



STOP SHORT OF ADDICTION

Since 1999, **STOP SHORT OF ADDICTION** has provided state-certified alcohol and drug services to Orange County youth and families. This unique substance abuse treatment program targets youth offenders, ages 12 to 18, which are in the early stages of drug use. The overwhelming success of STOP SHORT of Addiction is due, in large part, to the fact that we incorporate families into our program services. Together, youth and their families gain the tools needed to prevent them from regressing back to unhealthy and destructive behaviors. Parental participation in the program is mandatory.

STOP SHORT of Addiction is based on our award-winning SHORTSTOP program. It serves as an effective alternative to incarceration, providing education to both youth and parents on the legal aspects of drug-related offenses and the negative lifestyle consequences of substance abuse. Parents gain a better understanding of the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with drug use. As a result, they are better able to recognize and address any future problems as soon as possible.



The Problem

Studies show that unless youth are taught early the consequences of crime, their crimes will escalate. This is certainly the case in Orange County, where 69% of juvenile probationers go on to break the law again. All youth are potentially at risk for delinquency, but our Latino youth are particularly vulnerable. While Latinos represent 47% of the county's youth, they account for 75% of the youth in substance abuse treatment, 87% of teen mothers, 64% of high school dropouts, and 96% of youth gang members.

Likewise, substance abuse continues to be a significant threat to the health and safety of our community. Substance use is linked with a range of serious social, emotional and health problems. When kids use alcohol and drugs, they have a much greater likelihood of coming in contact with the juvenile justice system. For example, in Orange County, the legal system accounts for over 40% of the youth that are referred to substance abuse treatment. Once youth have had contact with the juvenile justice



system, they have a significantly greater chance of being incarcerated as an adult.

The importance of early intervention programs is indisputable. To meet these needs, STOP SHORT of Addiction partners with the Orange County Probation Department, local police departments and school districts to reach at risk youth early. As such, we are able to prevent youth delinquency and substance use from escalating into chronic criminal behavior and drug addiction.

The Solution

STOP SHORT OF ADDICTION is administered by bilingual/bicultural therapists, with assistance from trained legal experts, the Sheriff's Coroner and local law enforcement narcotics officers. Guest speakers are also provided from the Youth Guidance Center and Volunteers on Parole. Program services are offered in both English and Spanish. STOP SHORT of Addiction provides **youth and their family members** with the following:

- *Clinical Intake Assessment (1 hour)*
The intake gathers important information about youth drug history, emotional stability, at-risk behaviors, family dynamics and school functioning.
- *Three Group Substance Abuse Treatment Sessions (four hours each)*
Program sessions focus on providing legal education, healthy communication and coping skills, group therapy, educational materials and helping youth maintain a drug-free lifestyle. Session highlights include visiting a courtroom to hear incarcerated minors discuss how delinquent behavior and drug

use led them to criminal activity and incarceration, a County Coroner presentation illustrating the biological and psychological effects of drug abuse, and a panel of recovered teens that discuss making the choice to stay drug free.

- *Mandatory Homework Assignments*

Another critical part of STOP SHORT of Addiction is what happens at home:

- Reading substance abuse prevention materials.
- Family communications exercises.
- Interviewing a working professional in the community, to encourage the exploration of future career paths and positive life choices.
- Multiple writing and goal setting assignments.
- Attending two AA or NA meetings.

- *Individualized Restorative Justice Plan*

A personalized plan is created for each youth that requires financial restitution, victim-apology letters

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The Solution

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and community service hours. On average, each of our youth completes 21 hours of community service hours during the course of the program.

- **Family Therapy Services (up to eight, one hour sessions)**
Family therapy is available as needed, and as resources allow. Our evidence-based Brief Strategic Family Therapy model has proven effective in increasing protection against youth substance use and providing the tools to overcome individual and family problems.
- **Exit Plan and Case Management/Referral Services**
As needed, youth and families are linked to additional substance abuse treatment and behavioral health services. Our partner agencies include La Familia, Phoenix House, Human Options, Planned Parenthood, AIDS Service Foundation, Working Wardrobes, and Santa Ana Parks and Recreation.

To date, evaluation studies have shown that STOP SHORT of Addiction makes a measureable difference in the lives of local youth and families and to the well-being of our community. The results of our most recent recidivism study with the Probation Department indicate that 92% of our program participants are successfully diverted from the legal system for at least one year. In addition:

87% of youth participants remain drug free at least six months after program completion.

97% of parents report increased knowledge of drugs and addiction.

84% of youth report being more aware of the dangers of drug use.

87% of youth report changing their relationships with drug/alcohol using friends.

Our Success

“THE FIRST NIGHT in the courtroom I didn’t know what to expect. When I saw the orange jumpsuit I thought it was crazy. I don’t ever want to wear that ever again! I didn’t like how I was being questioned by the Santa Ana cop, but it made me think about what I’m doing. Having to talk about my mistakes in front of everyone wasn’t easy. My favorite part about the program was the second night of STOP SHORT of Addiction where we talked to a therapist. He heard what we had to say and talked to us about finding other ways to have a good time without the use of drugs.”

-STOP SHORT of Addiction youth

LISA WAS FIFTEEN when she got caught drinking at school and was referred to the Probation Department. As part of her probation Lisa was required to attend the STOP SHORT of Addiction program. During her intake, it became clear that a deep pain was underlying her actions. At the age of eight, she had been sexually abused. Her mother reported the abuse when it happened and made sure Lisa had counseling. And for many years after that, Lisa managed to get by. But when she started having flashbacks of her abuse, alcohol and marijuana quickly became her way of coping.

For over a year, Lisa kept these secrets from her mother. Thankfully, that changed when she entered STOP SHORT of Addiction. As she opened up to the STOP SHORT of Addiction case manager, the walls she had built to protect herself came down. It was clear that she desperately needed more help. So, the case manager and her probation officer added a referral for specialized sexual abuse treatment to the list of Lisa’s probation requirements. “I know I wasn’t making good decisions and I was hanging out with the wrong crowd. I couldn’t see how I was dealing with my feelings until now. I really felt the case manager was listening to me and really cared for me... I felt I could trust her and share my feelings of sadness, guilt, and anger. I hope that this program and the additional counseling that I will be receiving will help me. I’m confident and ready to do whatever it takes to change.

-STOP SHORT of Addiction participant’s name has been changed

“THIS PROGRAM GAVE ME a chance to think about my future and appreciate what I have. I learned about the effects of drugs and how deadly they are. I think this is a great program because it gives you a second chance and it’s a reality check for the people like me.”

-STOP SHORT of Addiction youth

Investing in the Future of Orange County

This valuable program is made possible through financial support from donors who believe and invest in our goals.

STOP SHORT OF ADDICTION Goals for Youth

- Reduced alcohol and drug use
- Increased legal education
- Reduced delinquent behavior and recidivism
- Improved pro-social activities and relationships with friends
- Improved family relationships

STOP SHORT OF ADDICTION Goals for Parents

- Increased parenting skills
- Increased positive communication and problem solving skills
- Increased legal education

Community Benefits

- Strengthened linkages to continuing care services

Financial support is needed to cover the costs of STOP SHORT of Addiction, including the cost for youth and family members to participate. No family is turned away if they cannot afford to pay the program fees. Additional support is needed each year to meet the ever increasing costs of funding Justice Center fees, program materials, and related program expenses.

When you give to the OCBF, your donation helps local youth to achieve their potential, empower people of all ages to lead healthier lives, and strengthen the bonds of family and community in Orange County.

Impact

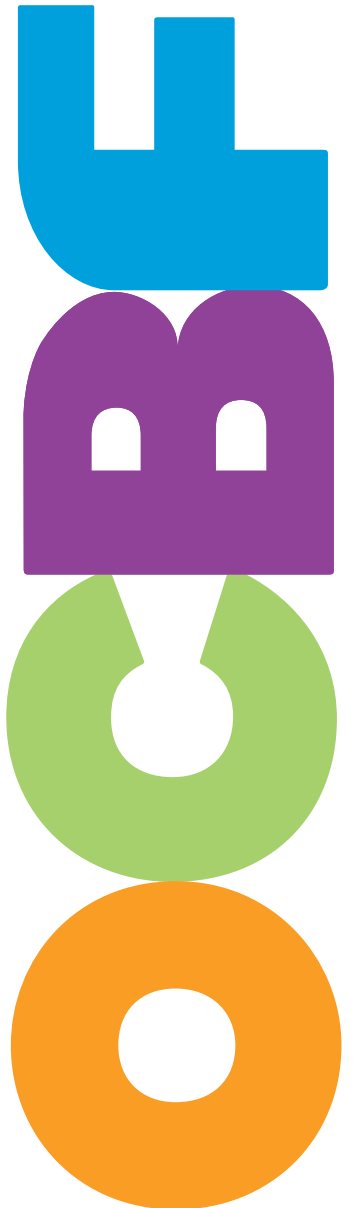


Each year, hundreds of youth and their parents are provided substance abuse education to promote drug-free lifestyles. Youth are deterred from a life of crime and families are stronger. The community benefits by having healthier citizens who are on the path to safer and brighter futures.

OCBF Empowering Youth to
Make Positive Choices
Orange County Bar Foundation

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ocbarfoundation.org



Mission Statement

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