



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – TEENS HAPPY HOME**

We have completed a review of Teens Happy Home. Teens Happy Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation). Teens Happy Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Teens Happy Home was providing services for four Los Angeles County DCFS children. Teens Happy Home is located in the Second Supervisorial District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that Teens Happy Home was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues and included an evaluation of Teens Happy Home Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with Teens Happy Home at the time of the review. Interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by Teens Happy Home, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Overall, Teens Happy Home is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, Teens Happy Home needs to make repairs to the facility; provide age-

“To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service”

appropriate recreational equipment; properly store food items; and maintain current psychotropic medication authorizations and psychiatric evaluations.

Attached is a detailed report of the findings.

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 15 business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact DeWitt Roberts at (626) 293-1101.

JTM:DR:CC

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
Beautina Robinson, Executive Director, Teens Happy Home
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Teens Happy Home
3936 S. Dalton Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90062
Phone: (323) 734-0302
License No.: 198203038
Rate Classification Level: 7**

I. Facility and Environment

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Teens Happy Home is located in a residential section of Los Angeles. The one-story exterior of the house was moderately maintained and blended in with the other homes in the neighborhood.

The interior of the home was generally neat and clean. However, there were areas we observed that needed improvement.

In bedroom number one, the light fixture needed repair, the bed frame was loose, and the bed pillow covers were not clean. In bedroom number two, there was a chipped and worn nightstand, and the window coverings were damaged. In bedroom number three, the two entry doors (one door leads into the house the other door leads to the outside) did not fit their frames properly. In addition, there was improper lighting in the bedroom closet (management has been asked to repair this light on two prior occasions), and the carpet needed cleaning.

In bathroom number one, there were holes under the sink and mildew on the wall surrounding the bathtub. In bathroom number two, there were tiles placed on, not adhered to, the floor causing a safety hazard. In addition, the bathroom fan did not work and there was a large hole under the sink.

In the kitchen, there was a water leak under the sink and the kitchen window had a buildup of dirt.

Teens Happy Homes had an adequate supply of board games, video games, books, and a computer for the residents. Other than a basketball, there was not a variety of recreational equipment available for the residents.

There was an adequate supply of food. However, some of the perishable food was not properly stored.

Recommendations

1. Teens Happy Home management:

- a. In bedroom number one repair the light fixture, tighten the bed frame, and replace the bed pillow.**
- b. Replace the nightstand and window coverings in bedroom number two.**
- c. Replace doors, install proper lighting in the closet, and clean the carpet in bedroom number three.**
- d. Repair the hole under the bathroom sink, and remove mildew from the wall surrounding the tub in bathroom number one.**
- e. Repair the floor, fan, and hole under the sink in bathroom number two.**
- f. Repair the water leak under the kitchen sink and clean the kitchen window.**
- g. Provide residents with age appropriate recreational equipment.**
- h. Properly store food to help prevent contamination and spoilage.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents met Teens Happy Home’s population criteria as outlined in the Program Statement and they received an initial diagnostic assessment.

Both residents had current Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) that were measurable, specific, attainable, realistic, and time limited. Both residents stated that they participated in the development and modification of their NSPs.

The residents’ Quarterly Reports were current, comprehensive, and focused on the goals in their NSPs.

The residents received individual and group therapy.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents were enrolled in public school and their files contained report cards and/or progress reports. The residents reported that they were provided with a sufficient amount of tutoring away from school on a weekly basis and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

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

Emancipation services and vocational training programs were being provided to the age-appropriate residents. The residents were able to work and manage their money. The residents could spend their allowances as they wanted.

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:

Teens Happy Home followed a monthly activity schedule developed by staff and residents. The residents reported that they had leisure time and were allowed to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation was provided to and from activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic/Other Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

There were four residents placed in Teens Happy Home at the time of the review. A review of one case file was conducted for the resident prescribed psychotropic medication.

Comments:

Court authorization and psychiatric evaluations for the resident receiving psychotropic medication were not current.

Medication logs were properly maintained.

Recommendation

1. Teens Happy Home management maintain current court authorization and psychiatric evaluations for each resident receiving psychotropic medication.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents were presented with the policies, rules, and regulations when arriving in placement. Both residents stated that the rules were fair as were the consequences for not following them. The residents stated that they felt safe in the home, liked the staff, and felt they were treated with respect. They indicated that a sufficient number of staff was always in the home when residents were present.

Resident chores included helping to maintain the bedroom, the bathroom and the kitchen. The residents did not feel the chores were too demanding.

Both residents were able to have telephone contact with their placement workers and stated that phone calls and visits were permitted with sufficient privacy. Both residents stated that they had religious freedom and felt that their health care needs were being

met. The residents felt that staff was culturally sensitive to each resident's background and ethnicity.

Both residents had been informed about their legal 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:

Teens Happy Home provided appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Teens Happy Home 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 was of good quality and sufficient quantity.

Residents received at least the required minimum weekly allowance that they were able to increase based on the Agency's behavioral system.

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

The residents had life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.