

## Aviva Family and Children's Services Hamburger Home to Aviva - Renewal, Healing, Resilience & Hope



### The Hamburger Family - Early Los Angeles Retail Merchants & Their Lasting Imprint

Asher Hamburger was a wholesale mercantile entrepreneur who first came to Los Angeles from Sacramento in 1856 to expand the family's mercantile business into retail. The Hamburgers called their Main Street establishment "The People's Store", catering to working class customers. The business thrived and Hamburger & Co established a strong presence as a leading retail merchant in Los Angeles.

In 1908, the Hamburger Building was built on Broadway and 8th Street, housing Hamburger's Department Store. When it opened, the Los Angeles Times called it "the greatest temple of commerce west of Chicago." On opening day, 75,000 people rushed through its doors, and in the ballyhoo of the time, flags were raised on the roof. Live music played, politicians gave glowing speeches, and bargain tables were set out to entice. Today the building is considered an early model for multi-level shopping destinations such as Century City, as it featured a wide range of amenities, including: book nooks in which to sit, relax and read; an 80-foot-long soda fountain; and a women's restroom featuring "cozy seats" and music played by a female orchestra. As evidence of its stylishly modern design, architect Alfred F. Rosenheim included an escalator, said to be the first on the West Coast, and six elevators to whisk customers up and down the five-story, Beaux Arts-style building, which also had a rooftop garden.



Then in 1923, "The Great White Store" – as Hamburger's Department Store was known by virtue of its facade and grand architecture – was sold to David May of the May Company. May's arrival on the retail scene in Los Angeles in 1923 was another historic moment in the City's commercial development. With the acquisition of the May Co.'s first large branch department store in Los Angeles, May became a prominent area business figure. May's imprint on Los Angeles remains today with their iconic department store building which opened in 1939 on Wilshire Boulevard. In 2021, it was renovated and rededicated as the Saban Building to serve as the home of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

### Hamburger's Philanthropic Legacy - From Ida Day Strauss to Wallis House

Asher Hamburger and his wife Hannah were also prominent philanthropists and leaders of the Jewish community in Los Angeles in the early 1900s. The Hamburger family's involvement in the founding of a philanthropic organization dedicated to young women and children more than a century ago was the origin of our organization, now known as Aviva Family and Children's Services.

**July 9, 1915:** The agency's original operation is founded as the Ida Strauss Day Nursery and Settlement House in 1915, located in a small rented cottage on Temple Street near Beaudry Avenue in Los Angeles, and officially founded as part of what is the first Jewish center in Los Angeles. Ida Straus was a German-American homemaker and the wife of Isidor Straus, the co-owner of the Macy's department store. Both died on board the RMS Titanic. Staffed by volunteers from the Los Angeles section of the National Council of Jewish Women, this new network of 250 women helped immigrant Jewish girls and provides support for the adoption of WWI orphans. With increased demand to provide day care for children of working mothers and widows along with continuing to address adoptions, the center outgrows its original location and rents a large house on Boylston Avenue near Temple Street in downtown L.A.

**June 23, 1919:** The nursery is incorporated into the Jewish Alliance of Los Angeles (part of the Federation of Jewish Welfare Organizations) and becomes a communal residential facility for low-salaried, employed women. This residence is relocated to Temple and Bunker Hill, housing 28 girls and providing educational, social, and recreational resources to residents and the community. As the need for space grows, single rooms are converted into doubles to accommodate 40 residents.



**February 5, 1928:** To keep up with growing demand, the Hamburger family finances a new residence at 1225 S. Union Avenue and dedicates it to the memory of their parents, Asher and Hannah Hamburger. Renamed Hamburger Home, this new residence for Jewish working women provides a low-cost, safe environment for 60 women, 18-years-old and older, who face challenging conditions that range from maladjustment to their home environment to difficult economic circumstances. The home is 75% self-supporting and governed by an all female board of directors.

**June 1955:** Having again outgrown its space, the organization sells the original Hamburger Home, purchases and renovates a new home located at 1701 Camino Palmero on the corner of Hollywood Blvd. in Hollywood, California. It provides more spacious surroundings and is conveniently located near community activities. It continues to serve as a home for Jewish working women for the next 11 years. When needed, the staff intervenes in cases of deprivation, addiction, physical and sexual abuse.



**September 8, 1966:** To meet the changing needs of the community, the Board of Directors votes to modify Hamburger Home’s mission, establishing a non-sectarian residence to provide intensive therapeutic services for adolescent girls who lack a secure foundation and experience behavioral and emotional problems. The residential program houses 36 teenage girls in a therapeutic environment with rehabilitation and preventative resources including life skills, art therapy, and psychotherapy. It is the *only* program in L.A. for “*emotionally unwell*” single, young women offering a healing and home-like setting.



**1984:** The historic property and residential service program is renamed Aviva Center. Aviva, in Hebrew, is a name for spring, suggesting renewal and growth. The name reflects the organization’s evolution from a single program to a multi-service social agency that provides individual, family, group and art therapy.

**1988:** Aviva Center becomes licensed as an official Foster Family agency and provides therapeutic foster care for children who cannot return to their homes. Aviva recruits, trains and certifies foster families and provides strong, ongoing support to both adolescents and foster parents.

**1992:** Aviva Center marks a quarter century of service to abused and neglected teenage girls and receives the City of Los Angeles’ Community Development Department Award for Excellence.

**2000:** Aviva changes its name to Aviva Family and Children’s Services to better reflect its emerging continuum of services.

**2001:** Aviva receives national accreditation through the Council on Accreditation, an international independent organization that accredits agencies that provide behavioral healthcare and child and family services. That same year, Aviva launches *The Platinum Associates*, a membership-based support group that raises awareness for Aviva through fundraising and community outreach.



**2002:** Aviva opens a new administrative building and high school campus at 7120 Franklin Avenue in Hollywood.

**2003:** With a grant from the Annenberg Foundation, Aviva renovates its historic residential property on Camino Palmero and renames it the Wallis Annenberg Residential Center.

**2005:** Aviva becomes a licensed adoption agency.

**2010:** Aviva's Foster Family Agency institutes the Intensive Treatment Foster Care program, which uses specially trained foster families and the support of a team of professionals to meet the treatment needs of children with more severe emotional or behavioral challenges.

**2012:** Aviva's residential program expands to provide specialized services to Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and opens the Hollywood High Wellness Center at Hollywood High School in Hollywood, California.



**2015:** Aviva celebrates its Centennial Anniversary and receives a proclamation from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. The agency continues a rigorous Performance and Outcome Measures (POM) Initiative to improve its services through data-informed management decision-making, more intensive data reporting and implementation of additional evidenced-based services. The overriding goal of these efforts is to ensure that Aviva's treatment programs and services rank among the most effective in the county, the state, and the nation.



**2017:** Beginning in 2017, Aviva is honored with Human Rights Campaign Foundation's "All Children - All Families" Seal for LGBTQ inclusive policies and affirming practices among child welfare agencies, leading with innovative approaches to inclusion. Aviva maintains its stature in the community as a beacon with renewed awards each year thereafter.



**2018:** Aviva is the first residential services provider in Los Angeles County to shift its services from group home services to family-based services for foster children. Aviva grows its Intensive Services Foster Care program and begins offering training and support to relatives who care for foster children.

Based in part on data from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), Wallis Annenberg Center is re-envisioned as a program offering shelter to unhoused Transitional-Aged Youth (TAY) ages 18-24 in L.A. County Service Planning Area (SPA) 4 where the population of youth who are experiencing homelessness is exceptionally large, and growing. Further research reveals a profoundly unaddressed need for support to a large subset among the unhoused TAY population, mothers with young children for whom Wallis House programming is then designed to provide shelter and comprehensive care. As plans to launch the new residential program evolve, it becomes evident that a facility renovation is in order. Los Angeles Councilmember David Ryu assists Aviva in securing funds to make extensive renovations to meet the current ADA compliance standards. The construction project is funded in large part by a \$2,360,000 capital grant from California's Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP).





**October 2019:** The historic residential facility renovation and program redesign is completed and rededicated as Wallis House to serve unhoused women and their children. Aviva plays a critical role in the coordinated effort to dismantle the vast and complex homelessness crisis in collaboration with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) in L.A. County's Coordinated Entry System (CES) wherein people experiencing homelessness are connected to shelter and service programs. In partnership with People Assisting The Homeless (PATH), Aviva provides interim supportive housing while PATH assists residents to secure permanent housing.

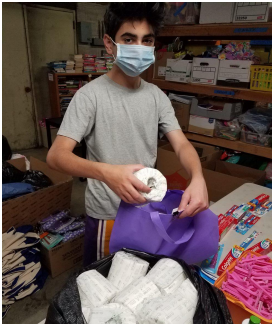
In addition to safe, clean shelter, residents receive broad therapeutic care including: three nutritious meals a day; comprehensive case management; mental health services; primary and pediatric preventative care; basic resources such as clothing, diapers, baby care supplies, hygiene kits and school supplies; personal development workshops for adults; enrichment programming for children; access to technology; seasonal events and holiday celebrations. Wallis House provides a caring, compassionate community and healing, inspirational, home-like environment for marginalized families, fostering more stable, healthy, productive, and happy lives.



**March 2020:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Aviva responds swiftly, pivoting to virtual service delivery of mental health and therapeutic behavioral services as a means of caring for more than 500 clients and families weekly. Aviva does not interrupt service delivery and helps its clients to navigate technology while keeping staff fully employed without cuts to hours or pay.

**Summer 2020:** The murder of George Floyd, an increased focus on police violence across the country, and a public health crisis that has exacerbated an already tenuous economic situation gives rise to a new urgency to address the grave inequities that perpetuate cycles of suffering. Aviva renews our commitment to justice, diversity, inclusion and equity in all interactions with our clients, providers, team, and the community at large. Aviva's *Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)* committee is formed. As we continue to work to develop and deliver highly impactful programs that improve our clients' lives and strengthen our communities, *JEDI* aims to support and inspire mutually respectful relationships and safe environments, as well as cultivate more just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive systems.

**2020 - 2021:** With Aviva's transition away from 100% in-person care to a hybrid model involving virtual services, telehealth capabilities remain of critical importance. Major investment in updated and expanded telehealth related technology is critical to maintaining case loads, continuity of treatment, quality of care, cost efficient delivery of treatment, and extending Aviva's reach to underserved populations.



For the overwhelming majority of families whose children receive direct services in all of Aviva's four program areas, their needs far surpass their means. Aviva responds to the significant need for food, basic necessities, and the very real desire for human connection during this period of elevated stress and isolation by expanding its Family Resource Center (FRC). The FRC provides resources to current and former client families in three main programs: Food Pantry; Resource Closet; Personal Development and Enrichment Programs. Aviva expands access with drive-thru event distributing food and essential goods to hundreds of Aviva client families

**February 2021:** Access to medical care is offered to Wallis House residents in partnerships with Kaiser Permanente and Saban Community Clinic. Services include pediatric preventive care, wellness workshops, onsite primary care and assistance with Medi-Cal and CalFresh enrollments.



**August 2021:** Aviva is proud to have again successfully completed the human and social service organization accreditation process through the Council on Accreditation for delivering a superior level of professional and quality services. Aviva's 2021 COA award extends accreditation through 2025.

**November 2021:** Beginning its 3rd year, Aviva's vision for Wallis House as a home, a harbor, a refuge, offering respite, security, and hope with a tapestry of services and vital resources for residents is now a reality. Based on a successful program launch and strong outcomes, capacity at Wallis House has almost doubled over opening levels, increasing the number of beds provided to some 30,000/year.

**May 2022:** Aviva hosts *Art of Giving*, honoring Aviva's retiring President & CEO, Regina Bette for her steadfast leadership; donor, Mario Ceballos, Kaiser Permanente for their enduring support; former Wallis House resident, Justina Duran for her resilience; and entertainer/former foster youth, Tiffany Haddish for her inspiration.

**November 2022:** Adrian Breitfeld and Patrick Monaghan accept invitations to join Aviva's Board of Directors providing complementary strengths and diverse expertise to Aviva's leadership. Breitfeld's experience as a senior finance and nonprofit management professional and Monaghan's diverse leadership roles as Legal Officer, General Counsel, Board Member, Strategist, Entrepreneur and Navy Veteran offer a wealth of capacity to successfully guide Aviva forward.

**December 2022:** Wallis House marks the close of the year having served 161 women and children with Interim Supportive Housing at Wallis House nurturing residents' health and healing and assisting them in building more resilient foundations and cohesive lives.

**January 2023:** Aviva's President & CEO, Amber Rivas M.S.W. takes the helm after a 17-year career at St. Anne's Family Services. With a deep understanding of the environment facing social services agencies, Rivas oversees budgeting, fundraising, human resources, programming and strategic planning at Aviva. Rivas' experience in diverse roles in social services drive her holistic, collaborative approach to promoting positive outcomes for the most marginalized children, youth and families in our communities.

