COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

May 4, 2006

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – OLIVE CREST TREATMENT CENTERS, INCORPORTATED, MALENA, MAXIMUS AND PALM GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Malena, Maximus and Palm Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Olive Crest Treatment Centers, Incorporated. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Malena and Palm Group Homes are each six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Malena Group Home was providing services for one Los Angeles County DCFS child, and five Orange County children. Palm Group Home was providing services for three Los Angeles County DCFS children, and three Orange County children.

Maximus Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for girls ages 15-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Maximus Group Home was providing services for one Los Angeles County DCFS child, and five Orange County children.

Malena, Maximus and Palm Group Homes are located in Orange County.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as 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 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. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

All three Group Homes need to provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance; encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Malena Group Home needs to clean the walls in the common areas, clean or replace the carpet throughout the home, clean the couches in the living room and den; replace light bulbs in the den; repair the damaged blinds in the living room; replace the shower curtain; clean the bathroom floor; repair the bathtub caulking around the bathtub; repair or replace the bulletin boards in bedrooms one and three; replace the pillows in the children's bedrooms; replace the linens in bedroom three; include the placement worker and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Maximus Group Home needs to repair the living room carpet; replace the bulletin boards in the hallway and in bedroom one; refinish the furniture in bedrooms one and two; clean the carpet in bedroom two; complete initial assessments for all children within 30 days of placement; and provide children with the opportunities to participate in emancipation programs.

Palm Group Home needs to repair the back door frame; clean the bathtub; replace the pillows in bedroom one; include the placement worker and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

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

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Donald Verleur, Executive Director, Olive Crest Treatment Centers, Incorporated
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

Olive Crest Treatment Centers, Incorporated
Malena Group Home
13442 Malena Drive
Orange, California 92705
Phone: 951-686-8500
License Number: 300603063
Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Malena Group 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.

There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home, and the Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the interior of the Group Home is not well maintained. The walls in the common areas are dirty. The carpet throughout the Group Home, including the children's bedrooms is dirty. The couches in the living room and the den are dirty. There is insufficient lighting in the den, and the window covering in the living room is damaged. In the bathroom, the shower curtain and floor are dirty, and the bathtub caulking is worn.

Children's 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. However, the pillows are worn and dirty in all of the children's bedrooms, and the linens are dirty in bedroom three. The walls in bedroom one are dirty, and the dressers in bedrooms one and two are worn and damaged. There is graffiti on the bulletin boards in bedrooms one and three.

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

1. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

   a. **Clean the walls throughout the house, as needed.**

   b. **Repair or replace the carpet throughout the home, as needed.**

   c. **Clean or replace the living room and den couches.**

   d. **Replace the den light bulbs.**

   e. **Repair or replace the window coverings in the living room.**

   f. **Replace the shower curtain.**

   g. **Clean the bathroom floor.**

   h. **Repair the bathtub caulking.**

   i. **Repair or replace the bulletin boards in bedrooms one and three.**

   j. **Replace the pillows in the children's bedrooms.**

   k. **Replace the linens in bedroom three.**

   l. **Repair or replace the dressers in bedrooms one and two.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals. However, the placement worker, and input from the child are not included in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that the child is receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

2. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management include the placement worker and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interview

Sample size for interviews: One

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 interview

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

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

children 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:

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

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication. Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interview with child

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. The child reports that he feels safe in the Group Home, and is provided with appropriate staff supervision. The child expresses satisfaction with the quality of his interactions with staff, and reports that staff treats him with respect and dignity.

The child reports that he is assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

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

The child reports 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 interview

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

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

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining a photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

3. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

    a. **Provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**

    b. **Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

Olive Crest Treatment Centers, Incorporated
Maximus Group Home
25372 Maximus Street
Mission Viejo, California 92691
Phone: 714-543-5437
License Number: 306000010
Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Maximus Group 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.

Overall, 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. However, there is a large burn mark on the living room carpet, and the hallway bulletin board has inappropriate writing on it.

Overall, children's bedrooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate 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. However, in bedroom one, the dresser is marked and stained, and the bulletin board has inappropriate writing on it. In bedroom two, the dresser and the nightstand are marked and stained, and the carpet is stained.

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

1. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

    a. **Repair the living room carpet.**

    b. **Replace the bulletin boards in the hallway and in bedroom one.**

c. **Refinish or replace the dressers and night stand in bedrooms one and two.**

d. **Clean the carpet in bedroom two.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interview

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

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

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that the child is receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

2. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management assess children for needed services within thirty days of placement.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interview

Sample size for interview: One

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.

However, age-appropriate children are not provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation programs.

Recommendation

3. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management provide all age-appropriate children with sufficient opportunities to participate in emancipation programs.**

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interview

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

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

Children 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:

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

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

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interview with child

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. The child reports that she feels safe in the Group Home, and is provided with appropriate staff supervision. The child expresses satisfaction with the quality of her interactions with staff, and reports that staff treats her with respect and dignity.

The child reports that she is assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to have private visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and send and receive unopened mail. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

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

The child reports 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 interview

Sample size for interviews: One

Comments:

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

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

4. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

   a. **Provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**

   b. **Encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

Olive Crest Treatment Centers, Incorporated
Palm Group Home
1614 East Palm Avenue
Orange, California 92666
Phone: 714-543-5437
License Number: 300606301
Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Palm Group Home is located in a residential community. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped. The exterior of the Group Home is generally well maintained. However, the wooden back door frame is rotting.

Overall, the interior of the Group Home is well maintained. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home, and the Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the bathtub is dirty.

Children's 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. However, the pillows are worn and dirty in bedroom one.

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

1. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

    a. **Repair the back door frame.**

    b. **Clean the bathtub.**

    c. **Replace the pillows in bedroom one.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals. However, the placement worker, and input from the child are not included in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

2. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management include the placement worker and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

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: Two

Comments:

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

Children 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:

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

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

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

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 able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. 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: Two

Comments:

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

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

3. **Olive Crest Treatment Centers management:**

    a. **Provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**

    b. **Encourage and assist all children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**

PLAN OF CORRECTION
Olive Crest Treatment Centers
Maximus, Palm and Malena Houses

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

A. The carpet at Maximus house has been repaired
B. The improvements at Malena house have been addressed, with the exception of the new carpeting, which should be installed as part of a home makeover. The expected date of completion is May 1, 2006. The couches have been replaced. The walls have been painted; new lamps will be purchased as part of the home makeover. New bed linens will be purchased for the client bedrooms. Window coverings have been purchased with further upgrades expected with the home makeover. A new bathtub was installed in the client bathroom. Bulletin boards have been replaced in the client bedrooms to address the graffiti issue. The dressers have been sanded and restained to care for the writing that was on them. Palm House and Malena House both purchased new pillows for those that were worn.

There are several checks and balances in place to ensure that the homes remain well maintained. There are monthly on-sites conducted and documented by the Residential Manager from each home. The Division Director reviews these. Additionally, the Program Supervisor for each home and the Division Director conduct monthly on-site visits checking the facility as well as the client charts to ensure compliance with agency, county and state standards. Feedback is given to the Residential Manager and disciplinary action is taken if necessary. House needs are submitted to the appropriate department responsible for filling the need. Follow-ups are made to check the statuses to ensure needs are met.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

A .House clinicians that write and carry out the Needs and Services Plans have been informed about the need to include the County Social Worker and the client at the time when forming the treatment goals for each client. The clinicians have been informed of the need to invite the Social Worker to participate in person with the clinician and the client in order to formulate realistic, achievable and necessary goals. Should the social worker be unable to attend the meeting, the clinician will note that in the client's chart, but seek input from the social worker as to the treatment goals of the client. These reports are turned into the Division Director. The Residential Manager, Program Supervisor and Division Director verify the timely completion of the reports through monthly chart audits. The expectation that these reports be completed within the first 30 days of placement and quarterly thereafter was reiterated.

B. The completion of these reports is tracked electronically and followed up weekly by the Division Director and the Clinical Director who directly supervises the clinicians. Disciplinary steps are taken when needed to ensure timely completion of these reports.

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

A. All clients age 15 1/2 –17 are required to participate in agency and county ILP programs. The county requires that clients attend a minimum of 2 ILP workshops per month. Attendance is tracked by computer and reports are issued monthly to the clinician, Residential Manager, Program Supervisor and Division Director to ensure client participation/attendance at the workshops.

B. In addition, Olive Crest has a program that requires emancipation-age youth to complete 10 contracts designed to strengthen skills necessary for success emancipation and independence. Clients are required to complete one contract per month until all 10 contracts are completed. There are built-in incentives in both programs to motivate youth to participate.

C. There is an ILS primary staff assigned in each group home to track youth participation in both agency and county programs. This is documented in the youth's ILS chart at the group home. The ILS Coordinator at Olive Crest audits these charts monthly. Also, the computer tracks youth participation at the county workshops. This information is available to the ILS Coordinator that provides monthly feedback to the house clinician and ILS Primary. Reports are also given to the Program Supervisor of each home as well as the Division Director to ensure attendance and compliance with expectations.

D. Also, weekly treatment team notes document ILS progress. These notes are turned into the Division Director to track progress on a weekly basis.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCE

A. Clients residing in the group homes are given at least the minimum $7.00 allowance per our contract agreement.

B. All LA County clients residing in the group home will have a Life Book to document their achievements, interests, activities or other important aspects of their lives that they can take when leaving the group home in order to have something to take as a remembrance of this life stage. Each resident will be encouraged to make additions to the book while in residence at the group home.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (714) 543-5437 ext. 1174.

Sincerely,

Elise H. Froistad, MFT

Elise H. Froistad, MFT
Residential Division Director