

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2010

Prepared for the

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Orange



Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Council

www.theraisefoundation.org

Submitted by

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"Preventing Child Abuse by Strengthening Families"



Resources in Motion (RIM) Mobile Services Unit

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Introduction

Mission

The mission of The Raise Foundation is to stop the cycle of child abuse through education, advocacy, community collaboration, comprehensive services and through our role as the Child Abuse Prevention Council for the County of Orange.

Vision

The elimination of child abuse in Orange County.

A Brief History

The Raise Foundation is Orange County's Child Abuse Prevention Council as officially designated by the Orange County Board of Supervisors (Resolution No. 74-492) in 1974. This is in keeping with the California Welfare and Institutions Code (Section 18982) which requires every county to have a child abuse prevention council.

We became incorporated as a private non-profit 501(c)(3) agency in 1987 under the name The Child Abuse Prevention Council of Orange County. In 1999, we changed our name to Prevent Child Abuse – Orange County. We became The Raise Foundation. Better parents. Better kids. TM in 2003.

Our purpose has remained the same throughout: fulfill our role as Child Abuse Prevention Council, prevent child abuse by working to strengthen families and by collaborating with other family-serving agencies to maximize impact while reducing duplication of services.

In *Strengthening Families: A Guidebook for Early Childhood Programs*, the Center for the Study of Social Policy identifies five “protective factors” that appear to reduce the occurrence in families of child maltreatment (Center for the Study of Social Policy, *Strengthening Families: A Guidebook for Early Childhood Programs*, Second Edition, July 2007). The protective factors are:

1. Parental resilience
2. An array of social connections
3. Adequate knowledge of parenting and development
4. Concrete support in times of need, including access to necessary services, such as mental health
5. Social and emotional competence of children

This research-based approach to reducing child abuse has been our guide in the development of all of our programs.

Child Abuse Prevention Council

The functions of the Child Abuse Prevention Council shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Provide a forum for interagency cooperation and coordination in the prevention, detection, treatment and legal processing of child abuse cases;
2. Promote public awareness of the abuse and neglect of children and the resources available for intervention and treatment;
3. Encourage and facilitate training of professionals in the detection, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect;
4. Recommend improvements in services to families and children;
5. Encourage and facilitate community support for child abuse and neglect.

(Welfare and Institutions Code 18982.2)

Forum for Interagency Cooperation

To provide a forum for interagency cooperation, we convene the **Prevent Child Abuse Network** (Network) on the second Thursday of each month. Any organization, agency or individual interested in child abuse prevention, intervention and treatment is invited to attend. It is in these meetings that attendees learn about the programs and resources available for children and families. Often the meeting includes an agency “spotlight” which provides an agency with the opportunity to present to the Network information on the agency’s programs and services, as well as the process for referring children and families to them. One of the goals of the Network is to minimize duplication of services while maximizing interagency cooperation and collaboration.

Network attendance included over 104 individuals. Over 60 agencies and organizations were represented, including: Children’s Bureau, Human Options, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, the Social Services Agency/Children and Family Services (SSA/CFS), the Health Care Agency (HCA), Orangewood Children’s Foundation, the Child Abuse Prevention Center, the Juvenile Justice Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, CASA, Western Youth Services, Olive Crest, Child Guidance Center, City of Irvine, the Department of Education (OCDE), CSP and over 40 others.

In addition to the Network, we formed the **Child Abuse Prevention Roundtable** (Roundtable). The Roundtable membership consists of directors from specific children and family serving agencies: The Raise Foundation, Children’s Bureau, Orangewood Children’s Foundation, Human Options, Child Abuse Prevention Center, CASA, Canyon Acres, Child Guidance Center, and Western Youth Services. This is a new committee with a set membership. Additional agencies will be represented at the Roundtable as identified and invited by the current membership.

Orange County’s public agencies have a forum for interagency cooperation known as the Children’s Partnership, formerly known as the Children’s Services Coordinating Council. The Executive Director of The Raise Foundation is a member of this council representing the community-based organizations involved in child abuse prevention. The Roundtable was formed to provide a parallel forum made up of community-based organizations as an effective means of communication between public agencies and

the community-based ones. One of the purposes of this group is to identify gaps in services to children and families and to discuss ways to close these gaps. Another purpose is to examine existing services to determine “best practices” as well as to determine how to strengthen less effective services. Currently the Roundtable meets on the fourth Monday of each month. The recommendations made in this report come from the Child Abuse Prevention Roundtable.

Promoting Public Awareness/Encouraging Community Support

We promote public awareness in a variety of ways throughout the year. Our signature event is the **Blue Ribbon Child Abuse Prevention Month Kick-off** held recently on March 27th at the miniature train park in Costa Mesa. This “Celebrate the Family” family festival drew over 2,000 attendees. Along with the train rides, activities included bounce houses, a climbing wall, face painting and crafts. The Junior League hosted an egg hunt for the children. The Orange County Fire Authority brought its Emergency Preparedness Vehicle. The Sheriff’s Department displayed its Hummer tactical unit. Over twenty exhibitors provided information to parents on the resources and services available through their agencies. Throughout the event, continuous live entertainment performed on stage.

The event also included a short program. Our key note speaker this year was Sheriff Sandra Hutchens. City of Costa Mesa Mayor, Alan Mansoor, opened the ceremony with a welcome to the crowd. Mike Ryan, Deputy Director for Children and Family Services, read the names of the eleven children who lost their lives to child abuse in 2009 and spoke about Orange County’s child abuse prevention efforts. Duane Cox, Administrator for the School and Community Services Division of the Department of Education, standing in for Superintendent Bill Habermehl, presented the awards to the county-wide art contest winners.

Other public awareness activities included the distribution of informational/educational materials at the **Festival of Children**, the **Orange County Fair** (through the Sheriff’s Department’s booth), as well as at **community health fairs** in the cities of Stanton, Anaheim, Huntington Beach and Lake Forest.

Our **Child Safe I.D. Program** also provides us with an opportunity to promote public awareness. This program provides parents with a card the size of a driver’s license. On the front of the card is a picture of their child and indentifying information, such as the child’s height, weight, hair color and eye color. The card also includes the child’s fingerprint. The back of the card provides the telephone number for the reporting of child abuse. When we give these cards to the parent(s), we include additional awareness/educational materials. This year we distributed 550 Child Safe I.D. Cards.

On a limited basis, Raise Foundation staff provided training to mandated reporters as requested. **Mandated Reporter Training** was provided to the staff of Pretend City, Doctors Ambulance, El Jardin Childcare Center, St. Joseph’s Ballet and others.

In addition to these general public awareness efforts, we also promote awareness on specific issues. Our **This Side Up Campaign** promotes safe sleeping practices and provides information/education about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Our This Side Up onesies, with the message “This Side Up” on the front and safe sleeping tips on the back available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, are being distributed by judges to new mothers who come before the bench in the Juvenile Court. We continue to

promote awareness of the **Safe Surrender Law** through posters, a video and public service announcements.

The Raise Foundation distributes a quarterly newsletter, *The Blue Ribbon*. We maintain a website that offers information on child abuse prevention and provides our partner agencies with another place to post job openings. We can also be found on the social media site, Facebook Cause at <http://apps.facebook.com/causes/398053> and on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/user/398053>.

Training of Professionals

The Raise Foundation presents its **22nd Annual Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Conference** on April 26, 2010. This year's conference, entitled "Strengthening Families," is offered in partnership with the Department of Education, the Health Care Agency, the Social Services Agency, the American Academy of Pediatrics – California Chapter 4, the Child Abuse Services Team (CAST), Strategies, the University of California Irvine, and VNA Home Health Systems. Held at the Department of Education's conference center in Costa Mesa, the Keynote Speaker was Dr. Lorraine E. Fox. Workshops include: Drugs and Children in the OC, Trauma: The Forgotten Issue in Out of Home Care, Understanding Attachment Disorders and How to Work with Them, Bullying From A to Z, etc. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available to social workers (MSW), therapists (LMFT), psychologists and nurses.

During the year, training for professionals is provided periodically at the Network meetings. At our meeting in October, Dr. Joshua Taylor presented a training entitled "**Message Boards and Adolescent Trauma: Depression, Self-Injury and Suicide**." Tina Fietsam, LCSW, presented a training entitled "**Anger Outbursts/Anger Management: Why it happens and what you can do**" at the February meeting. CEUs were provided at each of these trainings.

Representing the Child Abuse Prevention Community

The Raise Foundation represents the child abuse prevention community through its membership on the following committees and councils: the Child Death Review Team (co-chair), the Children's Partnership, CAST Advisory Council, Family to Family Child Welfare Redesign Committee, Safe from the Start Advisory Council, Child Care Development and Planning Council, and the Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity Committee (co-chair).

On March 25, 2010, we hosted, in partnership with CASA, a Community Forum on Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity at the Civic Center in the City of Stanton.

The executive director of The Raise Foundation, under contract with the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), serves as the regional coordinator for the Far Southern Regional Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils. The Far Southern Region includes the County of Orange, Imperial County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County and San Diego County.

Direct Services

Family Resource Centers

The Raise Foundation provides services in six FaCT funded Family Resource Centers (FRC) and one FRC funded by Mission Hospital. At four of the FRCs we provide the Information and Resource Specialist: Oakview (Huntington Beach), Magnolia Park (Garden Grove), Anaheim Harbor (Anaheim) and CHEC (San Juan Capistrano). We are the lead agency and provide the FRC Coordinator at the South Orange County FRC (SOC FRC) in Lake Forest. In the Stanton FRC, we provide the Family Advocate, a clinical director and counselors. For the Corbin FRC in Santa Ana, we provide services to foster and adoptive parents, as well as relative caregivers.

Noel Nicolas, Family Advocate at the Stanton FRC, first met with the Family in November. The mother and her children had walked into the FRC looking for assistance with food. The family is made up of two female children, ages 5 and 1, mom and dad. The 1 year old had been in the hospital twice for pneumonia. The doctor learned that the family was living in a garage without proper insulation where they slept on the floor. The doctor warned the family that if they continued living in such a situation, the child might die. The father began working a second full-time job. Mr. Nicolas assisted the family with food. The family moved into a two bedroom, one bath mobile home, but their new residence was empty. Mr. Nicolas, using The Raise Foundation's Basic Needs program, provided the family with an area rug, towels, blankets, dishes, a small kitchen table, a twin bed and a queen bed with bedding. The family has stabilized now. The father continues to work two full-time jobs. The mother stays at home to care for the children. The 1 year old has not had another trip to the hospital.

Noel Nicolas has provided Family Advocacy services to over 180 families this year.

Parent Education

The Raise Foundation's Parent Education Program consists of three components. The largest of these is the six-week parenting education series attended primarily by mothers but also some fathers. The series includes topics such as "How to Communicate with Your Child" and "Discipline not Punishment: Creating Positive Behavioral Change in your Children." This series has been attended by parents from 22 Orange County cities. The Parent Education Program is offered in Family Resource Centers, schools, in faith-based facilities, etc.

Ingrid Leyton-Rios, our Parent Education Coordinator, also offers single workshops on a wide range of parenting topics, as requested. By far, the most requested topic, discipline, is in response to the parents' most frequently asked question, "How can I get my child to mind me?" Ms. Leyton-Rios has had remarkable success with parents on this challenging topic. Drawing the distinction between discipline and punishment has helped many parents reframe how they think about "getting their child to mind."

"Dear Ms. Leyton-Rios:

Orange County Head Start, Inc. is an organization that prides itself in providing services to children and families of diverse backgrounds. As you probably observed during your visit, our parents are eager to learn and appreciate any guidance that is made available to them.

I'd like to thank you for your time and insightful information provided during the parenting classes offered at our center. The children's growth and development will benefit from strategies and ideas that were recommended.

We were so happy and I am learning so much from the class, was one comment from a satisfied parent. She said that her child is very difficult, but has improved since using a positive approach which she learned from the parenting class.

We look forward to having you visit our center in the near future.

Sincerely,

Angelica Alaniz
Orange County Head Start, Inc.
Centralia Center Director

"To: Raise Foundation

April 20, 2010

Thank you for providing Parenting Classes along with childcare. I'm a single mother of two children ages four and one. I cannot begin to tell you how much your six week Parenting Class has helped and taught me such as: About you, Parenting Style, Discipline, Responsibility, Sex Education, and Stress and Nutrition. The notebook we received along with all the articles and information packets that were given to all parents. The DVD's that we viewed in class had wealth of information on them. Ingrid Leyton our Instructor was absolutely wonderful, always answered any questions that were asked and she made herself available before and after class if you needed to speak to her in private. **I'm grateful and thankful to all Company's and Organizations big and small, their donations have made this parenting class possible. This Parenting Class has made me a better parent to my children.**

Thank you,
Sally D."

The second component of our Parent Education Program is similar to the one above except the classes are for fathers only. Robert Cortez teaches these classes which resemble a father's support group more than a traditional class. Many fathers have requested to continue meeting on an on-going basis after the six week course is completed.

Finally, the newest addition to our Parent Education Program is an innovative program entitled Mentoring Moms. Currently this program is available only at the CHEC FRC in San Juan Capistrano. Mission Hospital identifies new mothers who are leaving the hospital with their newborns only to be isolated and without support at home. The mothers are referred to our counselor at the CHEC FRC, Pilar Aguero. Ms. Aguero recruits and trains veteran mothers and matches them as mentors to the new mothers. The “mentoring mom” meets at least weekly in the home of the new mom, providing support, offering guidance and relieving the sense of isolation many of these new moms feel. The commitment is for six months, but many mentors have continued to provide support for their assigned new mom beyond this time frame. This has proven to be such a successful approach to assisting at-risk mothers that we hope to begin expanding the Mentoring Moms program throughout Orange County in 2010-11.

Health Access

Funded by the Children’s and Families Commission, The Raise Foundation’s Health Access Team is housed at the South Orange County FRC. This team of Health Access Advocates supports families by helping them enroll their children in available health insurance programs, by helping the parents identify a “medical home” for health care needs rather than the emergency room, and by insuring that the children are current on their immunizations. The Health Access Team also provides nutrition classes and community health fairs with developmental screenings.

Caring for Kids – Basic Needs

One of the factors known to prevent child abuse is concrete support in times of need. We call our program to help parents meet the basic needs of their families the **Caring for Kids Community Program**.

The Caring For Kids Community Program provided over \$389,000 in in-kind donations, e.g. food, personal and household products, etc., from July 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. In January alone, the program distributed over 4,000 pounds of food to over 450 households. Over 35 businesses, schools, and stores support this program with in-kind donations, food drives, and, occasionally, gift cards for families. Individuals in the community also contribute to the success of the program with their in-kind and monetary donations.

Businesses and/or individuals make in-kind donations of food or products. These donations may be received weekly, quarterly, or on a one-time basis as determined by the donor. For instance, each week The Raise Foundation staff picks up donations from two Bed, Bath and Beyond stores, two Pottery Barn stores and one Pottery Barn for Kids store. Also weekly, we pick up bakery products from one Costco and canned food and other staples from the Second Harvest Food Bank. On a quarterly basis, we receive donations from Office Depot. In addition, businesses and individuals provide donations of items such as furniture, children’s items (diapers, strollers, cribs, etc.) on an “as available” basis.

The items are picked up, sorted and maintained/displayed in our warehouse. These products are made available to any Orange County agency or organization that serves at-risk children and families.

Donations include linens, comforters, kitchen items, small and large appliances, furniture, baby items, rugs, curtains, bathroom items, towels, personal hygiene products, dishes, cooking utensils, blankets, as well as food.

Over forty agencies have distributed these goods and products this year to the children and families they serve. In February alone, more than 129 new, first time families (a total of 557 family members) received a donation of a basic needs and/or household item from this program.

A member of the Health Access Team (funded by the Children and Families Commission, aka Prop 10) housed at the Magnolia Park FRC in Garden Grove (funded by the Social Services Agency/FaCT) was helping a family sign the children up for health insurance. While in the family's home, she had an opportunity to meet the children. What she discovered was that the 11 year girl in the home was actually a niece living there with her aunt and uncle and two cousins. The little girl's father is deceased. Her mother was recently deported. The family lives on \$400 a month in Buena Park.

When asked what she wanted for Christmas, the little girl began to cry. She said that what she really wanted was to have hearing aids so she could hear again. At school, the school loans her hearing aids, but she is not allowed take them home with her.

The Health Access Team worker related this story to Joanne Stewart, the Caring for Kids Community Program Coordinator for The Raise Foundation (a community-based organization in partnership with the Social Services Agency and the Commission). Through our Caring for Kids Community Program we contacted an audiologist who agreed to work with the little girl and her family to get the testing and the hearing aids needed.

Thanks to the Children and Families Commission, the Social Services Agency, the Magnolia Park Family Resource Center, The Raise Foundation, and a generous community member, this 11 year old now has the gift of hearing again.

It's wonderful when the system that is designed to help struggling families actually works perhaps beyond even its own expectations.

Resources In Motion (RIM)

Our newest program is also our most ambitious. Access to services is a critical factor in the prevention of child abuse. Many families live in neighborhoods where their access to services is limited by either a lack of transportation or the fear of leaving the neighborhood. In a more perfect world, every distressed neighborhood would have its own family resource center. In the meantime, we are bringing services to underserved neighborhoods through our RIM mobile services program. The RIM program is not a substitute for a family resource center. Rather, it is a supplement to the FRC platform that allows similar, though more limited services to reach many more families.

The RIM mobile unit will provide core services which include: parent support groups, family advocacy, domestic violence outreach and awareness, nutrition classes, workshops on diabetes, obesity and other health issues, as well as basic needs items such as food and household products.



This is how it will work. The RIM Project committee will identify up to twelve neighborhoods with the greatest need. RIM will identify the most accessible site to station the mobile unit. When RIM arrives, the goal will be to make the event as festive and desirable as possible in order to encourage neighborhood participation. Canopies will be set up for the display and distribution of materials and to provide an identifiable space for providing classes. In addition to the classes/workshops, RIM staff will engage the neighborhood children in recreational activities. Storage bins of basic needs products will be made available. RIM will stay on-site for 3 to 4 hours with each visit, eventually traveling to two sites per day, three days per week. Each site will be visited twice per month. This means that three days each week, RIM will be delivering services to established locations. This leaves an additional two days per week, Saturdays, and those months with a fifth week for flexible scheduling on an “as needed” basis. Months such as November and December, because of the holidays, might have an adjusted schedule. Conservatively, RIM projects serving 30 individuals at each stop. Assuming six stops per week for 48 weeks, the number served by this project would be at least 8,640. This would not be an unduplicated count since some individuals might participate in multiple programs. Some individuals might participate in the project every time it is in their neighborhood.

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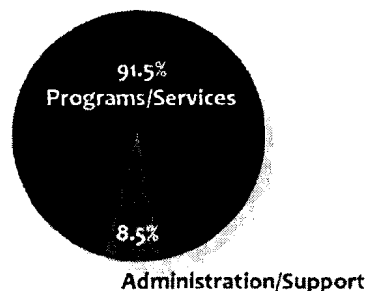
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Fiscal Responsibility



We pride ourselves on responsible stewardship of our \$1.6 million budget.

Recommendations

1. The adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” may be truer today than at any time in the past fifty years. The Family Resource Center Platform is still the most effective means of providing a wide range of child abuse prevention services in this county. Please continue your enthusiastic support of this preventive services platform.
2. As of April 9, 2010, seventy-two (72) children in the foster care system were either abducted or absent without leave (AWOL), which I assume means they had run away from their foster home or group home. Of these, fifty-four (54) have been missing for over six months. This is a recipe for child exploitation. We recommend the formation of a committee to review current policies and practices related this issue. The committee should make whatever recommendations it deems appropriate to address the problem of AWOL foster children. The committee should include representatives from the Department of Children and Family Services, the Juvenile Courts, the Probation Department, CASA and law enforcement.
3. While we agree that, in general, congregate care is less desirable as a placement option for children than relative care or foster home care, a well-designed group home program may be the best option for older teens. San Pasqual Academy, a residential high school for foster youth in San Diego County, represents a successful model worthy of consideration. It is not in the best interest of a child to be “bounced” from foster home to foster home until the child ages out of the system. We recommend that the Board of Supervisors support a spectrum of care for our foster children, from relatives to residential.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell Brammer

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Executive Director