

# ORANGE COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION



## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



**Superior Court of California**  
**County of Orange**  
**Juvenile Justice Commission**

December 31, 2020

Dear Reader:

In 2020, COVID-19 and public health restrictions impacted the Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC). In a typical year, the JJC would have interviewed staff and inspected all Orange County juvenile institutions, selected Orange County law enforcement agencies (LEAs), and all privately operated Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs). These inspections and interviews permit the JJC to evaluate the physical premises and assess staff competence and adherence to state and local mandates.

Since it was impossible to conduct in-person inspections in 2020, the JJC conducted video interviews. Through these interviews, the JJC was able to assess operations and evaluate policies and procedures. We have included a section of this Annual Report on what we believe to be the best practices in institutions, LEAs, STRTPs and schools.

The year 2020 was the third year of the JJC Essay Contest. With the cooperation of the Orange County Probation Department and the Orange County Department of Education, youth from Juvenile Hall, the Youth Guidance Center and the Youth Leadership Academy submitted 44 essays on "My Time."

As always, we thank Orange County Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Motoike for her help and support. We also thank our Executive Administrative Assistant, Susan Korean, for her tireless work on behalf of the JJC.

We hope our 2020 Annual Report will help you understand the Commission's work and the profound responsibility we all have for our children's well-being.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jan Sturla".

Jan Sturla  
Chairperson



### Commissioners and Staff

Pictured left to right: Susan Korean (Exec. Admin. Assistant), Judy Johnson, Michael Schumacher, Wyatt McClean, Marcy Garfias, Robin Rounaghi, Cheryl Hart, Mary Lou Vachet, Benjamin deMayo, Amy Crowley, Dolores Yost, Judy Zorrilla, Vice Chair Lynda Perring, Chair Jan Sturla and Jessica Esquivel (Legal Processing Specialist)



#### COMMISSIONER EXPERIENCE

**50**  
years in Juvenile/Criminal Law

**53**  
years in Education

**63**  
years in Mental Health/  
Substance Abuse Recovery

**73**  
years in Public Administration/  
Probation

**75**  
years in Law/Business

**133**  
years volunteering for youth/  
CASA work

The Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) is a group of private citizens appointed by the Superior Court with the concurrence of the Juvenile Court and authorized by Welfare and Institution Code Sections 225-231. The mission of the JJC is to inquire into the administration of juvenile court law in this county and to ensure that the highest standards of care and services are maintained for the youth within the juvenile justice system. The JJC advocates for a compassionate and collaborative community to meet the mental, physical, and educational needs of system-involved youth.

# TRAININGS AND WEBINARS

Throughout the year, our Commissioners attend trainings and webinars covering a wide variety of topics. Our goal is to stay informed on the latest information and research on issues that confront the families and youth of Orange County.

*Thank you to all of the agencies who sponsor and organize these events.*

## Sex Trafficking Awareness

*Sponsored by The Orangewood Foundation*

## Transitional Age Youth & Autism

*Sponsored by OCSSA - Speaker: Simran Garcia of TACA*

## Adolescent Development & Juvenile Justice

*Sponsored by UC Irvine - Speaker: Professor Elizabeth Cauffman*

## Trauma Informed Care

*Sponsored by The Orangewood Foundation*

## Defining Healthy Relationships

*Sponsored by UC Irvine - Speaker: Gimel Rogers, Psy. D.*

## Sexual Abuse of Children in Public Schools

*Sponsored by UC Irvine - Speaker: Professor Jodi Quas*

## Help@Hand Innovation Project Update

*Sponsored by CalMHSA*

## AB 2035: Healthy Futures for Foster Youth

*Sponsored by John Burton Advocates for Youth*

## Implementation of Therapeutic Foster Care

*Sponsored by CIBHS*

## Substance Use Disorders and the Family

*Sponsored by Raise Foundation - Speaker: Dr. Melody Bacon*

## Missing and Exploited Children Roundtable

*Sponsored by Crime Survivors Resource Center*

## CWS Involved Parents & Youth with Substance Use Behaviors

*Sponsored by HMA & OCSSA - Speakers: Dr. Helen Duplessis and Uma Abluwalia*

## Ensuring Justice in Child Welfare Summit

*Sponsored by NCSC, The Children's Bureau & others*

## ASIST Webinar on Racial Disparity

*Sponsored by Continuum of Care Reform*

## Reproductive & Sexual Health for STRTPs

*Sponsored by LARHEP*

## Implicit Bias

*Sponsored by CIBHS - Speakers: Adele James & Eric Haram*

## Serving Youth with Diverse SOGIE

*Sponsored by Continuum of Care Reform - Speaker: Caitlin Ryan, PhD*

## STRTP Curriculum: Reproductive & Sexual Health Mandates

*Sponsored by RHEP*

## Be Well Interfaith Discussion

*Sponsored by Be Well - Speakers: Reverend Kevin Vann, Rabbi Richard Steinberg, Kay Warren*

## Igniting Social Change: The Impact of Childhood Trauma

*Sponsored by Human Options - Speaker: Dr. Nadine Burke Harris*

## Transitional Housing and Non-Minor Dependents

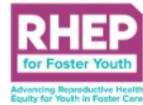
*Sponsored by Continuum of Care Reform*

## The Impact of Implicit Bias in the Child Welfare System

*Sponsored by the Judicial Council of California - Speaker: Dr. Rita Cameron-Wedding*

## Healing the Divide: The American Case for Compassion

*Sponsored by UC Irvine - Speakers: Nancy Guerra & Richard Matthew*



## LIAISON ACTIVITIES

Juvenile Justice Commission subgroups focus on the following areas: Education; Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP); Law Enforcement; Legislative; and Mental Health. One or more JJC members attend regularly scheduled meetings of the following groups to ensure the Commission is aware and apprised of current issues related to youth in the Juvenile Justice System. Beginning in March of 2020, all meetings were attended via video conference.

**Be Well OC Coalition**

**Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC)**

**Child Abuse Services Team (CAST) Policy Board**

**Child Welfare System Improvement Partnership (CWSIP)**

**Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Steering Committee**

**Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Steering Committee**

**Eliminating Racial Disparity & Disproportionality (ERDD) Advisory Board**

**Foster Care Advisory Board (FCAB)/Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)**

**Foster Family Agency (FFA) Forum & Resource Family Approval Partnership**

**Foster Youth Outcomes • Foster and Kinship Care Education Program**

**OC Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) • Juvenile Court Services (JCS) Stakeholders**

**Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Steering Committee**

**Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP) • OCCP Subcommittee**

**Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) Forum**

**Social Services Agency Youth Fatality and Probation Department Ward Death Reviews**

**Working to End Child Abuse and Neglect (WE CAN) Coalition**



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: 2020 Essay Contest

The third annual essay contest conducted by the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) was handled very differently due to the COVID pandemic which restricted all in-person gatherings or meetings. As a result, the contest had to be held remotely employing a Zoom virtual meeting format. Coordinated by the Probation Department, the winning students, parents, teachers, Juvenile court Judges, Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) representatives, Commissioners and other key people were connected on November 17, 2020. The Zoom meeting lasted for approximately 1 ½ hours with a total of 55 participants. Each of the Honorable Mention winners read their essays, followed by the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place winners. The Orangewood Foundation again generously contributed to the awards.

There were 44 essays submitted by students at the Otto Fischer School serving Juvenile Hall and the Youth Leadership Academy, and the Rio Contiguo High School which serves the Youth Guidance Center. The teachers provided the guidance for the students to complete their submissions entitled "My Time". The essays were reviewed by the JJC Essay Committee members and ranked. Once again, it was a very difficult task to select the winners among the many profound and deeply personal stories. In spite of the adaptations due to COVID restrictions, the celebration still provided a meaningful experience for the students, staff and court officials.

*“ Every day I have been given the opportunity to start over...I have learned that when I do get released, there will be many people whose trust I must earn back. Not just my family and friends' trust, the societies trust too. ”*

*“ I have accomplished many things at my stay at YGC, for example, I learned to sew masks and donated them to CHOC hospital. I will graduate in a couple weeks and will start college to pursue a degree in nursing. ”*

*“ In YGC, I see life in a different perspective. I'm working on myself and I have come to change my street mentality to a more mature perspective. ”*

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH: THIS YEAR'S INSPIRING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A reoccurring theme throughout 2020 was the impact of the heroes that emerged during the COVID crisis. Numerous news stories identified individuals who performed 'above and beyond' including first responders and other civic minded organizations or agencies. Although the JJC's in-person inspections and attendance at meetings and other functions were halted by the pandemic, the Commissioners still witnessed several examples of noteworthy accomplishments, including the following:

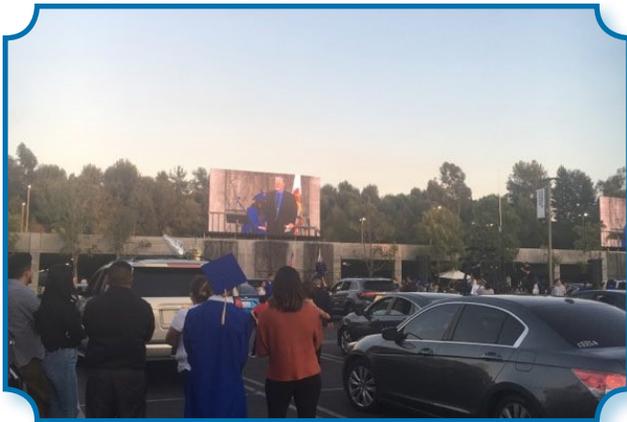
- Implementing California's first distance-learning education model for incarcerated youth
- Assembling comprehensive juvenile detention discharge packets given to all youth
- Overcoming the technological challenges to coordinate the Essay Contest Awards Ceremony
- Creating a socially distant high school graduation ceremony that was held in a church's parking lot
- Enhancing collaboration between agencies to address the remote learning and visitation needs of youth in our institutions
- Providing advanced computer programs to connect youth with families; and using those same programs to enable the caregivers to become tutors for the youth who couldn't attend classes

And, the JJC would like to recognize all of the other caregivers, institution and STRTP staffers, educators and law enforcement officers who provided exceptional service to system-involved youth during this difficult year.

### THE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION

Congratulates the graduating seniors of 2020.

Thank you to the school staff and administrators for making this year's  
"Social Distanced" graduations  
memorable for the students and their families.



## INSPECTIONS OF COUNTY-ADMINISTERED JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS

Each year the Juvenile Justice Commission, as mandated by the Welfare and Institutions Code, inspects the four facilities that provide residential care and services for those children/youth who are part of the Juvenile Justice System. The purpose of the inspections is to ensure that high quality and appropriate care is being provided. Each of the facilities provides an accredited school program staffed by the Orange County Department of Education so that education is not interrupted by the time in residence. Each facility also has medical staff on site to address any medical needs. Children and youth also have access to behavioral health care.

Despite the COVID restrictions this year, the JJC was still able to conduct in-person interviews with youth in Juvenile Hall and the Youth Guidance Center while practicing health protocols. The remainder of the inspections were conducted virtually.

### Orange County Juvenile Hall

#### On-line Interview: November 18, 2020

- Juvenile Hall is a Probation maximum security facility for male and female youth who have committed serious offenses in the community.
- Treatment options include Anger Management, Conflict Resolution, Substance Abuse and others.
- One-on-one counseling is provided.
- Family Reunification efforts are provided as appropriate.



### Youth Leadership Academy

#### On-Line Interview: October 21, 2020

- The Youth Leadership Academy is a secure Probation program for males only.
- This program is short term focusing on the youth's smooth transition back into the local community.
- Treatment options include one-on-one therapy addressing Substance Abuse, Gang Prevention, and Aggressive Behavior; Group Therapy; and Family and Crisis Counseling.

## Youth Guidance Center

**On-Line Interview: October 29, 2020**

- The Youth Guidance Center is a secure Probation four dormitory campus that includes a gymnasium and outdoor recreation fields.
- This program is for male and female residents aged 14 to 18.
- Substance Abuse is the treatment focus.
- There is also an emphasis on career readiness and occupational skill assistance.



## Orangewood Children and Family Center On-Line Interview: October 7, 2020

- Orangewood Children and Family Center is a Social Service cottage campus serving Court dependents.
- This program serves both males and females from birth to age 18.
- The length of stay is intended to be 10 days or less.
- The goal is to return the dependent to family or, if that is not possible, to locate a suitable placement.



## INSPECTIONS OF OC LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The JJC is mandated to inspect all law enforcement facilities where a minor is held in secure detention for any length of time and those where a minor is held in non-secure detention for 24 hours or more. No facility, other than the Probation-run institutions, holds minors for more than 24 hours. The JJC exceeds state law mandates by inspecting all facilities where a minor is held in non-secure detention for 6 hours or more. Due to COVID-19 Restrictions, in 2020, inspections were conducted as online interviews with administration at each agency. Listed below are all OC law enforcement facilities operated by police or sheriff departments with their recent statistics on detention of minors. 2020 inspection dates are listed for those that met inspection criteria. The JJC inquired about topics such as human trafficking of minors, the role of School Resource Officers, community youth programs, compliance with COVID-19 protocols and interactions with Probation and Social Services.

Law Enforcement Agency	2020 WebEx Interview	Number of Minors Detained		Minors in Secure detention for any time		Minors in non-secure detention for 6+ Hours	
		2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Anaheim PD	10/1/2020	228	93	6	8	0	0
Brea PD	9/30/2020	23	13	2	0	0	0
Buena Park PD	10/9/2020	89	73	5	8	0	0
Costa Mesa PD	10/30/2020	75	72	15	7	0	3
Cypress PD	10/9/2020	10	11	0	0	2	0
Fountain Valley PD	N/A	60	34	0	0	0	0
Fullerton PD	9/14/2020	86	27	6	1	0	0
Garden Grove PD	N/A	172	120	0	0	0	0
Huntington Beach PD	N/A	57	36	0	2	0	0
Irvine PD	N/A	38	13	0	0	0	0
Laguna Beach PD	10/30/2020	72	57	6	5	0	0
La Habra PD	9/8/2020	49	50	7	0	0	1
La Palma PD	N/A	6	3	0	0	0	0
Los Alamitos PD	N/A	0	1	0	0	0	0
Newport Beach PD	N/A	76	39	0	0	0	0
Orange PD	N/A	50	24	0	0	0	0
Placentia PD	postponed	46	52	0	0	1	0
Santa Ana PD	10/1/2020	132	90	77	59	0	0
Santa Ana Unified School Dist	N/A	11	7	0	0	0	0
Seal Beach PD	N/A	15	0	0	0	0	0
Tustin PD	N/A	93	54	0	0	0	0
Westminster PD	N/A	54	46	0	1	0	0
CSU Fullerton PD	10/1/2020	6	0	6	0	0	0
Dana Point - OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lake Forest - OCSD	N/A	6	0	0	0	0	0
San Clemente - OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
SJ Capistrano - OCSD	N/A	0	3	0	3	0	0
Aliso Viejo - OCSD	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stanton - OCSD	N/A	3	1	0	0	0	0
Yorba Linda - OCSD	11/12/2020	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>1459</b>	<b>919</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

## GUEST SPEAKERS

### Orange County School Threat Assessment Team (OCSTAT)

Sgt. Darren Braham, OCSD  
Christina Ronald, OC Probation

Christine Laehle, OCDE  
Joe Koller, Deputy District Attorney

The Sheriff's School Mobile Assessment and Resource Team (SMART) presented on the importance of threat assessment in schools to avoid the tragedy of an active shooter. With an overview of the US Secret Service and Department of Education publication on threat assessment, the team explained how this program works to foster good relationships between students and School Resource Officers. Included in the presentation were current examples on threats via social media and the mindset of youth when engaged in online activity.



### County of Orange Office of Independent Review



Sergio Perez introduced himself and gave a presentation on The Office of Independent Review (OIR). As the Executive Director, Mr. Perez and his team work to ensure that the needs of the community and the County of Orange are met by providing accountability in the performance and operations of the following County Departments: OC Sheriff, Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender and Social Services Agency. He explained that the OIR monitors and reviews specific incidents, identifies systemic issues, and assists in developing and assessing corrective actions that address high risk practices related to the departments it oversees.

### Orange County Probation Department

Steve Sentman, Chief Probation Officer  
Bryan Prieto, Chief Deputy Probation Officer

Probation Chief Steve Sentman gave the JJC an update on SB 823 (DJJ Realignment) effective July 2021. The Bill will transfer the responsibility for the custody, treatment and supervision of youth to the counties. Orange County is preparing for this transition by dedicating housing and programs at Juvenile Hall for qualified youth who may remain in custody up to age 25.

Probation Deputy Chief Bryan Prieto thanked the JJC for coordinating the annual Essay Contest that took place on November 17, 2020. He participated in the Zoom conference call during which the winners read their winning entries.



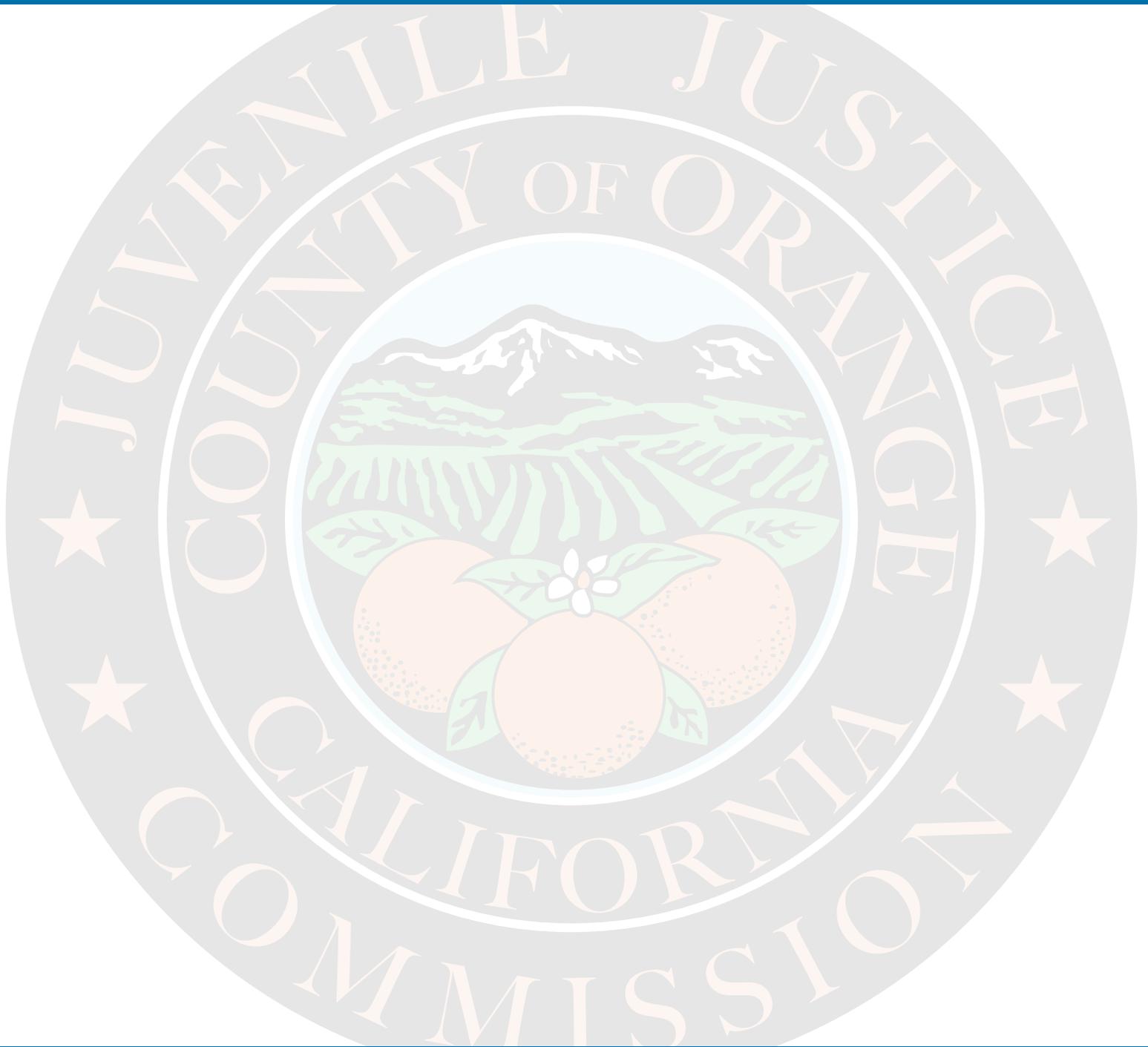
### OC Social Service Agency

Anne Bloxom, Director for Children and Family Services



Anne Bloxom gave a presentation on how her department has successfully provided both in-person and virtual programs, services and trainings in compliance with COVID pandemic social distancing regulations. She provided the JJC with updates on how OCSSA is implementing recent legislation affecting foster youth including: the new Family Urgent Response (FURS) program, the revised Foster Youth Bill of Rights, and the mandatory reproductive health training for staff. She also discussed the agency's procedures in cases involving youth with drug use issues including the availability of Narcan/Naloxone.

THE MISSION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION is to inquire into the administration of juvenile court law in this county and to ensure that the highest standards of care and services are maintained for the youth within the Juvenile Justice System.



To contact us or learn more, go to:  
[www.occourts.org/directory/juvenile/jjc/](http://www.occourts.org/directory/juvenile/jjc/)  
[jjc@occourts.org](mailto:jjc@occourts.org)