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October 28, 2003

TO: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – MICHELLE TRAVIS, INC., CHERRYWOOD, 41ST STREET, AND HOBART SITES**

We have completed a review of the three group homes operated by Michelle Travis, Inc., Cherrywood, 41st Street, and Hobart. Each home is licensed by the State and contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Cherrywood and Hobart are six-bed facilities located in the Second Supervisorial District that provide care for boys ages 10-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Cherrywood and Hobart were each providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children.

41st Street is a six-bed facility located in the Second Supervisorial District that provides care for girls ages 10-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, 41st Street was providing services for six DCFS children.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that the three homes were providing services outlined in their Program Statements. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues. The review included an evaluation of each home's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed in each of the respective homes at

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the time of the reviews. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the three homes were providing services as outlined in their Program Statements. However all three agencies need to provide each resident with an initial diagnostic assessment. In addition, the 41st Street site needs to make repairs to its facility and maintain current Quarterly Reports.

Attached are detailed reports of the findings for each home.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The agency's management has agreed to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within fifteen business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our reviews.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Patrick McMahon at (213) 974-0729.

JTM:PM:CC

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Patricia Cole, Executive Director, Michelle Travis

**Michelle Travis Group Home
Cherrywood
3911 Cherrywood Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90008
Phone: (323) 296-5254
License No.: 191800655
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Michelle Travis Group Home, Cherrywood, is a large home located on a residential street. The facility is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends in with the other homes on the block. No observable safety hazards were noted.

The interior of the home was generally neat and clean with common rooms nicely decorated and maintained. Resident bedrooms were spacious, comfortable, and personalized with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

There was age-appropriate play equipment in the home including table games, a TV, VCR, weights and basketball equipment. There were a variety of programs, books, resource material, and a computer.

There was a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit, properly stored.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents met Cherywood's population criteria as outlined in their program statement. One resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the program, but the other resident did not.

Both Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. In addition, the children's placement workers were given the opportunity to participate in the development and updating of the NSPs.

The Quarterly Reports were current, comprehensive, timely, and focused on the goals of the NSPs.

Both residents were receiving services required by the program statement including individual and group therapy.

Recommendations

1. **Cherrywood management provide each resident with an initial diagnostic assessment.**

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents were enrolled in school and their records contained semester report cards and/or progress reports. One resident required and had a current Individualized Education Plan. The residents reported that they were provided with a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills was part of Cherrywood's program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals, hygiene care was discussed as needed, and employment preparation encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Cherrywood provided its residents with sufficient opportunity to participate in both on-ground and off-ground recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided and stated that the recreation schedules were followed.

Local community organizations were utilized for recreation and program resources. The residents reported that they participated in the planning of some of the activities, had ample free time, and were able to participate in self-selected activities. Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: There were six residents placed in the agency at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the four residents prescribed psychotropic medications.

Comments:

The residents receiving psychotropic medication had current court authorizations. Documentation confirmed that the children were routinely seen by the psychiatrist for evaluation of their medication.

Medication logs were properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents expressed satisfaction with the facility and staff. Residents participated in an initial orientation and the policies and procedures were posted in the facility. The residents reported that they felt safe in the home and that there was no interference with daily living functions. Both residents reported satisfaction with the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They also reported that staff supervised them appropriately and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with the staff. Both residents felt there was at least one staff member they could trust and easily talk to.

Both residents reported that they had been assigned reasonable chores to complete on a daily basis, were able to have visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and contact their social workers, attorneys and family members as needed. Both residents had religious services freedom and felt that staff respected their cultural lifestyles by allowing residents to celebrate different holidays.

The residents reported that the discipline policies were consistently enforced by all of the staff and that they had fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Both residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Cherrywood provided appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Cherrywood supplied its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the residents were given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Residents are provided with at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they were able to increase based on the agency's behavioral system.

Cherrywood provided residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

Both residents had life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Michelle Travis Group Home
41ST Street Site
3309 West 41st Street
Los Angeles, CA 90008
Phone: (323) 292-6654
License No.: 191801259
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Michelle Travis Group Home, 41st Street, is a large home located on a residential street. This facility is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends in with the other homes on the block. No observable safety hazards were observed.

The interior of the home was generally neat and clean with common rooms nicely decorated and maintained. Resident bedrooms were spacious, comfortable, and personalized with posters, pictures and knick-knacks. However, there were a few areas in need of improvement.

In the downstairs common rooms, the wood floors were scratched, stained, and faded. In the kitchen, some of the pots and pans were old and burned. In the first bedroom downstairs and the upstairs bedroom, the curtain rods were broken and food was evident on the bedroom floor and dresser areas.

There was age-appropriate play equipment in the home including table games, a TV, VCR, weights and basketball equipment. There were a variety of programs, books, resource material, and a computer.

There was a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food was appropriately dated but a few packets of food in the freezer were not labeled and were open.

Recommendations

- 1. 41st Street, management:**
 - a. Repair the wood floors in the downstairs common living areas.**

- b. Replace the kitchen pots and pans as needed.
- c. Repair the curtain rods in the residents' bedrooms.
- d. Remove all food from the residents' bedrooms.
- e. Properly label and store frozen food.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents met 41st Street's population criteria as outlined in their program statement. One resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the program, but the other resident did not.

Both Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. In addition, the children's placement workers were given the opportunity to participate in the development and updating of the NSPs.

One resident's Quarterly Report was current, comprehensive, timely, and focused on the goals of the NSP. However, there was not a Quarterly Report in the other resident's case file.

Both residents were services as required by the program statement including individual and group therapy.

Recommendations

2. 41st Street, management:

- a. Provide each resident with an initial diagnostic assessment.
- b. Maintain current Quarterly Reports for each resident.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents were enrolled in school and their records contained semester report cards and/or progress reports. One resident required and had a current Individualized Education Plan. The residents reported that they were provided with a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills was part of 41st Street's program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals, hygiene care was discussed as needed, and employment preparation encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

41st Street provided its residents with sufficient opportunity to participate in both on-ground and off-ground recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided and stated that the recreation schedules were followed.

Local community organizations were utilized for recreation and program resources. The residents reported that they participated in the planning of some of the activities, had ample free time, and were able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: There were six residents placed in the agency at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the two residents prescribed psychotropic medications.

Comments:

The residents receiving psychotropic medication had current court authorizations. Documentation confirmed that the children were routinely seen by the psychiatrist for evaluation of their medication.

Medication logs were properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents expressed satisfaction with the facility and staff. Residents participated in an initial orientation and the Michelle Travis' policies and procedures were posted in the facility. The residents reported that they felt safe in the home and that there was no interference with daily living functions. Both residents reported satisfaction with the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They also reported that staff supervised them appropriately and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with the staff. Both residents felt there was at least one staff member they could trust and easily talk to.

Both residents reported that they had been assigned reasonable chores to complete on a daily basis, were able to have visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and contact their social workers, attorneys and family members as needed.

Both residents had religious freedom and felt that staff respected their cultural lifestyles by allowing residents to celebrate different holidays.

The residents reported that the discipline policies were consistently enforced by all of the staff and that they had fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Both residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

41st Street provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. 41st Street supplied its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the residents were given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The residents are provided with at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they were able to increase based on the agency's behavioral system.

41st Street provides residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

Both residents had life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Michelle Travis Group Home
Hobart Site
4209 S. Hobart Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90062
Phone: (323) 291-6167
License No.: 198202988
Rate Classification Level: 11**

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Michelle Travis Group Home, Hobart, is a large home located on a residential street. The facility is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends in with the other homes on the block. No observable safety hazards were noted.

The interior of the home was generally neat and clean with common rooms nicely decorated and maintained. Resident bedrooms were spacious, comfortable, and personalized with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

There was age-appropriate play equipment in the home including table games, a TV, VCR, weights and basketball equipment. There were a variety of programs, books, resource material, and a computer.

There was a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit, properly stored.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents met Hobart's population criteria as outlined in their program statement. One resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the program, but the other resident did not.

Both Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. In addition, the children's placement workers were given the opportunity to participate in the development and updating of the NSPs.

One resident's Quarterly Report was current, comprehensive, timely, and focused on the goals of the NSP. The other resident's Quarterly Report was not due.

Both residents were receiving services as required by the program statement including individual and group therapy.

Recommendations

1. **Hobart management provide each resident with an initial diagnostic assessment.**

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents were enrolled in school and their records contained semester report cards and/or progress reports. One resident required and had a current Individualized Education Plan. The residents reported that they were provided with a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

Development of daily living skills was part of Hobart's program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals, hygiene care was discussed as needed, and employment preparation encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Hobart provided its residents with sufficient opportunity to participate in both on-ground and off-ground recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided by Hobart and stated that the recreation schedules were followed.

Local community organizations were utilized for recreation and program resources. The residents reported that they participated in the planning of some of the activities, had ample free time, and were able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: There were six residents placed in the agency at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the one resident prescribed psychotropic medication.

Comments:

The resident receiving psychotropic medication had a current court authorization. Documentation confirmed that the child was routinely seen by the psychiatrist for an evaluation of medication.

Medication logs were properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Both residents expressed satisfaction with the facility and staff. Residents participated in an initial orientation and the policies and procedures were posted in the facility. The residents reported that they felt safe in the home and that there was no interference with daily living functions. Both residents reported satisfaction with the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They also reported that staff supervised them appropriately and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with the staff. Both residents felt there was at least one staff member they could trust and easily talk to.

Both residents reported they have been assigned reasonable chores to complete on a daily basis, were able to have visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and contact their social workers, attorneys and family members as needed. Both residents attended religious services of their choice and felt that staff respected their cultural lifestyles by allowing residents to celebrate different holidays.

The residents reported that the discipline policies were consistently enforced by all of the staff and that they had fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Both residents were aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Hobart provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Hobart supplied its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars, and the residents were given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Residents are provided with at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they were able to increase based on the agency's behavioral system.

Hobart provides residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

Both residents had life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.