

# Health Education Services



**Madres Unidas** (Mothers United) provides Latina mothers with sexual health education and HIV/STI risk-reduction services, as well as family therapy, to foster healthy and safe behaviors and positive family functioning.

**Youth Making Proud Choices!** and **iCuídate!** provide 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, nonjudgemental, 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.



# the problem

In Orange County, Latinos are more likely than any other racial/ethnic group to report not using condoms, leaving them at extremely high risk for STDs and HIV infection. Syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia are all on the rise, with Latinas being disproportionately represented among those infected.

The effect that substance abuse has on the safety and development of teenage girls and women is devastating: poor nutrition, exposure to unprotected sex, HIV/STD infections, pregnancy, and violence. Studies show that females are more likely than their male counterparts to use alcohol and drugs to gain peer approval, control their weight, and please their dating partners. They are also more likely than males to become dependent on alcohol and drugs, and tend to have less success with treatment.



# the solution

**Madres Unidas** means Mothers United, which is the theme of this culturally-based program. Madres Unidas helps prepare Latina mothers to discuss difficult topics generally considered taboo (such as drug and alcohol use, sex, HIV/AIDS and STIs) with their teenage children and partners. Services are offered to all Latina mothers, ages 26-50, in Orange County.

Madres Unidas offers six weeks of health education sessions focused on preventing HIV/STD infection and substance abuse, followed by family therapy, as needed. Services also incorporate:

- Emphasis on ethnic and gender pride
- Assertiveness training and coping skills
- Behavior management skills
- Free onsite HIV testing and healthcare linkages

## "In Madres Unidas, I learned a lot

about drugs, risky sexual behaviors, STI's and HIV. My son learned about the same topics in Youth Making Proud Choices. Thank you for these excellent programs!"

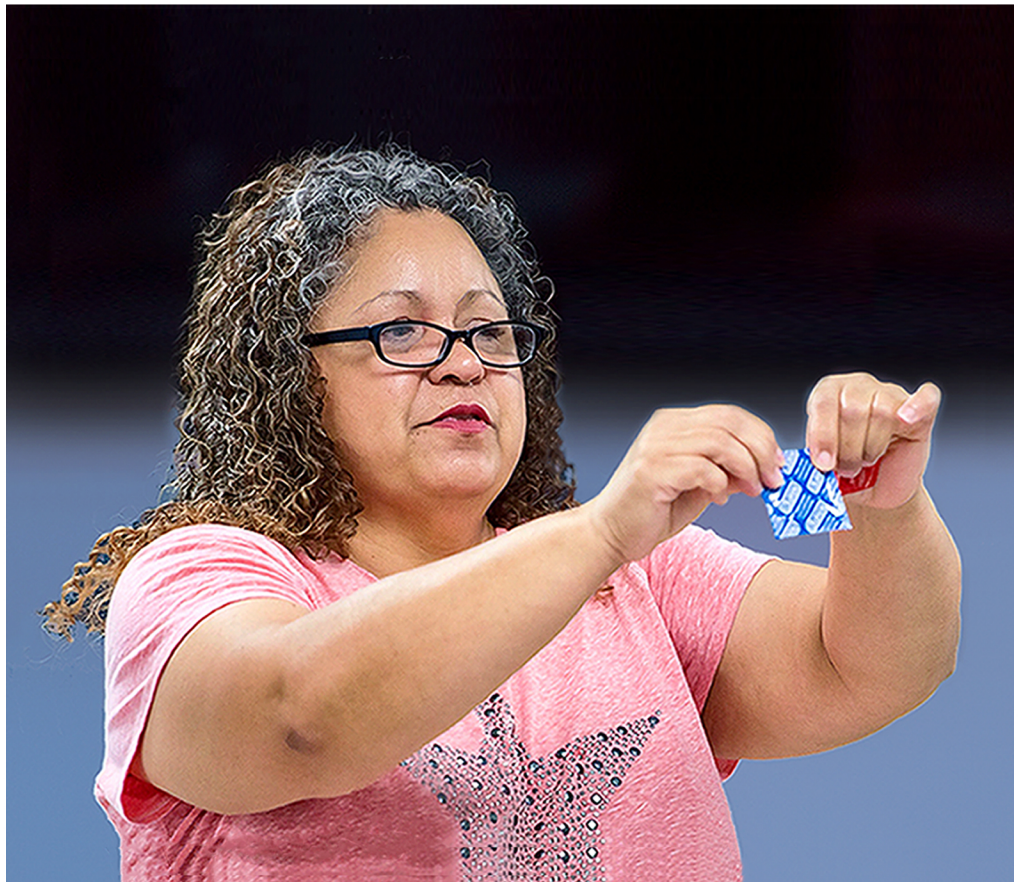
~ Madres participant and Youth Making Proud Choices! parent

## Madres Unidas impact

90 women served annually

97% of participants reported increased of knowledge about HIV/AIDS

84% of participants reported improved confidence and ability to use condoms correctly





**Youth Making Proud Choices!** is an evidence-based program that provides adolescents with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to reduce the risk of pregnancy, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections through abstinence or engaging in safer sex practices. It emphasizes sexual responsibility while teaching youth to respect themselves and others. It discusses drugs and their effect on sexual responsibility, including injection drug use and needle sharing.

Youth Making Proud Choices! meets the requirements of the California Healthy Youth Act and other laws pertaining to sexual health education, including inclusivity of LGBTQ youth and information on affirmative consent. It is presented in group format with two trained, bilingual facilitators in nine (9) weekly 90-minute sessions.



**¡Cuídate!** is an evidence-based, HIV/STI risk reduction, and comprehensive sex education program for at-risk Latino youth, aged 12-18, that attend a continuation school, school in the Santa Ana Unified School District, or are involved in the criminal justice and/or foster care system. It also integrates substance abuse prevention.

¡Cuídate! consists of nine (1.5 hour) modules. It focuses on “taking care of oneself and one’s partner, family, and community.” It also addresses all of the California Healthy Youth Act and CA Health Education Code requirements. ¡Cuídate! emphasizes Latino cultural beliefs to frame abstinence and condom use as an effective way to prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease, including HIV/AIDS.

“I grew up in Mexico City. I have three sons who were born here in Orange County. When I attended Madres Unidas, it was at my youngest child’s school site. I did not know a lot about what was presented. It was a great experience. It did not feel like the program facilitators were lecturing us, but instead it felt as though a good friend, who had this great information, was just excited to share it with us. There are many things we did not speak of in our family, including alcohol, drugs, sex, and STIs. Through Madres

unidas



Unidas, I learned that is not only important to know about these things, but it is also important to share this knowledge with our family and friends...how to protect oneself, how to recognize the things that put us at risk, be in control, and how to get out in time. I’m now a health educator for Madres Unidas. I have been empowered and I am proud to help do the same for other women in my community.”

~ Madres Health Educator

## ¡Cuídate! and Youth Making Proud Choices! impact

**640** youth served annually

Increased knowledge of HIV/STI transmission and intravenous drug use

Reduced substance use

Increased awareness of risky sexual behaviors and safer-sex practices



# investing in the future of Orange County

At Project Youth OCBF, we work hard to fill existing gaps in services, create extended service networks, and facilitate service linkages for Latino youth and families. Our goal is to reduce barriers to health education while increasing access to integrated prevention and intervention services.

Our health education programs are made possible through financial support from donors who believe in and invest in our mission. We rely on this support to cover program costs, including the cost for youth to participate.

We know that people have healthier lives when they're given the knowledge and skills needed to have positive and safe relationships. When you give to Project Youth OCBF, your donation helps to strengthen the bonds of family and community. Together with your support, we are able to make a measureable difference in the lives of Orange County's most vulnerable populations.



## mission statement

Project Youth OCBF's mission is to keep at-risk youth in school, healthy, and drug-free through education, counseling, mentoring, and family strengthening.

**Project Youth**  
OCBF

1605 E. 17th Street, Santa Ana, CA 92705  
Phone: 714.480.1925 • Fax: 714.480.1933

[www.projectyouthocbf.org](http://www.projectyouthocbf.org)