

# OLIVE CREST®

Strong Families, Safe Kids

## Transforming Lives Campaign



ORANGE COUNTY'S NEW  
CHILDREN & FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER  
AND TEEN HOUSING

# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE SUFFERING

No child should have to live with heartbreaking abuse and neglect, always in constant fear of additional pain and suffering. Every child deserves a safe home and loving family. Sadly, this is not the case in our communities today.

Tragically, every day in America:

- 5 children die from abuse or neglect
- 1 in 7 children experience child abuse or neglect
- Every 10 seconds a case of child abuse is reported

In the five minutes that you are reading this, 30 new cases of abuse will have been reported.

## Teens Experiencing Homelessness

For Jasmine, turning 18 meant finding a place to sleep, not planning for college.

Every year, thousands of teens like her “age out” of the child welfare system. When they turn 18, they often end up alone, isolated, and needing a place to sleep. Living day by day becomes a challenge, and the anxiety takes a heavy toll on these young adults.



Although Jasmine felt old enough to take care of herself, she ended up on the horrible road to homelessness. She faced challenges that often come with feeling alone and unloved - suicidal tendencies, mental health issues, alcohol and substance abuse, or entering a life of exploitation.



## Left at Huntington Beach

Angie was just a young girl when her biological mother took her to Huntington Beach for an afternoon outing. Her mother told her she would be right back and left her at the lifeguard tower. Tragically, her mother abandoned her there and never returned. Even worse, her mom denied knowing Angie when the park rangers asked her to take her daughter home. This life-shattering event began Angie’s worst nightmare as an abandoned child.

*“I never told anyone what happened to me because I was just scared. I thought that maybe they were going to be ashamed of me for something I did.”*

-Angie

## The Harsh Reality

60% of teens who “age out” of the system are homeless within six months to one year.

60% of children from the child welfare system will at some point become incarcerated.

60% of children who are sex trafficked come from the child welfare system.

**Approximately 27,000 teens, between the ages of 12 and 24, are homeless or housing insecure in Orange County.** These teens now experience disproportionately higher rates of:

- Unemployment
- Homelessness
- Substance Abuse
- Dependence on Public Assistance
- Lower Educational Attainment
- Teen Pregnancy
- Incarceration
- Suicidal Tendencies

No teenager should have to live this way. Each child deserves the opportunity for a better life that includes higher education, affordable and safe housing, and career planning that leads to healthy and productive lives.



## What More Can Be Done? Expand Early Intervention and Build Teen Housing

By intervening prior to abuse or neglect;

- Olive Crest stabilizes and strengthens families in crisis, helping keep children safe and from entering the child welfare system.
- Olive Crest equips teens for successful futures, helping them rewrite their story and overcome the trauma they have endured in the early childhood years.

Therefore, Olive Crest plans to enhance programs and services in two significant ways:

1. **Expand/renovate our Children and Family Resource Center (CFRC)**
2. **Build a new Teen Apartment Complex** adjacent to our CFRC

These two life-changing projects will require working collectively with community partners to close gaps in services and provide a more streamlined approach in meeting the escalating needs of kids and families in Orange County.

## Investing in Saving and Changing Lives

**A \$10 Million campaign has been initiated to fund the expansion and building of these two important resources, including a \$1 million endowment fund for future maintenance.**

# OUR 2-FOLD INNOVATIVE APPROACH

One of the most significant factors leading to child abuse and neglect is isolation. Suffering families are often not connected to the support system and resources necessary to address their problems. Therefore, it is imperative that we are able to support more high-risk children, teens, and families with a lifeline of resources and provide the emergency services for their stability and growth.

## WHO WOULD YOU GO TO IF YOU WERE IN CRISIS?

### 1. ORANGE COUNTY'S STATE OF THE ART CHILDREN AND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Orange County's Children and Family Resource Center, once fully renovated and expanded, will not only link us to more broken families for immediate assistance, but also provide a comprehensive coordination of care. By connecting with these children, youth, and families, they will be linked to the resources needed to flourish in the community.

Updates and additions planned:

- **Expand the existing counseling center** to serve up to 350 individuals monthly. Currently we are serving 300 individuals per month, with a 20 to 30-day wait list.
- **A safe place for victims of human sex trafficking** where teenagers can come to find safety, use the computer lab, make private calls, and visit with counselors, who have been "trauma informed" trained. Additional resources include a laundry room, private shower, and pro bono legal help.
- **A youth drop-in center** will serve youth and teens who can drop in to access a computer or resources for leads on jobs, housing, and other vital information. This will also serve as a place for mentors and young adults to socialize and connect in a safe environment.
- **Expand and renovate the current Family Visitation Center** to create a home and family atmosphere where parents can develop their skills as they seek to reunify with their children. Currently we are limited to 9 families at a time, so expansion will allow us to serve more families. This expansion will include a kitchen for families to share a meal together.
- **Create a more usable space**, including atrium play area for children, prayer room, and coffee shop operated by foster teens. Innovative opportunities for children to play and learn and youth to expand their knowledge of business operations.

These updates will allow us to move high-risk children, youth, and families out of immediate crisis and into a community of support.



## WHEN WERE YOU READY FOR INDEPENDENCE?

### 2. BUILD A NEW TEEN HOUSING COMPLEX

- 23,000 youth "age out" of the child welfare system each year
- 20% will become instantly homeless (i.e., living in their car or on the streets)
- Nearly 500 youth in California are on a waiting list for supportive housing, over 100 are homeless while waiting

California is home to the largest child welfare population in the nation with approximately 60,000 children and young adults on any given day. Seventeen (17%) percent of those individuals are between the ages of 18 and 21. In California less than three (3%) percent of teens who have been in the child welfare system will graduate from college.

These teens are falling through the cracks of our society. For many, they are approaching adulthood with a sense of anxiety and overwhelming fear. Without housing and support programs, these teens are less likely to complete their education, find employment, and make healthy relational decisions.

Many of these teens are resilient despite the adversity they have faced. Every day, Olive Crest helps them begin to dream again and discover life with a purpose. Our goal is to see their unique strengths invested and their potential reached.

Olive Crest plans to expand its services by building a two-bedroom, 16-unit apartment complex adjacent to the Children and Family Resource Center.

In addition to stable housing, all teens living in our facilities must participate in Olive Crest's Operation Independence (OI) program. OI provides customized support to ensure college success, breakdown barriers to employment, and address emotional wounds that would otherwise be carried into adulthood.

OI's specialized program and services include:

- Personalized case management
- Mental health support
- Alcohol and substance abuse treatment
- Health care
- Cooking classes (with access to healthy and fresh food, and storage)
- Mentoring with caring adults
- Financial literacy
- Tutoring
- Career counseling/goal setting

These services address the individual needs of high-risk teens as they work toward self-sufficiency and adulthood, and we are proud to report that almost 90% of teens who participate in Operation Independence complete the program.

Rendering of the new 16-unit teen affordable housing complex at the current Olive Crest in Santa Ana location. The new facility will be donated and built by *RSI Dream Communities*.



Site Location: Olive Crest, 2130 East Fourth Street, Santa Ana, CA 92705



## SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FOR 50 MORE YEARS

Serving children and families has been at the heart of Olive Crest's mission for 50 years and will be for at least 50 more. We have learned the greatest common factors among children, young adults, and families in the child welfare system are social isolation, low socioeconomic status, and housing instability. By renovating and expanding the Children and Family Resource Center and building new affordable teen housing, we can bridge this gap and get ahead of abuse and neglect in Orange County. Together, we can ensure Child Abuse Stops Here.®

*"We humbly invite you to change the trajectory of a life as we strengthen, equip, and restore children, youth, and families. Frederick Douglass once said, 'It is easier to BUILD strong children than repair broken men.' We can build, together!"*

**Kerri Dunkelberger**  
Executive Director  
Olive Crest, Orange County

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**For more information, contact:**

Kerri Dunkelberger at [kerri-dunkelberger@olivecrest.org](mailto:kerri-dunkelberger@olivecrest.org)  
714.543.5437 ext.1164

2130 E. 4th St, Suite 200  
Santa Ana, CA 92705

[www.olivecrest.org/orange-county/](http://www.olivecrest.org/orange-county/)