



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

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September 24, 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 – TRINITY
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES, ANZA**

We have completed a review of Anza Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Trinity Children and Family Services. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Anza Group Home is a 90-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Anza Group Home was providing services for 66 Los Angeles County Probation children, and a combined total of 16 Probation children from the counties of Santa Clara, Contra Costa, Alameda, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Joaquin. Anza Group Home is located in Riverside County.

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 six 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.

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Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to: provide the residents with extra pillows and blankets; document placement workers' participation in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans; provide residents with the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate; provide ample meal portions to the residents; modify resident discipline policies; allow residents the opportunity to routinely shop in the community; provide residents with the required minimum base allowance in accordance with their age; and provide residents with the opportunity to maintain photo albums/life books.

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's Group Home Ombudsman 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 Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

- c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
- David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
- Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer
- Al Winters, Executive Director, Trinity Children and Family Services, Anza
- Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee

**Trinity Children and Family Services
Anza
36401 Tripp Flats Road
Anza, Ca 92539
Phone: (909) 763-0843
License No.: 330900909
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:

The Anza Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is a large facility located in a rural area of Riverside County. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained and nicely landscaped. 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. However, residents reported that they are provided only one pillow and blanket each and that they would be more comfortable if they were provided additional pillows and blankets.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also electronic and board games, TVs, and VCRs. There are books and resource materials, including computers with a variety of programs.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendation

- 1. Trinity Children and Family Services management provide residents with sufficient pillows and blankets.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Six

Comments:

The 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. However, for four residents there was no documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly reports are current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSP.

The 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 weekly individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendation

- 2. Trinity Children and Family Services management provide documentation to show placement workers' participation in the development and update of the Needs and Services Plans.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Six

Comments:

Residents are attending school. All records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports for the residents. 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. The residents are involved in the planning of menus. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Five age-appropriate residents were not offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

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

Recommendation

3. Trinity Children and Family Services management provide age-appropriate residents with the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Six

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 23 case files

Comments:

Residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are 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: Six

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. However, Residents reported that meal portions are small and that they are often hungry. The Agency's administration stated that they will immediately address this issue.

Residents reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with most staff.

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 probation officers, 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 holidays.

Residents reported that all residents are often restricted from activities when only one resident misbehaves.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

4. Trinity Children and Family Services management:

- a. Provide ample meal portions for the residents.**
- b. Restrict only those residents who misbehave from participating in recreational activities.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Six

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 clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity. The residents are able to shop in the community for their initial clothing purchases. However, for subsequent purchases, residents are required to submit order forms to the staff who make the clothing selections and purchases for the residents.

The Agency provides residents with a base allowance. However, the amount provided is less than the required minimums based on the residents' ages. Residents are able to increase their allowance 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 not provided with opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

5. Trinity Children and Family Services management:

- c. Allow residents to routinely shop in the community for their clothing.**
- d. Provide residents with the required minimum base allowance in accordance with their ages.**
- e. Provide residents with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.**