Casa Familiar
A Community Development Agency

Our Mission:
To allow the dignity, power, and worth within individuals and families to flourish, by enhancing the quality of life through education, advocacy, service programming, housing and community economic development.
Casa Familiar

A History of Working with the People, For the People

**Our Vision**

To organize and empower residents in San Ysidro and South San Diego to take an active role in their communities by involving the residents in the civic engagement, sustainability and quality of life issues affecting their region.

**Our History**

Casa Familiar is a widely recognized authority when it comes to understanding the unique challenges faced by border communities. Casa’s strength is its ability to adapt to the true needs of its community, responding to multidimensional concerns with a holistic approach to engage the community. Casa provides over forty programs spanning a variety of areas addressing vital economic and community development issues.

Casa Familiar was founded in 1973 and is a 501(c)(3), community-based organization dedicated to serving residents in South San Diego County. Originally organized in 1968 under the name Trabajadores de la Raza, Casa Familiar has grown from existing solely to serve Spanish-speaking clients in the community of San Ysidro, to include services and programs for all of South San Diego’s residents.

Early on, Casa recognized that it was working with a low-income population that has changing and varied needs. Casa’s approach allows the agency to adapt to community needs through a multi-faceted program and funding strategy. This allows Casa to continue to sustain advocacy and community organizing at its core, while examining and addressing issues as they arise within the community.

The border region is an untapped asset for international, humanitarian, environmental, economic and infrastructure development. Casa maintains a well-developed network of community leaders throughout the South Bay area. These include local school districts, community leaders in the Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, and National City communities, and strong working relationship with local elected officials, Chamber of Commerce Executives and members, and the South County Economic Development Council.

Casa has helped me to help my family and my grandchildren. – Esperanza, Universidad Para Padres graduate
For more than 40 years, Casa Familiar has been a fixture in the South Bay community. Its programs are as diverse as the residents they serve. Below are just a few of Casa’s innovative programs and partnerships.

2002
Casa Familiar implements the San Ysidro Sin Limites/Unlimited Workshops as a forum for grassroots community involvement to gain input on community visioning, policy and decision making that affect the San Ysidro community.

2008
In partnership with San Diego State University’s Graduate School of Public Health, and the San Diego Prevention Research Center, Casa conducts the Healthy Borders Project to investigate the adverse social, health and environmental effects of the border crossing delays.

2008
Casa Familiar’s Arts & Culture Division launches amplify the neighborhood of San Ysidro as a site of cultural production. THE FRONT: A Collaborative of Arts, Cultural, Design & Urbanism, one of Casa’s art spaces, enables the production of new social and cultural relations bringing together arts and social programming, affordable housing and urban research in the border region.

2009
Casa and the South Caregiver Resource Center collaborate on the REACH program, a collaboration brought awareness of mental health needs and resources for senior caregivers.

2010
The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) requests Casa’s involvement in efforts to reach the communities of South San Diego to provide advocacy and outreach for Spanish speaking residents.

2010
Casa Familiar collaborates with the County Office of Education and One Economy to establish the Digital Connector Program, providing technology skills and exploration of future careers.

2011
Casa founds Universidad Para Padres, a program for parents to increase their participation in school, school governance, and their children’s education.

2012
Casa Familiar collaborates with ENGAGE San Diego (A program of the San Diego LGBT Community Center) to implement the “Get Out the Vote” Campaign in San Ysidro for the 2012 Mayoral election.

“How does a community gain its own self identity, its own self respect, and its own print on its future? That’s what we are about. Communities taking power for themselves.”

Irma Castro
Programs Officer
Casa’s Programs: Adapting to Community Need

San Ysidro has a population of almost 29,500 people. 93% of Hispanic origin.

89% speak Spanish at home as their primary language.

Of those living in San Ysidro 13,383 people were foreign born with Mexico being the primary county of origin with 94% of immigrants entering the US prior to 2010.

57% of these individuals have become citizens.

Casa Familiar is the leading service and community development organization in the community of San Ysidro, providing over 40 bilingual programs and services at six different sites in the region.

Programs range from Civic Engagement to Health & Social Services, Arts & Culture to Education.
Community and Civic Engagement

Casa Familiar believes that a thriving community depends on involvement on all fronts: from education to economics, public art to politics. Engaging residents in this way will create a sustainable border region guided by equity, equality, and social justice. Casa is proud that the majority of its employees are hired directly from the community they serve. This ensures they understand the needs of the community, and can provide culturally sensitive and quality bilingual services.

Social Services

15% unemployment rate

Casa Familiar offers a wide range of Social and Human Services, seeking to serve, aid, and protect needy and vulnerable children and adults to strengthen and preserve families, encourage personal responsibility, and foster independence.

Our team assists individuals with consumer advocacy issues, job search, emergency assistance, immigration and naturalization services, applications for governmental services and more. Community members can also receive assistance with obtaining food and housing referrals.

27% are below the Federal Poverty Level

Health Services

Casa Familiar believes healthy individuals lead to healthy communities. Casa supports various physical and mental health initiatives from support groups to nutrition classes and exercise classes for residents of all ages. Our afterschool programs incorporate physical activities to help raise confident, cooperative, responsible children and form strong, lifelong family relationships.

Hispanics have higher rates of obesity than non-Hispanics.

"Thanks to Casa Familiar, I'm accumulating my community service hours that I am required in order to graduate from high school. I have also learned how to interact with my peers. The reason I like coming to Casa Familiar is that I get to work with kids and help them with their homework or play with them."

-Ilse, 16-
Summer Camp student

"Coming to the gym at Casa Familiar has helped me spiritually and has reduced my stress by 80% and improved me physically by 90%. Thanks to Casa!"

-Juan Angel-
Arts & Culture

Casa Familiar’s Arts & Culture Division was established to promote cultural identity, the preservation and celebration of traditions, and to integrate the organization’s social service agenda with a local cultural policy. The result is the creation of new ideas, new spaces for art and economy, and the fostering of creative expression and collaboration with artists, architects, cultural producers and the community.

Throughout our various centers, we offer residents adult and youth dance and music lessons, and arts and culture classes. In addition they have the opportunity to display their works at one of our two exhibition spaces; La Front & El Salon.

Communities that invest in the arts reap the additional benefits of jobs, economic growth, and a quality of life that positions those communities to compete in our 21st century creative economy.

Education

Education is critical to personal growth, preparation for employment, building strong families, and making a meaningful contribution to society. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn and grow. Programs cater to youth, adult, disabled and senior learning opportunities.

Casa’s adult education classes range from computer literacy to parenting classes. The Universidad Para Padres program helps parents build skills so they can raise confident, cooperative, responsible children and understand how to better support their children’s education. Casa Familiar also offers citizenship, English as a second language and general literacy classes. To support our youth’s education, we offer afterschool programs which include computer classes, tutoring, and leadership development.

Only 52.2% have a high school diploma or higher

Less than 10% of adults have obtained a bachelor’s degree
“We strongly believe that people determine their own future, family, and community. The goal is to find tools to achieve this.”
-Andrea Skorepa, Chief Executive Officer

Casa Familiar is dedicated to empowering their community to change their own destiny. You can join alongside this effort and help change the future of an individual, family, and ultimately a community.

Your contribution will help Casa Familiar provide the tools necessary to create change. Casa is proud that 88% of your investment will go directly to our programs.

Contact Lisa Cuestas to donate
lisac@casafamiliar.org