



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 strengthening 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, x101

Associate Director of  
Fund Development  
Nancy Garcia, x108

Associate Director of  
Educational Services  
Martha Madrid, x107

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Nazly Restrepo, MSW, x102

Director of Development,  
Marisol Parand, ext. 104

## Academic and Career Development Programs

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 works to reduce the risk of juvenile delinquency by offering youth access to professional work environments, positive alternatives for spending their summers, and support from positive, adult mentors.

Contact: Nancy Garcia, ext. 108 ~ No cost

The **Higher Education Mentoring Program** provides Latino high school juniors and seniors from Santa Ana with the academic, social, and financial support needed to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Students receive 18 months of highly-individualized services during high school, including individual mentoring sessions with a professional or college-student mentor, college application and financial aid assistance, scholarship and internship opportunities, college tours, career panels, and workshops for youth and their parents. Continued support is offered to students throughout college, including financial aid and employment assistance, as well as linkages to leadership and volunteer opportunities.

Contacts: Alejandra Diaz ext. 100 &  
and Rosa Victor ext. 121 ~ No cost

**ICAN!** assists at-risk, transition-age youth to identify their vocational interests and complete career training at a designated trade school, technical institute, or community college vocational program. Focus is placed on career-training programs that offer hands-on experience and certifications that lead to well-paying professions with long-term growth and viability. Such career fields include paramedics, construction, health care, HVAC, culinary arts, automotive technologies, IT, paralegal, cosmetology, aviation, and plumbing. By completing the program, our goal is that participating youth will be placed on promising career paths that will lead toward a brighter future.

Contact: Manuel Gutierrez, ext. 114 ~ 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 Programs




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

~ Madres participant

**Madres Unidas** targets Latina mothers with adolescent daughters. It works to reduce the risk of HIV infection among these women and their family members. This free, culturally responsive program provides mothers with communication techniques to address alcohol and drug use, as well as early sexual activity, STDs and HIV infection.

**Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT)** is an evidence-based treatment model, that has 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 reduced conduct and emotional problems, improved family functioning, reduced drug use, and improved self-concept.



Project Youth provides comprehensive sexual health education to youth via the **Youth Making Proud Choices!** and **¡Cuidate!** evidence-based program models. Services focus on the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, and are engaging, nonjudgmental, medically-accurate, and tailored to the unique needs of youth. 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. Parental participation is mandatory.

**SHORTSTOP** breaks the cycle that turns youth into repeat offenders by providing intensive legal education and emphasizing personal accountability. The program is proven to be a successful wake-up call. Over 90% of the participating 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 and substance abuse treatment. Over 88% of the youth that successfully complete **STOP SHORT of Addiction** do not recidivate for at least a year.

**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.



"Each day we see families in crisis due to juvenile crime and substance abuse. **Shortstop** and **Stop Short of Addiction** intervene at a critical time to repair damage done to the family structure and help put youth on a positive path—a path of education, health and strong family bonding."

~ Karen Ruan, Executive Director