

THE CHALLENGE

Puerto Rico's child welfare workforce and foster youth are in need of support that leverages lived experience and significantly improves outcomes for youth, child welfare program services and leadership.

Recent legislation regards foster care as traumatic.

8K+

Young people in Puerto Rico receive foster care services each year

25%

Of youth in the system are considered older youth and at higher risk of poverty, incarceration homelessness and mental health conditions

Why OCA

OverComing Adversities is a 501 (c)(3) organization founded by foster youth, for foster youth. We are the only nonprofit in Puerto Rico dedicated to catalyzing personal and professional growth for young adults with foster care experience.

MISSION

Provide urgent and transformative opportunities that increase the likelihood of success outcomes for the foster youth community.

VISION

A world where youth have equitable access to people and environments that allow them to be their authentic selves.

We help youth cultivate essential skills to be better prepared to overcome adversity. Our programs aim to address the lack of learning alternatives and improve outcomes of youth in the system.

OUR SOLUTIONS



PEER MENTORING

Youth should be prepared to effectively communicate and build relationships with people, throughout diverse roles and situations. Our mentoring helps youth develop social and problem-solving skills in safe environments.



POSITIVE INTERACTIONS & NEW INFORMATION

We provide access to safe, empowering social-learning environments with exposure to diverse activities and perspectives to practice consideration of alternatives. We consider human behavior insights and focus on the value of healthy thoughts, interpersonal relationships and self-worth.



THINKING & LEARNING STRATEGIES

We share information about how humans work and "alternative thinking" as a tool to manage situations, outcomes, thoughts and resources and get closer to their goals.

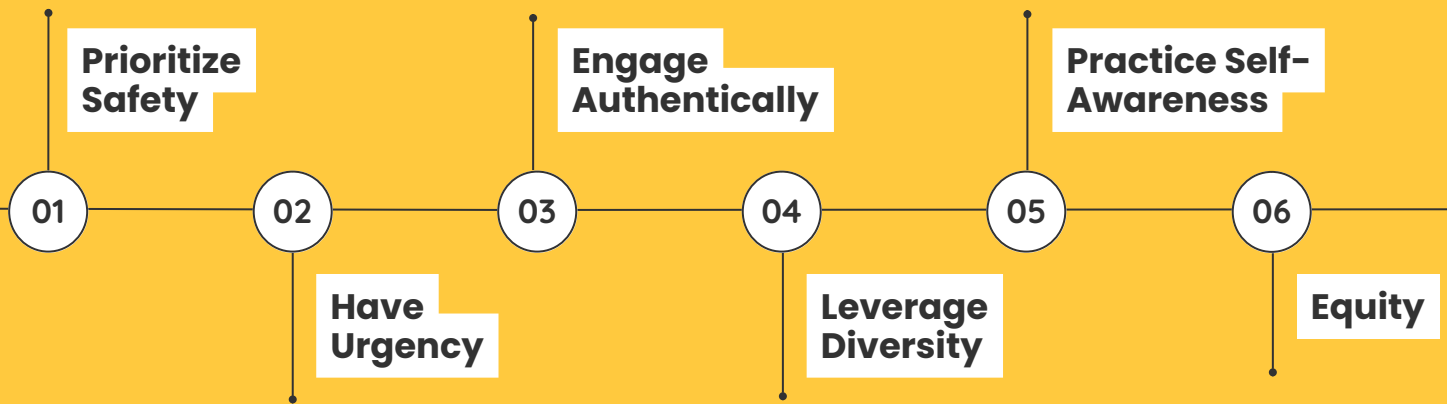


ACCESS TO PEOPLE & RESOURCES

Foster youth need access to social capital and support in retaining it, to increase their access to experience-based advice, transportation, emotional support, and other key personal and professional growth resources.

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Our Values



Founding Story

Yalanis Vélez, the founder of OCA, and her sisters experienced the socio-economic contrast of living in a working-middle-class home, to living in group homes and becoming part of the foster care system in Puerto Rico. This experience provided them with first-hand knowledge of the impact of social capital and alternative learning opportunities in foster youth success outcomes.

Yalanis believes youth need access to people, safe spaces and tools that allow them to heal and learn to think and act in ways that lead them to be who they want to be.



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