



Chambers of  
**MARIA D. HERNANDEZ**  
PRESIDING JUDGE OF JUVENILE COURT

# Superior Court of California County of Orange

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## Orange County Juvenile Court Miscellaneous Order M-2014-5

### **Re: Expanded University of California at Irvine (UCI) Research Study of At-Risk Children's Emotional Understanding, Empathetic Responses and Pro-Social Behavior**

Prolonged exposure to maltreatment has adversely affected the emotional response and emotional regulation of children in the custody of the Orange County Social Services Agency (SSA). The aftereffects of maltreatment complicate and prolong efforts to protect, reunify, and preserve families. The maladaptive behaviors exhibited by abused and neglected children correlate with higher rates of placement disruptions, truancy, delinquency, and poor academic performance.

Carefully tailored treatment and intervention programs better ensure positive outcomes for maltreated children. Juvenile Court stakeholders are required to meet the unique needs of the children within the Court's jurisdiction. However, the data on the emotional development, emotional response, and emotional regulation of children who have suffered maltreatment is sparse and there are too few effective intervention tools.

In order to address these challenges the Court authorized Dr. Jodi Quas of the University of California at Irvine (UCI) on May 7, 2013 to undertake a comprehensive four-year study of emotional understanding, empathetic responses and pro-social behavior in at-risk children and adolescents placed at Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC). The study is officially entitled At-Risk Children's Emotional Understanding, Empathetic Responses and Pro-Social Behavior (the Study). The Study began in the fall of 2013 and approximately 265 children and adolescents have participated.

Dr. Quas proposes to expand the Study by adding an intervention component known as Positive Emotion Training (PET). PET is an easily administered computer program designed to shift children's emotion recognition tendencies and behavior in a positive direction. Dr. Quas believes that the PET intervention component has the potential to help prevent maltreated children from crossing over into the juvenile delinquency system, and she would like to test PET on approximately 80 children. Dr. Quas also requests permission to determine whether PET is most effective if administered during early to mid-adolescence. Dr. Quas declares that in order to test whether PET is most effective during this stage, pubertal status

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needs to be measured. Dr. Quas declares that pubertal status is most easily and reliably measured by sampling hormones via the voluntary submission of saliva samples.

Dr. Quas proposes that at the beginning of the PET intervention component, the children will be asked if they are willing to provide two saliva samples to determine only their pubertal status. If the children agree, they will be given two small vials and asked to spit into the vials using ordinary household straws. Dr. Quas declares that each vial will be labeled only with an identification (ID) number. The labels on the vials will not include any other potentially identifying information (e.g., participants' names, race, gender). The ID numbers will be random, consecutive numbers that Dr. Quas generally assigns to all study participants. The ID numbers will be completely unrelated to case file information or SSA records. The record linking the participant's name to his or her vial ID number will be securely stored separately by Dr. Quas from the rest of the study data. Once a saliva sample is collected in a vial, the saliva vial will be stored in the Dr. Quas' UCI laboratory in a locked, secure freezer, pending testing.

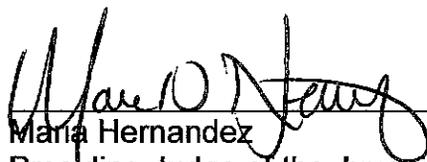
Dr. Quas proposes to collect approximately 160 (2 per child for approximately 80 children) usable vial samples. Once the first batch of approximately 80 vial samples is collected, the vial samples (all de-identified) will be shipped to and tested by Professor Lance Kriegsfeld's lab at the University of California, Berkeley. When the testing is complete, Professor Kriegsfeld's lab will send an anonymous file report containing the participants' ID codes and their corresponding pubertal status data to Dr. Quas. Once Dr. Quas has received the report, Dr. Quas will instruct Dr. Kriegsfeld to destroy the saliva samples in accord with UC Berkeley's strict protocols.

**FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, THE COURT HEREBY AUTHORIZES** Dr. Quas to expand the Study by the voluntary implementation of the PET intervention component, the voluntary collection of saliva samples, and the testing of the voluntarily submitted saliva samples in order to measure pubertal status only.

**FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, THE COURT ORDERS** that the voluntary saliva samples shall only be tested for pubertal status, that the saliva vial labels contain no identifying information other than ID numbers, and that the saliva samples shall be destroyed upon completion of testing.

This Court's authorization and order shall expire on May 7, 2017.

Dated this 19th day of November, 2014

  
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Maria Hernandez  
Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court