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February 4, 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 – CRITTENTON  
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES, VALLEY VIEW AND BOYS  
CASTLE**

We have completed a review of Valley View and Boys Castle Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Crittenton Children and Family Services. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Valley View Group Home is a 64-bed facility, which provides care for girls ages 13-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, emotional difficulties and may be pregnant and/or parenting. At the time of the monitoring visit, Valley View Group Home was providing services for 13 Los Angeles County DCFS children, 34 Probation children, four Orange County children, and one Riverside County child.

Boys Castle Group Home is an eight-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 8-11 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Boys Castle Group Home was providing services for five Los Angeles County DCFS children, one Los Angeles County Probation child, and one Orange County DCFS child.

Crittenton Children and Family Services Group Homes are located in Orange County.

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

### **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 three children placed in Valley View Group Home and two children placed in Boys Castle 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 address various areas where improvements are needed.

#### **Valley View Group Home**

Valley View Group Home needs to make repairs to its facility; provide parenting and child development magazines and children's books for the residents; develop Needs and Services Plans that cite specific, measurable, realistic objectives; provide documentation to support that staff participate in the implementation of residents' Needs and Services Plans; develop quarterly reports that focus on the goals noted in the Needs and Services Plans; provide residents with the opportunity to participate in meal preparation; provide adequate recreational activities; provide sufficient snacks at the Group Home; provide residents with the opportunity to make and receive private telephone calls; provide residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice; and ensure staff provide residents with consistent disciplinary consequences.

#### **Boys Castle Group Home**

Boys Castle Group Home needs to replace worn window coverings and a sofa; provide sufficient snacks at the facility; provide residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice; and inform residents of their right to refuse medication.

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 reviews.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:jdh

- c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
- David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
- Paul Higa, Acting Chief Probation Officer
- Joyce Capelle, Executive Director, Crittenton Children and Family Services
- Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee

**Crittenton Children and Family Services  
Valley View Campus  
100 East Valley View Drive  
Fullerton, CA 92832  
Phone: (714) 680-9057  
License No.: 300612972  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

**I. Facility and Environment**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

**Comments:**

Valley View Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is a large facility located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The Group Home consists of administrative offices, a dining hall, kitchen, and four residential cottages; Juniper, Willow, Pine, and Aspen. Parenting residents share rooms with their children. 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, there are areas that need improvement.

In the Aspen Cottage television room, electrical cords are exposed presenting a safety hazard. Also, some furniture is broken, videos and DVDs are strewn about, and there is insufficient seating. In addition, there are no children's toys, and the children's play area is not appropriately designated.

Residents are not provided sufficient house keeping assistance or training. As a result, some of the resident bedrooms are cluttered.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. There is a computer with a variety of programs. However, there are no parenting and child development magazines or children's books.

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.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Crittenton Children and Family Services management:**

- a. Install appropriate child safety covers for the electrical cords.**
- b. Remove or repair broken furniture in the television room of Aspen Cottage.**
- c. Properly store videos and DVDs in the television room of Aspen Cottage.**
- d. Provide sufficient and comfortable seating, appropriate toys, and a designated children's play area.**
- e. Provide residents with housekeeping assistance as part of their daily living skills training.**
- f. Provide residents parenting and child development magazines and children's books.**

## **II. Program Services**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

### **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. However, they do not consistently cite specific, measurable, and realistic goals. In addition, while there was documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs, the documentation does not support that staff is included in the implementation of the NSPs.

The quarterly reports are current; however, they do not appropriately focus on the goals of the NSPs.

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 individual and/or group therapy.

### **Recommendations**

#### **2. Crittenton Children and Family Services management:**

- a. Develop Needs and Services Plans that cite specific, measurable, and realistic goals.**
- b. Provide documentation to support that staff participate in the implementation of residents' Needs and Services Plans.**
- c. Develop quarterly reports that appropriately focus on the goals noted in 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: Three**

#### **Comments:**

The residents are attending school. There are current Individualized Educational Plans for the residents. The 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. While the residents have input into the planning phase of meals, they are not involved in the preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to manage their own money.

**Recommendation**

- 3. Crittenton Children and Family Services management provide residents with the opportunity to participate in the preparation phase of meals.**

**IV. Recreation and Activities**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides its residents with opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents stated that the recreation schedules are followed; however, they are relevant to only some of the residents. The residents expressed frustration regarding the types of recreational activities provided.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they have the opportunity to 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 scheduled activities.

**Recommendation**

- 4. Crittenton Children and Family Services management provide adequate recreational activities for all residents.**

**V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for 18 case files**

**Comments:**

Residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that the 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: Three**

#### **Comments:**

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency. 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 their ability to participate in menu development. However, residents stated that they are not provided with two snacks a day as required. Residents reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with most staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

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. Telephone calls are severely limited and, are sometimes limited to speaking to one family member for five minutes per day. The telephone calls are not provided in a private setting and residents are not always permitted to contact their probation officers, attorneys, and family members as needed. The Agency has not provided the residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice unless they use their own money for public transportation. Residents feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents feel that the discipline policies are inconsistently enforced. Residents also feel that behavioral expectations are unclear and that consequences are issued without sufficient explanation.

The residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.



## **Recommendations**

### **5. Crittenton Children and Family Services management:**

- a. Provide residents with two snacks a day in accordance with the Statement of Work.**
- b. Provide residents with the opportunity to make and receive private telephone calls from their probation officers, attorneys, and family members as needed.**
- c. Provide residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice.**
- d. Ensure that the enforcement of disciplinary policies is consistent and that consequences are adequately explained.**

## **VII. Clothing and Allowance**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

### **Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. Valley View Group Home 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 residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase 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 provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

## **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**Crittenton Children and Family Services  
Boy's Castle  
604 North Harbor Boulevard  
Fullerton, CA 92832  
Phone: (714) 680-9073  
License No.: 300600336  
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:**

Boys Castle Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is a large two-story house located on a busy street in a semi-residential community. The exterior of the facility is moderately maintained and blends well with other structures in the area. 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 moderately maintained and decorated. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks. However, the window coverings in the living room and game room are in poor condition, and the sofa in the living room is worn.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are table games, a TV, and a VCR. There are books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs.

Group Home meals are provided by a catering service. The Group Home also maintains fresh fruit and other appropriate snack foods.

**Recommendations**

- 1. Crittenton Children and Family Services management:**
  - a. Replace worn window coverings in the living room and game room.**

- b. Replace the sofa in the living room.

## **II. Program Services**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Two**

### **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. There was appropriate documentation to support the placement worker's participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly reports for residents are current, comprehensive, and appropriately focus on the goals of the NSPs.

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 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:**

Residents are enrolled in school. Neither resident requires an Individualized Educational Plan. Both 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 have some involvement in the planning of meals and may prepare some of their snacks. Hygiene care is discussed as needed.

Residents are too young for emancipation and vocational programs.

Residents do not work.

### **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:**

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 three case files**

### **Comments:**

Residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that the 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: Two**

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 stated that they are not provided with two snacks per day as required. Residents reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

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 to receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their social workers, probation officers, attorneys, and family members as needed. The Agency has not provided residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice unless they accompany friends or family. The residents feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

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

The residents are not aware of their right to refuse medication.

### **Recommendations**

#### **2. Crittenton Children and Family Services management:**

- a. **Provide residents with two snacks per day in accordance with the Statement of Work.**
- b. **Provide residents with the opportunity to attend religious services of their choice.**

- c. Inform residents of their right to refuse medication.

## **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 Group Home 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 sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides its residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase 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 space.

Residents are provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**