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DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

December 29, 2006

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – PHOENIX ACADEMY OF ORANGE COUNTY, PHOENIX HOUSE GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Phoenix House Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Phoenix Academy of Orange County, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Phoenix House Group Home is a 45-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 12-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Phoenix House Group Home was providing services for two DCFS children, two Probation children, twenty-six privately placed children, five Riverside County children, four Orange County children, and one San Diego County child.

Phoenix House Group Home is located in Orange County.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as 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.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement.

Phoenix House Group Home needs to maintain current Needs and Services Plans in the case files; and provide age-appropriate children with emancipation and vocational training programs.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. 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
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Ron Plotts, Executive Director, Phoenix Academy of Orange County
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

Phoenix Academy of Orange County
Phoenix House Group Home
1207 East Fruit Street
Santa Ana, California 92701
Phone: (714) 953-9373
License Number: (714) 953-9373
Rate Classification Level: 6

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Phoenix House of Orange County Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

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.

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 appropriate.

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

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

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

The Group Home does not maintain Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) in the case files.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendation

1. **Phoenix Academy of Orange County management maintain current Needs and Services Plans in the children's files.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

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

However, children are not provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational training programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

2. **Phoenix Academy of Orange County management provide age-appropriate children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational training programs.**

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

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

Children 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 relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size: 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 express 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 able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and

receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services 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 receive 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: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required $50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities 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 weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances 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.

Phoenix Academy of Orange County / 1207 East Fruit Street, Santa Ana, CA 92701 / 714-953-9373 / 714-953-9155 Fax

Phoenix House

June 12, 2006

Attention: Candace Rhue, Group Home Audit Supervisor
Department of Auditor-Controller, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple St., Room 515-A
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Ms. Rhue:

This communication is a follow-up to the audit report that was issued on April 27, 2006. The following corrective action plan (CAP) addresses the deficiencies that were noted by the auditor during the site visit.

Corrective Action Plan

1. Recommendation - Phoenix House of Orange County, Incorporated management maintain current Needs and Services Plans in all the children's files.

Response: The Needs and Service Plans have been inserted in all client files.

2. Recommendation - Phoenix House of Orange County management provide children with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs.

Response: All clients who are determined to be in need of the vocational/emancipation services via a case conference by the clinical staff team and authorization by the client's social worker will be eligible to attend emancipation and/or vocational programs. The program staff will work with the social worker to find the appropriate services and ensure that transportation is readily available to attend those services. Currently, all clients are attending Independent Learning Classes (ILP).

We believe the stated corrective actions effectively address the deficiencies that were noted during the site visit. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Ron Plotts
Program Director