



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

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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

February 19, 2004

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 – HILLSIDES  
HOME FOR CHILDREN, MAIN CAMPUS, BOYS SATELLITE, AND  
GIRLS SATELLITE FACILITIES**

We have completed a review of the three group home operated by Hillsides Home for Children (Hillsides), Main Campus, Boys Satellite, and Girls Satellite facilities. Each facility contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Main Campus is a 54 bed facility, located in the Fifth Supervisorial District, which provides care for boys and girls ages 6-17 years who exhibit severe emotional disturbances. At the time of the monitoring visit, Main Campus was providing services for 44 Los Angeles County DCFS children, one child each from Ventura and Santa Clarita County, and 10 children that were privately placed.

Boys Satellite Home is a six bed facility, located in the Fifth Supervisorial District, which provides care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit severe emotional disturbances. At the time of the monitoring visit, Hillsides Boys Satellite was providing services for six DCFS children.

Girls Satellite Home is a six bed facility, located in the Fifth Supervisorial District, which provides care for girls ages 13-17 years who exhibit severe emotional disturbances. At the time of the monitoring visit, Hillsides Girls Satellite was providing services for five DCFS children.

**Scope of Review**

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

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

and interviews with six children placed with the Main Campus and two children placed in each of the Satellite facilities at the time of the review. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by each facility and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

**Summary of Findings**

Hillsides Boys and Girls Satellite facilities were providing the services outlined in their Program Statements.

Generally, Hillsides Main campus was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, we did note various areas where improvements are needed.

Hillsides Main Campus needs to make minor repairs; provide initial diagnostic assessments for each resident within the first 30 days of placement; maintain current court authorizations for each resident receiving prescribed psychotropic medication and documentation of each resident's monthly psychiatric evaluation; and provide each resident with at least the required minimum weekly allowance.

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 15 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 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
- John Hitchcock, Executive Director, Hillsides
- Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee

**HILLSIDES HOME FOR CHILDREN**  
**Main Campus**  
**940 Avenue 64**  
**Pasadena, CA 91105**  
**Phone: 323-254-2274**  
**License No.: 191200313/191801995**  
**Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

**Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Six**

**Comments:**

Hillsides Home for Children is a 54 bed facility located in a residential area of Pasadena. The campus consisted of an administration building, gymnasium, private school, cafeteria, and other facilities. The grounds were attractive and well maintained.

The residential cottages were nicely maintained, individually decorated, had furniture in good condition, and a home-like atmosphere. Each unit had a TV, VCR, board games, and reading material. The residents' bedrooms were clean, neat, and personalized with pictures and other items. However, there were some areas that needed improvement.

**Family**

There was insufficient lighting throughout the cottage especially in the bathrooms. In addition, a build-up of rust was around the bathroom stalls and vents.

**Arroyo**

There was insufficient and inoperative lighting in some of the bedrooms.

Residents had ample opportunities for recreation in the gym that was fully equipped with a basketball court and athletic supplies. The school had a computer lab and a library.

Resident meals were prepared daily in the main kitchen and served in an adjacent dining area. There was a sufficient supply of food properly stored.

**Recommendations**

**1. Hillsides management:**

- a. Provide sufficient lighting in the Family and Arroyo cottages as needed.
- b. Repair rusted areas in the bathroom in the Family cottage.

**II. PROGRAM SERVICES**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Six**

**Comments:**

The residents met Hillsides' population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. However, only three of the six residents had an initial diagnostic assessment on file.

Each resident had a current Needs and Services Plan (NSP) on file. However, four of the six NSPs had some of the same information as in the prior NSPs. This was discussed with management who stated that if a goal in the prior NSP had not yet been attained, the current NSP would not reflect a change in that area. It was suggested that it be documented on the NSP when no changes in specific areas had occurred.

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

The residents received individual and group therapy.

**Recommendation**

- 2. Hillsides management provide initial diagnostic assessments for each resident within the first thirty days of placement.**

**III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Six**

**Comments:**

The six residents attended Hillsides on-grounds private school and their records

contained progress reports and/or report cards. Each resident required and had an Individualized Education Plan on file. The residents reported that they were provided a sufficient amount of educational stimulation away from school on a daily basis and that staff was supportive of their academic progress.

As part of the development of daily living skills, the residents had to maintain their living areas, bedrooms, and discuss hygiene care as needed.

Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs. One resident worked and was able to manage her money. The residents were able to spend their allowances as they chose.

**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: Six**

**Comments:**

Hillsides provided residents with an exceptional recreation/activity program. There was a baseball and football field, swimming pool, gymnasium, and facilities for creative arts. Residents’ artistic works were displayed throughout the facility and residents have won artistic awards and recognition for their creative works.

Residents take part in activities both on and off campus. Staff developed a monthly calendar of activities to which the residents indicated they did not provide input. This was discussed with management who stated that a lot of activities were donated and residents were sometimes not told until the last minute what the activities would be. However, the residents were asked on a daily basis to evaluate activities they had done and give suggestions for what they wanted to do. At times a resident wanted to go one place but the majority wanted to go somewhere else. Management stated that they would make an effort to help each resident feel they had a say in the recreational planning process.

Residents were permitted and encouraged to participate in activities such as sports, various classes, and workshops. Transportation was provided to and from activities as needed.

## **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations for this section.

## **V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

There were 54 residents placed in Hillsides at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the 39 Los Angeles (LA) County residents prescribed psychotropic medications.

### **Comments:**

Four of the 39 LA County residents receiving psychotropic medications did not have current court authorizations. One resident did not have a current psychiatric review of medication on file.

The medication logs were properly maintained.

## **Recommendations**

### **3. Hillsides management:**

- a. **Maintain a current court authorization for each resident prescribed psychotropic medication.**
- b. **Maintain documentation of each resident's monthly psychiatric evaluation of medication in their file.**

## **VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS**

### **Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Six**

### **Comments:**

The residents were presented with the policies, rules, and regulations when arriving in placement. The residents felt that the rules were generally fair, as were the consequences for not following them.

The residents expressed overall satisfaction with their placement at Hillsides, reported that their cottages were comfortable, and that they were given more than two snacks a day. However, each resident rated the food from "very poor" to "disgusting" and stated that they were not involved in menu planning. This issue was discussed with

management who provided documentation revealing that residents in each cottage are given the opportunity to comment on the menus and the findings are discussed with the nutritionist. Some meals are liked by the older residents but not the younger residents and vice versa. However, if residents from three of the six cottages do not like certain meals or foods, they are dropped from the menu.

The residents indicated that a sufficient number of staff was always available on the premises and rated the facility from “fair” to “poor.”

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas. The residents did not feel their chores were too demanding.

Visits and phone calls were permitted with sufficient privacy and residents were able to have telephone contact with their placement workers. Each resident indicated that they had religious freedom and felt that staff was culturally sensitive to each resident’s background and ethnicity.

The residents stated that their health care needs were being met, they had been informed about their medication, and were aware of 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: Six**

**Comments:**

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

Three of the residents did not receive at least the required minimum weekly allowance. This was discussed with management who stated that the matter would be looked into because the individual cottages were responsible for dispersing resident allowances. Residents were able to increase their allowance based on the Agency’s behavioral system and were encouraged to earn extra money by either working on or off campus.

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

The residents had life books.

**Recommendation**

- 4. Hillsides management provide residents with at least the required minimum weekly allowance.**

**HILLSIDES HOME FOR CHILDREN**  
**Boys Satellite**  
**2220 Maiden Lane**  
**Altadena, CA 91001**  
**Phone: 626-798-3198**  
**License No.: 191200838**  
**Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

**Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Hillsides Boys Satellite is a large home located on a residential street. The home was well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends in with the other homes on the block. No safety hazards were observed.

The interior of the home was generally neat and clean with furnishings that were in good condition. The bedrooms were clean, neat, and decorated by the residents.

There was an adequate amount of recreational and educational materials available to the residents including a computer, TV, VCR, a library of videos, video games, a collection of books, and board games.

The food supply was adequate and 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 Hillsides Boys Satellite's population criteria as outlined in their program statement and received an initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were realistic, measurable, and time specific. Both residents and their placement workers participated in developing and updating the NSPs.

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

Both residents were receiving 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:**

Both residents attended Hillside on-grounds private school and their records contained report cards and/or progress reports. 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 Hillside Boys Satellite’s program. The residents were involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals and doing household chores. In addition, employment preparation was encouraged.

Age-appropriate residents had the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs. The residents were able to work, manage their own money, and spend their allowances as they chose.

**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:**

Hillsides Boys Satellite followed a monthly activity schedule developed by staff with input from the residents. Residents were encouraged to participate in activities they desired as well as larger activities planned at the main campus. The residents had an opportunity to play table games, sports, and read at free times during the day.

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**

**There were six residents placed in the home 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 medications had current court authorizations. Documentation confirmed that the residents were routinely seen by the psychiatrist for a review 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:**

The residents were presented with the policies, rules, and regulations upon arriving in placement. Both residents stated that they felt safe in the home and were treated with respect. They reported that a sufficient number of staff was always in the home when residents were present and rated the physical facility as “very good.”

Resident chores included the maintenance of their own rooms and common areas, which the residents did not feel 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. The residents indicated that they had religious freedom, their health care needs were being met, and that staff was culturally sensitive to each resident's background and ethnicity.

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:**

Hillsides Boys Satellite provided appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Hillsides Boys Satellite 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 of sufficient quantity.

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

Hillsides Boys Satellite 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.**

**HILLSIDES HOME FOR CHILDREN  
Girls Satellite  
873 North Hill Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
Phone: 323-254-2274  
License No.: 191290639  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

**Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

**Comments:**

Hillsides Girls Satellite Home is located in a residential neighborhood of well-maintained older homes. The exterior of the home was nicely maintained and blended in well with other homes on the street. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the home was being renovated. Furnishings throughout the house were in very good condition and the bedrooms were clean, neat, and decorated by the residents.

There was an adequate amount of recreational and educational materials available to the residents including a computer, TVs, VCRs, a library of videos, video games, a collection of books, and board games.

The food supply was adequate and 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:**

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

Both residents were receiving individual and group therapy.

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Age-appropriate residents were offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs. The residents were able to work, manage their own money, and spend their allowances as they chose.

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Transportation was provided to and from activities.

**Recommendations**

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**V. PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION**

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**There were five residents placed in the home 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 medications had current court authorizations. Documentation confirmed that the residents were routinely seen by the psychiatrist for a review of their medication.

Medication Logs were properly maintained.

**Recommendations**

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