



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

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J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

May 30, 2006

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

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – HILLSIDES
HOME FOR CHILDREN – MAIN CAMPUS & ON CAMPUS SATELLITE
GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Main Campus and On Campus Satellite Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Hillside Homes for Children. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Main Campus Group Home is a 50-bed facility, which provides care for boys and girls ages 6-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Main Campus Group Home was providing services for forty-four Los Angeles County DCFS children.

On Campus Satellite Group Home is a four-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, On Campus Satellite Group Home was providing services for four Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Hillside Main Campus and On Campus Satellite Group Homes are located in the First District.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

Both Group Homes need to complete initial assessments for all children within 30 days of placement; include the treatment team and the child in the development of Needs and Services Plans; and maintain current and comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long-term goals for all children.

Main Campus Group Home needs to repair the bathroom faucet in Redwood cottage; repair the stove burner in Tradewinds cottage; replace or clean the curtains in the dayroom, repair a cabinet door in Family cottage; repair and clean the window screens and sills in all cottages; repair the curtain rods in Tradewinds cottage; and repair the dresser drawers and floor board in Family cottage..

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

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

Attachments

- c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
- David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
- Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
- John M. Hitchcock, Executive Director, HillSides Group Homes.
- Public Information Office
- Audit Committee

**Hillsides Main Campus Group Home
940 Avenue 64
Pasadena, California 91105
Phone: (323) 254-2274
License Number: 191200313
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Main Campus 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.

Overall, 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. However, there are a few areas in need of improvement. In Redwood cottage, the bathroom faucet water pressure is low. In Tradewinds cottage, a stove burner does not light. In Family cottage, the curtains are dirty and torn in the dayroom, and the entertainment cabinet door is broken.

Overall, children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate lighting and storage space. Children's mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate. However, Redwood, Tradewinds, Family, and Arroyo cottages need to repair broken window screens, and clean the window sills in all bedrooms. In Tradewinds cottage, the curtain rods are broken in bedroom two. In Family cottage, the dresser drawers are broken, and the floor board behind the door in bedroom one needs repair.

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

- 1. Hillsides Main Campus management:**
 - a. Repair the bathroom faucet in Redwood cottage.**
 - b. Repair the stove burner in Tradewinds cottage.**

- c. Replace or clean the curtains in the dayroom, and repair the entertainment cabinet door in Family cottage.
- d. Repair and clean the window screens and sills in all cottages.
- e. Repair curtain rods in Tradewinds cottage.
- f. Repair the dresser drawers and floor board in Family cottage.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Four

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. However, children are not assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team and the child are not included in the development or the implementation of the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs). Two children have a current NSP; however, the other two children do not have a current NSP. NSPs are not comprehensive, and do not include short and long-term goals.

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

Recommendations

2. Hillside Main Campus management:

- a. Complete and maintain initial assessments for all children within 30 days of placement.
- b. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children.
- c. Include the treatment team and input from the child, in the development and implementation of the NSPs.
- d. Develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are specific, attainable, realistic, time limited, and include short and long-term goals for all children.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Four

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 for interviews: Four

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are given 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:

Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist. However, one child does not have a current court authorization for the psychotropic medication he is taking. .

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

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

3. Hillsides Main Campus management maintain current court authorizations for all children who are taking psychotropic medication.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Four

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 have private visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. 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 for interviews: Four

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are given 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 base 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.

Hillsides On Campus Satellite (OCS)
940 Avenue 65
Los Angeles, California 90042
Phone: (323) 354-2274
License Number: 191801995
Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Hillsides On Campus Satellite (OCS) 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 for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. However, children are not assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team and the child are not included in the development or the implementation of the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs). One child's NSP is current; however, the other child does not have a current NSP. NSPs are not comprehensive, and do not include short and long-term goals.

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

Recommendations

1. Hillsides On Campus Satellite management:

- a. Complete and maintain initial assessments for all children within 30 days of placement.
- b. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children.
- c. Include the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.
- d. Develop comprehensive NSPs that are specific, attainable, realistic, time limited, and include short and long-term goals for all children.

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, 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 for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are given 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:

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 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 have private visitors, make and receive personal telephone calls, and send and receive unopened correspondence and mail. 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 for interviews: Two

Comments:

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

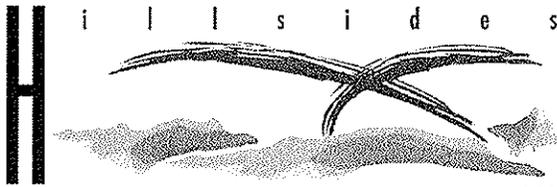
The Group Home provides children with the required minimum base allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

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.



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ATTACHMENT
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January 15, 2006

Department of Auditor-Controller
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, California 90012-2766

Attention: Candace Rhue, Group Home Audit Supervisor

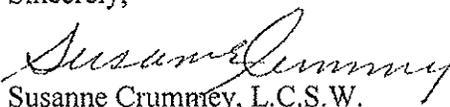
This Corrective Action Plan is being submitted in response to the site visit that was conducted on December 14, 2005. The monitoring review included both the main campus program located at 940 Avenue 64 as well as the small four-bed program located in Sierra Cottage called On Campus Satellite located on Avenue 65.

Attached is a summary of the correction plan.

I want to express my appreciation for the professional manner in which the review was conducted.

If additional information is needed or the plan should be amended in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,


Susanne Crumme, L.C.S.W.
Associate Executive Director

- JOHN M. HITCHCOCK, LCSW
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- SUSANNE E. CRUMMEY, LCSW
ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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AMERICA



Corrective Action Plan
Hillsides Main Campus Group Home
940 Avenue 64
License Number: 19200313

- I. Facility and Environment: The overall comments were that the interior of the group home was well maintained, neat and clean. However, six specific recommendations were made regarding issues in three of the cottages, Redwood, Tradewinds, and Family.

Recommendation "a": Repair the bathroom faucet in Redwood Cottage.

Correction: The Maintenance Supervisor oversaw the repair of the faucet, which included replacing the screen and adjusting the pressure valve.

Recommendation "b": Repair the stove burner in Tradewinds Cottage.

Correction: The Maintenance Supervisor saw to it that the stove was properly cleaned and adjusted to allow for proper igniting of the burner.

Recommendation "c": Replace or clean the curtains in the dayroom and repair the cabinet door in Family Cottage

Correction: All the curtains in Family Cottage were cleaned. The cabinet door hinge was repaired and secured.

Recommendation "d": Repair and clean the window screens and sills in the cottages.

Correction: The Director of Operations oversaw the housekeeping staff washing the windowsills and insides of all windows. An outside contractor has been hired to clean the screens and outsides of the windows. The damaged screen has been repaired by maintenance.

Recommendation "e": Repair curtain rods in Tradewinds Cottage.

Correction: The two curtain rods that were damaged have been repaired by maintenance staff and checked by the Supervisor.

Recommendation "F": Repair the dresser drawers and floorboard in Family Cottage.

Correction: The damaged dressers have been repaired and a set of ten new dressers has been ordered to replace dressers when they can no longer be repaired. The damaged section of floorboard in one of the bedrooms has been replaced.

Plan of Correction for on-going maintenance and cleaning is as follows:

The current system for monitoring repairs includes cottage staff identifying daily repair and cleaning needs and highlighting safety issues that need urgent attention. Because some problems may not get noticed by staff or staff forgets to report them, the following steps will now be taken to improve the system.

1. The Maintenance Supervisor will inspect each cottage on a monthly basis to note any problems that may not have been previously noted or reported and schedule the work to be done.
2. The Director of Operations will make a quarterly inspection of each unit to focus on areas that may need attention with a focus on long range improvements such as furniture, carpeting etc. that may need to be scheduled for replacement. The Director of Operations will attend a quarterly meeting with key administrators to discuss resources for the upgrading or replacing of major items.
3. The Director of Systems Management will review the handling of both short term and long term maintenance and cleaning to develop a spread sheet that allows for the tracking of repair and on going replacement within the physical plant.

- II. Program Services: In reviewing the Program Statement and the on going documentation it was noted that some of the children did not have Needs and Services Plans completed within thirty days of placement and two of the children did not have current Needs and Services Plans. In addition the plans were not sufficiently comprehensive.

Recommendation "a": Complete and maintain initial assessments for all the children within 30 days of placement.

Correction: Treatment staff has completed Needs and Services Plans within 30 days for each of the new admissions and each admission will be monitored by the Director of Treatment Services to insure that these Plans are completed within the deadline.

Recommendation "b": Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for all children.

Correction: The Needs and Services Plans that were past due, have been completed and the Director of Treatment Services has set up a monitoring system

with the Treatment Secretary to insure that all Plans are completed in a timely fashion.

Recommendation "c": Include the treatment team and input from the child, in the development and implementation of the NSPs.

Correction: The treatment team and child currently have input into all treatment planning but their participation is not always clearly documented. Treatment staff will clearly note and describe the participation of the treatment team and as well as each person's roll in the treatment process.

Recommendation "d": Develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are specific, attainable, realistic, time limited, and include long and short term goals for all children.

Correction: Treatment staff has been given examples of Plans that are specific, time limited and include both long and short-term goals. These plans will be used as a format for writing plans. The Director of Treatment Services will review each plan to insure that it meets the required specificity and structure.

Plan of Correction for Program Services: Some of the Needs and Services Plans were not done in a timely fashion, did not meet the 30 day requirement or were not current and in addition were not sufficiently comprehensive. The following correction plan has been developed:

1. The Treatment Secretary will maintain a control sheet that will be checked on a weekly basis by the Director of Treatment Services to insure that Plans meet deadlines.
2. A training meeting has been held with Treatment Staff to address the content and participation in developing Plans. Examples were given to the staff to use as guidelines in developing each plan so that the plans are specific, attainable, etc.
3. The Director of Systems Management has assessed the issue of Needs and Services Plans and is developing a quality review system that will track the completion of plans as well as monitor their quality. This system will be implemented by March 31, 2006.

V. Psychotropic Medication: In reviewing the records of children receiving medication, documentation for the children was found to be as required with the exception of one court authorization. The physician had decided to stop a medication and then decided it would not be in the child's best interests to do so. The accompanying court authorization was overlooked.

Recommendation: Hillsides Main Campus management maintains current court authorizations for children who are prescribed psychotropic medication.

Correction: The missing authorization was immediately requested, obtained, and filed. A current monitoring process exists to catch oversights however this one

error, because it was a unique situation, slipped through the existing structure.
See Plan of Correction.

Plan of Correction for Psychotropic Medication: The current monitoring process within the Nurses office had been successfully insuring that court authorizations were on file until a unique situation occurred. The doctor sent through a "discontinue" on a medication that he was still tapering down. The Nursing Supervisor and Physician have developed a new plan that will prevent this unique error from occurring.

1. A Discontinue will not be requested by the doctor until the medication has already been tapered down.
2. Weekly office meetings are held in the Nurses office to review documentation and court authorizations. The Nursing Supervisor will review all authorizations on a monthly basis.
3. Each form, once completed by the secretary, will be reviewed by a nurse before it is faxed.
4. The Director of Systems Management is reviewing the internal office system to spot-check the potential for errors and to enhance coordination. A report of this process will be submitted to senior management.

Corrective Action Plan
Hillsides On Campus Satellite (OCS)
940 Avenue 65
Los Angeles, California 90042
License Number: 191801995
Rate Classification Level: 12

The On Campus Satellite is a small four-bed boy's unit. The review noted that the quarters were neat and clean and that the group home provides a home-like environment.

- II. Program Services: The only area that was noted as needing attention was the Needs and Services Plan with the same issues as were a focus for the Main Campus.
Please refer to the Main Campus Action Plan. The same process will take place to correct issues in this facility. The Director of Treatment Services oversees the documentation for both programs and is responsible for the plan of correction.