



safe space

# FY2010 ANNUAL REPORT

**Our mission for nearly a century:  
protect kids, keep them safe,  
and help them grow**

89-74 162<sup>ND</sup> STREET, JAMAICA, NY 11432 (718) 526-2400 SAFESPACENYC.ORG

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



**This past year Safe Space celebrated reinvesting all of our resources back into the community where we first began.**

Many things in Southeast Queens have changed significantly since we were originally founded in 1919 as the Queensboro Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. But one thing has always remained constant: our steadfast belief that every child deserves to grow up healthy and safe.

Today, our community is one of the most diverse in the United States, with an estimated 48.5% percent of its population foreign born and hailing from over 70 countries. Long before the current recession, the families we serve in Jamaica, Far Rockaway and Richmond Hill struggled with some of the highest poverty and unemployment rates in NYC, overwhelming amounts of crime and gang violence and seriously underperforming schools.

Your past support has been instrumental in helping us to return home, allowing us to cost effectively streamline and focus our service delivery on the needs of this besieged community. Your continued support will ensure that our neighbors can conveniently access and benefit from the full range of integrated

family support, community health, mental health, educational and youth services we provide.

The stories that follow represent this inter-related nature of our comprehensive services and what I consider to be Safe Space's greatest strength: the diversity, compassion and dedication of our staff on the frontlines. It is through their efforts every day that we continue to achieve our almost century-old mission: *to protect kids, keep them safe and help them grow.*

Our work would not be possible without your generous investment in building a more hopeful future for the children and families we serve. I am deeply grateful for your support and proud to share this FY2010 Annual Report highlighting some of the achievements you helped make possible.

Sincerely,

Christine Molnar  
President & CEO

# SAFE SPACE PROGRAM SNAPSHOT



## FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

### Program Focus: Helping Families Build a Better Future

- Stabilize Families in Crisis and Help Avoid Foster Care
- Prevention Services to End Family Violence
- Resources to Develop Emotional, Physical and Economic Well-Being

## MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

### Program Focus: Offering Positive Alternatives to High-Risk Behavior

- Psychotherapy, Psychiatry, Counseling and Recovery Services For All Ages
- Therapeutic Family Violence and Trauma Interventions
- Specialized Programs for Children and Youth

## YOUTH PROGRAM

### Program Focus: Engaging Teens to Expand Their Horizons

- Drop-In Centers That Provide a Safe Environment for At-Risk Adolescents
- Transitional Residences to Support Homeless, Runaway and HIV+ Youth
- Skills-Building Employment and College Discovery Initiatives

## COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

### Program Focus: Improving Long-Term Health Outcomes

- Health Care Access for Low-Income Families
- Maternal and Child Health Programs Promoting Pre-and-Post Natal Care
- HIV Prevention, Outreach and Education For All Ages

## SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

### Program Focus: Leveling the Educational Playing Field for Our Kids

- Quality After-School and Summer Camp Programs
- Homework Help, Computer Study and Enrichment Activities
- Instruction in the Arts, Dance, Music and Athletics



# FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

## SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

**Jamaica and Far Rockaway both reported a shocking 75% increase in child abuse and neglect cases between 2006 and 2010.**

**In FY2010  
Safe Space helped 890  
families access needed  
resources to build a  
stable support system  
for both parents and  
children.**

**Alejandra Espíndola** has experienced first hand how hard it is for someone caught in the downward spiral of family violence to ask for help.

She also now knows just how much can be accomplished when you do. When Alejandra first arrived at Safe Space seeking Family Support Services in March 2010, she was a legal immigrant struggling with trying to have her abusive husband deported back to their native Argentina. Despite holding a master's degree in psychology, her difficult domestic situation had prevented her from finding employment for over two years. Although frightened and discouraged, she was determined to find a way to provide for her three children on her own.

Alejandra enrolled in Safe Space's Immigrant Support Program, specifically targeted to foreign-born women who have experienced family violence. This program offers legal assistance for undocumented clients and provides intensive individual counseling, group therapy and case management services targeted at achieving one main goal: to get

participants into a safe environment.

Last year, this program helped 100% of the 89 immigrant survivors of family violence we served have a safety plan in place (including obtaining legal orders of protection as required) within one month of entering the program. Over 1/3 of them were also successfully placed in educational or vocational settings.

Since her focus was supporting her family, Alejandra chose to concentrate on the program's employment and job training component. Following her graduation, Alejandra was hired by Safe Space as a case planner at our Family Resource Center in Richmond Hill. She now helps others get the overall support system they need in place to ensure the health, safety and well-being of themselves and their children.

Alejandra reflects, "First, Safe Space helped my family, and now it is my passion to help others in my community to realize their potential."



**In FY2010  
Safe Space helped enroll  
7,013 people in health  
insurance plans.**

# COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

## SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

**More than one out of every three Queens residents lacks health insurance of any kind.**

**Malka Yagudayeva** wants to ensure that every family in Southeast Queens has access to the affordable health insurance options they need.

As a Safe Space Community Health Coordinator, this Uzbekistan native knows that communication is critical in reaching our diverse community. In addition to English, she speaks fluent Russian, Hebrew and Farsi. Thanks to her facility with languages, she is also able to work with people who only speak Spanish or Chinese.

“I am thrilled to help everybody,” states Malka. “I have done this job for more than 10 years so a lot of people know me. They tell their neighbors and friends to come to my office. They are so grateful to learn that they really are eligible for health insurance. They even send ‘thank you’ cards and bring me flowers.”

“I am very busy,” she adds with a laugh. “I make time to respond to 40 or more messages a day. I can’t make them wait after they reach out to me for help.”

She spends hours doing hands-on

outreach, handing out flyers on Queens Boulevard, Union Turnpike, and Main Street and visiting medical centers and other community gathering places. According to Malka, “You have to really listen to people to earn their trust and get them to open up and ask questions.”

Malka particularly remembers when 55-year old Bella first came to see her. In the year since she had been laid off from her job, neither Bella nor her husband had been able to pay for the expensive COBRA coverage that was available through her former employer. She had recently been diagnosed with cancer and was overwhelmed with worry about how she was going to afford the treatment and medications she needed. “It was a very good day when I could help her get the low-cost insurance she needed,” Malka recalls.



**In FY2010  
Safe Space clinics  
provided mental health  
services to 775 patients.  
Over 55% of them were  
under the age of 18.**

# MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

## SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

**A recent Queens study confirms an 11.8 (per 1,000) child victimization rate borough-wide. In comparison, Jamaica reports a rate of 20.3 and Far Rockaway a staggering 27.3.**

**Tarra Neblett**, a Safe Space LMSW therapist, knew there was more to the story when 19-year-old Michael\* first sought help at our mental health clinic.

Michael was part of the street culture of crime and gang violence that has been increasing steadily throughout Southeast Queens. He was required by the court to attend therapy after setting fire to his foster home. Like the majority of these “tough” street guys that Tarra had treated before, he initially entered into their sessions full of bravado and refusing to discuss any of his real feelings.

According to Tarra, this is a typical example of the “Doorknob Theory.” When a client has an underlying issue that’s too painful to address directly, he/she will finally bring it up only after discussing less traumatic topics. Patients often wait until the end of a session to share their most painful issues. Then they drop the “bombshell,” put their hand on the doorknob, and leave. The real therapy begins in the ensuing sessions.

Michael’s rough exterior at the beginning eventually gave way to sharing experiences

that he never imagined telling anyone about. He revealed a childhood of constant devastating physical abuse by his father, his mother and his siblings. “Each client is different,” explains Tarra. “You need to be patient and establish a trusting relationship. This allows people to finally deal with the hard stuff.”

Tarra guided Michael through the intensive internal work he needed to do himself before he could begin the healing process. Over time, they established a trusting relationship. With her support, Michael came to realize that he was worthy of being loved and deserved a bright future. She helped provide him with both the confidence and resources he needed to become independent.

Today, Michael is moving forward with his life and living happily on his own.

\* This name has been changed to protect the patient’s privacy.



**In FY2010  
Safe Space after-school  
and summer camp  
programs combined had  
1,002 participants.**

# SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

## SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

**More than 35% of students in both Jamaica and Far Rockaway perform below grade level in math. Both also report a dismal 51% performance below grade level in reading.**

**Imtiaz Choudhari** loved school while growing up in Pakistan. By the time he was in sixth grade he knew he wanted to be a teacher.

“Mr. C” as he is known to his students, immigrated to NYC in 1990, and soon after joined Safe Space as a part-time math tutor in one of our after-school programs. He continued working while simultaneously earning his Master’s of Science in Education from City College. In 2006, he was promoted to his current position of senior program supervisor of our after-school program in PS30.

Safe Space operates after-school programs in four public schools in Southeast Queens. In our communities, there are few recreational activities available to keep kids engaged and out of trouble between the critical 3–6pm after-school hours. We offer the ideal solution for concerned working parents: a safe refuge combined with a structured learning environment. Our programs combine 1-hour of homework help and targeted preparation for reading and math testing with 2-hours of enrichment activities including dance, music, drama and athletics. More than 80% of the

kids in our program completed their homework assignments every day.

“Mr. C” loves working directly with the students. When he first met Jessica last year, she was terribly shy and unsure of herself so he encouraged her to join the Micro Society program. This student-created miniature community, featuring a variety of businesses, is governed by an elected mayor, with a police department, judges and lawyers to enforce the laws. “Micro Money” wages, distributed weekly by the bankers, allow workers to learn to manage their finances and purchase student created merchandise. Last year, Jessica gained confidence and made friends by successfully managing a Micro Society restaurant.

Now, as a veteran fifth-grader, Jessica has decided to run for mayor. She explains, “Even though at first I had butterflies in my stomach when I had to make a speech, it’s really been fun campaigning because I’m not shy any more.”



**In FY2010  
Safe Space provided  
786 at-risk teens a  
safe place to stay off  
the streets and learn  
valuable life skills.**

# YOUTH PROGRAM

## SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

**In the 2008–2009 academic year, graduation rates at Jamaica and Far Rockaway public high schools averaged less than 49%.**

**Cassilda Aguilera** frequently got into trouble in elementary school for drawing during class. Now she has made a career of encouraging young people to express themselves and open up through art.

Cassie, as she is better known, has been with Safe Space for 14 years. She serves as the agency’s arts expert and LGBT outreach specialist, working with different age groups throughout several service areas. She conducts weekly art workshops in both Jamaica and Far Rockaway, overseeing various artistic projects that encourage individual creative expression. She finds engaging students through the creation of personal masks—painting the outside to reflect their “outer persona” while writing their inner feelings inside—to be a particularly effective exercise.

“The arts are a great form of expression, especially for young people. Kids are often reluctant to verbalize their feelings, and expressing emotions this way is empowering,” states Cassie. “Opening up through art gives us a clearer picture of what is really happening in their lives and often

leads to counseling opportunities.”

More than 50% of the nearly 600 teens that participated in art workshops last year also began counseling as a result.

Jelva is a perfect example. She was 15 when she first came to our Drop-In Center four years ago. She was withdrawn and refused to interact with other youth or staffers, so Cassie encouraged her to pursue solitary activities like drawing and writing poetry. Gradually, Jelva began trusting Cassie and started to talk about the family troubles she was already expressing through her art. She then also started participating in some of the group art projects and began making friends and developing relationships with the staff. She still stops by the Drop-In Center occasionally to re-connect.

A few months ago, she excitedly announced that she has enrolled in a local art program and landed a job in an art gallery. She now plans to make art her career.



**In FY2010  
Safe Space spent  
86¢ of every dollar on  
providing high-quality  
programs for the  
children and families  
we serve.**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD TREASURER

**As always, in any economic downturn, it is always the poorest and most vulnerable among us who feel it most swiftly and severely.**

Our Board is committed to ensuring that Safe Space continues to provide the high quality programs so urgently needed by our community. The Statement of Activities from our 2010 audit, which accompanies this message, reflects our focus on efficiency and sound fiscal management in achieving our mission. Under the strong leadership of the Board of Directors, our President & CEO Christine Molnar, and her senior staff, we accomplished three significant financial objectives in FY2010.

- We returned to our historical “home” base of Jamaica, Queens, completing a planned relocation and consolidation of our administrative headquarters and five program sites into one building that simultaneously strengthened programming and reduced operating expenses.
- Even in this challenging economic environment, we were able to increase our program revenues by \$845,090—allowing us to expand critical services.
- At the same time, we successfully reduced our management overhead by \$153,843, improving on the trend of operating deficits over the last several years to end with a \$58,808 deficit in FY2010.

We have made great strides and will maintain our diligence in these areas. In addition, through efforts led by our Board Development Committee, we are actively seeking to

increase private funding from foundations, corporations and individuals in the coming year. We are also focused on our net assets and have been exploring available avenues to reduce a serious negative balance that is the result of two significant legacy debts to government agencies. Both agencies, the NYC Administration for Children’s Services (“ACS”) and the NYS Department of Mental Health, remain as key Safe Space funders and partners. Following a series of meetings to begin the process, we have successfully reduced the ACS liability by \$525,695 in FY2010 through a first level appeal and will continue to aggressively pursue all available appeal options with the goal of significantly reducing these past debts with each agency.

We are grateful for your continued investment in the children and families we serve and pledge our commitment to honor your support through sound management practices and high quality programming.

Sincerely,

James F. Capalino  
Safe Space Director  
FY2010 Board Treasurer

# FY2010 FINANCIALS

	2010			2009		
	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Government fee & contracts	\$ 12,294,282		\$ 12,294,282	\$ 11,486,643		\$ 11,486,643
Program service revenue	155,903		155,903	153,805		153,805
Contributions	626,873	\$ 237,800	864,673	802,645	\$ 580,000	1,382,645
Special event revenue	38,357		38,357	76,693		76,693
Direct benefits special events	(15,820)		(15,820)	(18,188)		(18,188)
Miscellaneous income	180,368		180,368	41,062		41,062
Satisfaction from restrictions	681,326	(681,326)		712,372	(712,372)	
<b>Total revenue and losses</b>	<b>13,961,289</b>	<b>(443,526)</b>	<b>13,517,763</b>	<b>13,255,032</b>	<b>(132,372)</b>	<b>13,122,660</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Program services						
Mental health services	1,397,731		1,397,731	968,271		968,271
Community health services	1,942,320		1,942,320	1,980,043		1,980,043
Education services	1,666,443		1,666,443	1,398,182		1,398,182
Preventive services	4,860,731		4,860,731	4,970,250		4,970,250
Young adult services	2,114,271		2,114,271	1,819,660		1,819,660
<b>Total program services</b>	<b>11,981,496</b>		<b>11,981,496</b>	<b>11,136,406</b>		<b>11,136,406</b>
Support services						
Administration	1,854,195		1,854,195	1,890,402		1,890,402
Development	184,406		184,406	302,042		302,042
<b>Total support services</b>	<b>2,038,601</b>		<b>2,038,601</b>	<b>2,192,444</b>		<b>2,192,444</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>14,020,097</b>		<b>14,020,097</b>	<b>13,328,850</b>		<b>13,328,850</b>
<b>CHANGES IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(58,808)</b>	<b>(443,526)</b>	<b>(502,334)</b>	<b>(73,818)</b>	<b>(132,372)</b>	<b>(206,190)</b>
<b>OTHER CHANGES</b>						
Gain on sale of building				1,621,377		1,621,377
Deposit forfeiture				151,359		151,359
Prior year contract adjustment	525,695		525,695	(1,671,775)		(1,671,775)
Prior year contract closeout	(78,188)		(78,188)			
Settlement of prior lease agreement	(100,000)		(100,000)			
<b>CHANGES IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>288,699</b>	<b>(443,526)</b>	<b>(154,827)</b>	<b>27,143</b>	<b>(132,372)</b>	<b>(105,229)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS - Beginning of the year</b>	<b>(3,040,270)</b>	<b>598,276</b>	<b>(2,441,994)</b>	<b>(3,067,413)</b>	<b>730,648</b>	<b>(2,336,765)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS - End of the year</b>	<b>\$ (2,751,571)</b>	<b>\$ 154,750</b>	<b>\$ (2,596,821)</b>	<b>\$ (3,040,270)</b>	<b>\$ 598,276</b>	<b>\$ (2,441,994)</b>

In FY2010  
Safe Space increased  
program revenues  
by \$845,090 and  
decreased overhead  
expenses by \$153,843.

Please visit our website at [www.safespaceinc.org](http://www.safespaceinc.org)  
to review our complete FY2010 Audited Financial Report.

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