COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
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 – JUNIOR BLIND OF AMERICA, LOS ANGELES GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Junior Blind of America, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles Group Home is a 40-bed facility, which provides care for girls and boys ages 6-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles Group Home was providing services for ten DCFS children, ten privately placed children, five Alameda County children, two Orange County children, two Sacramento County children, two San Bernardino County children, two San Diego County children, one Riverside County child, one Butte County child, one Kern County child, one Modesto County child, one San Gabriel County child, and one Tri-County child.

Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles Group Home is located in the Second District.

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, observation, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. One child is non-verbal and unable to participate in the interview; therefore, observation of the child and supporting documentation are used to determine the appropriateness of program services provided by the Agency. 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. The Agency needs to address a few deficient areas.

Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles Group Home needs to ensure that all children are assessed within the first thirty days of placement; maintain current court authorizations, and provide routine evaluations by the prescribing psychiatrist for all children taking psychotropic medication; and provide all children with adequate personal care items.

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:jdh
http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Robert B. Ralls, Executive Director, Junior Blind of America Group Home
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

Junior Blind of America
Los Angeles Group Home
5300 Angeles Vista Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90043
Phone: (323) 295-4555
License Number: 191800260
Rate Classification Level: 11

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles 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. However, the initial assessment for one child was not completed within the first thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals.

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

Recommendation

1. **Junior Blind of America management complete initial assessments for all children within the first thirty days of placement.**

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.

Children are provided with opportunities 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: 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:

The Group Home does not maintain current court authorizations for psychotropic medications children are taking. One child taking psychotropic medication is not 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

2. **Junior Blind of America management:**

   a. **Maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication**

   b. **Provide routine evaluations by the prescribing psychiatrist for all children taking psychotropic medication.**

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 does not provide children with adequate personal care items.

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

Recommendation

3. **Junior Blind of America management provide children with adequate personal care items.**

JUNIOR BLIND™
OF AMERICA

April 24, 2006

Candace Rhue
Group Home Audit Supervisor
Department of Auditor –Controller
Kenneth Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple St. room 515-A
Los Angeles CA 90012

RE: Correct of Action
License # 191800260

Dear Ms. Rhue

Enclosed you will find Junior Blind of America's correct of action plan (CAP) subsequent to Jacquelyn D. Hayes audit report recommendations dated on April 17, 2006.

If you have any questions regarding the CAP, please contact me at (323) 295-4555 ext.466 or Deborah Adams Senior Director of Programs ext 275.

Respectfully,

Ernesto Vasquez

Ernesto Vasquez
Director of Residential Services

Junior Blind of America
Children's Residential Program License No. 191800260
Corrective Action Plan April 21, 2006

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION	MAINTANANCE	MONITORING
1. To complete initial assessments for all children with in the first thirty days of placement.	Junior Blind of America will ensure that all residents upon placement will have a completed initial assessment within the first thirty days of placement.	The treatment team will develop the initial assessment within thirty days. The treatment team will review the Needs and Service Plan/IPP within thirty days. Director of Residential Services and/or Director of Social Services will ensure that assessment is completed within the thirty day period.	Case Managers to complete initial assessment. Director of Social Services will review initial assessment. Directors will receive a status report within thirty days.
2. To provide routine evaluations for all children who receive psychotropic medication.	Junior Blind of America will ensure that all children who receive psychotropic medication receive evaluations as needed to ensure all documentation is current and in compliance with regulations.	The Psychiatrist will evaluate and make a chart note of the review date and document if monthly or bimonthly review is needed depending on the children's stability.	Director of Nursing will conduct chart note review to ensure routinely evaluations are done when needed. Director of Social Services will have a monthly check list to ensure evaluations are done on a timely matter
3. To maintain current court authorizations for all children taking psychotropic medication.	Junior Blind of America will ensure to maintain current court authorizations for all children who receive psychotropic mediation.	Director of Nursing and Psychiatrist will complete court authorization form and fax to Dependency Court Office on a timely matter. Director of Social Services will ensure court authorizations are received on a timely matter by tracking on a monthly check list.	Director of Nursing will notify Director of Social Services when court authorization is faxed. Director of Social Services will review current court authorization.

Junior Blind of America
Children's Residential Program License No. 191800260
Corrective Action Plan April 21, 2006

RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION	MAINTANANCE	MONITORING
4. To provide all children with adequate personal care items appropriate to their ethnic needs.	Junior Blind of America will ensure to provide of all residents with appropriate personal care items appropriate to their ethnic needs.	Primary caregiver will conduct a monthly inventory of the personal care items and request items appropriate to their ethnic need. Children Residential Program Coordinator and Supervisor will ensure items are purchased as needed.	Primary caregiver will complete monthly inventory and request P and I as necessary. Delegated staff will purchase items requested. Supervisor will ensure resident received items.