

Our approach



Since 2005, we have been a registered NGO in Western Samoa, helping train police, courts, schools, and village representatives to provide an integrated and dignified response to family violence. Our organization serves vulnerable populations through advocacy and casework, shelter for children, and community education and violence prevention. We have a network of over 500 community educators, and we operate a free 24-hour hotline for anyone to call for advice or referral.

We advocate for legislative changes that protect the rights of vulnerable people. In 2013, the government of Samoa passed landmark legislation (Family Safety Act and Crimes Act) criminalizing family violence and establishing a Family Court. This has provided focus on children's rights and enables more people to come forward to report abuse and seek resolution. However, there are still no government-run shelters, and the country lacks a formal network of social workers. SVSG is the only refuge in all of Samoa, and demand for our services continues to grow. Our shelters serve as the primary place for children who have been removed from the home, and at any time we have an average of 70 kids in our care, for which we do not receive government funding.



We support
We help
We care
We are your family

Samoa Victim Support Group
To'omaga mo e Puapuagatia

PO Box 2554

Apia, Samoa

svsginsamoa@gmail.com

Office: 27904 or 777-6609

24 hour Free Help Line: 800 7475

Stop by our office next the Police in Apia

Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG)



SVSG seeks to protect and promote the rights of, women, children and vulnerable population, specifically the right to be free from abuse.

SVSG believes that greater awareness of human rights will provide civil society with the knowledge to ensure these rights are upheld.

A, strong, proud and successful community do not tolerate any form of violence, especially against women & children.

www.samoavictimsupport.org

Advocacy

We provide guidance to the government of Samoa regarding legislation and judicial processes to protect families. We have inputted into the Protection Order process and the process for referrals to the police and justice system. We refer cases to the Ministry of Police and help connect people with social welfare services or health services for the disabled. In 2013, after years of advocacy, the government of Samoa passed and revised the Family Safety Act the Crimes Act respectively, which finally criminalized family violence. These important laws established a Family Court dedicated to resolving the unique needs of young people and families in trouble. These were important milestones in our work, but now we must make the laws real through ensuring that rights holders can access the courts; and that Police and other advocates are comfortable enforcing the laws. This education, advocacy and follow-up are essential parts of our overall program.

The courts have ordered rehabilitation courses for perpetrators of domestic violence, but they do not provide funding for the classes. The SVSG Advocacy provides counseling on anger management, drug and alcohol abuse, stress relief, marriage counseling, and family leadership. We coordinate ministers, employers, and family members to work together to provide guidance, monitoring, and evaluation in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice. Each person referred to us receives an individual assessment and treatment plan. We provide mid-term and final reports for the justice department to use in evaluating the completion of court-ordered classes. Men who graduate from our program become better fathers and community members. Group leaders are always on-call to talk with families, listen and counsel, or help resolve family matters peacefully. Group leaders also provide follow-up evaluation and support after graduation.

Prevention and Support

At Samoa Victims Support Group (SVSG), we help the whole family and work to prevent violence through comprehensive community engagement. We have organized a well-trained network of more than 700 volunteer village representatives who facilitate social welfare services for families in need and provide training and support to end family violence. These village reps give us access and credibility in every corner of Samoa. They provide mediation for families as well as anger management courses. Our village representatives connect us with schools, churches, and community groups to provide trainings and resources to identify and prevent domestic violence. Together, we are reducing incidences of family violence.

Through our network of community volunteers, we look after vulnerable populations such as children, underprivileged families, and elderly and disabled people. We also help child laborers (usually market or street vendors) and their families to access educational and employment opportunities. We have a peer support network, SVSG Juniors, which provides healthy lifestyles activities and identifies career training opportunities for young people.



Protection and Healing

Children come to us pregnant from incest or rape. These children are often cast out of the family or are unable to return to their villages due to danger. We support young mothers, sometimes only 11 or 12 years old, through their birthing process and assist the courts with evidence or witness location to help resolve cases. Our caseworkers also answer the free Help Line and provide counseling or referral services 24 hours a day.

We organize legal aid and provide non-judgmental support to young victims of sexual violence, so they can bravely tell their story and seek safety. We provide shelter for children before and after their court cases; counseling and rehabilitation services for survivors of family violence; and connections with local health services. Counselors are always available to answer questions, calm nightmares, or talk through difficult decisions with a young person in need. We help these girls understand that what happened to them is not their fault, and they can have a safe and loving future. We have a "School of Hbpe" on our campus, so children can continue their studies while awaiting resolution to their case.

Sometimes, intervention is not sought until after a child has been born. Babies are brought to us when abandoned or left in our driveway in the night time. Our nursery provides a safe and positive start for the newest members of our community. These young mothers do not want to breastfeed or care for the child they had to birth. We need a constant supply of diapers and formula, clean clothing and bedding, and 24 hour care for newborns and infants up to three years old.

Many of the services and goods needed to keep the shelter running are given by generous volunteers and donors.