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April 29, 2005

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley   
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – PENNACLE  
FOUNDATION, INC., CARSON, CORNING, AND LITTLE WINGS  
GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Carson, Corning, and Little Wings Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Pennacle Foundation, Inc. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Carson Group Home is a four-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Carson Group Home was providing services for three Los Angeles County DCFS children. Carson Group Home is located in the Fourth District.

Corning Group Home is a four-bed facility, which provides care for girls ages 9-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Corning Group Home was providing services for three Los Angeles County DCFS children. Corning Group Home is located in the Second District.

Little Wings Group Home is a three-bed facility, which provides care for girls ages 9–17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Little Wings Group Home was providing services for one Los Angeles County DCFS child and one child from Tri-Counties (San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura) regional center. Little Wings Group Home is located in the Second District.

*“To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service”*

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, facility inspections, and interviews with two children placed in Carson and Corning Group Home, and one child placed in Little Wings Group Home at the time of the review. 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**

The Agency needs to immediately address various areas where improvements are needed. Carson Group Home needs to maintain age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment; develop Needs and Services Plans that are specific, measurable, and realistic; develop quarterly reports that focus on the goals of the Needs and Services Plans; include residents in the planning and preparation phase of meals; provide residents with sufficient opportunities to participate in recreational activities; follow the recreational schedule; maintain a current court authorization for each resident receiving psychotropic medication; advise all staff to treat residents with respect and dignity and monitor their behavior; ensure there is no interference with residents' daily living functions, and administer discipline in a fair and equitable manner.

Corning Group Home needs to thoroughly clean the kitchen and inform residents of their right to refuse medication.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

**Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide a corrective action plan to the Children Services Group Home Ombudsman within 20 business days from the date 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 Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC;jdh

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS  
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer  
Greer Davis, Executive Director, Pennacle Foundation, Inc.  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**Pinnacle Foundation, Inc.  
Carson Group Home  
6133 East Carson Street  
Lakewood, Ca 90713  
Phone: (562) 429- 3433  
License No.: 197803159  
Rate Classification Level: 14**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

### **Comments:**

Carson Group Home is located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. Resident bedrooms are comfortable and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home does not maintain age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment such as balls. There are board games, a TV, and a VCR. However, the household video games are not accessible to the residents. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs are available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

### **Recommendation**

- 1. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management maintain age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment including video games for the residents.**

## **II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current. However, they are not always specific, measurable, and realistic. There is documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly report for one resident is current but does not appropriately focus on the goals of the NSP. The other resident has not been in the Group Home long enough to require a quarterly report.

Residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular individual and/or group therapy.

**Recommendations**

**2. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management:**

- a. Develop Needs and Services Plans that are specific, measurable, and realistic.**
- b. Develop quarterly reports that focus on the goals of the NSPs.**

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Residents are attending school and have current Individualized Educational Plans. Their records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. Residents have minimal involvement in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation is encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

**Recommendation**

- 3. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management include residents in the planning and preparation phase of meals.**

**IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

The Agency does not provide its residents with sufficient opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents reported that recreational schedules are not routinely followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. Residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

**Recommendations**

- 4. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management:**
  - a. Provide residents with sufficient opportunities to participate in recreational activities.**
  - b. Follow the recreational schedule.**

**V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for three case files**

**Comments:**

Two of the residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medications. Documentation confirms that the children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Medication distribution logs were properly maintained.

**Recommendation**

- 5. Pennacle Foundation, Inc., management maintain a current court authorization for each resident receiving psychotropic medication.**

**VI. Personal Rights**

**Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency. However, residents indicated that there are some staff members who did not treat them with respect and dignity. Residents reported the interactions to be antagonistic, stressful, and sometimes humiliating. Residents at times may require one-to-one supervision. When there is a heightened level of care, residents stated that staff sometimes interferes with their daily functioning. The Agency's representative was not aware of the residents' negative interactions with staff and stated that the matter would be addressed with administrators and staff immediately.

Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home.

Residents reported overall satisfaction with the food. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors, to make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their placement workers, attorneys and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Group home is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are not consistently enforced and that discipline and restrictions are meted out in an unfair manner.

Residents are not aware of their right to refuse medication.

**Recommendations**

- 6. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management:**
- a. Require all staff to treat residents with respect and dignity and monitor their behavior.**
  - b. Ensure that there is no interference with residents' daily living functions.**
  - c. Administer discipline in a fair and equitable manner.**
  - d. Inform residents of their right to refuse medication.**

**VII. Clothing and Allowance**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to the residents is of good quality and sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. Residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage space.

Residents are provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**Pinnacle Foundation, Inc.  
Corning Group Home  
5643 Corning Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90056  
Phone: (310) 645-4841  
License No.: 198202803  
Rate Classification Level: 14**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

### **Comments:**

Corning Group Home is located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks. However, the interior of the Group Home is in need of improvement.

In the kitchen, the floor, cabinets, ceiling fan, stove, and countertops need cleaning.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

### **Recommendation**

- 1. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management thoroughly clean the kitchen.**

## **II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews – Two**

Residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.



The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. There is documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

Quarterly reports for the residents are current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSPs.

Residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular individual and/or 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:**

Residents attend school and have current Individualized Educational Plans. Their records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of the residents' daily living skills. Residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation is encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

**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:**

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

#### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

#### **V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for three case files**

**Comments:**

Residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medications. Documentation confirms that the children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

#### **Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

#### **VI. Personal Rights**

**Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their placement workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate different holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are not aware of their right to refuse medication.

**Recommendations**

- 2. Pinnacle Foundation, Inc., management inform residents of their right to refuse medication.**

**VII. Clothing and Allowance**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews.**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. Residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

Residents are provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**Pinnacle Foundation, Inc.  
Little Wings Group Home  
4324 Fifth Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90008  
Phone: (323) 298-5003  
License No.: 198203831  
Rate Classification Level: 14**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

**Method of assessment – Observation**

**Sample size for resident interviews: One**

### **Comments:**

Little Wings Group Home is located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

### **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: One**

### **Comments:**

The resident meets the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement.

The resident received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSP) is current, realistic, measurable, and time specific. There is documentation to support the placement worker's participation in the development and update of the NSP.

The quarterly report for the resident is current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSP.

The resident is provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. The case file reflects adequate documentation to show evidence of the resident receiving regular individual and/or 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: One**

#### **Comments:**

The resident attends school and has a current Individualized Educational Plan. Her record contains current semester report cards and/or progress reports. The resident reported that she is provided with a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feels that the Group Home is supportive of her academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The resident is involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation is encouraged.

The resident is not old enough to be involved in emancipation and vocational programs.

The resident does not work.

#### **IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: One**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The resident expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The resident reported that she participates in planning some of the activities. The resident has free time and is able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

#### **V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for one case file**

**Comments:**

The resident has a current court authorization for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that the child is routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

#### **VI. Personal Rights**

**Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: One**

**Comments:**

The resident expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. The resident participated in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. The resident reported that she feels safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with her daily living functions.

The resident reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with her ability to participate in menu development. She reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of her interaction with staff. The resident feels that there is at least one staff member she can easily talk to and trust.

The resident reported that she is assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. The resident is able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. She is permitted to contact her placement worker, attorney, and family members as needed. The resident is able to attend weekly religious services of her choice and feels that the Agency is respectful of her cultural lifestyle. The Agency allows the resident to celebrate different holidays.

The resident reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

The resident is aware of her 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: One**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the resident. The Group Home supplies the resident with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the resident is given the opportunity to select her own clothes. Clothing provided to the resident is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides the resident with the required minimum base allowance, which she is able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. The resident is permitted to spend her allowance as she chooses.



The Agency provides the resident with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

The resident is provided with a regular opportunity to maintain a photo album/ life book.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**