



our
Orange County



A close-up, high-angle photograph of a young child's face. The child's eyes are closed, and their expression is peaceful. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of their skin and the length of their eyelashes. The background is a blurred blue and pink color.

It's Our Orange County

The dream of a more vibrant, prosperous Orange County is within our reach. To achieve it, we must understand and confront the difficult realities faced by too many of our residents.

Through ConnectOC, we are making local knowledge and networks available as never before—to all who want to make a difference in Orange County. And we're showing the promising approaches that are making an impact today. Already, we are making strides toward the dream we share for Orange County.

In the coming months, this information will help shape the ways we plan, act and give back as a community. No single individual or organization can do it alone. The Orange County Community Foundation invites you to learn, be inspired and get involved!

Our Orange County Your Community Foundation



The Orange County Community Foundation helps people support the causes they care about most.

We collaborate with individuals, families and businesses to match their charitable interests with our community's needs. We strengthen local nonprofits through grants and supportive resources. We incubate new ideas and bring leaders together to address our community's most pressing needs.

Since our inception, OCCF has granted **\$225 million** to meet needs in Orange County, across the nation, and around the world – with \$190 million granted in the last decade alone. ConnectOC will take our impact even further.

Ready to make a difference? We can help.

Visit oc-cf.org today!



ConnectOC shares local knowledge vital to the county's well-being—and suggests strategies and opportunities to make life better for all of us who call Orange County home.

We invite you to explore ConnectOC.org for eye-opening facts of life in our community today—and opportunities for us to work together to build a brighter Orange County.

Acknowledgements

ConnectOC reflects the combined efforts of many dedicated organizations and individuals. We recognize the following for their invaluable contributions:

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MCKINSEY & COMPANY

Lynn Dorsey Bleil, Partner

Todd Harris

Paul Kagoo

LEADERSHIP CABINET

Marcia Adler	Bill Habermehl
Dick Allen	Julie Hill
Randy Barth	Ed Kacic
Vicki Booth	Timothy J. Kay
Supervisor Bill Campbell	Paula Mathis
Ranney Draper	Mike Mussallem
Sister Regina Fox	Michael Stephens
Kim Goll	Wallace Walrod

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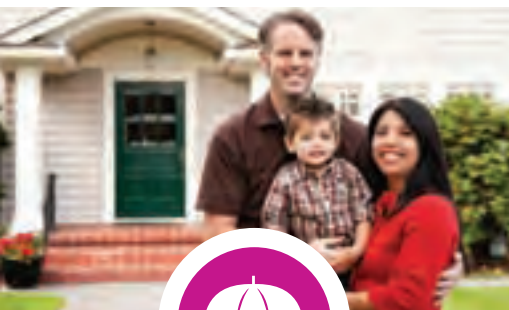
Orange County is a community of contrast.

A dream destination for visitors and residents alike, Orange County has much to offer. Sandy beaches. Picturesque mountains. Thriving business and culture. This community's wealth of natural and human resources is unique and well recognized.

Alongside the dream, however, lives a more difficult reality in Orange County. Not far from opulent homes, families struggle to find shelter for the night. In the shadow of luxury spas, there are men, women and children who can only

hope for good health, with no insurance and nowhere to go for medical care. Amid bright-eyed scholars are thousands of children missing basic essentials like attending preschool, mastering language skills and even eating regular meals. These disparities have deepened with a challenged economy and rising cost of living.

The Orange County we dream of is ours for the making. But first, we must understand and address these critical realities.



SAFETY NET

NEARLY HALF OF OC STUDENTS LIVE IN FAMILIES MAKING THE EQUIVALENT OF **\$40,000 or less** PER YEAR (FOR A FAMILY OF 4)



HEALTH & WELLNESS

1 in 3 ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS IS UNINSURED OR UNDERINSURED



EDUCATION

only 55% OF ORANGE COUNTY THIRD GRADERS READ AT A PROFICIENT LEVEL

THREE CRITICAL ISSUES



SAFETY NET

High cost of living and unemployment create extraordinary challenges for people living in deep pockets of poverty adjacent to great affluence



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Families who struggle with basic needs are more likely to suffer from poor health and well-being, which negatively impacts children's educational achievement



EDUCATION

Lack of education drives lower incomes and limited ability to meet basic needs, creating a negative cycle that can continue for generations

The future of Orange County depends on our success in addressing three critical areas of need that today drive down quality of life for thousands of residents and our community as a whole: the **safety net** for our community's most vulnerable, the **health and wellness** of children and families, and the **education** of our youth.

RESEARCH BREAKS IT DOWN...

Community needs in the areas of safety net, health and education are complex and entrenched, in large part because they are highly interrelated. High cost of living and low-paying jobs leave many without sufficient means. And it's hard to work or learn while hungry, hurting or homeless. Unemployed adults and under-educated children are greatly challenged to find pathways out of poverty.

McKinsey & Company analyzed multiple sets of data and summarized key findings on these issues that together have serious implications for the long-term health of Orange County.

...TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD IT UP.

Now is the time to work together on some of the most difficult, complex and interconnected issues facing Orange County. To do this, we need to understand these issues deeply, along with the effective strategies and solutions that are already moving the needle in significant ways.

These approaches give us hope and the beginning of a blueprint for creating an Orange County that reflects vibrancy and possibility for all.

THE ISSUES ARE CONNECTED. THE SOLUTION INVOLVES YOU.

LEARN about key community issues and real-life solutions at ConnectOC.org/learn

FIND organizations and individuals leading the way. Get connected through ConnectOC Nonprofit Central, an online database hub launching soon at ConnectOC.org/find

SHARE your own community stories and ideas at [Facebook.com/OCCCommunityFdn](https://www.facebook.com/OCCCommunityFdn) and on Twitter using the hashtag **#ConnectOC**

ACT on your passion for our community today! Call OCCF at **949-553-4202** to learn how you can make a difference.





SAFETY NET

Hanging by a Thread

Outside appearances paint Orange County as a vibrant community filled with happy, active families and a thriving economy. But what you don't see on the surface tells the tale for thousands of Orange County residents who are unemployed or underemployed, homeless or insecure in their housing, and hungry or hard-pressed to find adequate food for themselves or their children.

Significant income disparity coupled with a high cost of living challenges many families and individuals to meet even their most basic needs. Multiple families often share crowded living spaces. Seventy percent of Orange County's homeless are families with children. And one in five Orange County children lacks a reliable source of healthy food.

NOT WORKING

Lack of steady, sufficient employment can create immediate and generational poverty, increasing risk for low education levels, poor nutrition and health, and increased incidence of family violence.

Those who lose their jobs are not only more likely to have financial difficulties, but also are more likely to report poor physical health, depression, anxiety, insomnia and related disorders. These problems can arise at the same time a worker is losing employment-based health insurance.

Nearly half of OC students live in families making the equivalent of **\$40,000 or less** per year for a family of four



Source: Orange County Children's Partnership: The 17th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County, 2011
<http://ochealthinfo.com/docs/occp/report2011/>

Areas with high unemployment create pockets of extreme poverty surrounded by affluence, a startling juxtaposition within a single county. Struggling families are faced with the same grocery, gasoline and housing costs as higher-income neighbors, creating an ever-widening gulf of disparity.

NO PLACE TO CALL HOME

A home is a sanctuary, the ultimate symbol of safety and security for many Americans. Yet in Orange County, high housing costs combined with lower income means that too many residents are homeless or live in unstable housing.

A minimum-wage worker must work 133 hours a week—three full-time jobs—to afford to rent a one-bedroom apartment in Orange County. To make ends meet, many households are forced into double and triple occupancies. More than 26,000 Orange County children live in unstable housing, a number that is increasing each year.

1 in 5 CHILDREN is not certain of his or her next meal



Source: Community Action Partnership of Orange County: Who are the poor?
<http://www.capoc.org/awareness/index.html>

HUNGER PAINS

In a county known for its affluence, a shocking number of Orange County residents go to bed hungry—and most distressing of all, many are young children. Fundamental to brain and body development, proper nutrition is essential for growing bodies and minds. Unfortunately it is a “luxury” that too many Orange County families can't afford.

Nearly half of our county's students—almost 222,000 children—receive free or reduced price lunch. And for many, scant resources at home make their school lunch the most nutritious meal of the day.



Source: County of Orange: Orange County 2012 Community Indicators
http://cams.ocgov.com/Web_Publisher/Agenda04_03_2012_files/images/000112-000414A.PDF

Moving the Needle

We can offer greater security and hope by strengthening the safety net for our community's most vulnerable children and families.



▲ Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County



FAMILIES FORWARD

Families Forward provides safety net services to families in Orange County who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Rather than simply providing temporary shelter, the organization supplies the tools for families to retain their dignity and become independent, productive residents of the community.

Last year, Families Forward served 126 families and 395 individuals through homeless prevention programs, and helped thousands more through its food pantry program, career coaching and other services.

What We Can Do

IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

With increased vocational training and relevant job skills, more Orange County residents will have the tools they need for success.

Career advancement training

Additional training for unemployed or underemployed individuals can help them qualify for positions with a sustainable wage.

Technical education and training

To meet specific hiring needs, vocational training for both high school students and adults can be tailored to the unique growth industries in Orange County.

Job search skills

By strengthening their job search skills—including English proficiency—and promoting better use of existing job search resources, we can help more Orange County residents find meaningful, sustainable employment.

PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO HOUSING

By increasing resources for individuals and families facing homelessness, and improving access to affordable housing, we can ensure a safe haven for vulnerable children and families in Orange County.

Prevent homelessness

Identifying and bringing supportive services to families at risk can help them avert a crisis before it occurs.

Emergency response

Supportive services tailored to meet individual needs can ensure a successful transition to permanent housing.

Permanent housing

Improved access to affordable, permanent housing lessens the burden on shelters and helps Orange County residents retain their dignity.

INCREASE ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Improving access to nutritious foods can reduce hunger and improve health throughout our county.

Expand capacity of programs addressing food insecurity

Improved countywide access to nutritious and affordable foods for vulnerable populations means no one—young or old—has to go hungry.

Outreach and education

Increased awareness and education about existing food resources help reach those in greatest need.

Meal services

Increasing the capacity of food distribution programs and meal service providers at locations throughout the county can help individuals with limited access, including transportation barriers.

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SENIORSERV

Since 1967, SeniorServ has been at the forefront of creating programs and services that reduce hunger and improve wellness for impoverished seniors in Orange County. These services often provide the only regular human contact these seniors have.

Core safety net programs include Meals on Wheels for homebound older adults, the Senior Lunch Program that provides a hot, nutritious lunch at 26 senior centers and adult day care.





HEALTH & WELLNESS

Failure to Thrive

Poor health impairs learning ability and quality of life, hurts productivity and drains family savings. In Orange County, serious health issues for some threaten the well-being of the entire community.

Orange County ranks as one of the healthiest counties in the United States overall. But a closer look shows significant disparities between affluent and impoverished areas. Research shows residents in challenged communities bear a greater burden of illness, suffer from poor nutrition and exercise habits, and struggle to provide for the basic needs of their families. These deficits diminish the quality of life for our county as a whole.

1 in 3 Orange County residents is uninsured or underinsured

Source: UCLA: California Health Interview Survey, 2009
<http://www.chis.ucla.edu/main/DQ3/geographic.asp>

HOLES IN THE SYSTEM

Access to quality, affordable health care is essential to improve and maintain overall community health. But the economic downturn coupled with rising unemployment has left one in six Orange County residents uninsured and another one in six underinsured.

People without adequate insurance coverage often defer medical care, leading to more serious ailments. And most uninsured individuals—many of whom are unemployed—are not financially prepared to handle a catastrophic illness.

EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS

For many Orange County residents, lack of access to nutritious foods, high stress levels, extreme time constraints and a poor understanding of nutrition lead to obesity and increased risk of serious health problems.

Childhood obesity is causing a broad range of health problems previously not seen until adulthood, such as high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes and elevated blood cholesterol levels. Additionally, obese children are more likely to become obese adults with even more severe weight-related health issues.

ALL TOLD

112,000 youth are overweight in Orange County



IN HARM'S WAY

In a community that prides itself on being safe and welcoming, thousands of Orange County children and families live in fear of violence at home or school.



Source: Orange County Children's Partnership: The 17th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County, 2011
<http://ochealthinfo.com/docs/occp/report2011/>

Nearly 40,000 incidents of child abuse are reported each year in Orange County—an average of two per classroom. And childhood bullying is a growing epidemic, touching one out of every seven students nationwide.

The physical and emotional scars of childhood abuse can last a lifetime, leading to mental health problems, substance abuse and often a cycle of perpetuating violence. These issues negatively affect future work performance, education, interpersonal relationships and emotional and physical well-being.

Source: UCLA: California Health Interview Survey, 2009
<http://www.chis.ucla.edu/main/DQ3/geographic.asp>

Moving the Needle

By supporting organizations making a measurable difference we can improve the health and well-being of our entire community.



▲ CHOC Children's Down Syndrome Program



SHARE OUR SELVES (SOS)

Share Our Selves (SOS) emphasizes care of the whole person by providing comprehensive health care services for struggling Orange County residents. These services include free or low-cost medical and dental care in addition to social services, ensuring a seamless system of care to those in need.

Each year, SOS provides services that improve the health and well-being of thousands of Orange County children and families.

What We Can Do

INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

We can improve local health care capacity and help Orange County residents understand their options.

Availability of cost-effective services

Community-based and mobile clinics, sliding-scale services and affordable prescriptions help residents gain access to health care they would otherwise lack.

Outreach and education

Programs that provide outreach and education help uninsured and underinsured residents better utilize available health care resources.

Systems of care

Coordinated care is proven to enhance access to services, improve quality of care and lower overall medical costs.

PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

By providing more opportunities for increased physical activity and healthier eating habits, we can help Orange County residents stay well.

Greater physical activity

To reverse the epidemic of obesity, we must increase opportunities for children and adults to incorporate physical activity in their daily lives.

Healthy food and beverage choices

By working within schools, neighborhoods, health care settings and after-school programs, and partnering with local businesses, we can increase healthy food and beverage options and make selecting nutritious foods easier.

Nutrition education

More effective education and messaging about food and nutrition can help children and adults make healthy decisions.

PREVENT AND ADDRESS ABUSE AFFECTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

We can help end the cycle of family violence with effective prevention and victim support measures.

Abuse prevention

Educating children, teens and adults gives them the tools they need to help prevent abuse and to protect themselves if they are victimized.

Emergency shelters and transitional living

For victims of domestic violence, emergency shelter programs offer a lifeline of safety and support to break the cycle of violence.

Anti-bullying programs

Supporting anti-bullying programs for youth can stop the cycle of violence before it begins.

It's our Orange County. Get informed, be inspired and get involved at ConnectOC.org.

LATINO HEALTH ACCESS

Healthy eating can be difficult in neighborhoods inundated with fast food options on virtually every corner. In collaboration with Northgate Markets, Latino Health Access (LHA) provides education on maintaining a traditional Latino diet while preparing food in healthier ways.

In addition, LHA promotes healthy lifestyles by training community workers to educate their neighbors about diabetes, breast cancer, obesity, domestic violence, parenting and other serious public health problems affecting the community.





EDUCATION

Bridging the Gap

We like to think of our classrooms as level playing fields where any ambitious student can reach his or her full potential. But while a number of Orange County schools are beating the odds, many students are left on the wrong side of a growing achievement gap that becomes harder to overcome without sufficient resources and support.

Helping every child receive a high-quality education is one of the best ways to ensure a productive, successful future. But a startling number of Orange County students don't have access to the skills and resources they need to succeed.

1 in 4 Orange County students is not fluent in English



Source: California Department of Education Educational Demographics (Ed Data), Orange County 2010-2011 http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/App_Resx/EdDataClassic/fsTwoPanel.aspx?#bottom=/_layouts/EdDataClassic/profile.asp?tab=1&level=05&ReportNumber=16&County=30&fyr=1011

LOST IN TRANSLATION

Students who are still learning English face exceptional challenges. Not only must they learn a new language, but they must also balance the same course load as their English-fluent peers, putting them at a significant academic disadvantage.

Students who struggle with language barriers are far less likely to perform well in school and graduate from high school, significantly diminishing their future opportunities for success.

A LATE START

Research shows that children who attend high-quality preschool before beginning kindergarten are ahead in early reading and math skills, an advantage that continues through their K-12 schooling and into adulthood.

But in Orange County, there are only 43,341 licensed, center-based preschool spaces to accommodate 82,613 children—meaning that approximately 50 percent of preschool age children do not receive critical early childhood education.

Only 55 percent of Orange County third graders read at a proficient level



Source: California Department of Education, 2012 STAR Test Results - Orange County <http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2012/index.aspx>

SCHOOLS STRETCHED THIN

California's drastic budget cuts have stacked the deck against local schools—hitting hardest in communities already facing the greatest challenges. Larger class sizes and fewer school days mean educators have more challenges and less time to tackle the learning divide.

AVERAGE PER PUPIL \$



Average per pupil spending in Orange County is consistently lower than national and even state averages, with an **8 percent drop over the past three school years.**



Orange County Department of Education 2010-2011 Financial Report <http://www.ocde.us/Business/Pages/Reports-and-Publications.aspx>

The average class size in Orange County is 29 students — compared to a statewide average of 24 students per class. Larger class sizes reduce the frequency of student-teacher interaction and hands-on activities and hinder teachers' ability to identify learning difficulties in a timely manner. In areas with high English-learner populations, individualized attention becomes even more challenging.

Moving the Needle

We can help all Orange County students realize their full potential and get the educational start they need to be successful in school and in life.



▲ Jumpstart



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF HUNTINGTON VALLEY

The Twilight Education Project provides low income, English language-learning families an opportunity to acquire language and life skills that will help them thrive. School-age children receive tutoring in English literacy, homework help and computer lab access, while their parents gain proficiency in language associated with safety, medical care, transportation and work. Parents can also get hands-on job skills training to help open the door to greater employment opportunities.

Last year, more than 350 children and adults learned side by side in the program's supportive atmosphere.

What We Can Do

IMPROVE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND PROFICIENCY

Supporting language development and literacy programs for both families and students can ensure that all students are ready for college and career.

Support for students

We can support language acquisition through early family literacy programs, early childhood and preschool programs, and learning environments as well as programs that build on students' natural interests and abilities.

Support for parents and families

Effective programs can help families of preschool and school-age children foster the strong language skills critical for lifelong social and academic success.

ENSURE STUDENTS RECEIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

By making high-quality early childhood education the clear choice and available to all, we can help kids get the strong start they need to succeed in school.

Increase early education options

If we increase the number, affordability and quality of early education programs, we can make sure that no child is turned away.

Parents as teachers

By collaborating with families to make learning an everyday experience, we can help children become lifelong learners.

Learning readiness

By providing a full range of services, including access to medical and dental assessment and care, language and literacy programs, parenting support and related programs, we can help prepare each child for school.

INCREASE RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS

We can support the learning process through tutoring and mentoring for students, leadership and professional development for teachers, and engaging parents as partners.

Tutoring for at-risk youth

Through effective in-class and after-school programs, we can provide academic support, tutoring and mentoring for at-risk youth.

Leadership development

We can equip teachers and administrators with the ongoing training and support they need to be successful.

Parent partnerships

Training and programs help parents understand how to best work with schools and support their child's learning.

It's our Orange County. Get informed, be inspired and get involved at ConnectOC.org.

THINK TOGETHER

Extra time and attention can go a long way in helping struggling students to succeed. THINK Together is helping close the achievement gap for at-risk students through partnerships with school districts to provide afterschool, summer, early literacy and Saturday programs, as well as tutoring.

THINK Together serves over 100,000 low-income residents in Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino and San Diego counties.



It's Our Orange County.



Visit ConnectOC.org to learn about critical community needs and solutions at work in Orange County today!



LEARN about key community issues and real-life solutions at ConnectOC.org/learn

FIND organizations and individuals leading the way. Get connected through ConnectOC Nonprofit Central, an online database hub launching soon at ConnectOC.org/find

SHARE your own community stories and ideas at [Facebook.com/OCCommunityFdn](https://www.facebook.com/OCCommunityFdn) and on Twitter using the hashtag [#ConnectOC](https://twitter.com/ConnectOC)

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