



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **May Proclaimed as Foster Care Month in Orange County**

**Orange County, CA** - The Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed May 2017 as Foster Care Month in Orange County and highlighted the significant need for additional families to provide loving homes for foster youth. In Orange County, there are more than 2,000 children and youth in foster care.

“We recognize that brighter outcomes are achieved when children are provided opportunities to grow and develop in family settings,” said Chairwoman Michelle Steel. “We are committed to ensuring that children are placed in family-based care whenever possible.”

“As someone who at a young age had to relocate and adjust to a new life, I am so grateful for the love and compassion our Resource Homes provide to Orange County’s foster youth,” said Vice Chair Andrew Do. “A loving, stable family is the single most important resource that can be provided to abused and neglected children as it has the power to give support, show compassion, provide a safe home and help children find the courage to hope for a better life.”

The County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) is in the midst of implementing California’s Child Welfare Continuum of Care (CCR) with the goal of improving the child welfare system through the elimination of group home placements and the increased utilization of home-based care for foster youth. Through CCR, increased emphasis is placed on locating foster families, now referred to as “Resource Families,” for foster youth. “These families are a vital resource for children in Orange County and do not receive the recognition they deserve for their commitment to providing children in need with safe and loving homes,” said Supervisor Todd Spitzer, Third District.

As a licensed group home, Orangewood Children and Family Center will be transitioning to a ten-day shelter through CCR. SSA has long supported the goal of placing children in family-based care and, currently less than nine percent of Orange County foster youth are placed in group home care. However, SSA and the Orange County community are currently faced with a significant need for loving homes for foster youth. The children most impacted by this transition to a ten-day shelter are those who struggle with specialized behavioral, emotional and medical needs. Supervisor Lisa Bartlett stated, “With the ongoing transition of Orangewood to a ten-day shelter, there is a dire need to build capacity in the community to provide homes for foster youth with specialized needs.”

Fostering a child can be a challenging yet rewarding journey for families. Orange County’s Resource Families continue to express the value they find in providing safe homes for children, where foster youth have the opportunity to grow and thrive. For more information on becoming a Resource Family, please call (888) 871-KIDS, visit [www.oc4kids.com](http://www.oc4kids.com).