



CASA

Centro para los Adolescentes
de San Miguel de Allende A.C.

We grow
respect

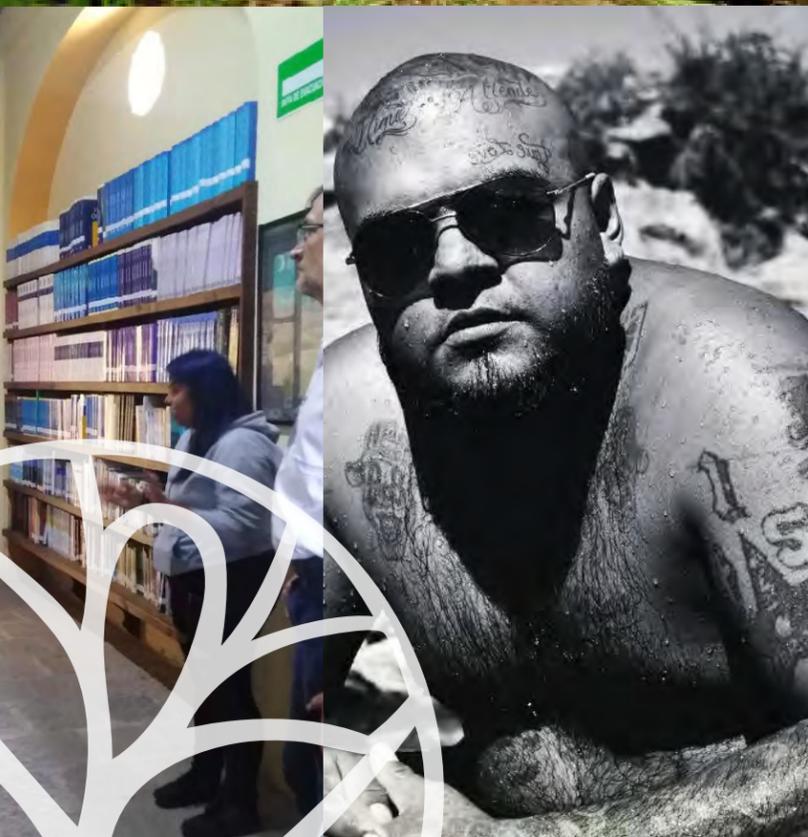
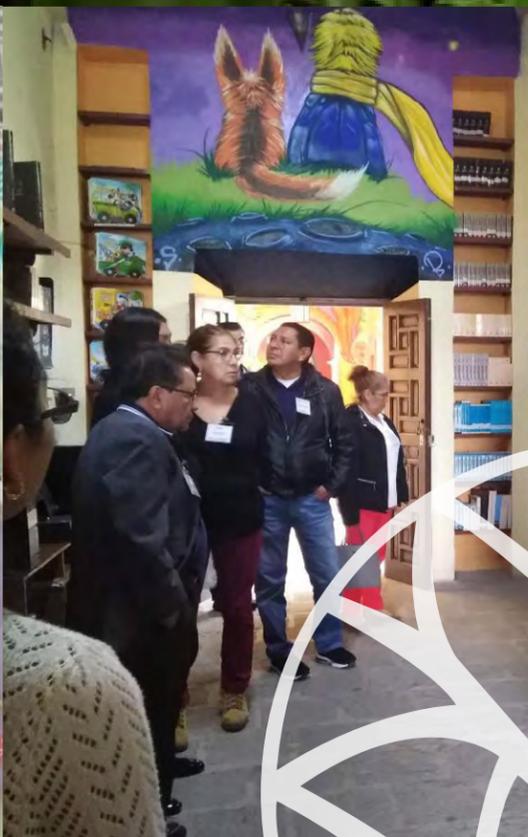
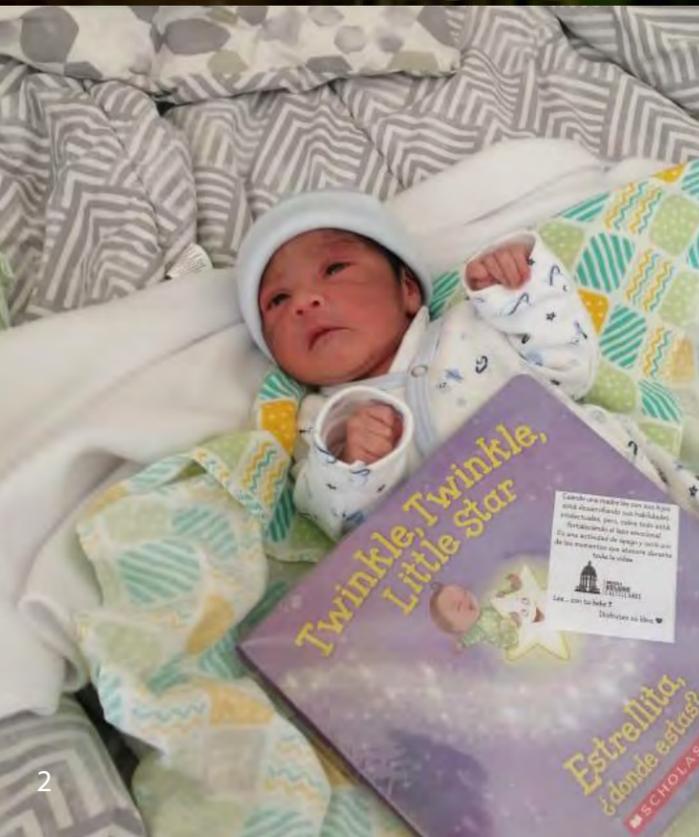
ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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Like nature, respect is organic. It roots where it is planted – and it grows when it is nourished.

So much of what we do at CASA is built on this premise. Our programs and initiatives promote respect of self, others, parents, peers, partners, community and the environment. Thank you for for being a part of the CASA family and sharing in our stories!

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Growing respect every day

The lack of “formality” and absence of typical hierarchies, not to mention the array of programs at CASA, can be overwhelming for some. Nonetheless, those that find a “home” at CASA quickly realize that the integrated work and daily respect for diverse individuals and groups and for our environment liberates us all – allowing for remarkable, often unexpected results!

“Foreward thinking” has not been a goal but it has been a reality for close to 40 years. The organization has been consistently ahead of the curve; on the forefront in many areas, pivotal in its integrated approaches and impactful on multiple policy levels.

Some people who work with CASA are concerned with planned pregnancies, with everyone receiving safe birth and safe surgery when needed; others focus on nutrition and the necessity for safe food. Simply put, all people deserve to be safe and respected! Reproductive justice and more recently criminal justice are major tenants at CASA. Everyone deserves a safe street and everyone also deserves a second chance (humanization versus criminalization); all children merit a safe home, school and community, including libraries where they learn to love books.

Strategic planning objectives during the next three years (2020 – 2023) include CASA’s boards and friends working in a yet more efficient and effective manner to grow the endowment fund. With today’s challenges and CASA’s founder soon retiring, it is more imperative than ever to enable our young, committed staff to spend their time working on the ground in a creative manner, rather than constantly fundraising and living hand-to-mouth.

The first gift to CASA’s endowment was from Susan Porter Smith. Susan began her career at CASA in 1986 as a volunteer and donor partner; later she asked us to suggest how she could combine her dreams for gender equality and reproductive justice with environmental work. CASA recommended to Susan that she work with a coalition of diverse, grassroots Mexican organizations and the Rio Laja Foundation was born.

Over the years, CASA has worked not just on river restoration but other projects such as recycling, community gardens, environmental education for youth and more. Back then and still today CASA has understood that all health services must be voluntary, comprehensive and accessible, especially in the area of reproductive justice. Simultaneously, like Susan, we have a nuanced understanding of the population-environmental relationship and know that many solutions to health and environmental challenges need to address human pressure on natural ecosystems.

Universal access to family planning and abortion services is a right and can also be one of the most cost-effective ways to address climate change challenges. Thinking out of the box in an integrated fashion has and will always be vital. For those interested in learning more about the CASA endowment please contact: nadinegoodman@casa.org.mx.



Left:
“They did not die. They were murdered.”



Right:
“Femicide - Woman assassinated because a man considered her as his property.”

Everyone deserves justice

All people deserve to be free from harm & respected yet the conservative, centrally located state of Guanajuato in 2019 remains one of the most violent states in the Mexican Republic.

On November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women CASA community organizers mobilize their community to respond to violence; urging accountability for femicides. Femicide is generally understood to involve intentional murder of women because they are women, but broader definitions include any killings of women or girls.

Impunity is unacceptable and repair is also urgently needed, as well as, transformation of conditions to prevent future harm.

For more information about CASA’s violence prevention programs and services for survivors such as a safe house, 24/7 hotline, free counseling, and legal & medical services, please contact elegir@casa.org.mx or call 415 15 4 60 90.



Left:
“It is not a compliment. It is harassment.”



Right:
“They murdered me because I am a woman.”

I am proud to help my community avoid unplanned pregnancies

By Omar Uriel Juarez Garcia, age 25

As long as I can remember, I have known people that have gotten pregnant when they were really young. In many cases I have heard them say – “Now what are we going to do?” One time a friend said - “My life is over!”

I love being a volunteer at a CASA family planning bodega because I have felt my friends, family and acquaintances suffer and I know that I can help them avoid this suffering.

I know that parents are sometimes a bit afraid to speak with their children about sexuality and often friends are our only allies; nonetheless I believe that we can all work together to help young people take care of themselves and avoid unplanned pregnancies, especially when we are too young.

CASA has “bodegas” all over San Miguel de Allende; in my case, my barber shop is a bodega! I got training from young people at CASA and they give me free stuff like condoms, the morning after pill and pamphlets to give away. I feel really content every time a young guy comes into my barber shop for a haircut and asks me for free condoms or when an older man after a shave asks me for condoms for his son who is too embarrassed to ask for them. I am really motivated to continue to be a CASA volunteer because I know I am helping young men and women to take care of themselves.

There may be folks that are not interested in my offer of free condoms or look at what I am doing as wrong but I always have a smile, respect their opinion, and say in a kind way that everything I am doing is for the future of our young people.

I am also so grateful to CASA for the opportunity to be at the birth of my first child this past October and to receive this service free of charge. For me to see my child being born was the best experience of my life! Abril was our midwife and she and the CASA Clinic are awesome. Plus, when your baby is born at CASA they give you your baby's first book, tell you about CASA's free baby library and give you a library card to get more books.

Don't be shy – I am waiting for you at my family planning bodega that is my barber shop called the “Rollalty Barber Shop! Our address is Salida a Queretaro 33.



Omar and his coworkers at the Rollalty Barber Shop.



Check out CASA on Facebook: @casa.org.mx or our website: www.casa.org.mx for more information regarding bodega locations, hours and location of CASA's Clinic, library and more. If you want to be trained as a volunteer to run your own bodega please contact Sonia Ivon Lanas Lopez – tel 415 15 4 60 90 ext. 107 or psc@casa.org.mx



Ana finds help in her neighborhood Adolfo Lopez Mateos

By Ana Ivon Herrera Ferrer

I was an adolescent mom and fortunately am in a stable situation now but I would not want my daughter to have to go through everything I had to go through. Today I receive my needed, free birth control at a stationary store close to my house – it is called Papeleria Cruz and is one of CASA's family planning bodegas.

Recently I went to our local junior high school, the Bicentenario to listen to a talk given by CASA for parents. It is hard for us parents to talk about things related to sex with our children; we often cannot even talk with our couple about sex! I am really happy about the work that CASA does that helps us parents know how to talk to our kids about sexuality and I am really, really happy that CASA helps young people easily get birth control. Even if we are doing a good job as parents, we have to be honest and understand that it is very rare that our teens are going to ask us for information and it is even less likely that they are going to ask us for condoms! We are so fortunate that CASA is doing both these jobs.

It is our job as parents to make sure our children don't have the idea that is to bad to use condoms or that they should not talk about sex in the house. Our children need the skills to deal with the complicated society we live in; they need to know how to take care of themselves and make good decisions about their sexuality.



Papeleria Cruz or the Stationary Store Cruz offers free condoms and more from CASA and is located on Calle or Street San Luis Potosi #48, Colonia



Collaborative problem-solving

At CASA year-end reviews help keep us honest and plan for subsequent years. We always begin our annual assessments with the question:

What concrete results transpired this year that have assisted more people exercise their human rights?

We measure how many people received one or more of CASA's diverse services; changes in individual knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. We also attempt to evaluate our impact on public opinion since we know that cultural values and norms can both assist or deter a society from being the best it can be. And finally we have benchmarks to evaluate if we have contributed to better, more just public policy; if government service delivery systems are improving due in part to their interaction with CASA. Over close to forty years our organization has strongly promoted public-private partnerships but never as a substitute for universal, high-quality public services.

Collaborative problem-solving, sometimes referred to as intersectorial collaboration, is a mouthful and even more difficult to carry out successfully on the ground. This term basically means different sectors such as the business community, nonprofits and government work together toward mutual goals. In 2019, CASA had many positive experiences working with the local business community and its municipal government, as well as the Mexico City government, the federal government and international organizations. For example:

- In 2019, CASA midwives enthusiastically received in San Miguel de Allende a total of 68 health care professionals that work for the Mexico City public health department, including gynecologists, pediatricians and others. These professionals took a 3-day blended learning course that included observing how our midwives give prenatal care and attend births with the participation of family members or whomever the woman chooses to be with her at her birth. The Mexico City professionals also went to rural areas to meet traditional midwives and they took an online course about midwifery on CASA's E-learning platform. These Mexico City public health workers will be training staff in midwifery and hiring midwives with CASA's assistance in 2020 in 4 major hospitals that attend some 1,800 births a month. We are very happy to be working the extraordinary staff at the Hospital General Iztapalapa, Hospital Comunitario Emiliano Zapata, Hospital General de Tlahua and Hospital Materno Infantil de Tlahuac.



On September 30, 2019, physicians and nurses that work in Mexico City public hospitals visited Casilda Garcia Gonzalez, a traditional midwife from the rural community Alonso Yañez. Casilda has been on staff at the CASA Midwifery School since 1997.

- Since 1985, CASA has promoted the importance of reading to newborns and infants and, run programs in this area. In 2019, Mexico's government began its national strategy in reading with Eduardo Villagas, Coordinator of "Memoria Historica y Cultural de Mexico" playing a vital role. In September 2019, Eduardo visited CASA's multiple library programs, Early Childhood Development Center and Maternity Clinic where a specialized book made for infants is given to each new family. Since Eduardo's visit, he has informed CASA of a national plan to develop books for newborns and infants. In 2019, a total of 33,500 books have been borrowed by the public thanks to CASA's multiple library programs.



- San Miguel de Allendes' government joined CASA, the business community and some 250 people from the public for the opening of a photographic exhibit about Ranchero Pandillero, one of CASA's newest programs serving vulnerable youth. The exhibit was hosted by José Benigno Torres Trujillo, President of the "Consejo Coordinador Empresarial de San Miguel", a nonprofit business counsel at the conference center called La Casona on Josefina Orozco 2.

Highlights of the photographic exhibit included live art by graffiti artists and rap performances. Dr. Eliette Valladares of the PanAmerican Health/World Health Organization attended the event as did Damaris Sosa de Antuñano who works for the federal health ministry, ("Comision Nacional de Proteccion Social en Salud"). Eduardo Mendoza, Director of Direct Relief also participated. CASA and Direct Relief, a large international organization have worked together over more than a decade.

The event was a big success, especially because many of the young artists sold their art work!



- The concerns of the overall population of 2,500 people of working-class neighborhood called San Luis Rey on the outskirts of San Miguel de Allende was first documented in early 2018 by CASA community workers via individual questionnaires; at the time 84% said insecurity is a big problem and 71% said gangs were a big problem. The CASA out-reach team set to work and already: 3 truces have been reached between rival gangs, murals have been painted, green areas restored, young people referred to free counseling, soccer tournaments between rival gangs organized and more. The same questionnaire applied in 2018 was reapplied in 2019 and it was found that 22% less people felt insecurity to be a major problem, and 14% less felt that gangs are a problem.



Javier Mata, second from the right is seen here with members of Ranchero Pandillero. Javier, a long-time resident in San Luis Rey, is a small businessman that provides employment to local youth. According to Javier, "Ranchero Pandillero's work is really good. We asked them to help us with conflicts and have seen lots of positive changes. It use to be that right here in front of my house, there were constant physical fights but with intervention by Ranchero Pandillero things have calmed down; we are living more in peace, things have advanced, the young people are listening."



Proud to be president of the parent association for CASA's Early Childhood Development Center

My name is José Luis Rodríguez Arellano. Years ago I decided to get married and I knew that the nonprofit CASA rents for a really reasonable rate spaces at their Community Center in the Santa Julia neighborhood of San Miguel. My fiancé Yanet and I went to look at the spaces and fell in love. Our ceremony and wedding party was held in the big and beautiful dining room with a valued ceiling and large patio that is also the place where some 150 babies and preschoolers in CASA's day care and preschool program receive their well-balanced, daily meals.

Fast forward and now we have been married seven years; Luis Artuvo our 4-year-old son is in preschool at the CASA School and I am the Chair of the Parent's Association. I am a certified public accountant and try to use all my skills and contacts to help an organization that has done so much for my community for almost 40 years and that we want to be around for at least another 40 years!



My boyfriend and I count on CASA for our birth control

My name is Dany and I am 18 year old, in my last year of high school. Jesus, my boyfriend and I have been together 3 years.

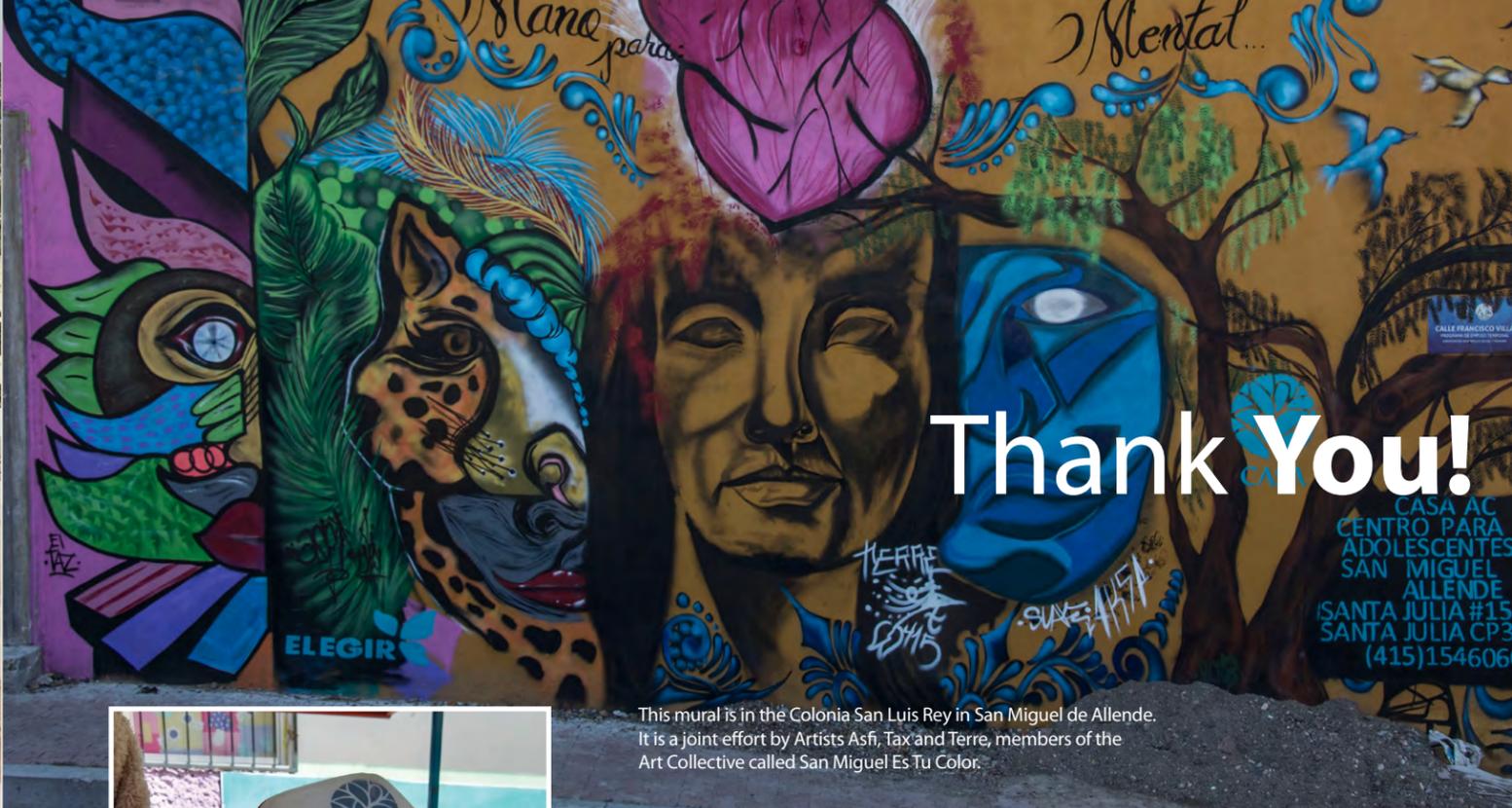
About two years ago, Jesus and I were fortunate to go to a free talk by CASA peer counselors where we learned about the organization's free birth control program.

At the CASA presentation some of our friends were making silly comments because they felt embarrassed talking about sex but I was really interested especially because a few days earlier I had had an uncomfortable experience with my boyfriend (we did not have a condom, it was difficult to stop midstream, we didn't know where we could get condoms; were embarrassed and frankly did not have much money).

At the end of the CASA talk, I asked the peer counselor the locations of the different birth control "bodegas", thinking that it was good to have this information. We decided to go to a CASA Bodega that is located at "Pome's" corner store. We entered and saw the stand with the free condoms and since my boyfriend knows Pome, it was easy for him to ask for the condoms.

It has been two years now that I am a CASA Community Health client (PSC) and I am really content with the friendly services that Pome gives us and I highly recommend to all young people that they not be embarrassed and use the network of birth control bodegas that CASA provides us. The CASA services are not only completely free but there is confidentiality and respect. In other words – Young people: We need to take care of ourselves and there is no reason we can't!

To date in 2019, CASA has gifted 32,500 condoms to the public.



Thank You!

This mural is in the Colonia San Luis Rey in San Miguel de Allende. It is a joint effort by Artists Asfi, Tax and Terre, members of the Art Collective called San Miguel Es Tu Color.



Each year, countless individuals and organizations make CASA's on-the-ground work possible with their generous donations, both financial and in-kind.



CASA team members (from left): Alma Berenice Hernández Aguilar, Professional Librarian Juan Carlos Rodríguez Molina and Psychologist Miriam Garduño, Director of Out-Reach enjoying the children that love their community library!



CASA

Center for the Adolescents of San Miguel de Allende

To make your tax deductible donation to CASA, please visit our website:

www.casa.org.mx

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www.casa.org.mx

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Such as a Spanish Book,
Educational Materials . . .



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