



Strategic Plan for Children, Youth and Families

Highlights for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

In May 2008, the Irvine City Council approved the Strategic Plan for Children, Youth and Families 2008-2013. The Plan is comprised of six priority goal areas and 13 strategies that support the Plan's vision to create a safe community where children, youth and families thrive emotionally, physically, academically and socially.

This report details many activities and programs implemented during the 2010-2011 fiscal year (FY 2010-11) to address the Plan's goals.



- Goal 1: Reduce or eliminate poverty and the harmful effects of near poverty status among families in Irvine.
- Goal 2: Improve health outcomes and fitness among children and youth in Irvine.
- Goal 3: Expand early care and educational opportunities for parents and children least likely to benefit from the highest quality care.
- Goal 4: Improve mental health outcomes among children and youth in Irvine.
- Goal 5: Reduce underage drinking in Irvine.
- Goal 6: Enhance and expand community service by adults and youth in Irvine.

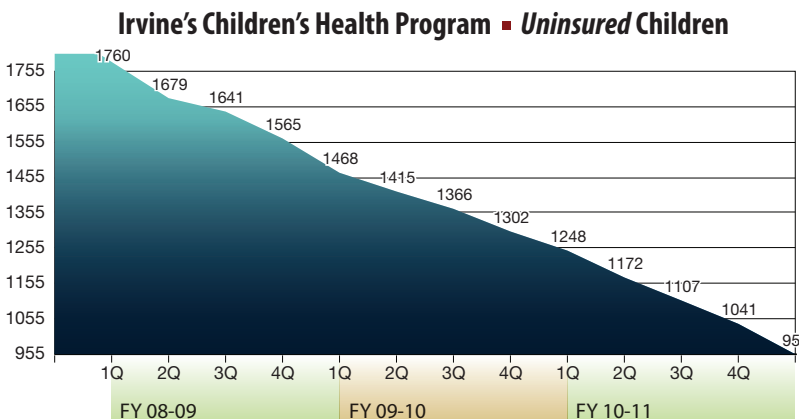
GOAL 1: Reduce or eliminate poverty and the harmful effects of near-poverty status among families in Irvine.

Irvine Children's Health Program

The Irvine Children's Health Program (iCHP), a partnership between the City of Irvine and the Children's Health Initiative of Orange County, helps income-eligible families access affordable quality health care for their children. In 2008, it was estimated that approximately 1,760 Irvine children lacked health care coverage.

In FY 2010-11, 293 children were enrolled into health care programs through iCHP, for a total of 805 enrollments since the program's inception in July 2008 through June 2011. In addition, for FY 2011-12, the iCHP program expanded its services to assist adults in finding public health care coverage and other assistance programs for themselves and their families.

During this past year, Hoag Hospital, Kaiser Permanente and the Medici Foundation provided more than \$65,000 in grant funding to support the iCHP program.



Community Tax Preparation Day and Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative

In 2010, the City of Irvine, in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society of Orange County, provided seven community tax day events. More than 1,400 low- to moderate-income individuals and families participated in the program, which provided no-cost tax preparation assistance to income-eligible taxpayers. Additionally, 325 participants qualified for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a refundable tax credit designed for lower income working families and individuals. Each year, billions of EITC refunds are left unclaimed in California; Irvine's EITC Initiative helps ensure that lower income taxpayers are aware of and receive the maximum tax return benefit.

Tax Day Outcomes	2008	2009	2010
Individuals Served	971	1,210	1,421
Total Tax Refunds (in the Millions)	\$1.2	\$1.6	\$1.8
Number EITC Eligible (Irvine Residents)	192	269	325
EITC Refunds for Irvine Residents	\$451,586	\$532,782	\$602,679

GOAL 1: Reduce or eliminate poverty and the harmful effects of near-poverty status among families in Irvine (continued).

Scholarships to Families in Need

Irvine's Community Services Department provides scholarships for park programs, Meals on Wheels, and TRIPS transportation services to income-eligible Irvine residents.

The Irvine Child Care Project, a joint-powers agreement between Irvine Unified School District and the City of Irvine, provides scholarships for before- and after-school licensed childcare at 22 Irvine Unified School District sites. Funding for child care is provided through state grants, the Irvine Children's Fund and Irvine Child Care Project.

Scholarships FY 2010-11	Number Provided	Dollar Value
Irvine Community Services	269	\$60,244
Irvine Child Care Project	259	\$660,862

Community Education: Youth Employment Program and Financial Literacy Campaign

The City's Youth Employment Program provided 22 job survival workshops this past fiscal year. Approximately 390 youth attended the workshops, which included tips on resume writing and interviewing techniques. Youth who participate in the workshops are eligible to meet with the program job counselor and receive local job referrals.



As part of the City's Financial Literacy Campaign, 119 workshops were held on topics including surviving unemployment, homebuyer education and personal finance. More than 2,100 individuals attended these workshops, which were led by Consumer Credit Counseling of Orange County and Legal Aid of Orange County, in partnership with the City.

GOAL 2: Improve health outcomes and fitness among children and youth in Irvine.

City and Irvine Unified School District Partnerships for Youth Wellness and Physical Activity Programs

Community Services park staff members lead wellness and physical activity programs on school sites during and after school, including:

Lunch Time Activities	Inspires youth to be physically active by providing large group and skill-building activities during lunch time at 17 elementary schools, one to five times per week. Activities were made available to 15,300 students in FY 2010-11, and were partially funded by the Parent Teacher Association.
Youth Wellness Committee	Student committees at University and Northwood High Schools educate peers on the importance of physical activity and healthy eating through on-campus events and community activities; 1,090 students participated in Youth Wellness Committee activities in FY 2010-11.
Ready, Fit, Go Fitness Challenge	Provides each student with one hour of fun, non-traditional physical activity during the regular school day; 10,000 students at 14 elementary and middle schools participated in FY 2010-11.
Middle School Program	Engages youth at five middle schools in after-school sports programs twice a week and provides special interest sessions including kayaking and surfing; 661 students participated in FY 2010-11.
Walk to School Wednesdays	Part of the Safe Routes to School program designed to increase the number of students walking and biking to school; seven schools participated in FY 2010-11. (See article on next page).
City Fitness	Provides structured physical activity class sessions during the school day at two elementary schools reaching 1,400 students in FY 2010-11, and funded in part by the Parent Teacher Association. (See article to the right).

City Fitness Pilot Program

During the 2010-11 school year, the City, Irvine Unified School District, and Turtle Rock and Santiago Hills Elementary School Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), partnered on a new pilot program, City Fitness, to enhance physical education opportunities for students at Turtle Rock and Santiago Hills Elementary Schools.

City Fitness, led by parks and recreation specialists and partially-funded through the PTAs, is structured around the Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools, and focuses on increasing students' activity levels and knowledge of physical fitness opportunities. Students participate in activities such as obstacle courses, strength training and cardiovascular exercises, which provide moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

Approximately 1,400 students participated in the program, receiving 90 minutes of fitness activities per month. City Fitness was so well received, it has expanded to one additional school for the 2011-12 school year, with plans to expand to additional schools in 2012-13.



GOAL 2: Improve health outcomes and fitness among children and youth in Irvine.

Safe Routes to School Program – Walk to School Wednesdays

As part of the City's Safe Routes to School program, seven schools in the Irvine Unified School District participated in the Walk to School Wednesdays program. During the 2010-11 school year, 6,857 students actively took part in the program. Led by City staff in partnership with school faculty, the Walk to School Wednesdays program is designed to encourage students to regularly walk, ride or skate to school by designating one day a week when student participation is tracked and recorded. The goals of the program are to promote healthier lifestyles through active transit and to reduce car usage, ultimately decreasing traffic congestion around school campuses.

Pre- and post-surveys conducted at participating schools demonstrated an increase in the percentage of students walking to school (see chart to the right). School personnel reported that the program encouraged children to consistently walk to school over the course of the year and reduced congestion in the school parking lot. Ninety-seven percent of school personnel surveyed expressed interest in continuing the program at their school.

The Walk to School Wednesdays program received an award in April 2011 for "Outstanding Supporter of Prevention" from the Irvine Prevention Coalition. The program is continuing at all seven participating schools during the 2011-12 school year. The City was also awarded a \$500,000 federal grant to continue the Safe Routes to School program over a four-year period beginning in the 2012-2013 school year.

Percentage of Student Body Walking to School

Participating School	Spring 2010	Spring 2011
Alderwood Elementary	16.5%	44.5%
Brywood Elementary	23.0%	28.5%
Canyon View Elementary	24.2%	34.0%
Lakeside Middle School	21.8%	31.5%
Oak Creek Elementary	26.6%	41.5%
Plaza Vista School	46.2%	57.5%
Woodbury Elementary	8.1%	23.5%

"Thank you for bringing this program to Irvine. One mom told me after the fourth week...that she and her daughter enjoyed their first few walks; they decided to do it every morning. I personally find that my second grade twins tell me so much more on our walks than when we drive to and from school."

–PTA Member, Alderwood Elementary School

"My family loved the program and I lost 10 pounds walking to school with my children."

–PTA Member, Alderwood Elementary School

"It seems as if most of my class did walk to school on Wednesdays. Of 28 kids, all but three consistently walked on Wednesdays. When I had morning parking lot duty, it was definitely less congested with cars and the sidewalk had LOTS of kids and parents!"

–First grade teacher



Student awarded a bicycle for walking to school every Wednesday during the school year.

GOAL 3: Expand early care and educational opportunities for parents and children least likely to benefit from the highest quality care.

Child Care Quality Enhancement: Provider Education and Technical Support

The Irvine Child Care Coordination Office works closely with its partners to provide professional development opportunities for early childhood education providers. In FY 2010-11, the Child Care Coordination Office hosted 16 professional development training workshops with a total of 680 attendees. In addition, the Office conducted 63 technical support phone sessions with individuals interested in opening new home-based or center-based child care businesses.

Child Care Provider Trainings and Support FY 2010-11	Attendees or Contacts
Professional Development Workshops (16 events)	680
Technical Support to Potential Child Care Operators	63
E-blasts for provider trainings, resources and funding opportunities (19 e-blasts)	2,789



Early childhood education providers participating in a *Mathematizing with Preschoolers* workshop at the Irvine Child Resource Center.

Referrals to Child Care and Other Resources

Early care and education support services are available for Irvine families through the Irvine Child Care Coordination Office. Resources and referrals include information about licensed child care options, how to choose quality child care, and how income-eligible families may access financial assistance and transportation services to child care sites.



Resource and Referral Contacts FY 2010-11	Contacts
Child Care Referrals	349
Financial Assistance Referrals	214
Transportation Referrals	29
Family Support Services Referrals (parenting classes and counseling)	15

Irvine Unified School District School Readiness Program

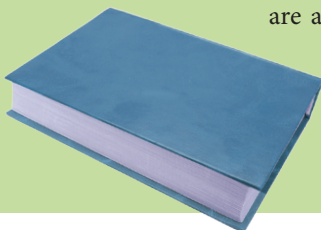
The School Readiness Program provides parents and child care professionals with an array of services that help develop skills to build strong families with healthy children, ages 0-5, who are learning and ready for school.

The Program provides a broad range of parent education classes, as well as classes and services for young children. A full calendar of classes is offered every year (see iusd.org/eclc/school-readiness.html).

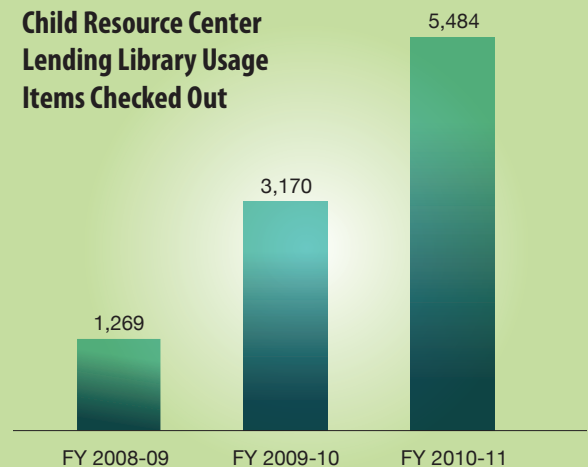
In the 2010-11 school year, 675 parents, children and professionals participated in School Readiness Program classes and services.

Irvine Child Resource Center Lending Library

The Child Resource Center is a membership-based lending library that provides families and early childhood education professionals access to educational toys, children's books and music CDs, parenting books, DVD training materials, curriculum materials and more. Every item in the library is focused on child development and is carefully selected based on the latest child development research and recommendations of early childhood educators. Knowledgeable staff members are available to answer questions to help visitors select the best materials to meet their children's needs.



Child Resource Center Lending Library Usage Items Checked Out



GOAL 4: Improve mental health outcomes among children and youth in Irvine.

FOR Families Program

FOR Families is a unique City program that offers short-term support, information and referrals to Irvine families and individuals who need assistance identifying and accessing services and resources. FOR Families is staffed by licensed family counselors and provides assistance for a variety of issues including stress and depression, relationship difficulties, financial problems, substance abuse, legal concerns and family violence.

In FY 2010-11, FOR Families provided:

- 185 individuals with in-person consultations; and
- 868 phone support sessions to those seeking information and assistance.

Of those receiving in-person consultations, the most frequently reported areas of concern were financial issues, domestic violence, parent/child interactions and relationship/communication issues.

Irvine Public Safety officers, who often encounter individuals in crisis, referred more than 40 percent of FOR Families clients.

Family Violence Prevention Project

The Family Violence Prevention Project is a collaborative endeavor between the Irvine Police Department, Community Services, the District Attorney's office, local hospitals and other agencies to increase awareness and reporting of family violence, primarily through education and outreach. The project's mission is to implement sustainable and proactive strategies to reduce the occurrence of family violence, and to increase the use of services to help people cope with the effects of family violence.

Services provided by the Family Violence Prevention Project include:

- 1) a victim advocate ride along program in which a trained advocate rides with a patrol officer and is available to provide on-the-scene crisis counseling for domestic violence victims;
- 2) a comprehensive Victims Resource Guide provided to every victim;
- 3) community forums to address family violence in the community;
- 4) school presentations that address abusive relationships for high school- and college-aged individuals; and
- 5) a dedicated victim advocate in the Police Department to provide comprehensive, customized care for victims.

Family Violence Prevention Project Accomplishments FY 2010-11	
Victim Advocate Ride Alongs	Conducted approximately 16 ride alongs to provide on-scene counseling.
Victims Resource Guide	Secured funding to translate the guide into Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese and Farsi.
Educational Forums and Presentations	Collaborated with the School Resource Officer from University High School to provide a teen dating violence presentation at the high school.
Victim Advocate	Conducted 1,200+ direct service contacts with victims of various crimes.

Irvine Unified School District Project Success

Project Success is one of the core services addressing the needs of high-risk youth in all middle and high schools in Irvine Unified School District. The program provides prevention and early intervention services to students to reduce mental health and substance abuse problems, and supports students and families in their choices toward healthy and safe lifestyles. Services include: individual, group and family counseling; substance abuse intervention; information and referrals; and crisis intervention and management.

Project Success is supported, in part, by the Irvine Educational Partnership Fund, which is a City grant program enhancing academic and health programming for Irvine students in the Irvine and Tustin Unified School Districts. For the 2010-11 school year, Irvine Unified School District received \$150,262 to implement Project Success.

Results of Project Success have been consistently positive. In the 2010-11 school year, 848 students, who completed eight or more program sessions, were surveyed and reported:

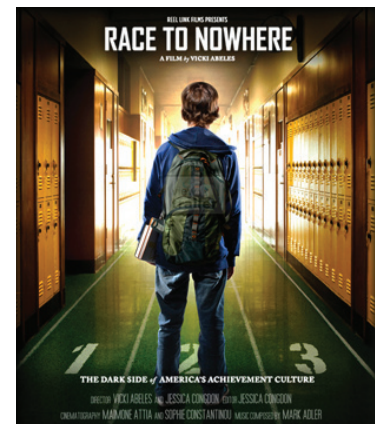
- Increased perceptions of harm from cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana use;
- Improved relationships with peers, siblings and parents;
- Improved ability to cope with stress, communicate effectively and manage emotions more appropriately; and
- Increased connection to school.

Irvine Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee Community Forum

On February 24, 2011, the City of Irvine, the Irvine Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee, and the Irvine Child Care Committee hosted a special screening of the documentary *Race to Nowhere*, which examines how society defines success in American education.

Experts in the fields of education and psychology participated in a panel discussion immediately following the film to discuss the importance of balance in a child's life, the definition of success and the significance of parental involvement. The event also featured a community resource fair to connect families to services to assist children in coping with competition and academic pressure.

More than 200 adults and youth attended the event, which sold out within two days of ticket availability.



GOAL 5: Reduce underage drinking in Irvine.

PAUSE Campaign to Reduce Underage Drinking and Other Risky Behaviors

In 2009, the City’s High School Youth Action Team, along with Irvine Community Drug Prevention, developed the PAUSE Campaign, a social marketing campaign to prevent or reduce underage drinking and other risky behaviors among Irvine students. The campaign aims to show youth and adults the “true norm” regarding substance abuse among teens, as most people overestimate the level of drug use among teens, and this misperception can actually influence a young person’s decision to use alcohol and drugs.

Each year, teams of students develop the PAUSE Campaign for the school year, including educational materials, giveaways and messages. In the 2010-11 school year, the teams developed the PAUSE Experiment, an innovative activity to kick-off the campaign.

The PAUSE Experiment included more than 200 students on five high school campuses who were given signs stating positive alternatives to substance use and statistical data from the California Healthy Kids Survey showing that drug and alcohol use among Irvine students is not the norm. During the lunch break, participants were instructed to freeze for five to ten minutes while holding the signs to attract the attention of the rest of the student body, who were unaware the activity was going to take place.

More than 1,000 students witnessed each experiment. In impromptu fashion, students walking around campus read the signs held by their classmates. The exercise brought awareness to the PAUSE Campaign and educated students that most youth in Irvine choose not to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

Posters created by the Youth Action Team with information about the PAUSE Campaign were placed on high school campuses and remained posted throughout the school year. Youth Action Team members continued the campaign throughout the year by hosting booths, games and lunch-time activities focused on alcohol and drug use prevention.

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Substance Use Prevention Forums

The High School Youth Action Team hosted two community forums about substance use prevention in FY 2010-11:

- 400 youth and adults attended a forum about the physical and legal consequences of marijuana and other substance use.
- 75 youth attended a forum on illegal prescription and over-the-counter drug use.

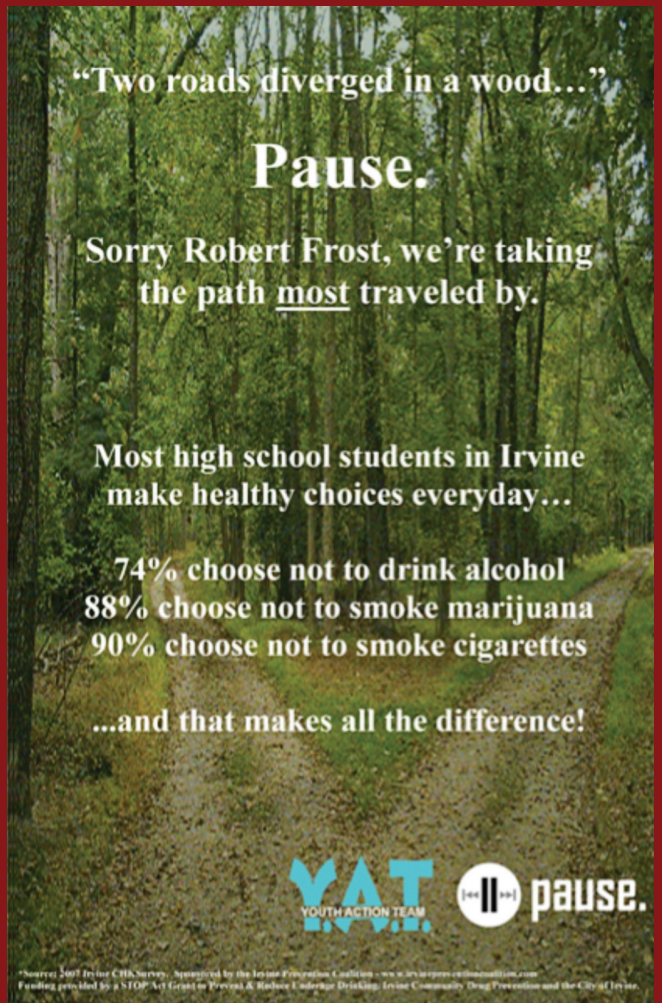
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Prescription Drug Take-Back Events

Irvine Public Safety Department, with support from the Irvine Prevention Coalition, hosted two prescription drug take-back events in FY 2010-11. Take-back events provide the community opportunities to safely dispose of unwanted, unused and left-over prescription drugs in order to help prevent inappropriate use of potentially dangerous medications.



Irvine High School students participating in the PAUSE Experiment.



PAUSE Campaign poster developed by Youth Action Team members.

GOAL 6: Enhance and expand community service by adults and youth in Irvine.

Youth Volunteer and Community Service Opportunities

The benefits of volunteering are many. Youth who volunteer state that they learn to respect others, develop leadership skills, become more patient, and better understand good citizenship (Independent Sector/Gallup, 1996). Studies show that youth who volunteer are more likely to do well in school, graduate, vote and be philanthropic (UCLA Higher Education Research Institute, 1991). Statistics also show that youth who volunteer just one hour a week are 50 percent less likely to abuse drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, or engage in destructive behavior (Search Institute, 1995).



Leaders In Training Program participant assisting with a children's arts camp at the Irvine Fine Arts Center.



Youth Action Team member volunteering at the Incredible Edible Park, which provides fresh fruits and vegetables to Second Harvest Food Bank.

The City provides numerous youth volunteer and community service opportunities, including:

High School Youth Action Team

The City's High School Youth Action Team provides high school students the opportunity to participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of services for their peers. The program aims to foster youth leadership and increase youth participation in community service. The Youth Action Team oversees on-campus service clubs at five high schools. In FY 2010-11:

- 350 student volunteers joined Youth Action Team service clubs and conducted more than 6,500 hours of community service;
- 300 projects were completed, providing students with an average of 25 volunteer opportunities per month;
- Community projects included: Habitat for Humanity, Homework Help at Irvine Parks, Irvine Disability Services events, Irvine Junior Games, Rancho and Lakeview Senior Center Game Day, American Cancer Society Relay For Life and more;
- \$3,500 in donations were raised by the Youth Action Team for Relay for Life of Irvine; and
- 640 students were registered to vote by Youth Action Team members in an on-campus voter registration campaign.

Leaders in Training Program

Leaders in Training is a summer program that provides career development training for youth through hands-on work experience opportunities at various City sites and programs. In FY 2010-11:

- 182 youth participated at 12 sites throughout the City;
- 95 percent of participants reported they gained skills that may help them gain future employment; and
- 93 percent of participants reported they gained experience in helping others in their community.

Creekside Leadership Academy

Creekside Leadership Academy, held at Creekside High School, an alternative education site, is a six-week after-school program that helps students develop leadership and life skills, and provides students with community service opportunities. In FY 2010-11:

- 24 students participated, completing over 250 hours of volunteer community service; and
- Volunteer opportunities included: Victoria Healthcare and Rehabilitation, a convalescent hospital for long-term elderly care; Orange County Food Bank; and Hemopet, a greyhound rescue organization.

Volunteer Website

iVolunteer is a self-serve/self-help City of Irvine hosted website that provides Irvine organizations with an easily accessible site to post volunteer opportunities, and Irvine residents with an easy way to find volunteer opportunities. In FY 2010-11, the iVolunteer website received more than 4,000 visits.

cityofirvine.org/cityhall/cs/ivolunteer/default.asp

Irvine Strategic Plan For Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee

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Committee Member
- **Casey Prottas**
HSYAT Committee Member
- **Anmarie Rodriguez**
HSYAT Committee Member



Photos: top to bottom

- Mobile Recreation Program leading a group activity at Orchard Park.
- Leaders in Training Program participant assisting at the Lakeview Senior Center.
- Lunch Time Activity Program encouraging Irvine students to keep active during their lunch break.
- Students taking part in an educational activity during an Irvine Child Care Project after school program at Santiago Hills Elementary School.



For more information about the Strategic Plan for Children, Youth and Families, call 949-724-6680 or visit cityofirvine.org/spcyf