




Our Circle's Quarterly Report

October - December 2020

QUARTERLY REPORT

Content

- Welcome
 - Meet the 2021 Board
 - About Our Circle
 - Financial Statements
 - HIV Testing & Sexual Reproductive Resources
 - Visitor's Report
 - Acheivements
- 

WORDS FROM FOUNDER AND

Managing Director



"We have been doing this work for years, but we are not resting on our laurels and we are in fact creating and delivering innovative programming that addresses the needs and challenges of the LGBT-formed family units today and in the future."

| **Derricia Jael**

This past quarter, despite the adversities related to COVID-19, has seen incredible advances for the Our Circle LGBT Resource Center and the LGBT-formed family units in Belize.

When we were founded over 7 years ago, we were not lucky to have a building, and we were fighting to stay visible as our sexual orientations and identities made our families legally nonexistent. Even at that time, some brave people believed that we deserved better. Our families aren't legally recognized as a part of the fabric which makes up the Belizean society as yet, but we forged ahead to make our LGBT Resource Center a home that is beautiful, vibrant and equipped to help everyone in the LGBT community live the lives they deserve.

The gay man with HIV who is struggling to get and stay sober, the lesbian couple hoping for a baby, the young person who is

desperate to find another kid just like him, the transimmigrant who needs services catered specifically for her, the LGBT elder who comes here to reminisce with friends. They all matter. People still need to hear this message, even today, even in places like Belize City.

Having a permanent and inclusive structure that is welcoming and easy to navigate in which to deliver that programming is a huge step forward in empowering people to lead healthy, successful lives.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Our Circle LGBT Resource Center to make this transformative project and all of the life-saving work we have done possible.

We have taken the Our Circle LGBT Resource Center to new heights, and we hope you'll drop by soon to see it for yourself.

OUR VISIONARY Directors



Abner Recinos
Director of Finance



Denae Fairweather
Director of Publicity



Jeronima Sanchez
Event Coordinator



Phyllis Staine
*Community Engagement
Officer*



Shakeel Flowers
Director of Fundraising



Sherine Petillo
*Director of Program
Development*

OUR CIRCLE'S

Vision & Mission

To improve the quality of life and access to opportunity for LGBT persons and families formed by LGBT persons, ensuring a socially inclusive Belize.

About Our Circle

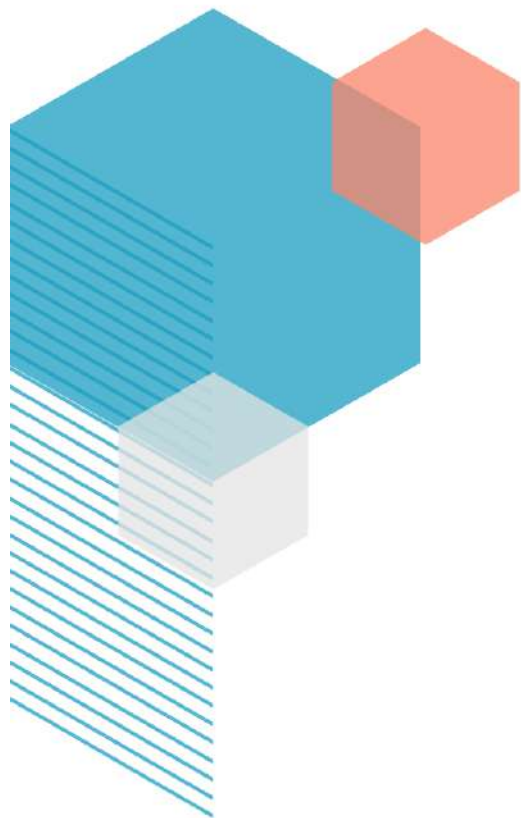
Our circle is the primary organization working with LGBT families in Belize. Over the past five years, our circle has worked to create changes within and surrounding the LGBT community. Our circle moves full speed ahead in achieving our strategic objectives, and in turn, fulfill our commitment to improving the way of life for LGBT persons in Belize. Our Circle is the only LGBT-led organization which provides a safe space for the LGBT community and its supporters to be able to host small community events. By establishing this safe space, our circle has been able to provide LGBT family education and awareness programs, legal advising service as well as family, individual and couple's counselling services. Through this, we are able to link the LGBT community to the necessary service providers by strengthening its institutional capacity and organizational networks.

Mission

The mission of Our Circle is to advance legal and lived equality for LGBT families, and for those who wish to form them, through building community, changing hearts and minds, and driving policy change.

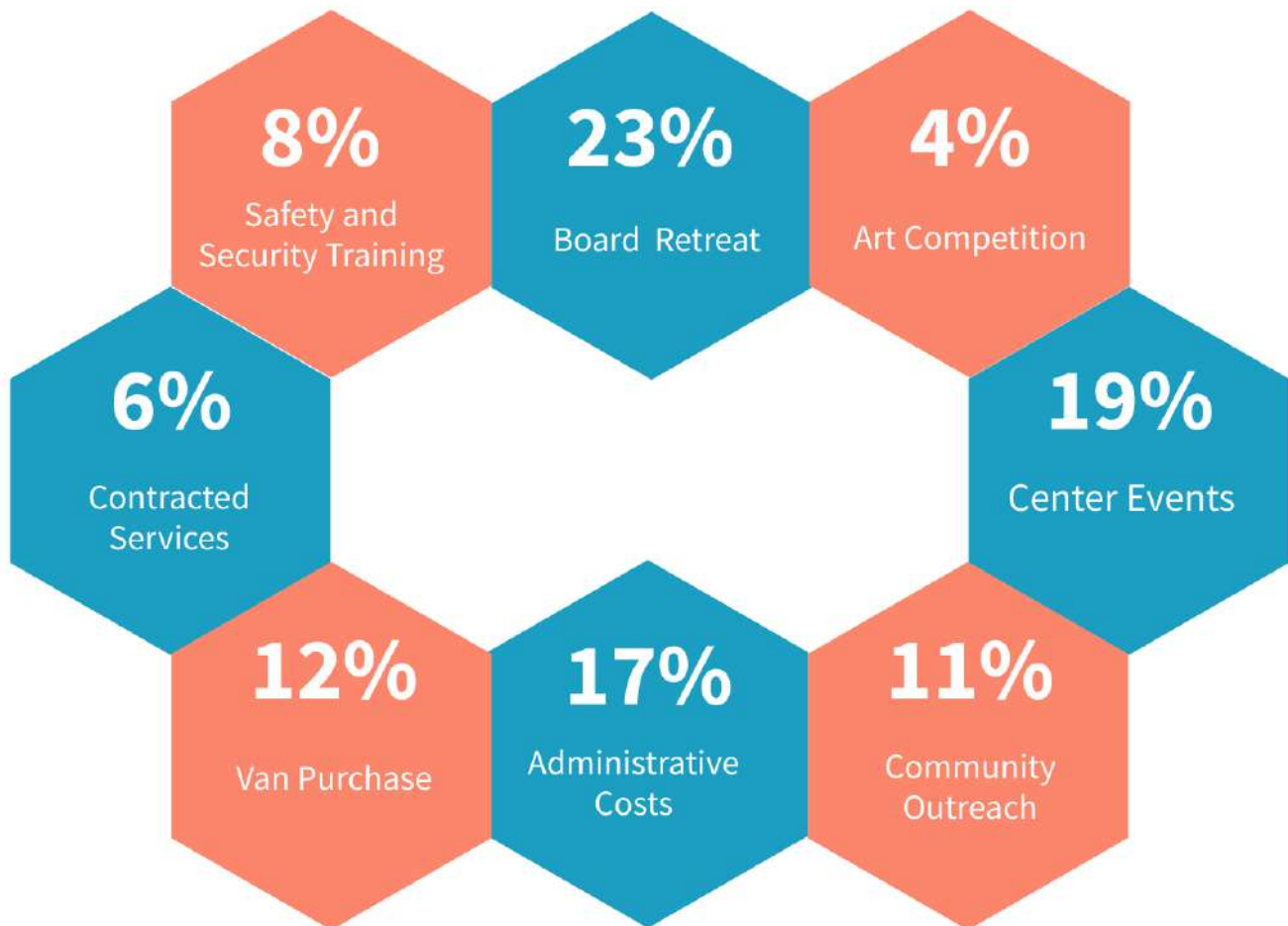
Vision

The Our Circle Team envisions a future where all LGBT families, regardless of creation or composition, live in communities that recognize, respect, protect, and value them. We envision a Belizean society in which every LGBT person has the right and the opportunity to form and sustain a loving family, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, religion, national origin, geography, socioeconomic status, disability, or the intersection of those characteristics.



OUR CIRCLE'S

FINANCIAL REPORT

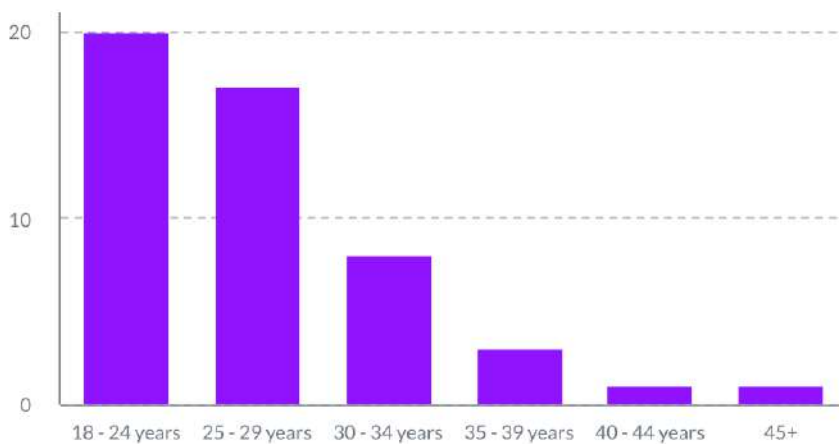


Cost Item	IAF	CoC	Astraea	Our Circle
Contracted Services	\$4,200			
Safety & Security Training		\$3,456		\$2,000
Board Retreat	\$10,400			\$5,639.78
Art Competition		\$3,009.61		
Center Events	\$11,335.12			\$1,762
Community Outreach	\$7,536.98			\$276.65
Administrative Costs	\$11,000		\$6,000	\$800
Van Purchase	\$8,000			\$150
Total	\$52,472.10	\$6,465.61	\$6,000	\$10,628.43

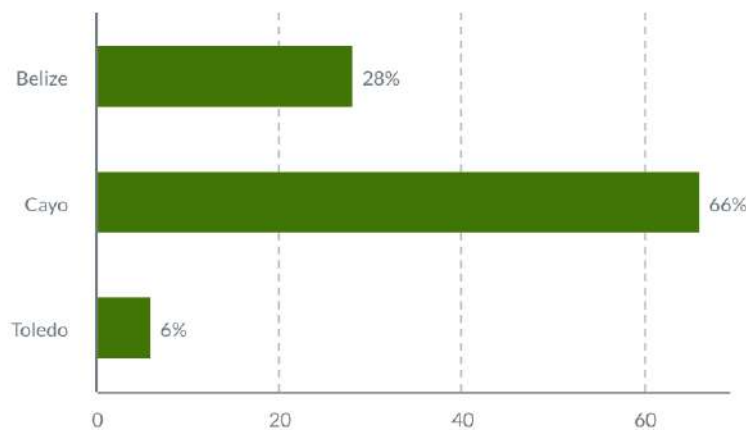
OUR CIRCLE'S

HIV TESTING & RESOURCES

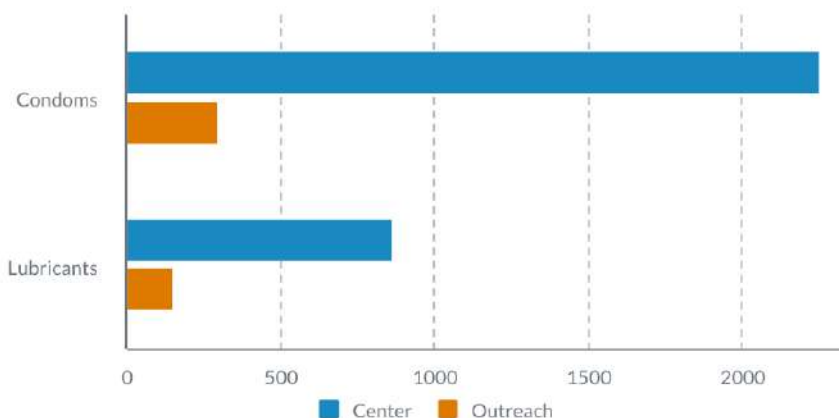
In collaboration with the Civil Society Organization (CSO) Hub, Our Circle ventured onto an initiative to test a total of 50 men in vulnerable communities in an effort to encourage behavior change and link positive men to care and treatment. While we were unable to find any positives through our interventions, we were able to provide condoms, lubricants and access to sexual reproductive rights and responsibility resources.



50 MSM tested through testing outreaches

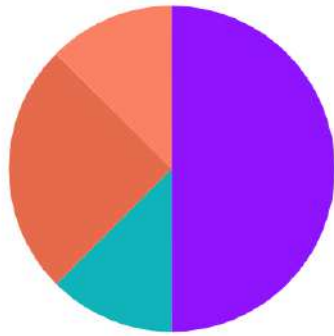


3 districts were targeted for MSM rapid testing



2,555 condoms distributed

1,017 lubes distributed



50 MSM tested at the Resource Center

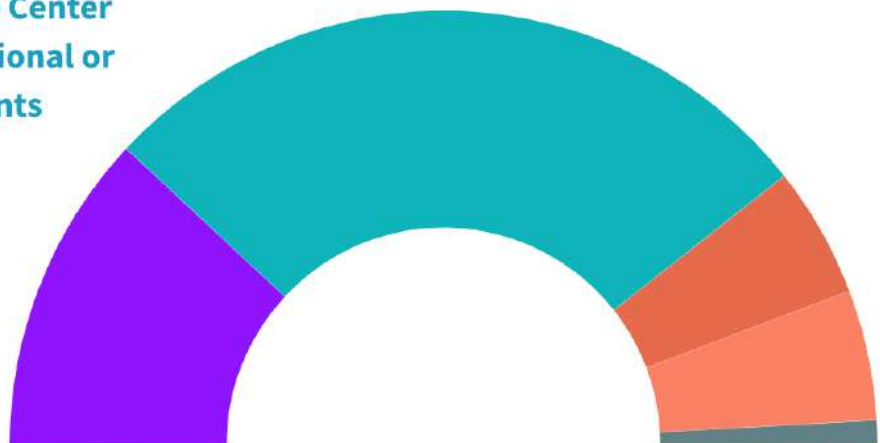
18 - 24 years (50%) 25 - 29 years (12.5%) 40 - 44 years (25%) 45+ (12.5%)

OUR CIRCLE'S

HIV TESTING & RESOURCES

This quarter, the center saw a total of **99** visitors who accessed a variety of our available services. The chart below details the number of visitors and the services they accessed when visiting the center.

55% visited the Center for Educational or Social Events



Workshops and Meetings (23.89%) Educational and Social Events (54.87%) HIV Testing (9.73%) Sexual Health Packages (9.73%) Drop In Visitors (1.77%)

OUR CIRCLE'S

Achievements

October 2020

- **LGBT Safety and Security Training- Punta Gorda**

The LGBT Safety and Security team held one of its many sessions in Punta Gorda Town. This workshop covered crucial steps that LGBT persons, their families and allies can take to reduce security threats to their person, online and within the wider community.

- **Started HIV testing with CSO- Hub**

Partnered with CSO- Hub Belize to provide scheduled HIV testing and resources.

- **Signed MOU with RET**

Partnered with RET Americas to strengthen knowledge, attitudes and practices with community advocates, frontline responders, and youth victims at-risk, who support the reduction in incidences of gender-based violence at the community level.

- **Safe to Come Out Art Competition**

The competition created an opportunity for amateur and professional artists between 16 - 25 years old, self-identified LGBT members or allies to capture, through their original art, their understanding of what it means to “come out” safely in Belize.

- **Board Orientation and Retreat**

The strategic planning retreat involved discussion on intersectionality and ability to strategically integrate several issues into our organization’s work for the next three years along with self-care and team building activities.

- **Community Service – Hopkins**

The Our Circle team conducted a beach clean-up in Hopkins village.

- **Vote with Pride Campaign**

The Vote with Pride Campaign sought to educate the LGBT community of Belize on the General Election and to urge the community to vote for lawmakers who are willing to support the work being done to provide lived and legal equality for all LGBT persons in Belize.

November 2020

- **Understanding Election Law and Voters’ Rights**

The session featured a live discussion of legal issues and cases related to elections and voting with attorney-at-law Michelle Trapp.

- **Launch of Strategic Plan**

The strategic plan integrated partnerships and assets to build upon current momentum and ensure progress that is both efficient and effective.

- **Culture and Sexuality Discussion**

A live discussion focusing on the connection between culture, family, gender and sexuality and their impact on the LGBT community in Belize.

OUR CIRCLE'S

Achievements (con't)

- **16 Days of Activism**

- Gender-Based Violence PSA

- During the 16 days of Activism, Our Circle, Belize Youth Empowerment for Change, Empower Yourself Belize Movement, United Belize Advocacy Movement (UniBAM), and Amixito partnered with the Department of Youth Services to a PSA addressing gender-based violence against LGBTQ+ persons in Belize.

- Drive Through Open Day

- In partnership with RET Americas, our drive through open day focused on educating and engaging community members about Gender Based Violence, access to support and supporting services being offered by Our Circle.

- Media Workshop

- The workshop was designed to forge stronger links between media organizations and NGOs working for gender equality as part of the 16 Days of Activism.

- Art Giveaway

- To end the 16 Days of Activism, Our Circle's Art Giveaway featured an online competition to engage followers and commemorate Human Rights Day.

- Safety, Security and Solidarity Activists Meeting

- This meeting engaged participants to discuss and share tactics, strategies and resources on how human rights activists can create effective security protocols to protect themselves against physical threats and secure their data in the field or office as a part of the 16 Days of Activism.

- **Garifuna Drumming**

- Live online Garifuna Drumming to celebrate Garifuna Settlement Day and educate viewers on the history of Garifuna music and engage them in a discussion about Garifuna culture.

- **Facebook Takeover**

- In honour of Transgender Awareness Week, The "Trans Takeover Tuesday" featured Belize Trans Colors (BTC) highlighting issues surrounding transgender health and rights protection.

December 2020

- **World AIDS Day Ribbon Campaign**

- As a part of our Strategic Plan to further develop Our Circle's profile and maintain a relationship with our donors, both past and present, we donated several red ribbons in lieu of World AIDS Day to our partners.

- **Safe to Come out Art Auction**

- A live auction of the painting from the "Safe to Come out" Art competition where a percentage of the sales went back to the artists to thank them for their contribution to Our Circle's Fundraising initiative.

OUR CIRCLE'S

Achievements (con't)

- **Toy Drive**

The toy drive sought donations from community members to provide gifts to a few LGBT-formed family units with children in need.

- **Christmas Raffle**

The raffle engaged community members to support our fundraising initiative by entering a raffle with a chance to win attractive prizes.

- **COVID- 19 Impact Report**

This study focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the LGBT+ community. Community members and organizations partnered to discuss how they have adapted since the implementation of the COVID-19 restrictions in regards to employment, access to government support services and access to sexual reproductive and HIV adherence services.

- **Virtual LGBT Hangout**

This weekly virtual hangout encouraged LGBT+ youth between the ages of 16-24 years to have healthy discussions, get individual support, build skills while socializing with their peers.

Capacity Building

- **Capacity Building Series with CSO Hub**

This series featured several webinars attended by members of the Our Circle team to expand their knowledge in the targeted topics.

- **Engaging Men and Boys to Advance Gender Equality with Women's Commission**

In partnership with The National Women's Commission and Spouses of CariCom Leaders Action Network (SCLAN). This training series sought to create a Men's Advocate Coalition to support increased sensitization and awareness among men and boys of their role in preventing GGBV in Belize.

- **Queering the SDGs with Rainbow Academy**

The intense 9-days training about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and their impact on LGBTIQ lives helped OC to effectively utilize our advocacy and support sustainable changes.

- **Capacity Building Series with CariFlags**

This series featured several webinars attended by the Our Circle team to expand their knowledge in the highlighted topics. The sessions covered included: Networking and the Use of Social Media, Monitoring and Evaluation, Proposal Writing and Budgeting and Mental Health Awareness and Self Care.



Our Circle Resource Center
14 New Road(l/f)
Belize City, Belize

www.ourcirclebze.weebly.com
ourcirclebze@gmail.com

+501-623-6062

