



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

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June 10, 2004

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – JOURNEY HOUSE**

We have completed a review of Journey House Group Home (Group Home or Agency). The home contracts with the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation).

Journey House is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 14-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Journey House was providing services for six Los Angeles County Probation children. Journey House is located in the First District.

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 the 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

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to make repairs to its facility; remove all potential fire hazards from the home; monitor the use of household disinfectants, cleansers, and hazardous materials; create Needs and Services Plans that have detailed, measurable, and achievable goals; include residents and their authorized representatives in the

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development and update of the Needs and Services Plans; provide residents 16 years and older with ILP and vocational training; and create activity schedules that specifically state the types of planned activities.

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 Probation Department 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.

ASL:DR:CC:bg

- c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
- David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
- Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
- Tim Mayworm, Executive Director, Journey House
- Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee

**Journey House
1232 N Los Robles
Pasadena, CA 91104
Phone: (626) 798-9478
License No.: 191221321
Rate Classification Level: 6**

I. Facility and Environment

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Journey House (Group Home or Agency) is located in a suburban residential neighborhood and blends well with the other homes on the street. Overall, the exterior and the interior of the facility and the surrounding grounds are clean and comfortable. However, the carpet throughout the house is stained.

The residents' bedrooms, although well furnished, have clothes and personal items scattered throughout, and the closets are missing doors or curtains. There are blinds on all the bedroom windows, but the residents use pinned-up blankets, pillowcases, and towels for additional light control.

In bedroom number one, a candle, which appears to have been used by the residents, creates a fire hazard. In bedroom number two, the light fixture adjacent to the window is missing a cover, and the resident propped up a towel, used as window covering, on the bare bulb. The towel has burn marks, which creates an additional fire hazard. Carpets in the residents' bedrooms are stained.

The Group Home receives an exception from Community Care Licensing (CCL), dated January 26, 1998, for allowing normal household cleaning materials to be accessible to the residents. However, we observed cleaning solutions scattered throughout the bedrooms, which presents a safety hazard because of the possibility of residents mistaking them for personal care products.

The residents are able to personalize their bedrooms by posting pictures and personal items on the walls.

The Group Home has a variety of athletic and educational supplies, including exercise equipment, video games, board games, and books. The residents' computer is operational.

The food supply is adequate in quantity and quality, and is properly stored to prevent spoilage.

Recommendations

- 1. Journey House management:**
 - a. Remove stains from carpet in the common areas and the residents' bedrooms.**
 - b. Assist the residents in cleaning their rooms and organizing their clothes and personal items on a regular basis.**
 - c. Replace closet doors/curtains in the residents' bedrooms.**
 - d. Install curtains in residents' bedrooms to replace blankets and towels currently used by the residents.**
 - e. Replace all missing light fixture covers.**
 - f. Remove all potential fire hazards from the home, including but not limited to, candles and heated elements near fabrics and other flammable materials.**
 - g. Ensure all household disinfectants, cleaning solutions, and hazardous material are properly stored, as specified in the CCL waiver dated January 26, 1998.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides and documents the program services to its residents. Both residents in the sample have the required initial assessments in their files that are thorough, detailed, and focused on several aspects of the assessment needs of the residents.

Both residents have Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) in their files. Although the NSPs are specifically designed for each resident, the goals in the NSPs are not detailed, measurable, and achievable. Input from the residents and/or their authorized representatives are not included in the NSPs.

The residents' quarterly reports are detailed, comprehensive, and addressed the children's therapeutic, residential, educational, and social goals.

Both residents are receiving clinical services, in a variety of therapeutic milieus. In addition to group and individual therapy conducted by social work staff or contractors as described in the Program Statement, behavioral and psychological treatments are provided on regular weekly or more frequent basis.

Recommendations

2. Journey House management:

- a. Create Needs and Services Plans that have detailed, measurable, and achievable goals.**
- b. Include each resident and the resident's authorized representative in development and update of the Needs and Services Plan.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency documents the education and emancipation services provided to its residents. Copies of progress reports, report cards, and other school correspondence are maintained in the residents' files.

The main focus of the Agency's program and treatment is education. According to the administrators, four of the six current residents are college-bound. One resident has already been accepted to a local State university. The residents stated that the Group Home provides excellent educational support, educational resources, and daily cognitive stimulation.

The residents are taught basic essential daily living, self-help and survival skills, such as cooking, shopping, and transportation. However, one 18 year old resident was not receiving Independent Living Program (ILP) services. According to the administrator, it is the Group Home's general policy not to enroll the residents into ILP courses until their senior year in high school. One resident is employed and able to manage his money.

Recommendation

- 3. Journey House management provide all residents 16 years and older with ILP and vocational training.**

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Although the Agency’s recreation schedules are not specific, the Group Home is providing sufficient, appropriate recreational activities to its residents. Because the Group Home’s focus is on teaching independent living skills, residents are allowed to make their own choices of activities and have autonomous and unsupervised access to the community.

The residents express satisfaction with the variety and the quantity of activities provided. The residents report that they are exposed to a number of organized, age-appropriate outings and events.

Some of the local community organizations for recreation and program resources are utilized. The children report that they are able to participate in self-selected activities and that transportation is provided to some of the activities.

Recommendation

- 4. Journey House management create recreation schedules that specifically state the types of planned activities as required by the Statement of Work.**

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to Group Home management, there are no residents receiving psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented in the medication log.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency ensures that the personal rights of its residents are respected. The residents express great satisfaction with the facility and staff stating that the Group Home has a fair and respectful atmosphere. The residents feel very comfortable and cared for and state that they are treated with great regard and dignity by the staff.

The residents state that they feel safe in the home and that there is no interference with daily living functions. Both residents report a general level of satisfaction with the taste of the food.

The residents report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced by all of the staff and that they have fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. The residents also report that the staff supervises the residents appropriately.

The residents express a great level of satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff stating that the staff is fair and respectful in their interactions with the residents. Both residents report that their privacy is respected and that they are able to contact their placement workers and attorneys at any time.

The residents state that they receive appropriate medical care, are informed about the medications they are taking, and that there is ample support from the Group Home staff and medical personnel about all health issues. The residents state that they are aware of their right to refuse medication and have religious freedom.

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:

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and allowances to the residents. The Agency 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 of sufficient quantity.

The residents receive at least the required minimum weekly allowance and are able to earn an increase based on the Agency's behavioral system. The residents are able to spend their allowances as they choose.

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

The residents have life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.