



a new leaf
helping families, changing lives



Where It All Began

History by Frank Bennett (Founder's Son)

A Commitment to Helping Families, Changing Lives

Prevention and Rehabilitation, later known as Prehab, was established with the guidance of a strong citizen board. Originally named Prehab of Mesa, the organization expanded its reach and became Prehab of Arizona. Its first facility was a small white stucco house located on South Wilbur and MacDonald near Mesa Drive and Broadway. In 1973, Prehab opened a 24-hour residential facility, marking a significant milestone. By 2005, the organization had grown to a \$20 million budget, employed 450 staff members, and had helped thousands of people.



Fun Fact:

At its peak, Prehab was the largest private school in Arizona.

Community-Driven From The Start

Prehab's mission was simple yet profound: "Helping families, changing lives." The organization was co-founded in 1971 by Larry Simmons, a 30-year-old school psychologist and devout Mormon who served as the first Executive Director, and Dorothy Gertrude Bycroft Bennett Mitchell, a 56-year-old single mother and devout Catholic. Tragically, Dorothy passed away in August 1974.

Initially, Prehab was founded as an alternative school offering a half day of classes combined with intense counseling and therapy for children unable to thrive in public school settings. Prehab also provided residential and outpatient behavioral health services for youth struggling with substance use and behavioral health challenges. The organization began with a start-up grant of \$12,000 to \$14,000.

Rebranding to A New Leaf

In 2007, recognizing its expanding impact on the community, Prehab was renamed A New Leaf. Today, it stands as a testament to the vision of its founders and their commitment to creating transformative change for individuals and families in need.

For 53 years, A New Leaf has advanced its mission of "Helping Families, Changing Lives" by providing meaningful opportunities to empower disadvantaged individuals and families, and to create a stronger and healthier community. A New Leaf's 35+ programs in the Phoenix Metro area address households' immediate and longer-term needs through a continuum of care that promotes social and economic health and stability.



Fun Fact:

In 2007, recognizing its expanding impact on the community, Prehab of Arizona was renamed to A New Leaf



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Helping Families Changing Lives

Providing A Hand Up to Our Neighbors in Need

A New Leaf's services meet people where they are, encourage them to set their own goals for the future, and give them the support and tools needed to help them overcome challenges and work towards accomplishing their goals.

Programs go beyond basic services to effect long-term and meaningful change for households experiencing poverty, homelessness, domestic violence, and instability. Support services help children and youth address trauma, develop coping skills, build positive relationships, and overcome generational issues related to poverty, domestic violence, and substance use.

Housing and Shelter Services



Everyone should have a place to call *home*

- Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing
- Bridge to Housing
- Emergency Homeless Shelters
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Transitional Housing
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance

Domestic and Sexual Violence Services



Every survivor should have safety and support to *heal*

- Court Advocacy
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- Sexual Violence Helpline
- Sexual Violence Services
- Shelter Overflow Emergency Housing
- Trauma Informed Healing and Support

Financial Empowerment Services



Everyone should have the ability to provide for their *family*

- Financial Literacy and Coaching
- Rent & Utility Assistance
- Small Business Development
- Tax Preparation Assistance
- Workforce Development
- Financial Services Industry Career Training
- Veteran's Business Outreach Center
- Workforce services for previously incarcerated veterans
- Community education services offered

Educational Services



Everyone should have access to a good *education*

- After School and Summer Programs
- Early Childhood Education
- Matched College Savings Program
- Referrals to Adults Education Programs
- Tutoring and Academic Support

Foster Care Services



Every child should have a loving, supportive *family*

- Transitional Foster Care
- Therapeutic Foster Care

Family Support Services



Every child should have a loving, supportive *family*

- Family Connections
- Nurturing Parenting
- Supervised Visitation
- ORR Program



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La Mesita Family Homeless Shelter and Community

Established in 1991

Lending a Hand to Our Neighbors in Need

La Mesita was founded by Eddie Basha and Ross Farnsworth in 1991, who converted a motel into a temporary homeless shelter for women. It was used as a temporary homeless shelter, but the crumbling infrastructure made some units uninhabitable.

A New Leaf, a homelessness and social services agency in the Valley, decided to bulldoze the motel and start from scratch on a \$35 million campus that now includes an emergency family homeless shelter, affordable housing and permanent support apartments just along the light rail near downtown Mesa. The city of Mesa is one of the organization's biggest supporters, both with La Mesita and other Leaf projects throughout the East Valley. The project was funded through public-private partnerships, donations and income earned by A New Leaf. Each of the 30 new units were "adopted" and furnished by local companies or families.

The City of Mesa gave A New Leaf a \$500,000 interest-free, 20-year loan to help with the first phase of La Mesita and spent \$1 million to buy land owned by the agency so it could expand Monterey Park. That money went into the La Mesita project. Financing also came from private equity through the sale of federal tax credits administered by the Arizona Department of Housing.

The Transition of La Mesita

A New Leaf, which celebrated the groundbreaking of La Mesita on December 5, 2012. The first phase of the project, which was completed at the end of 2013, included 80 units of affordable and permanent supportive housing and community space. La Mesita's new affordable apartments served very low-income families and offered integrated services including employment services, on-site childcare, financial literacy and education classes. Phase 2 followed in 2013 and included 30 permanent supportive housing units for chronically homeless individuals with special needs which required more intensive and longer-term supportive services. Lastly, Phase 3 followed in 2015 in which 16 units were transitioned into a family emergency shelter.

The 110 units range from studios to three-bedroom homes. Some are affordable-housing units, with rent determined based on an individual's income. The others are permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless, mostly individuals with behavioral health issues or homeless veterans. Residents of those units have either qualified for a Section 8 voucher, a federal housing assistance program, or pay minimal rent based on their income, which could be Social Security or Veterans Affairs benefits.

A New Leaf's La Mesita Family Homeless Shelter has 16 units and is the only shelter in the East Valley that allows parents to bring their children with them, a critically needed resource for families in crisis. Families are allowed to stay together and have the unique comfort of a private apartment in which they can lock the door and know their children will be safe. When a family arrives at the La Mesita Family Homeless Shelter, they are immediately provided with all the essentials of a home: food in the pantry, toiletries in the bathroom, and fresh linens on the beds. Families can stay up to 120 days in 1 or 2-bedroom apartments.

Support Services For Our Residents

The La Mesita Family Homeless Shelter also delivers comprehensive services meant to assist families with becoming stable and secure in their housing and basic needs.

La Mesita's Permanent Supportive Housing works off a housing first model, which essentially eliminates common barriers to housing such as disabilities, mental health needs, addictions, background checks, previous domestic violence, or income (having 3x the rent). Instead, the goal is to get the person off the street and out of crisis as quickly as possible so they can then have a permanent stable home. This allows them to work on addressing those root causes of homelessness while also preventing the further escalation of issues that would likely lead to the need for emergency services. While there are emergency shelters or transitional housing models that help many people, some individuals need more time than these services can offer to end the cycle of homelessness they've experienced.

Support Services increase housing retention and promote long-term stability through ongoing case management, financial coaching, employment assistance, life skills classes, community events, and other activities. Residents have a Head Start program on-site at La Mesita for kiddos not yet school-age and a free after school program for those that are, allowing single parents to maintain regular work hours. Staff connect residents with community resources and networks to receive substance use treatment, job training, assistance accessing health care, legal aid, transportation, computer lab and training, access to wellness center, gym and a variety of community building activities and classes. and other services tailored to the needs of the residents.

They also engage residents through regular activities and fun community events which connect them with their neighbors to strengthen their sense of belonging and increase housing stability.

The Future of La Mesita

Overall, long-term supportive housing provides a foundation for individuals to address other aspects of their lives such as personal growth, employment, education, and skill development which they can use to keep themselves off the streets, out of crisis, and contributing back to the community.

A New Leaf will break ground the Spring of 2026 on an additional 54 supportive housing units for senior adults and veterans at the La Mesita campus. La Mesita is located within an Opportunity Zone in Mesa. The Opportunity Zones program is a federal program designed to spur community investment by providing tax benefits to investors. The City of Mesa has 11 census tracts that have been designated Opportunity Zones by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



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East Valley Men's Center

Established in 1998

Where It All Began

Margie Frost was a 35-year veteran of East Valley community agencies such as United Way and served as director of the East Valley Men's Center, a facility helping homeless men re-enter society. Frost is credited with the center's founding in 1998, when she served on the Task Force on Homelessness. The center opened its doors Dec. 17, 1998. Under Frost's leadership, it became a facility that then housed up to 84 men. The center used a "tough love" approach in helping male residents overcome homelessness.

Frost was often described as a "mother figure," cooking for residents at times and always making sure they kept to their plans for developing self-sufficiency, which included sobriety, employment and saving money. Frost's plan involved a contract between Mesa taxpayers and the city's homeless, center residents would stick to their plans for rehabilitation and Mesa citizens would continue to provide resources to facilitate their efforts.

The Transition of EVMC

A New Leaf acquired the East Valley Men's Center in 2006, and it is now a 110 bed, safe haven for men facing homelessness in Arizona and helps them achieve long-term housing stability. Ten of the beds in a semi-private room are utilized by Circle the City and houses those in need of medical attention.

When men arrive at the facility, they are immediately provided with a bed and storage area for their personal possessions that they can keep for the entire duration of their stay. Once the men have settled, our dedicated staff gets to work, helping residents plan a permanent housing plan to foster physical health, mental health, financial independence, and social responsibility. An onsite workforce office also helps the residents build a resume, find references, and secure job interviews. A New Leaf strongly believes in offering a hand up to men willing to put in the effort to improve their lives.

Who Does EVMC Serve?

EVMC accepts homeless men 18 years of age and older, providing up to 120 days in emergency shelter, during which residents work with case managers to find permanent housing options. Residents are required to pursue employment and save most of their income. Services include case management, laundry and shower access, employment assistance, clothing, counseling and behavioral health referrals, substance abuse support group referrals, transportation assistance, financial literacy, preventative health and dental, veteran resources and long-term housing solutions.

The men are served three meals per day which are provided by local churches, corporate outreach groups and group or individual community members. Opportunities to provide or serve a meal are open to all through our group planning coordinator.



Fun Fact:

East Valley Men's Center property was originally a bingo hall.

Ammenities for EVMC Residents

The basketball court was funded through private donations and healing garden and upgrades in the backyard were a grant gift applied for through Valley Partnership in 2023. The gym apparatus and weights are returned to a local Costco which were then donated to EVMC, and the clothing center is filled through generous community donations.

Bikes are provided by the Red Mountain Bike Group which was established with a mission to not only provide bicycles but also teach bike maintenance skills to help individuals gain a greater sense of independence and mobility. With the help of a local bike shop, these volunteers were equipped with the knowledge they needed to help build and repair bikes for East Valley Men's Center's residents. On behalf of the Red Mountain Community Church, these amazing volunteers aim to support these men getting back on their feet.

In addition, local men volunteer their time to repair and replace the necessary parts to ensure the men have a mode of transportation to get to and from work. We are always looking for recycled bikes and parts.

The Future of EVMC

A New Leaf's EVMC is funded by State, Federal and local East Valley City Governments, and a variety of charitable organizations. EVMC also receives support through fundraising, donations and volunteer services.

On October 1, 2024, in partnership with the City of Mesa, A New Leaf will break ground on the East Valley Men's Center Transitional Housing Complex, adding 30 apartment units to the property. These apartments will focus on the men who are on the right path to self-sustainability but require more time to put savings together or make additional adjustments in their lives.



Desert Leaf Apartments

Established in 1998

Lending A Helping Hand

Desert Leaf Apartments are a 20-unit permanent supportive housing complex, developed specifically to serve families or individuals experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, or severe mental illness.

A New Leaf's Desert Leaf Apartments offers a safe, supportive environment for veterans and individuals to recover from trauma and find long-term stability. At this gated, close-knit complex, residents get to know one another and build a community rooted in a shared identity.



Fun Fact:

Over 50% of the units are occupied by veterans, and all fall below the federal poverty line.

Who Does Desert Leaf Serve?

Residents are survivors of homelessness, domestic violence, or severe mental illness and are referred through community partners and government entities.

Onsite staff work closely with each resident to make sure that they receive the support they need to feel at peace and remain stable. Additionally, basic needs, counseling, and community resources are regularly made available to those in need of extra help, through A New Leaf and other partners.

Desert Leaf Apartments works with residents to ensure consistent, stable housing with active case management and comprehensive support services. Participation is voluntary and tailored to meet the individual's needs, assisting them in adapting to living with stability, autonomy, and dignity.

Community Partners

Desert Leaf Apartments is a partnership that currently includes the Cities of Mesa and Phoenix, Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care, MARC Community Resources, and A New Leaf. Residents are referred to through community partners and governmental entities.

The project is an excellent example of regional collaboration between major cities to end homelessness. The City of Phoenix committed NSP funds to purchase the property while the City of Mesa awarded project-based vouchers to target very vulnerable families and individuals.



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West Valley Housing Assistance Center

Established in 2023

Uplifting Our Neighbors

A New Leaf's West Valley Housing Assistance Center opened in July 2023 and offers emergency housing, warm meals, and more to families facing homelessness.

This newer facility hosts seven apartment style units for families experiencing a crisis, giving them a chance to start fresh, find work, and saving for a long-term home or apartment. Each unit is furnished like a home, making every family feel safe and dignified.



Fun Fact:

A New Leaf received the Leading Edge Best Nonprofit Award from the City of Surprise in 2023.

Meals for residents are offered three times per day at an onsite cafeteria, and a resource center will connect residents and community members to additional services. The resource center can offer support for families experiencing homelessness, workforce services to assist adults in finding work, and acts as a West Valley coordinated entry point for households to be assessed for shelter or housing assistance.

Our Fundamental Principles

A New Leaf believes that no child, no family, should have to experience homelessness for any reason. Everyone deserves a stable, affordable place to call home. A New Leaf works to make this a reality by providing urgently needed shelter and support to those experiencing housing challenges of any kind.

A New Leaf's West Valley Housing Assistance Center in partnership with the City of Surprise offers emergency housing and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Coordinated entry services are currently being offered at the Center Monday-Friday. Families experiencing homelessness can find rental and security deposit assistance, as well as workforce services to assist adults in finding work. This is also a West Valley entry point for households to be assessed for Family Housing Hub shelter or housing assistance.

In 2024 A New Leaf was honored with the prestigious Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award. This esteemed recognition celebrates the City's pivotal role in creating the West Valley Housing Assistance Center, a beacon of hope for those facing homelessness and housing insecurity.



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Homeward Bound

Established in 1990

From Our Family To Yours

With 68 residential units on a beautiful campus in Phoenix, Homeward Bound provides safe shelter for those facing homelessness. Founded with one single-family home in 1990, Homeward Bound soon learned that housing alone could not solve family homelessness.

In 2000, Homeward Bound began operating on the Thunderbirds Family Village campus and began offering wrap-around services to the entire family including: case management, financial coaching, employment lab, coin laundry, security, fitness stations, licensed childcare facility, after-school programs, family library, teen center and emergency pantries to help prepare families to transition into stable housing.

Helping Our Neighbors Rebuild

In 2021, Homeward Bound adjusted its approach to a housing-first philosophy, establishing an emergency shelter and affordable housing program alongside its transitional housing to ensure a low barrier to entry.

Homeward Bound introduced a homelessness prevention program, providing similar wraparound services to families on the brink of homelessness before they lose their homes.

Homeward Bound provides safe shelter for those facing homelessness, giving families and individuals a chance to recover and work towards independence.

Homeward Bound also offers programs for children and adolescents of all ages. The Strong Foundations Early Learning Center is a licensed childcare facility through the Arizona Department of Health Services and can serve children aged 0-5. Onsite after-school and summer activities offer enrichment for school-aged children ages 5 to 12. An additional teen center offers tutoring, career training, and more to youth ages 12-17.



Domestic and Sexual Violence

Providing Survivors With Support

A New Leaf provides shelter to survivors of abuse at confidential locations across the Valley, giving them safety, counseling, and more as they recover from the trauma of abuse. Domestic violence has impacted thousands of women, children, and men across Arizona.

This heart-breaking community challenge affects our neighbors, our friends, and our family members. A New Leaf believes that every survivor of domestic violence deserves the chance to find safety, achieve independence, and pursue healing.

Through shelter, lay legal advocacy, and comprehensive support services, A New Leaf works to provide any survivor of domestic violence with the choice and ability to safely leave. A New Leaf DV/SV Shelters are committed to honoring the lived experiences of survivors through inclusivity and promoting dignity and respect for all.

Areas of service include:

- Shelter and Housing: A New Leaf's Domestic Violence shelters are dedicated to helping survivors find safety, stability, and independence after leaving an abusive partner.
- Community Based Services: A New Leaf offers civil court and lay legal advocacy, personal advocacy and case management, parenting and art-based workshops for families, and educational/awareness/training presentations.
- Sexual Violence Services

A New Leaf's DVHEART project provides several services to abused parents and their children, including parenting workshops, healing art workshops, advocacy, access to case management with referrals to counseling, and various other resources that survivors of domestic violence may need.



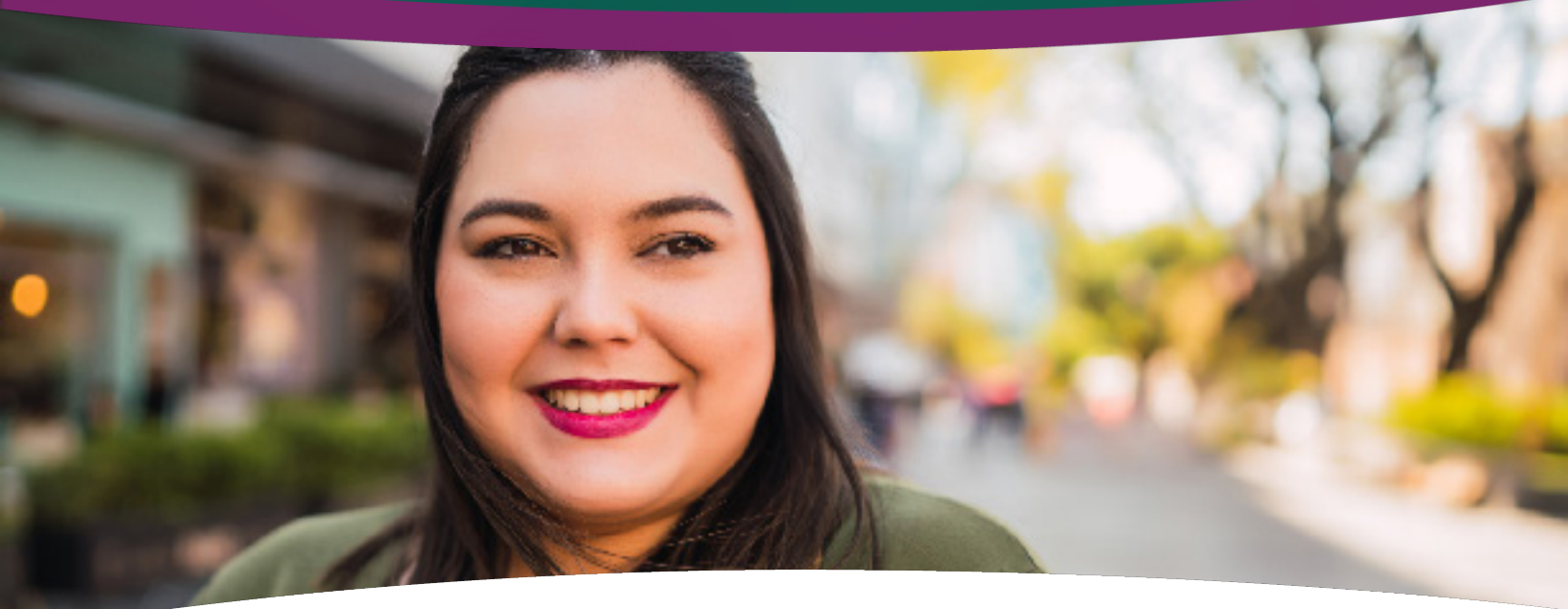
Autumn House

Established in 1983

How A New Leaf Helps Survivors

Autumn House was the East Valley's first domestic violence shelter, operating 24/7. Every survivor coming into shelter will be provided three meals a day, basic living needs, and connection to resources. When a survivor arrives, safety is the top priority. Dedicated staff members are assigned to support survivors. Services and goal setting are client driven based on their individual needs such as employment, transportation, counseling and housing. An onsite child specialist is available to work with children arriving at the shelter.

With a home-like feel the shelter promotes safety and well-being. Apartment style units help provide autonomy and choice. The program offers individual case management, safety planning and advocacy while the children's specialists work with families in groups and one on one. Once a survivor is prepared to move into long-term housing, Autumn House staff assist with the transition. Optional services and program connections are offered for up to six months max after the survivor leaves the program. Through our network of support, A New Leaf offers a variety of services to support survivors.



Faith House

Established in 1974

Providing A Safe Place To Heal

A New Leaf's Faith House is a 24-hour Emergency Shelter in the West Valley for individuals and families who are experiencing domestic violence. Faith House is composed of 20 units providing a safe and supportive environment for those in need. Ten of the units operate as an emergency crisis shelter with 34 bed spaces available to single adults and adults with children who are fleeing domestic violence. The other 10 units are transitional housing to provide survivors with the opportunity to find stability, stay connected to resources and continue to thrive outside of their experience with domestic violence. Transitional living serves single adults and adults with children, with the same access to support as those in shelter.



Fun Fact:

Faith House is the oldest operating domestic violence shelter in Arizona and the only domestic violence shelter in Glendale.

To encourage stability outside of Faith House, the transitional housing program works with survivors to find appropriate affordable housing during their stay. Survivors utilizing this program can stay for up to a total of one year depending on their need. Every survivor coming into shelter will be provided three meals a day, basic living needs, and connection to resources.

When a survivor arrives, safety is the top priority. Dedicated staff members are assigned to support survivors. Services and goal setting are client driven based on their individual needs such as employment, transportation, counseling and housing. An onsite child specialist is available to work with children arriving at the shelter.

With a home-like feel the shelter promotes safety and well-being. Apartment style units help provide autonomy and choice. The program offers individual case management, safety planning and advocacy while the children's specialists work with families in groups and one on one.

Lending A Helping Hand

Once a survivor is prepared to move into long-term housing, Faith House staff assist with the transition. Optional services and program connections are offered for up to six months max after the survivor leaves the program. Faith House represents a critical community resource in the West Valley, assisting people on their healing journey with services tailored to their unique needs. We believe in offering resources needed to help survivors attain long-term safety, stability and independence.

RiverBoat BINGO Hall is eleven acres of land used for fundraising purposes which support A New Leaf's homeless, and domestic violence shelter programs in Maricopa County. The main building, designed as a riverboat, is 5,350 square feet (seats 750 people) and hosts 10 bingo sessions each week. Riverboat Acres also offers RV storage, an indoor meeting/event facility, a covered pavilion (seats 200 people), two wooden gazebos, a fenced tennis/basketball court, and a wonderful Café, The Captain's Galley".



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sexual & domestic violence services



Community Alliance Against Family Abuse

Established in 1998

Expanding Our Outreach

Community Alliance Against Family Abuse (CAAFa) is located in Apache Junction and was established in 1998 by community members who were confronted by the tragic reality that local victims of domestic violence and their children were living in their cars out in the desert because they had nowhere else to go.

Since its inception, CAAFA has grown substantially and now serves victims of domestic and sexual violence from eastern Maricopa and northern Pinal County. In 2021, CAAFA merged with A New Leaf and now operates under their Domestic and Sexual Violence division offering both Emergency Crisis Shelter and Outreach services to survivors.

Empowering Survivors

CAAFAs empowers individuals and families in the community to be free from abuse. The community learns through collaboration, prevention, and awareness. Community members founded CAAFA in Apache Junction when they learned that local victims of domestic violence and their children were living in their cars and out in the desert.

Seeing that survivors had nowhere else to go, they created the shelter and support services that help approximately 470 survivors annually.

Survivors can find help with the 16-bed emergency shelter, support groups, Lay legal advocacy, case management, sexual assault victim advocacy, food boxes, community outreach services, and more.

Providing Legal Advocacy

CAAFAs provides domestic and sexual violence survivors with the support and resources they need to leave an abusive relationship. Domestic violence case managers help identify survivor's needs working with them to set goals on independence, peace and stability.

Lay legal advocates help survivors navigate through orders of protection, family court cases, criminal cases, victims' rights compensation, safety planning and more. An onsite child specialist is available to help families arriving at the shelter.

Offering A Place To Call Home

Every survivor coming into shelter will be provided three meals a day, basic living needs, and connection to resources. When a survivor arrives, safety is the top priority. Dedicated staff members are assigned to support survivors.

Services and goal setting are client driven based on their individual needs such as employment, transportation, counseling and housing. An onsite child specialist is available to work with children arriving at the shelter.

With a home-like feel the shelter promotes safety and well-being. Apartment style units help provide autonomy and choice. The program offers individual case management, safety planning and advocacy while the children's specialists work with families in groups and one on one.

Once a survivor is prepared to move into long-term housing, CAAFA staff assist with the transition. Optional services and program connections are offered for up to six months max after the survivor leaves the program.

An empowerment counselor offers one on one sessions for survivors as they heal from the trauma they have experienced. By providing a necessary network of support, A New Leaf offers survivors various resources and services as they move forward with their healing journey.



Fun Fact:

CAAFA is the first and only non-profit sexual and domestic abuse service provider in Northern Pinal County.



Other Domestic and Sexual Violence Services

DVSTOP:

1999 –Domestic Violence Safe Temporary Overflow Placement
Provides short-term emergency placement for survivors when Maricopa County domestic violence shelters are full.

DVHeart:

DVHEART or “Domestic Violence Healing and Engaging Resiliency Training” serves domestic violence survivors, non-offending parents, and their children. DVHEART provides two different types of workshops curriculums: Triple P and A Window Between Worlds (AWBW). Triple P are parenting support workshops that help parents with setting clear limits, building parent-child relationships, staying calm and giving clear instructions, and looking out for yourself (self-care).

A Window Between Worlds are art healing workshops where clients spend a window of time using art to create, reflect, process, express self-care, find peace empower, transform, and heal. DVHEART offers both workshops in groups or individually, in-person or virtually, and in English or Spanish. DVHEART provides services within A New Leaf, with outside organizations and in the community. DVHEART also provides case management services to clients after shelter care and to any DV Survivor in the community. DVHEART is currently providing workshops in 11 sites in the valley, in addition to 18 case management families.

Sexual Violence Services

The REACH Sexual Violence Services Center in Mesa addresses the unique, short- and long-term emotional safety and healing needs of those who have experienced sexual violence in the past and/or present. Services are free, survivor-driven, and healing-centered, providing individualized support and empowerment for survivors and secondary survivors of all genders, sexual orientations, and expressions. REACH Advocates provide survivors a supportive space to be heard, believed, and empowered on their healing journey. Services include:

- Helpline – Provides emotional support, advocacy, information and resource referral, setting appointments with staff as requested.
- Personal Advocacy & Emotional Safety Planning – Available In-person at REACH Center, virtually (phone or Zoom), or mobile advocacy in safe community settings.
- Group Support – RISE (Resilience In Shared Experience) virtual, gender inclusive support groups for survivors. Additional therapeutic healing activities are offered as available.
- Medical Accompaniment (as requested) – Medical Forensic Exams.
- Legal Accompaniment (as requested) – Law Enforcement Reporting.
- Resource Referral – On-site Counselor/Therapy, Holistic Healing Options, Legal Advocacy, etc.
- Community Education & Training – offer training and educational presentations to community members, businesses, churches, schools, colleges, sororities, service clubs, as well as awareness and tabling events.
- Therapeutic Programming - DV Heart (Art Through Healing)



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Where We Are Today

Who Does A New Leaf Serve?

A New Leaf primarily serves families and individuals facing barriers to stability, such as homelessness, domestic violence, poverty, mental and behavioral health challenges, and other crisis situations.

Sub-populations include individuals who are veterans, formerly incarcerated, have substance use disorders, limited education and work experience, and physical and mental disabilities. Therapy and counseling resources are available to help aid and address all incoming hurdles.

Geographic Area Served

A New Leaf facilitates 35+ different programs with physical sites located in the East and West Valley and Central Phoenix Metro area. Services predominantly impact residents of Maricopa and Pinal Counties, though some programs serve other areas of the state also. Programs are physically located in the cities of Mesa, Phoenix, Glendale, Surprise, and Apache Junction, and several programs serve clients at community-based sites, their residence, or virtually.

There are currently 85 designated Opportunity Zones within Maricopa County. Most of the individuals served by A New Leaf's programs are from very low- to low-income households residing in these designated areas. The Opportunity Zones program is a federal program designed to spur community investment by providing tax benefits to investors. The City of Mesa has 11 census tracts that have been designated Opportunity Zones by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Last year, A New Leaf's services improved more than 23,792 lives through culturally responsive programming that cultivates equity in the community.

- 3,251 were homeless and low-income families and individuals in need of emergency shelter and supportive housing.
- 6,862 were survivors of domestic or sexual violence.
- 8,506 were under-resourced households and individuals in need of financial assistance, employment and career support, and financial wellness services.
- 3,936 were low-income adults, children, and families in need of behavioral health services.
- 1,140 were low-income and at-risk children and parents/caregivers in need of family support services.

For 53 years, A New Leaf has advanced its mission of "Helping Families, Changing Lives" by providing meaningful opportunities to empower disadvantaged individuals and families, and to create a stronger and healthier community.

Lack of Stable and Affordable Housing

The Phoenix Metro area is experiencing a humanitarian crisis with one of the highest rates of homelessness in the nation. While homelessness across the country increased by less than 1% between 2020 and 2022, Arizona saw a 23% increase. Of those experiencing homelessness, 56% were unsheltered, meaning they were living on the street, in a car, or another place not meant for human habitation. The crisis is intensified by a serious lack of affordable housing and a significantly higher percentage of low-paying jobs compared with other major urban areas. These issues, along with the rising cost of living, have contributed significantly to increased homelessness in our community.

In 2022, Phoenix apartment rental prices increased by an average of 24% -- the largest rate increase in the nation. More than 83,000 evictions were filed in Maricopa in 2023 alone, the most evictions recorded since 2007. 2024 is already on pace to exceed 2023. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, only 36 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. The Joint Center for Housing Studies reports that nearly 1 in 3 households are cost-burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

In 2023, of the individuals and families who received services from A New Leaf and who reported, over 90% had household incomes of less than \$40,000/year (for a household of four), which is defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as Low- and Very Low-Income. They may recently have been evicted or they may have escaped a domestic violence situation and have nowhere else to go; they may have lived on the streets for months or even years; or they have experienced homelessness multiple times due to health or financial-related barriers to retaining permanent housing.

Current Issues Today

While the lack of affordable housing is the most fundamental issue facing those who are homeless. Homelessness itself creates barriers to achieving future independent self-sufficient housing. In a few fortunate situations, those who have been evicted may still retain income and/or employment, allowing them to quickly re-enter the housing market after reconciling their eviction status.

But for most, the eviction or inability to find housing creates a negative snowball effect. For seniors on fixed incomes, it may mean facing not having a home for the first time in their life and often when they are most vulnerable. For those escaping domestic violence, it often means leaving a home in the middle of the night with children and not having financial or personal ID records, a child's favorite toy, or a reliable sense of personal safety. Once in a homeless environment (a car in a parking lot or a tent in an encampment), the newly homeless are vulnerable to theft, con artists, exposure to alcohol and drugs, physical and sexual assault, and other severe psychological and emotional trauma.

While it is true that many enter homelessness because of behavioral health and/or substance abuse problems, many others develop those syndromes because of the trauma of living in constant homelessness leading to serious mental illness or substance abuse as a coping mechanism. These are often the issues we must help resolve before our clients can reasonably be able to join or rejoin the job market and economically sustain an independent living situation.

For others who have been chronically homeless for years, when they enter our shelters, we are faced with first having to re-develop life skills ranging from improved personal hygiene, to learning to operate by a clock and attending meetings on time, to improving their conflict resolution skills. Then we can start dealing with any behavioral issues such as substance abuse or mental illness. Only after helping to clear these obstacles, can we start to address financial literacy, workforce readiness, achieving a job that can fund an independent lifestyle, and the search for long term affordable housing.