

Building Community Safety, Healing, and Cross-Racial Solidarity

Coalition for Community
Safety and Justice

IMPACT REPORT
2022 - 2023



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Introduction

Since 2019, the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice (CCSJ) has stepped up in a moment of crisis as we see the rise and spread of hate, violence, and racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). We hear of high-profile incidents, some even right here in San Francisco, and we see a growing fear across our communities as we grapple to develop meaningful solutions.

CCSJ believes that everyone wants to and deserves to feel safe in our communities, whether we're at work, at school, shopping, commuting, or especially in our own homes. And when harm occurs, we want to make sure we have the resources to care for ourselves and our families.

As a collaboration between Community Youth Center, Chinese for Affirmative Action, Chinatown Community Development Center, and Chinese Progressive Association, we are reimagining personal and community safety for AAPI communities in San Francisco and working with local and state governments to strengthen San Francisco's community safety infrastructure. Each of our partner organizations have been rooted in the community for over 50 years. Our collective experience has shown us that community safety starts with supporting people and their families when harm occurs, and building relationships and understanding with people from different backgrounds.

CCSJ has been leading a city-wide holistic model. Our work is focused on three main activities.

RESPOND	Provide victim wrap-around services and engage the community to support victims and survivors of violence
RESTORE	Develop programming that builds towards cross-racial community healing and solidarity
REFORM	Strengthen critical public safety systems to stabilize health and safety for all of SF communities

In this impact report, we are excited to share our work and our lessons learned from each of our coalition partners from fiscal year 2022-2023 that have helped push our vision of community safety forward. We share stories of hope and change, where survivors have the tools and resources to heal from their harm and communities of color come together in intergenerational and cross-cultural spaces. We measure our impact with numbers, dollars and examples. We hope you are inspired to learn more about each organization and reflect on what role you can play in strengthening San Francisco's capacity to mobilize healing and resources for AAPI communities in need.

It takes all of us to create a safe community. Join us!



BY THE NUMBERS

JULY 2022-JUNE 2023



Amy Zhou, Chinatown CDC

77 AAPI victims supported in 2022 by CCSJ's victim services program (145+ total since program began)

73 AAPI victims supported until July 2023 by CCSJ's victim services program (184 since 2020)



Amy Zhou, Chinatown CDC

\$40,000

Distributed to victims in 2022 through CCSJ's victim services program (\$80,000 total since program began)

\$34,567

Distributed by the Victims Support Fund to 38 victims

7 Languages spoken by CCSJ victims services team (Cantonese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Toishanese)

500+ Participants in four "Move the Chi" community healing events, led by CPA at Yik Oi Huang Peace & Friendship Park

200,000+

views in 2022 of the 100+ Chinese-language articles on community safety written by CAA's Chinese Digital Engagement team

1,500+

Residents engaged in CCDC's community safety programming at Ping Yuen and Tenderloin Family Housing



Centering Victims and Survivors

One of the important components of our collaboration is empowering AAPI victims with the resources and support they need in a crisis and for long-term recovery. We are experts and leaders in providing holistic survivor-centered care that is culturally competent and offered in six languages. As the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice (CCSJ), we offer rapid response and direct services that center the dignity and well-being of San Francisco's AAPI impacted communities.



Reverend Norman Fong warms up the crowd at Summer in the Pings.



CYC Executive Director Sarah Wan visits with Mrs. Liang, a grandmother who was a victim of a violent attack in early 2023.

After violence like the Half Moon Bay shooting in January 2023 and AA bakery stabbing in Chinatown in June 2023, CCSJ engaged our partner organizations to listen to what community members needed and lift up resources available. While our work is focused on San Francisco, we stepped in to support survivors of the Half Moon Bay shooting by conducting personal visits and coordinating with San Mateo County government agencies and local San Francisco providers.

CCSJ also raises awareness of AAPI communities' perspective through established communication channels like WeChat to share and report valuable information, while pushing back against divisive language and calls for carceral-only solutions to crime. Through the leadership of Community Youth Center (CYC), victims and families receive customized care to rebuild after a tragedy.

Housed at CYC, CCSJ's victim support programming is made up of two teams: community outreach and victim services. Staff perform daily outreach in neighborhoods across the city, engaging with small business owners and establishing personal relationships.



When I read news reports about AAPI incidents of violence, it's often about who got hurt, who hurt whom, and maybe the why. What these stories don't cover is the trauma, the healing journey and the work that needs to be done to help people feel whole, well after the incident is over. Behind every violent incident are regular people living their day-to-day lives who need care and support.

MICHAEL WONG
SENIOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR
AT CYC

Additionally, CYC hosts community safety workshops throughout the city about addressing and preventing violence on the street or at school, with assessment, intervention, mediation, referral and follow-ups as appropriate. The most common incidents we heard community members experience last year were assaults, robberies, and burglaries.

What makes our work effective are trained victim advocates with language and cultural competency to support AAPI victims of crime with wrap-around direct services, such as wellness checks, monetary assistance, in-house mental health screenings and referrals, legal assistance and referrals, and social services navigation. Victim advocates provide a range of support - from getting access to a wheelchair to navigating the criminal legal system.

CYC partners closely with city departments to ensure victims are supported through the recovery process. Our approach is always guided by trust and empathy, to help people feel comfortable navigating complex government systems. In one particular case of an elderly woman who was assaulted on the street in a hate crime, she remembered that one of the most impactful things was having a CYC advocate at the hospital with her.



“Everyone at the hospital spoke English and I had no idea what was going on. Then CYC came and they spoke Cantonese. I felt so comforted,” said Mrs. Liang, an 88-year-old grandmother who was a victim of a violent attack in San Francisco. CYC helped the family access mental health services to aid in recovery, called every week to check in on the family, and facilitated a grant in which the family received \$5,000 from The Asian American Foundation.

Victim Support Highlights of the Year

- We provided support services to 73 victims in San Francisco.
- In 2022, CCSJ victim services expanded to include in-house mental health services, funded by California Department of Social Services, and free legal consultation with the support of Asian Law Caucus and API Legal Outreach. The City (the Mayor's Office) is also funding mental health services for AAPI victims by hiring two bilingual clinicians stationed at RAMS and the UCSF Trauma Recovery Center to serve victims referred by CYC.
- In 2023, Our Victim Support Fund distributed \$34,567 to 38 victims to help with property and income loss, home repairs, relocation help, medical expenses, and funeral expenses.
- CYC hosted 103 workshops and trained 2,362 participants in English, Chinese and other Asian languages on topics ranging from personal safety, de-escalation skills, and bystander intervention.



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We all deserve to feel safe so that when I walk down the street, I know my neighbors, live without fear of violence, and can care for my loved ones.

MICHAEL WONG
SENIOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR
AT CYC

In 2021, we launched our Victim and Survivors Fund, a crowdfunding page that shares 100% of all donations with impacted individuals and families to provide financial assistance for their immediate needs. The fund is still active. From there, we established another Victims Support Fund for corporations, foundations, and donors to support victims of crime through CYC. Our long-term goal is to not have to rely on donations but actually improve the social support and safety infrastructure for AAPI families, victims and survivor care, so no one has to suffer through trauma and hardship alone.

Building Cross-Racial Healing and Solidarity



Member leaders from Chinese Progressive Association, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, and Coleman Advocates gathering at Sisterhood Gardens.

Since 2019, The Coalition for Community Safety and Justice has worked to address and prevent violence, racism, and xenophobia that affects all communities of color. As part of this work, CCSJ uses community building and cross-racial dialogue to reimagine personal and community safety, address the root causes of violence and create sustainable short and long-term solutions. We specifically engage working-class Chinese and Black communities to delve beneath the headlines and political rhetoric in search of genuine perspectives on crime, violence, accountability, and safety.

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For over five decades, CCSJ partner organizations — Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Progressive Association, Community Youth Center, and Chinese for Affirmative Action — have worked to ensure safety in our community. Our collective knowledge of over 200 years in the community have shown us that the best way to keep our community safe is by meeting people’s immediate needs so they are less likely to be harmed and commit harm toward others.

JANICE LI
COALITION FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY
AND JUSTICE COALITION DIRECTOR

Creating Spaces for Community Building Events

Cross-racial healing and solidarity is critical to creating vibrant, safe communities where people feel seen, celebrated, and valued regardless of their race or ethnicity. This past fiscal year, CCSJ partner organizations held community building events, workshops, and dialogues designed to help San Franciscans from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds foster a sense of belonging and safety.



2023 Iftar Celebration at City Hall

As a resident services provider, Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC) provides services at 27 properties with over 1,200 apartments and 3,000 residents, primarily from low-income and diverse backgrounds including Chinese, Black, Arab, and Hispanic communities. As part of its mission to build community and enhance the quality of life for San Francisco residents, CCDC provides culturally diverse and resident-centered services-enriched housing. Residents are engaged in the planning and implementation of community building events including Juneteenth, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Pride Month, and Disability Justice Month. Tenderloin Family Housing residents led a community-driven campaign for an annual Iftar, a celebration to mark the breaking of the fast and the end of Ramadan, to be recognized as one of the Mayor’s twelve institutional cultural heritage events at City Hall.

One of the largest public housing developments in Chinatown is Ping Yuen, colloquially known as The Pings, which has a resident population that is majority Chinese (60%) while one in five are Black. Despite cultural differences, residents share a common understanding that everyone deserves safe and healthy neighborhoods. In the summer of 2023, over 500 people attended “Summer in the Pings,” a block party on Pacific Avenue with performances, safety resources, and activities for children, to highlight the beauty of the people who call Chinatown home.

To build relationships and educate communities on issues of violence, safety, healing and cross-race solidarity, Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) held intergenerational membership exchanges in partnership with Arab Resource and Organizing Center and Coleman Advocates. Fireside chats were held with the broader English speaking community on issues, such as gun violence and alternatives to carceral solutions.



Summer in the Pings

One fireside chat included a film screening of “What These Walls Won’t Hold” by Adamu Chan, a 45-minute documentary on ways the COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed organizing efforts at San Quentin State Prison. Following the discussion was a panel with the film’s director joined by community organizers from Asian Prisoners Support Committee and Coleman Advocates to share reflections. CPA also held three Cantonese language seminars to educate community members on issues such as racism, education, employment, policing, and the history of cross-racial solidarity building.



Before the course, I didn’t know what restorative justice was. After... I understood it as a people-centered system where we can deeply explore the impact of disputes through dialogue.... Emotions are an opportunity to engage everyone harmed and in the process, find solutions that build trust and relationships.

JING, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
COHORT PARTICIPANT AT CHINESE
PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION



When community leader Sasanna Yee wanted to honor her grandmother who was fatally attacked in 2019 at Visitation Valley Playground, CPA supported efforts to develop a neighborhood-specific racial healing program. Over 150 people gathered to rename the park “Yik Oi Huang Peace & Friendship Park” to honor Yee’s grandmother. Communities from different

cultural backgrounds came together to reclaim the public space as one of peace and community and share cultural practices of resilience including Qigong, sound healing, African drumming, hot Siva-Polynesian dance, acupressure ear seeds, herbal medicines, massage, and Reiki.



Community safety is not just the absence of harm but more about the overall well-being of our working families and communities. It requires all of us working together – elected leaders, local and state governments, community groups – to build a public safety infrastructure that institutes language access and culturally competent services.



SUPERVISOR
SHAMANN WALTON

Creating Spaces for Young People

Young people are integral to the conversation about community safety. To foster a community of civically engaged youth, Community Youth Center (CYC) began writing a new curriculum for their youth development program including topics such as racism against AAPI communities, implicit bias, restorative justice, and queer and trans solidarity. This curriculum will be facilitated for program participants and clients in the cohort, and in community-based settings. As part of its Youth Justice Collective, CYC launched a youth-led, peer-based prevention program and recruited 16 Youth Equity Facilitators to focus on addressing sexual harassment in schools, dating violence, sexual abuse, and more to develop youth leaders in relevant community safety topics.

Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) partnered with Coleman Advocates and Arab Resource and Organizing Center to facilitate intergenerational and multilingual exchanges. These events combined cultural sharing with political education and were designed to build empathy, forge relationships, and deepen understanding of each other’s histories, lived experiences around issues of race and class in communities, schools, workplaces, and ancestral homelands. Having worked together for years to build equity and justice in our communities, CPA, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, and Coleman Advocates leveraged long-standing organizational relationships to increase trust and understanding among youth members.

CPA continued to expand a restorative justice capacity building pilot for working class Chinese American youth members. The pilots included cohort members from CPA, Southeast Asian Development Center and CYC and provided spaces for deep self and intergenerational healing. This is especially important for youth members as they build the skills necessary to handle conflict with peers and even parents.



Community safety should include not only the physical safety of community members, but also the mental and social health of its members. By being inclusive and involving all our community members—all ages, all backgrounds, all abilities—we are able to build the safe community we envision together.

LILY LI, SENIOR RESIDENT SERVICES
COORDINATOR, CHINATOWN COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

When two high profile youth altercations occurred at Stonestown, CCSJ engaged the broader community in the immediate aftermath of the incidents. Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) held a workshop to discuss youth violence with community members, including San Francisco Unified School District students and families. CAA also partnered with the school district, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, and the Department of Children, Youth and Families to host a youth safety town hall bringing

representatives from multiple departments into one room. More than 50 parents, who were mostly limited English speaking, learned how to better engage with their school sites, prevent youth violence, and navigate multiple city departments that impact youth safety.

At CCDC's Ping Yuen, Black and Chinese high schools students are part of a Youth Ambassador program where they take part in training and orientations about the neighborhood's history. They are hired to help with outreach for community events and to distribute and collect community input surveys.

Developing Effective Solutions to Increase Public Safety



CAA Immigrant Rights Program Manager Jose Ng hosts the Youth Safety Town Hall in Cantonese in May 2023

Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) leads the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice's policy analysis and advocacy work to ensure our government advances effective safety solutions rather than repeating the punitive and ineffective criminal legal policies that have characterized our broken safety system for decades. This policy work is two-fold.

First, CAA analyzes safety ideas that are proposed in San Francisco to determine how they will impact the communities that CCSJ serves and whether these ideas are worth supporting or opposing. CAA also make recommendations on how current systems can be improved to better serve AAPI communities.

For instance:

- CAA released several policy memos including recommendations for the California Victim Compensation Board, the negative effect of surveillance technology on San Francisco residents, SFUSD school safety plans, and the impact of criminal adult charging on youth.
- CAA, Chinese Progressive Association, and Chinatown Community Development Center, along with over 100 other organizations, signed a letter in support of policy modifications to reduce racial disparities in police pretextual stops.



Restorative justice workshop held in Cantonese with working class Chinese immigrants, led by Chinese Progressive Association

Second and more importantly, CAA fights for real safety solutions to combat the interpersonal and state-sanctioned hate AAPI communities face. For example:

- **CAA, along with Stop AAPI Hate, led the No Place for Hate statewide legislative campaign in response to street harassment in San Francisco and across California.** Stop AAPI Hate's data shows that the vast majority of hate incidents against AAPI communities are not criminal. Instead, the vast majority of what our communities experience is verbal harassment in spaces open to the public. No Place for Hate is a campaign aimed at improving safety in those public spaces. CAA successfully shepherded three safety bills through the California state legislative process: AB 2448, SB 1161, and SB 434.
 - AB 2448 created a pilot program for businesses to create safer shopping experiences for all patrons.
 - SB 1161 and SB 434 led to the creation of a community survey tool and required the top 10 transit agencies in California, including SFMTA and BART, to collect and publish rider experiences with harassment on their transit systems data collection on riders' experiences with harassment.
- **CAA and Stop AAPI Hate led the effort to expand the API Equity Budget, which resulted in \$40 million in additional funding along with the original \$155.5 million.** The additional funding ensures that AAPI organizations in San Francisco and beyond can continue to provide victim support services, strengthen their resources, and expand their violence intervention programs.

- Despite the City’s Language Access Ordinance, far too many AAPI community members cannot access city services. Language barriers are a type of state-sanctioned hate and discrimination against communities who speak non-English languages. CAA advocated for and submitted community-driven policy proposals to expand and strengthen the City’s Language Access Ordinance amendments, including new statutory requirements for greater enforcement and transparency.



When the pandemic began, the AAPI community became a major target of hate attacks, and I knew action needed to be taken. I championed a \$166.5 million equity budget to support the AAPI community through the hate crisis, with most of the funding going towards community-based organizations. The work that the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice has done over the past few years is critical in doing the on-the-ground work to support victims of hate and help prevent future attacks.



ASSEMBLYMEMBER
PHIL TING

In 2023, CAA created a local Community Safety and Justice policy platform aimed at providing evidence-based policies and practices to improve safety. Recognizing that violence is present when there is a disinvestment in communities, particularly neighborhoods that are home to Black and Brown people from low-income backgrounds, the platform refers to a holistic framework that centers economic justice, community development, and environmental conditions to inform its local community safety and justice policy recommendations.

Shifting Narratives and Strengthening Public Safety Systems

CCSJ occupies a unique space: providing direct services and support to Chinese and broader AAPI communities in San Francisco whose personal safety has been compromised. Community safety is a broadly defined term, often used interchangeably with public safety which can be tied to law enforcement and carceral solutions.

As more media stories focus on AAPI victims of violent crime, community members are feeling more vulnerable and unsafe. Many, especially elders, are scared to leave their homes and go so far as changing their daily routines to feel safe. At the same time, the city’s public services that are intended to support our families and communities and keep us safe have been unable to stop crime from happening, provide us with in-language services, and create lasting safety and security.

Crime doesn’t happen in a vacuum. To better understand San Francisco’s diverse AAPI communities, CCSJ engaged a communications firm and conducted a landscape and media scan, facilitated strategy and messaging sessions, held community listening sessions, and interviewed stakeholders. Through this strategic communications process, we created a definition of community safety, particularly in the context of healing (individually and as a community) and centering survivors. CCSJ also began research efforts, held community education events, and facilitated dialogues to hear AAPI communities’ needs and what solutions they may have.

Countering fear based narratives with values based messaging

Conversations around stopping Asian hate surround the community with fear, hate incidents, and harassment, and deflect from the root causes of crime that can prevent violence and create safer communities. As a result, anti-Asian hate is getting wrapped up in the narrative on crime and safety in San Francisco and beyond. The current fear-based narrative is being exploited locally and nationally by “tough on crime” and law enforcement groups.

Popular media sources, from TV shows and movies to news channels, portray police as the only way to create safety. In reality, police are not the only solution and are not always responsive when harm occurs. When they do respond, there are language and cultural barriers.

Through listening sessions, stakeholder interviews and focus groups, we found there is opportunity to uplift meaningful stories of community safety and cross-racial solidarity by turning a fear based scarcity frame to one of solidarity, hope, and abundance.

CCSJ developed a core messaging platform that uses the Values, Problem, Solution and Action messaging framework by the Opportunity Agenda.

VALUES	We all want to feel safe, whether we speak different languages, come from different countries, or have different cultures. We want to feel safe commuting, at work, at school, when we’re shopping, and when we’re at home. We want to trust that our children are safe when they aren’t with us, and we want to have the resources we need to care for ourselves and our families.
PROBLEM	Many of us, including our elders and children, are feeling vulnerable and unsafe. We’re seeing people who look like us being targeted, leaving us scared to leave our homes and making us change our daily routines. We don’t know where to go or who to call for help when we need it.
SOLUTION	For over five decades, our organizations – Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC), The Chinese Progressive Association (CPA), Community Youth Center (CYC), and Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) – have worked to ensure safety in our community. Our collective experience of over 200 years in the community have shown us that the best way to keep our community safe is by meeting people’s immediate needs so they are less likely to be harmed and commit harm toward others.
CALL TO ACTION	It takes all of us to create a safe community. If you know someone who has been a victim of a recent incident or needs support services, reach out to the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice.

Meeting Communities Where They Are

Because San Francisco’s AAPI communities are incredibly diverse, CCSJ set out to better understand their views on community safety through focus groups, interviews, listening sessions and dialogues. Some of the major themes we touched on this year were restorative justice, gun violence, public transit safety, and trauma-informed responses to violence. Chinese Progressive Association hosted workshops for Chinese immigrants on how to practice restorative justice in their own lives and on a systemic level, and held focus groups with Chinese voters in the Richmond, Chinatown, Excelsior, and OMI neighborhoods to explore their perspectives on community safety.



Youth Safety Town Hall

Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA) connected our community with elected officials through a number of engagements such as “From Community to Congress,” an event with San Francisco community based organizations and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, and meetings with the Mayor’s Office, Board of Supervisors, and the District Attorney’s Office on key issues of language access, victim services and supporting AAPI voices. We also made progress on assessing our metrics of community safety and building a foundation for CCSJ’s programmatic evaluations based on a holistic and equitable view of community safety established by our members.

Our key learnings

- The media's outsized role in purporting the tough on crime narratives and fueling racial tensions between Black and Asian communities.
- Participants were more open to explore and link greater investments in public education and youth programs as alternative solutions beyond the police.
- Community members have a very nuanced view of policing. While some expressed the need for more police, most cited homelessness and addiction and require that the City must address.
- Language and cultural barriers prevent participants from engaging with their non-Chinese speaking neighbors.
- There is a desire for more cross cultural activities and events that can bond people together, build rapport and create community.
- Local media, especially Chinese media, look to CCSJ partner organizations as trusted sources on victim services and community safety solutions.
- CCSJ spokespeople found that community safety messaging works when it's focused on solutions, especially for several Chinese media stories in Sing Tao Daily, World Journal and KTSF.

Understanding and meeting communities where they are will continue to be a central component of CCSJ in the coming years. Our initial research shows that while community members are being inundated with fear based messaging, we are encouraged by the depth of their understanding about community safety.



Building the strength of all of our communities starts with understanding that we all want safe and healthy neighborhoods, well-funded schools, stable housing, and access to child care. Our partnership with the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice focuses on making San Francisco safe with sustainable community infrastructure and cultural and language competency.



SUPERVISOR
CONNIE CHAN



CONTACT US

The Coalition of Community Safety and Justice was formed in 2019 in response to an increase in high-profile anti-Asian hate incidents. CCSJ provides community-based solutions to increase safety of the AAPI community in San Francisco. We partner with existing public safety systems to better serve and meet the needs of our communities.

To get in touch with us, please email Janice Li, CCSJ Coalition Director, at jli@caasf.org.

If you or someone you know is a victim of a recent incident, you can immediately seek services by calling or texting Community Youth Center's outreach staff at (415) 988-1299. You can also email jli@caasf.org for an intake form to get support today.

Connect with our coalition partners:



caasf.org



Chinatown Community
Development Center
華協中心

chinatowncdc.org



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