



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

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J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

September 16, 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 – CHILDNET
YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, LONG BEACH YOUTH HOME**

We have completed a review of ChildNet Youth and Family Services, Long Beach Youth Home. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Long Beach Youth Home is a thirty-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, Long Beach Youth Home was providing services for 24 Los Angeles County Probation children, one Kern County Probation child, one Orange County Probation child, one San Bernardino County Probation child, and two Santa Clara County Probation children.

Long Beach Youth Home is located in the Fourth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

children are 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 Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency has deficient areas that need to be addressed.

Long Beach Youth Home needs to complete initial assessments within the first thirty days of placement; obtain court authorizations for all children who are prescribed psychotropic medication; and provide children with the required minimum base weekly allowance.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. 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:jh

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Robert DiStefano, Executive Director, ChildNet Youth and Family Services
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**ChildNet Youth and Family Services
Long Beach Youth Home
4151 Fountain Street
Long Beach, California 90804
(562) 961-6106
License Number: 191601150
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Long Beach Youth Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. 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 interviews

Sample size for interviews: Three

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home’s population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. However, children are not consistently assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services as identified in their NSPs.

Recommendation

- 1. Long Beach Youth Home Management ensure that children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Three

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home’s program includes the development of children’s daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Three

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are given opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children are allowed to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, one child who is prescribed psychotropic medication does not have a current court authorization for one medication he is currently taking.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

- 2. Long Beach Youth Home Management obtain current court authorizations for all psychotropic medications prescribed to children.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Three

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home’s policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff

supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to have private visitors, to make and receive personal telephone calls, and to send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

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

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Three

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are given opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose; however, they are not routinely provided with the required minimum base weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

3. Long Beach Youth Home Management provide children with the required minimum base weekly allowance.



To: Carla Carr, Group Home Ombudsman
Department of Auditor Controller, Kenneth Hahn Hall of
Administration
500 W. Temple St. Room 515-A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

From: Tim Witherspoon, GHA
Director Long Beach Youth Home
ChildNet Youth and Family Services

Date: 07/06/05
RE: Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

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RECOMMENDATION

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Long Beach Youth Home Management to ensure that children are assessed for needed services within the first thirty days of placement.

CAP

The Treatment Director facilitated training on June 15, 2005, with the Treatment Team Supervisors. The purpose of the training was to review the requirements regarding the timelines for initial needs and services plans and alleviate any confusion regarding dates.

The initial needs and services plan "due dates" are reviewed in weekly Management meetings to ensure accuracy. This was implemented on June 28, 2005.

In order to ensure that the deficiency will not occur again, the Treatment Team Supervisors will be responsible for implementing the corrective action. The Treatment Director will be responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective action remains implemented and is working as intended.

RECOMMENDATION

V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Long Beach Youth Home Management to obtain appropriate court authorizations for all children who are prescribed psychotropic medication.

CAP

Long Beach Youth Home is aware that in one situation, a current court authorization for psychotropic medication was missing from the file. However, the authorization was correctly filled out, the necessary signatures (i.e., legal guardian) were obtained and faxed (with proof of fax date) to the court offices. In addition as noted in the Audit Report dated June 28, 2005, "children are routinely seen by the prescribing

psychiatrist". "children are informed about their psychotropic medication and of their right to refuse medication", and "medication logs are properly maintained." According to the LA County Group Home Contract, Long Beach Youth Home is in compliance as long as the above mentioned situation occurs. Unfortunately, the timeline for receiving authorization back from the court clerk's office is out of our control.

Long Beach Youth Home has experienced situations where the Clerk's Desk failed to return the court authorizations in a timely manner (approximately two weeks). As a result, over the years Long Beach Youth Home has utilized the following procedure to ensure documentation of our compliant/follow-up with the court in hopes of retaining these authorizations within a two-week time frame. The person responsible for implementing the corrective action plan is the Day Treatment Administration Coordinator and the Treatment Team Supervisors will be responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective action remains implemented and is working as intended.

- Procedure for Faxing Psychotropic Authorizations
 - 1) Authorizations are checked for accuracy (i.e. guardian's signature, physician's signature, specifications, court case number)
 - 2) Authorization is faxed to Clerk's Desk for Delinquency and Dependency (323) 260-5082
 - 3) Fax confirmation is attached to original and files as "Pending"
 - 4) Steps 1-3 are completed again if no response is received within 2 weeks

RECOMMENDATION

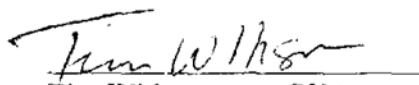
VI. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCES

Long Beach Youth Home Management to provide children with the required minimum base weekly allowance.

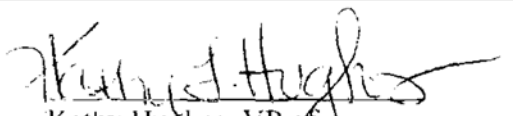
CAP

As of June 28, 2005, Long Beach Youth Home will provide all residents with the required minimum base weekly allowance. A base allowance of \$5.00 is provided to residents ages 11-13 and \$7.00 is provided to residents ages 14-17. Additional funds are provided according to status level.

The person responsible for implementing the corrective action plan is our Resident Services Coordinator. The person responsible for monitoring to ensure that the corrective action remains implemented and is working as intended is the individually assigned Caseworker for each resident and their Treatment Team Supervisor.


Tim Witherspoon, GHA

7/12/05
Date


Kathy Hughes, VP of
Community and Residential Services

7/12/05
Date