



CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS

OF CALIFORNIA

Conference Spotlight: San Luis Obispo County Probation

San Luis Obispo County Probation Department received SB81 Round 1 Local Youthful Offender Rehabilitative Facility Construction Financing to fund an expansion of juvenile hall. The expansion allowed the juvenile hall to free up an existing 15 bed unit for re-purposing into a residential treatment unit, called Coastal Valley Academy (CVA), to serve as an alternative to group home care. Planning for CVA was initiated well before the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 403 and changes to foster care related to Continuum of Care Reform (CCR); however, it has become an integral part of the Probation Department's response to this legislation. CVA provides a safer, more structured, and locally controlled alternative to group homes or Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs) for those youth that need to be removed from their homes but are not appropriate for a home based foster care setting. It also provides for greater family involvement as group home youth were often placed a significant distance away from family and other supports.

CVA is a custody commitment program in Juvenile Hall for 14-17 year old male and female youth who are moderate to high risk and in need of residential treatment. Youth are ordered to stay 6-12 months and receive intensive case management, treatment and educational services through collaboration with



a local treatment provider, Family Care Network, and the County Office of Education. While CVA is located onsite with Juvenile Hall, the program is completely separated in programming, having its own classroom, recreation yard and living unit. The physical features of the unit are more home like, while still maintaining compliance with Title 15 and Title 24.

The Coastal Valley Academy provides a safe and effective alternative to group homes, engaging the families in the treatment and reunification process. Youth participate in Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings as well as individual, family and group treatment. CVA staff is trained in Comprehensive and Substance Abuse Curriculums designed by the University of Cincinnati and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Groups are facilitated by both treatment staff and CVA Probation Officers.

***Youth take weekly outings,
including hiking, trips to the beach,***

Youth participate in pro social activities, including off-site activities, community service projects, and home passes. For example, all youth who enter the program receive a pair of running shoes, donated by a local running store. In Run Club, youth are encouraged to

run, jog or walk, creating a healthy outlet for energy, anger, and trauma. Local organizations have sponsored the youth to participate in local fun runs, completing distances of 3 and 6 miles. The goal is

to expose the youth to positive pro-social experiences to assist in their community re-integration after they complete CVA.