



Project Youth OCBF is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) agency committed to its mission of keeping at-risk youth in school, healthy and drug-free through education, counseling, mentoring, and family strengthen- ing services.

Project Youth has been built upon a legacy deep within the local legal community. It was initially established as the philanthropic arm of the Orange County Bar Association. Due to the success and growth of our work supporting at-risk youth, Project Youth became an independent non-profit agency in 1981. Since then, Project Youth has successfully provided direct services to at-risk youth and their families. We know that second chances and healthy choices are more easily achieved when the whole family is involved and when there is hope for a brighter future.

Executive Director  
Karen Ruan, ext. 101

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## Academic and Career Development Programs

The **Higher Education Mentoring Program** provides Latino high school juniors and seniors from the city of Santa Ana with the academic, social, and financial support needed to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Participating youth receive 18 months of highly-individualized services during high school:

- Individual mentoring sessions with a professional or college-student mentor
- College application and financial aid assistance
- College tours and career panels
- Scholarship and internship opportunities
- Financial literacy curriculum
- Monthly college readiness workshops for youth and their parents
- FAFSA workshops and SAT/ACT preparation assistance

The Higher Education Mentoring Program offers continued support to students throughout college, including financial aid and employment assistance, as well as linkages to leadership and volunteer opportunities. In addition, program graduates are given the opportunity to return as mentors.

### Contacts:

Alejandra Diaz ext. 100 and  
Rosa Victor ext. 121  
No cost

With the goal of investing in tomorrow's leaders, **Project SELF (Summer Employment in Law Firms)** provides incoming high school seniors from Santa Ana with paid, hands-on summer internships at local law firms and businesses.

Project SELF, in partnership with the Association of Legal Administrators, works to reduce the risk of juvenile delinquency by offering youth:

- Positive alternatives for spending their summers
- Access to professional career fields
- Support from positive, adult mentors

Contact: Nancy Garcia, ext. 108 ~ No cost

*"Thanks to the Higher Education Mentoring Program, I succeeded in going to college. The program was a place for me to find comfort and to learn exactly what I needed to do to not only get into college, but to graduate. Getting to where I am today was a difficult journey, but I received help from the Higher Education Mentoring Program every step of the way."*

~ Program participant  
and recent college graduate



## Health Education

**Madres Unidas** offers health education with HIV risk-reduction services to Latina mothers. Culturally responsive, bilingual services also offer:

- Coping and assertiveness skills training
- Referrals for free HIV testing
- Emphasis on ethnic and gender pride
- Substance abuse education
- Behavioral self-management
- Support group sessions

**Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)** is an evidence-based treatment model, developed by the Center for Family Studies at the University of Miami. BSFT provides counseling services that have been proven effective in treating early drug use, dysfunctional family relationships, conduct problems, and associations with antisocial peers, all of which are recognized risk factors for drug addiction. Outcomes include improved self-concept, reduced conduct and emotional problems, reduced drug use, and improved family functioning.

*"This program has helped me to educate my children and to have more open communication with them about important health topics."*  
~ Madres participant



**Youth Making Proud Choices!** and **¡Cuidate!** Project Youth provides comprehensive sexual health education to youth via these evidence-based program models. Program services focus on how to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. They also include community engagement and linkages to youth-friendly reproductive health services. Services are engaging, medically-accurate, nonjudgmental, and tailored to the unique needs of youth and their communities. They are offered in a range of settings, including schools, foster care group homes, and juvenile justice facilities.

**Contacts for Health Education Programs:**  
**Rocio Aceves ext. 128 & Frances Torres, ext. 122 ~ No cost**

## Juvenile Diversion Programs

(English and bilingual/bicultural Spanish services offered)

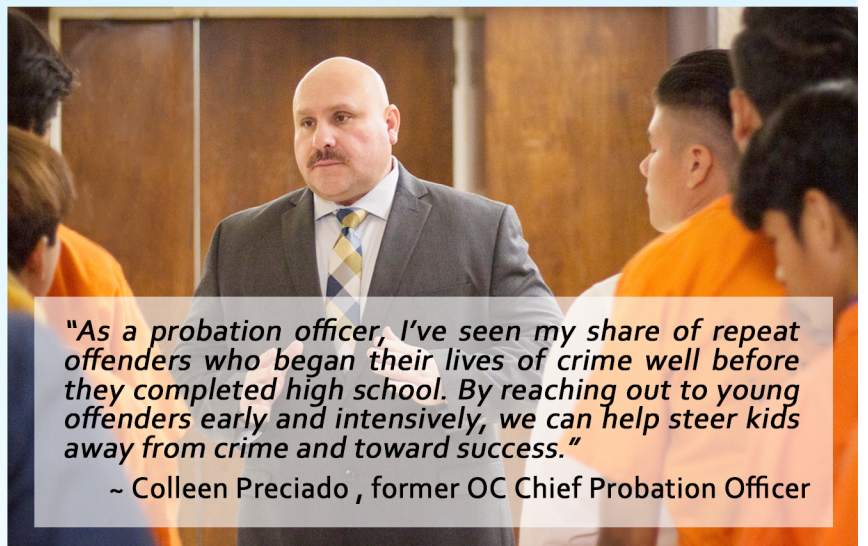
For over 35 years, **SHORTSTOP** has provided an alternative to incarceration by offering youth offenders the opportunity to receive diversion services in place of formal prosecution for first-time, minor offenses. SHORTSTOP breaks the cycle that turns youth into repeat offenders by providing intensive legal education and emphasizing personal accountability. Parental participation is mandatory. Youth and parents participate in several evening program sessions, where volunteer attorneys, legal professionals, and paroled convicts dramatically present the "legal facts of life" in a courtroom setting. Through SHORTSTOP youth are given the chance to learn from their mistakes and move forward without serving jail time or having a criminal record. The program is statistically proven to be a successful wake-up call. Over 90% of the youth that successfully complete SHORTSTOP do not recidivate for at least a year.

**Contact: Manny Gutierrez, ext. 114 ~ Sliding Scale**

Based on our successful SHORTSTOP model, **STOP SHORT of Addiction** is a state-certified substance abuse program that works with first-time juvenile offenders who are in the early stages of substance abuse. Parental participation is mandatory. STOP SHORT of Addiction provides an effective alternative to incarceration that integrates intensive legal education, group substance abuse treatment, and individualized restorative justice plans. Services address personal accountability and teach conflict resolution, peer refusal, and family communication skills. Family therapy services are also offered (up to 12 weeks, as needed and as resources allow). Family therapy is provided through our Brief Strategic Family Therapy program.

**Contact: Martha Veliz, ext. 119 ~ Sliding Scale**

Pursuant to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Project Youth OCBF does not discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age.



*"As a probation officer, I've seen my share of repeat offenders who began their lives of crime well before they completed high school. By reaching out to young offenders early and intensively, we can help steer kids away from crime and toward success."*

~ Colleen Preciado, former OC Chief Probation Officer