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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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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 – BIENVENIDOS  
CHILDREN'S CENTER, INC., BIENVENIDOS VILLAGE FOR CHILDREN**

We have completed a review of Bienvenidos Village for Children (Group Home or Agency) operated by the Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Bienvenidos Village for Children is a 46-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 0-8 who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Bienvenidos Village for Children was providing services for 26 Los Angeles County DCFS children and seven San Bernardino County children. Bienvenidos Village for Children is located in the Fifth 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 three 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.

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

**Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to maintain current quarterly reports for all residents.

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  
Paul Higa, Acting Chief Probation Officer  
Laurie Castro, Executive Director, Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc.  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
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Audit Committee

**Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc.  
Bienvenidos Village for Children  
183 E. Palm St.  
Altadena, Ca 91001  
Phone: (626) 798-7222  
License No.: 197600355  
Rate Classification Level: 11**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

### **Method of assessment – Observation**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

### **Comments:**

Bienvenidos Village for Children (Group Home or Agency) is 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 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.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, TVs, and DVD players. There are resource materials, including a computer 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.

### **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: Three**

**Comments:**

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. The goals are realistic, measurable, and time specific. There was documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

One resident did not have a current quarterly report on file.

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.

**Recommendation**

- 1. Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc. management maintain current quarterly reports for all residents.**

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

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

**Sample size for resident interviews: Three**

**Comments:**

The residents attend school. Their records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. 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 and some preparation phases of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed.

Residents are not old enough to participate in emancipation or 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: Three**

**Comments:**

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. 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. Residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. 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 11 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 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. They 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 receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their social workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend 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 the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are 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: Three**

#### **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 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.**