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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

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May 3, 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 – HILLSIDES
HOME FOR CHILDREN - BOYS SATELLITE AND GIRLS SATELLITE
GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Boys Satellite and Girls Satellite Group Homes operated by Hillside Home for Children (Hillside). The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Hillside Boys Satellite and Girls Satellite Group Homes are six-bed facilities, which provide care for boys and girls ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, each Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children. Both Hillside Home for Children Group Homes are located in the Fifth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are 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

The Agency was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. 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:cr

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
John Hitchcock, Executive Director, Hillside Group Home
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Hillsides Home for Children
Boys Satellite Group Home
2220 Maiden Lane
Altadena, California 91001
Phone: (626) 798-3198
License: 191200838
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

The Hillsides Boys Satellite Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, adequately landscaped, and secure.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment, including family style dining.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are observed as appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR/DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

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 interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children were assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team developed and implemented the Needs and Services Plan (NSP) with input from the child. The NSP is current, comprehensive, and includes long and short-term goals. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services as identified in their NSP.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are given the opportunity to participate in planning activities. The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are

allowed to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of documents for relevant case files

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication, and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home’s policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed private visits, to make and receive personal

telephone calls, and to send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. Children are able to attend religious services and activities of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children are free to receive or reject voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the children. The Group Home supplies children with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance, and children are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum base allowance. Children are permitted to spend their allowances and/or earnings as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Hillsides Home for Children
Girls Satellite Home
873 North Hill Avenue
Pasadena, California 91104
Phone: (323) 254-2274
License: 191290639
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

The Hillsides Girls Satellite Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, adequately landscaped, and secure.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment, including family style dining.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are observed as appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR/DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

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

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Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

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The treatment team developed and implemented the Needs and Services Plan (NSP) with input from the child. The NSP is current, comprehensive, and includes long and short-term goals. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services as identified in their NSP.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are given the opportunity to participate in planning activities. The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are

allowed to participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

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Method of assessment – Review of documents for relevant case files

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