

2020 Annual Report

Building Strong, Resilient, Communities



LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

This year brought more challenge and heartache than any of us could have ever anticipated. The prolonged and layered impacts of the pandemic on our children, neighbors, businesses, and ourselves have been profound. At the same time, as we reflect on 2020, we clearly see the resilience, strength, optimism, and compassion that emerged not only within our organization, but within the community at large. From the remarkable intersection of a collective crisis, community health, social and racial justice, and basic human needs emerged an incredible opportunity for us to find new ways of advancing our mission to meet local needs.

Our organization embraced that opportunity with creativity and passion- with staff and volunteers all working remotely we rapidly pivoted our programs online to continue our service provision with minimal interruption. Doing so allowed us to fill gaps we couldn't have imagined in the months prior. While the Courts were closed to the public, we provided mediation services over Zoom – ensuring clients had access to justice through efficient and accessible dispute resolution without delay. When the Governor's stay at home proclamations abruptly prohibited in-person supervised visitation, we developed new policies and practices to keep parents and kids connected remotely, while ensuring safety for all. When our doors closed to the public we converted all of our workshops to online modules – ensuring new mediators could still be trained, developing innovative partnerships to create access to free equity workshops, and equipping community members near and far with helpful skills through our Understanding Conflict workshops.

We also proudly launched our Safe Spaces program, creating another avenue for marginalized community members to share their concerns about their experiences with and within the City of Bellingham. Serving as a trusted bridge, this program adds a new pathway for people to be heard and valued.

From holding listening sessions on race and justice, to collaborating with statewide partners to develop a mediation framework for eviction resolution, to designing conflict resolution learning modules for parents and kids alike, we spent the past year finding new strategies to help Whatcom County approach conflict in creative and healthy ways. As community needs grow and change, we will continue to live our values and respond with nimble optimism, grace, and compassion.

We will be able to do so because of the tremendous support from our community – the generosity of individuals, businesses, foundations, and other public and private partners who stepped forward to Partner in Peace with us this past year was simply remarkable. Together, we'll continue the work.



Moonwater,
Executive Director

Stephen Gockley,
Board President



Staff

Moonwater, Executive Director

Jaina Gemin, Office Manager

Jennifer Stephens,
Community Engagement Manager

Tim Campbell, Community Engagement
and Administrative Associate

Gayle LaCroix,
Mediation Program Manager

Cynthia Moore, Family Case Manager

Britt Sullateskee,
Mediation Case Manager

Emily Machin-Mayes,
Education Program Manager

Marissa Collins, AmeriCorps
Youth Program Specialist

Janne Sleeper,
Supervised Visitation Manager

Devin DiBernardo,
Supervised Visitation Staff

Many thanks to our previous staff members for their efforts in helping us achieve our 2020 successes:

Linda Suther, Finance Manager

Rebecca Vigoren,
Supervised Visitation Coordinator

Sydney Arndorfer,
Community Engagement Coordinator

Board of Directors

Stephen Gockley, Board President

Donna Loken, Vice President

Michael Riber, Treasurer

Amy Rydel, Co-Secretary

Kirsten Drickey, Co-Secretary

Sarah Chan

Cynthia Clay

Therese Norton

Matt Paxton

Donnell Tanksley



WDRRC Board of Directors

Advisory Board

Masa DeLara

Marian Exall

Dave Grant

Leon Henley

Phil Montgomery

CJ Nathon

Mary Sass

Tim Schermetzler

Alivia Jelinski

Many thanks to our previous board members for their leadership and guidance in 2020:

Catherine Riordan

Christian Christensen

Adam Lervik

Kate Imus

John Krause

Approaching Conflict in Creative and Healthy Ways

Conflict happens every day. Through the work of our staff and the incredible dedication of our volunteers, community members are empowered to resolve these conflicts.

Volunteer Numbers

3175.75 HOURS **54** VOLUNTEERS

Helping Families and Communities Heal:

The Exceptional Role and Dedication of our Volunteers

A volunteer at the WDRRC walks into conflict willingly, and with curiosity and respect--regularly giving their time to support peace-making in our community.

- They help a family see their way to a parenting plan through mediation;
- In small claims court, they may help neighbors resolve a dispute or friends agree on an outstanding debt;
- They teach classes that help to heal rifts and cultural misunderstanding;
- They supervise visits between non-custodial parents and their children.

Volunteers in our Supervised Visitation program work with families over an extended period of time during extremely difficult and divisive circumstances. As the program shifted to virtual visitation over Zoom, we began to provide two supervisors on every visit to ensure safety and integrity in the virtual forum. We need to maintain that safety, and at the same time, build trust with each family member.

The program and its volunteers work to reassure parents that we will protect their children and honor their concerns. Our Supervised Visitation volunteers collectively donate more than 15 hours every week to ensure that the children involved in our program are comfortable, and can have honest, difficult, and joyful conversations with their visiting parents.

“Being a supervisor can have unsaid hardships that flip like a switch into the most sincere exchanges where the families connect with laughter, smiles, and the joy of being seen by their parents.” – Jenalyn, WDRRC Volunteer

Empowerment

We value empowerment. We share knowledge about effective practices and models for dispute resolution and we promote and practice community resilience.

Exploring Equity and Cultural Humility

Divisions, opinions and traumatic events shaped 2020. Education brings healing and we were pleased to offer four free sessions of Exploring Equity and Cultural Humility. Led by Masa DeLara, Heather Jefferson and Julie Mauermann, these workshops equipped attendees with renewed awareness and tools to realize positive change within Whatcom County. These free trainings were made possible with support from the Whatcom Community Foundation's Resilience Fund.

We were also pleased to have partnered with WWU's Small Business Development Center, the Whatcom Community Health Worker Network and other local employers to bring these workshops to businesses throughout Whatcom County.



“ In creating a just society, you must have equality, equity, and inclusion. ”

– Shovia Muchirawehondo, Participant

“ This class is a game changer for folks starting down the path of equity education. It lays a great foundation from which we can continue lifelong building toward equity and dismantling inequality! ” – Session Participant

Safe Spaces: *Let Your Voice Be Heard*

In recognition that barriers to direct communication between community members and the City of Bellingham exist, we launched this program to provide a trusted bridge that addresses this gap. Safe Spaces empowers individuals to share their concerns with city services, interactions with city departments and their experiences within Bellingham itself. The program provides an avenue for those who feel unable, unwilling or previously unsuccessful in bringing their issues directly to the city. As a supplement to existing programs, we provide a neutral service that listens to, honors and captures community members' concerns.

Bringing Together a School and a Neighbor

An issue was brought to us involving the Bellingham School District and the times at which they were leaf blowing. We provided the school neighbor a direct line for them to speak with someone in the district about their concerns. The matter was quickly and satisfactorily resolved. This inquiry illustrates an additional community benefit of the program as they were empowered to ask for help before tensions escalated. The individual was heard and the complaint was rapidly addressed and resolved.

A Situation of Divisive Imagery at a Community Park

While at a local lake, a family encountered a group of folks fishing at a boat launch wearing what they described as clothing with white supremacist imagery. After kindly asking for the group to remove their fishing lines so that boats could access the boat launch, a member of the family shared with us that the group became hostile. They wanted to report the incident but they were unable to share their experience through the Bellingham Police online portal. They contacted us through Safe Spaces and we were able to provide the opportunity for them to talk anonymously with a city representative and voice their concerns.

Collaboration

We value collaboration. We welcome multiple perspectives--it is our strength. Our mediation process is interest-based and supportive of mutually agreeable resolutions. Our facilitation services encourage collaborative engagement. Our trainings emphasize strategies for working effectively with others. We remain open-minded, creative and innovative as we serve our clients.

A Cross Coalition Power Hour: *Bringing Community Coalitions Together*



We are an active member of coalitions and groups focused on the health and wellbeing of youth and families. The Whatcom Prevention Coalition, Ferndale Community Coalition, Mt. Baker Community Coalition and Birch Bay Blaine Thrives meet monthly--bringing educators, human service professionals, county employees, community members and young people together to reflect on community trends and create opportunities for collaboration.

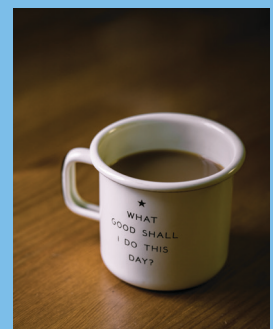
In April 2020, the magnitude of the pandemic was setting in and many of us were feeling the toll of isolation and worry. Realizing each coalition was looking for ways to support its members, the WDRC joined with the Coalition coordinators and leadership to create a new offering--a cross coalition power hour. We aimed to create an opportunity to build hope and resilience by inviting people to share their reflections of how they were coping and what they were seeing that gave them

hope. We shared songs, books and the new habits we'd cultivated. We shared community information about support available to adults and youth, and invitations to events. The WDRC is proud to be a leader in community efforts to bring people together and build new paths forward.

Resolving Conflicts Between Landlords and Tenants

A landlord contacted us early on in the pandemic to request support communicating with his tenant and discussing a repayment plan. The tenant was already three months behind on rent and not responding to his calls. The landlord was struggling to make their mortgage payments and had picked up a side job to prevent his house from going into foreclosure. He was frustrated and concerned. When we made contact with the tenant, he expressed he had been afraid to reach out to his landlord and discuss his situation. His business had recently closed due to COVID-19 which created a significant loss of income. He was embarrassed and the more time that passed, the harder it was to reach out. We were able to connect him with local rental assistance to provide help with catching up, and the two of them mediated to reopen dialogue, agree to a payment plan, and affirm a mutual interest in staying in communication should the tenant continue struggling to pay rent on time.

Listening Sessions on Race and Justice



Over the summer, the City of Bellingham reached out to the WDRC to help facilitate a series of Listening Sessions for the community to voice their concerns regarding topics of race and Justice.

During a time of increased anxiety for many in our community, these listening sessions provided a chance for individuals to share their story and be heard by city officials and their fellow community members.

Communication

We value communication. We are approachable and compassionate. We are thoughtful with our words, and intentional in our actions. We promote communication skills and active listening and interactions both for ourselves and our community.

Understanding Conflict for Kids: Helping Our Youth During This Trying Time

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into a new school year it made our typical classroom workshops difficult to coordinate. The WDRC Youth Program needed to find new ways to connect with youth in our community and help them develop their conflict resolution skills. We developed the idea of creating an “Understanding Conflict for Kids” workshop and we piloted our first free, online and open-to-the-public youth workshop in September of 2020. We had kids and families from all over the country register! With an age range of 9-12, we were impressed with the youths’ willingness and eagerness to share and participate in our activities. Building on the success of the first workshop, we created two additional ones in November and December focusing on conflict styles, stress management and communication. We were able to keep the workshops interactive and entertaining by including several discussion questions, activities that included movement and allowing time for all of the youth to share – which they really liked to do! The fall sessions were well attended by kids, siblings, parents and other family members.



Hearing What Our Kids Have to Say

“It provided me with many ideas, including how to cool down when I get upset.”

“What I liked about the workshop is that they were very interactive and taught us a lot of strategies on calming down.”

“Fun and easy way for us to start talking about conflict resolution.”

Creating Spaces for Productive Conversations

Whatcom Community College reached out to us in October 2020 in advance of the Presidential Election to create a training opportunity for WCC’s leadership team to strategize on effective ways to navigate challenging conversations on and off campus. Participants learned how to prepare themselves to enter into difficult or triggering conversations and stay focused on what they were aspiring for-- a sense of connection, a sense of curiosity, deeper understanding and a sense of welcoming.

There is no magic formula for how to move through tumultuous times with grace and ease--where we excel is to teach helpful concepts and strategies for individuals to use everyday. When we make space for different perspectives we build bridges for individuals to be seen and valued and to invite deeper connection.

“ (The trainers) helped us navigate our new reality in the virtual world. Through their facilitation and guidance, we were able to address some common issues and begin working with common purpose.”

– A WCC workshop participant

Integrity

We value integrity. We are curious and seek new ways to improve ourselves and the organization and we cherish that our clients trust us. At all times we conduct ourselves with the highest integrity.

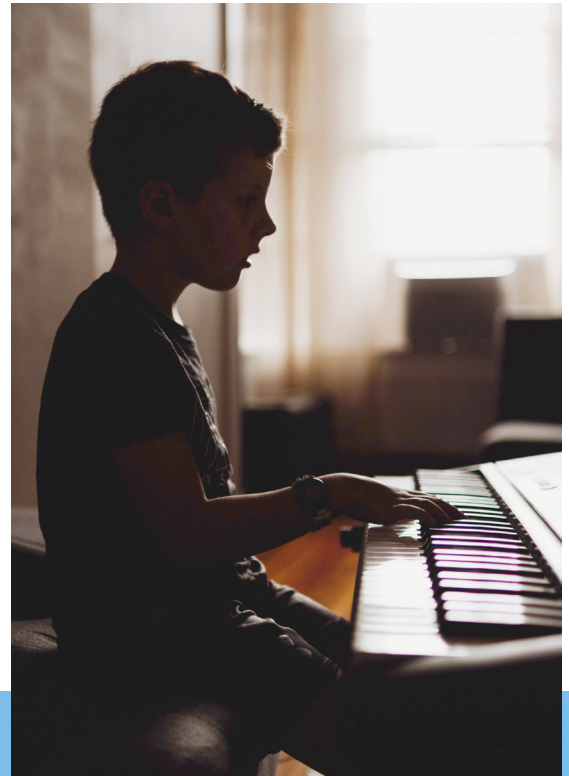
Creating New Virtual Family Interactions with Trust and Integrity

When schools closed per the Governor's order on March 13, 2020, we cancelled all supervised visits. As it became apparent that this was not a temporary closure, we moved to find new ways for parents and children to connect.

We helped families meet online by implementing safety features on Zoom, collaborating with other providers in the U.S. and addressing concerns for survivors of domestic violence. Suddenly children and parents were spending time together in their own spaces and connecting in entirely different ways.

We carried with us a sense of loss and the knowledge that a video cannot replace a child's hug, but were excited by the new opportunities that virtual visitation offered. We were able to support a number of parents who no longer live in Whatcom County and for whom weekly, in-person visits were impossible.

- * *One child played keyboards for his mother, who had never heard them play before.*
- * *Cats and dogs were introduced on screen and some children saw pets they had not visited for months or years.*
- * *One avid gardener asked the children to pick out the bulbs she would plant in the beds near her home, then showed the flowers' progress weekly.*
- * *A dad had a book made of his daughter's baby pictures, going through each one with her during the visit.*



Working with a Family Through Mediation: *A Story of Building Trust and Resolution*

Mom called us out of desperation. It had been over a year since she had seen her 4-year-old son. She had experienced many past challenges - trouble with the law, substance abuse, and losing housing. She understood why Dad was holding their son and was devastated by her circumstances. She had worked hard to turn her life around and was ready to show she was fit to parent. Dad was cautious. He had experienced homelessness and other challenges too. He knew how hard making healthy changes could be, and he was scared for his son.

Mom shared her progress during the mediation— completion of a treatment program, secure housing, and ongoing therapy support - and her hopes to see their son regularly. The mediator helped them address each of Dad's concerns and reframed the conversation to focus on their son, his safety, and his future. They became more relaxed and open as they listened to each other, and Dad suggested they try a limited weekend visit schedule. Mom was thrilled! We hope these parents do well, their son is safe and loved by them both, and we can be a resource for them in the future.

2020 Our Impact

237
people participated
in the Exploring Equity
& Cultural Humility
Workshop

1,665
training participants
1,370 virtually

4,212
total people served
3,036
virtually

409
hours of
Supervised Visitation
280 virtually

174
cases mediated
119 virtually
82%
cases reached
agreement

387
mediation participants
262 virtually

851
youth served
613 virtually

944
facilitation
participants
919 virtually

Services

Mediation - Facilitation Conciliation Supervised Visitation Coaching
Safe Spaces - Youth Training Adult Training Restorative Practices Education

Awards In 2020, our **Supervised Visitation** program received a **Ken Gass Community Building Award for the excellent efforts to support youth and keep kids and parents connected**, especially recently during the pandemic. Our **Exploring Equity and Cultural Humility** trainers were also honored for their work in **raising awareness and striving for positive change** in Whatcom County.

2020 General and Partners for Peace Campaign Donors and Supporters

Anonymous
Ray Ballweg
Michael and Susan Batcheller
Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
Dick Bernard
Ralph and Dyna Besse
Drew and Mike Betz
Ronna Biggs
Nancy and John Blume
Iris and Andrew Bodman
Kacey Bradt
Jean Brechan
Max Bronsema
Janet Brynjolfsson
Michael Bucove and Randi Sulkin
J. Hope Burse
Henry and Marilyn Burwell
Claudia Callahan
Addie Candib
Lucy Candib and Richard Schmitt
Joan Cervisi
Joan Cervisi and David Thorngren
Sarah Chan
June and Ben Cherry
Tom Cobb
Craig Robinson and MaryAnn Crawford
LaDessa Croucher
David and Jayme Curley
Colleen Curtis
Cushing, John
Tracy Dahlstedt-Rienstra
Dennis Danger
Barbara Davenport
Andy Day and Connie Cogburn
Dianna Del Giorgio
David and Andrea Doll
Sally DuBane
Mary Dumas
Deborah Dempsey and Mary Durbrow
Alexandra Eberle
Ann and Pug Edmonds
Pamela Englett
Marian and Graham Exall
Molly and Clarence Falk
Rose Anne Featherston
Elka Fink
Heather Flaherty
Seth Fleetwood
Deborah Forgays
Lindsey Frallic
Howard and Mary Francell-Sharpstein
Tom Frankel
Amia Froese
Richard and Sylvia Gerry
Jerry and Dagmar Getz
Jen Glyzinski
Hilary Goode
Bill Grant
Brady Green
Kirsten Green
Christina Greene
Karla Hall
Margo Hammond
Howard and Barbara Harrison
Dennis and Roberta Haskin
Rod and Daria Haynes
Laurie and Ken Heck
Sam Hellis
Marjorie Herdes
Heather Higgins
Highline Construction
Kathy Hilmoe
Mike Hilty
Eric Hirst

Judy Hopkinson
Crina Hoyer and Barry Arps
Pegatha Hughes
Doug Hyl Dahl
Lee and Duane Jackman
Alivia Jelinski
Sarah Jenkins
Nancy and Travis Jordan
Bernadine Joselyn
Nancy Joseph
Kate Imus and Kevin Misiuda
Janice Keller
Edson Kempe
Daniel Kirkpatrick and Lisa Beck
Janet Kortuem
Shemaia Kountouros
Jon Krause
Michael Langey
Robin Lawhorn
Adam and Megan Lervik
Emily Linderman
Angie Lindquist
Donna and Keith Loken
James Loucky
Jack & Cindy Louws
Melinda Lunsford
Jo and Dave Maas
Emily Machin-Mayes
Cindy Madigan
Marcia and Bob Marks
Ross Marquardt
Kay Marsh
Tamara Marston
Alexarc Mastema and Teri Bryant
Camille Matern
Marilyn Mayers
Victoria and Jim McCarthy
Ann McCartney and Norm Lindquist
Carl McGrath
Mary and James McKenna
Angus McLane
Julie Mellick
Carl Meyers
Caroline Minto
Phil Montgomery
Mary Moores
Bob and Jeanette Morse
Heather Munro-Hildreth and Alex Hildreth
David Namba
CJ and Margaret Nathon
Thomas and Carole Niggel
Ann Nugent
Nisha Parasher
Mary Passmore
Stephen and Noel Paus
Elizabeth Pernotto and Robert Marshall
Mike and Sue Phillely
Sandra Portz
Frances Posel
Elizabeth Purdy
Barbara Rappaport
Linda Read
Ronald and Jeannie Reafs
Janiece Reilly
Michael Riber
Alan and Susan Richardson
Jean Richardson and David Cunningham
Garland Richmond
Jennifer Rick
Catherine Riordan and Phil Thompson
Robert and Debbie Withrow
Chuck and Dee Robinson
Wendy and Jeffrey Robinson
Barbara and George Rofkar

Donna Ronning
Peter and Gage Ruffatto
Sheri Russell
Kevin Ryan
Amy and Randy Rydel
Paul Sarvasy and Sheila Sondik
Laurie Satushek
Bill Schenken
Timothy Schermetzler
Dale and Frances Schmitz
Betty Scott
Jill Seager and Paul Neel
Janice Sigmund and Mike Jereczek
Nancy Simmers
Laura Singletary
Keith and Nancy Sjoquist
Greg Smyth
Chuck and Johanna Snyder
St James Presbyterian Church
Rick and Nancy Steele
James Steven and Sara Geballe
Kristin Stevens
Ann Stevenson and Michael Berree
Sue Staley and Chris Wiscavaage
Kaia Svien
Linda Telfer
Wanda "Terry" and Wendell Terry
Denny and Lauri Thorley
Tim and Joanne Douglas
Steven VanderStaaay
Dennis Veith
Mary and Kevin Vermillion
Barbara Wagner
Samantha Watkins
Mark and Almaz Wentling
Isa Werney
Heather Whitaker
Moonwater and Wes Withrow
John and Kathryn Whitmer
Kirsten Drickey and Kendall Whitney
Luke Wiesner
Mark and Julie Wiesner
Doug Wight
Ann Wilby
Lee Willis and Rick Herman
Dean and Carolyn Withrow
Catherine Witney
Peace Wizard
Debra Young
Rhonda Younker
Mary J. Zeimet

Business Supporters

Amazon Smile
Bank of the Pacific
Banner Bank
Barkley Company
Bellingham Cold Storage
Bellingham Grocery Outlet
Bio Bug Pest Management
Birch Equipment
The Black Cat
Boccemon
Boundary Bay Brewery
Brett McCandlis Brown and Connor PLLC
Buri Funston Mumford PLLC
Calypso Kitchen
Chicaoji
Coastal Insurance Group
Dick's Drive-In
Ecopacific Sea Food LLC
Fred Meyer Community Rewards
Highline Construction

Kulshan Brewing Company
Law Office of Douglas Hyl Dahl
Pacific Surveying and Engineering
Pediatric NDT + SI Therapy Services
Peoples Bank
Rice Insurance
Saratoga Real Estate
Small Business Development Center,
WWU
Smith & Just
SPIE
Talbot Real Estate
Village Books

Foundations

Chuckanut Health Foundation
Dave Nelson Memorial Foundation
James Boskey Memorial Foundation
Lhaq'temish Foundation
Whatcom Community Foundation
Resilience Fund

Grantors

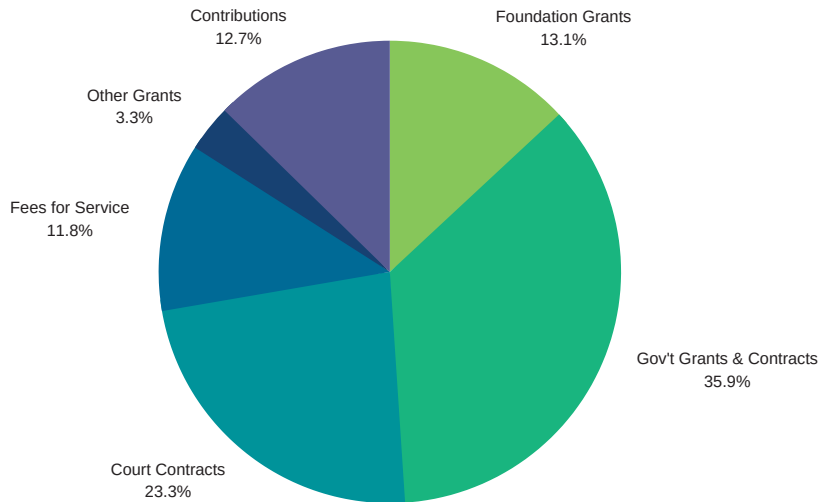
501 Commons
Bellingham Bay Rotary Club
Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
City of Bellingham
DCYF
Ferndale CARES Act
St. James Presbyterian Church
Superfeet
United Way
Washington Service Corps
Whatcom Family and Community
Network
Whatcom ReStart CARES Act
WA State Dept of Commerce
CARES Act Grant
WA State Department of Commerce
WA Youth Development Nonprofit
Relief Fund

Coalitions

Association for Conflict Resolution
Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber
of Commerce
Birch Bay Blaine Thrives
Building Healthy Communities
Task Force
Community Resource Network
Downtown Bellingham Partnership
Ferndale Chamber of Commerce
Ferndale Community Coalition
Healthy Whatcom/Community Health
Improvement Planning
Mt. Baker Community Coalition
National Association for
Community Mediation
Project Safer
Resolution Washington
Sustainable Connections
Whatcom County Incarceration
Prevention & Reduction Task Force
Whatcom County Commission against
Domestic and Sexual Violence
Whatcom County Bar Association
Alternative Dispute Resolution
Planning Committee
Washington Mediation Association
Whatcom Prevention Coalition
Youth and Family Coalition
Whatcom Family and Community Network

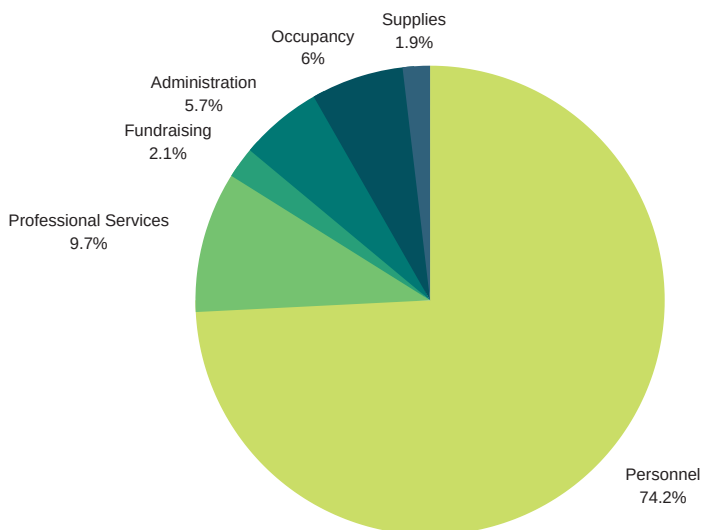
2020 Financial Statement

Income



Total Income: \$825,265

Expenses



Total Expenses: \$643,077

Net Income: \$160,462 *

Balance Sheet

Assets

Current Assets

Cash & cash equivalents	\$474,363
Accounts receivable	\$60,838
Total current assets	\$534,263

Fixed Assets

Building & land	\$616,244
Building improvements	\$366,413
Other fixed assets	\$-98,967
Depreciation	\$943,723
Total fixed assets	\$943,723

Total Assets **\$1,477,986**

Liabilities & Equity

Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$19,541
Accrued expenses	\$20,948
Long-term loan payable	\$84,000
Mortgage payable	\$345,484
Capital loans payable	\$250,000
Total liabilities	\$719,973

Equity

Unrestricted net assets	\$591,754
Temp. restricted net assets	\$5,797
Net Income	\$160,462 *
Total Equity	\$758,013

Total Liabilities & Equity **\$1,477,986**

* Includes Capital Contributions



Friendship

Children laugh.
Children play.
Children leave peace in their wake.
Children leave
love,

peace,

and harmony.

They slip and slide,
they run and play,
with each other.
They leave peace everywhere they go.
but,

most importantly,

they leave friendship.

Lucy B.
12, Kulshan Middle School

The mission of the WDRC is to provide and promote constructive and collaborative approaches to conflict.

The vision of the WDRC is for Whatcom County to be a community in which people approach conflict in creative and healthy ways.

The WDRC values impartiality, accessibility, empowerment, collaboration, communication and integrity.

