



# April Hero Profile 2019

**Children's Bill of Rights #4:** As the children and youth of San Luis Obispo County, may we each be and feel safe everywhere we go.

**APRIL'S HERO**  
Jean Tolman

**PASSION**  
Helping children heal from past trauma

**ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE JEAN**  
Hope

**NOMINATED BY**  
Stand Strong

**Jean Tolman is a champion for children, dedicating her life to supporting little ones who have experienced deeply distressing situations.**

For nearly a decade now, Jean has been part of the team at Stand Strong, formerly known as the Women's Shelter Program of San Luis Obispo. As the agency's Children's Services Coordinator, Jean provides oversight and assistance to some of the youngest, most vulnerable clients—children who are dealing with significant trauma, and who need delicate attention and care. She does this in many ways, largely through therapeutic art and play.

Colleagues say Jean is patient, kind, open and passionate about her daily work, which is really more of a personal calling. She keeps the department organized and ready to take loving care of children while their parent(s) or caregiver is in therapy or meeting with one of the Stand Strong legal or housing representatives. Jean's knowledge and dedication give hope to children and families, hope that not only can they survive—but ultimately thrive— in the face of seemingly-unbearable circumstances.

Jean puts her whole heart into the creative art that helps children during their emotional recovery. Last fall during Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Jean was asked to help with Stand Strong's "Art After Dark" display. She constructed an exhibit beyond what anyone would have imagined, adorning multiple tables filled with beautiful art made by children from her therapy group. The creations, and the love that goes into them, serve as a powerful reminder of human strength and resiliency—at any age. And it is Jean's gentle guidance that allows children to feel safe expressing themselves as they work to restore their inner peace and stability.

**Thank you, Jean.  
You are a true Hands-On Hero.**

*Look for more on all of our Hands-On Heroes on COE-TV channel 19!*



Hands-On Heroes is a special recognition of dedicated individuals who believe in and support the Children's Bill of Rights, an achievable vision that our children grow up with healthy minds, bodies and spirits that enable them to maximize their potential. This program is coordinated by First 5 San Luis Obispo County in collaboration with local organizations that make a difference in the lives of children in our community. To find out more about First 5 and the Children's Bill of Rights, please visit [first5slo.org](http://first5slo.org).



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