



Superior Court of California
County of Orange
News Release

Media and Community Relations Office
Contact: Carole Levitzky (714) 834-7623
clevitzky@occourts.org

September 29, 2009

**A New Court to Help “At Risk” Girls
In Juvenile Dependency Court**

Orange – After a year of planning, a program to address the special needs of at risk girls, ages 12-17, will begin October 2nd. Approximately 30 girls from the juvenile dependency court have been selected to be the first participants in the new Girls Court program. Modeled from the successful collaborative court program, Girls Court will feature a dedicated judicial officer, court staff, and county team.

“Our goal is to target at-risk girls who are doing poorly in school and have substance abuse and mental health issues, and provide them with proper treatment and counseling and teach them skills that will get them back on the right track to a productive life,” said Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court Carolyn Kirkwood. She added, “An investment now to stabilize the lives of these adolescent girls is a small cost compared to the financial burden posed if they remain in the justice or social welfare system.”

Orange County Superior Court Commissioner Jane Shade will oversee Girls Court on Friday afternoons at the Lamoreaux Justice Center. A team approach will emphasize individual treatment and programming for each participant. Agencies working with the Superior Court of Orange County to administer the program include Orange County Health Care Agency, Orange County Social Services Agency, and the Orange County Department of Education.

Academic and non-profit communities involved in the planning for Girls Court include the University of California, Irvine; the American Pediatric Association; the Orange County Medical Association; the Collaborative Courts Foundation; the Orangewood Children’s Foundation and the Samuelli Foundation.

Court Release # 15-09

Visit Our Web Site: <http://www.occourts.org>
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, California 92701