



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

2024 ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT

CAMPUS VERNON KILPATRICK



Campus KILPATRICK



427. S. Encinal Canyon Road
Malibu, CA 90262

Los Angeles County Probation Department
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Los Angeles County Juvenile Health Services

MAY
2024



SUMMARY

The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC), in its mission to oversee and make recommendations to the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation), is completing the 2024 Annual Inspections of all of Probation's detention facilities, marking the fourth year of inspections.

The POC has found it of critical importance to provide substantial and timely feedback to Probation, the Board of Supervisors (Board), and public stakeholders after each inspection of the conditions observed within the facilities. This summary presents the findings of the second facility inspected during this annual cycle: Campus Vernon Kilpatrick (CVK).

While the POC collected a large amount of information at this inspection, takeaways were derived from the most impactful observations and interviews made during the day.

The following list represents key findings from the inspection of CVK:

- **The only facility consistently using a practice model based upon trauma-responsiveness and teamwork amongst professionals, CVK is an environment where youth thrive-** The implementation of a partnership-driven model with a shared cross-departmental understanding of youth development and trauma appeared to directly cause the successes seen at the facility. Partnerships rooted in respect of one another's professionalism directly helped to create safety and accurate programming calendars. Steps to replicate the practices and the actions taken to develop this culture should be immediately replicated across Probation's facilities.
- **Lack of full commitment to a model-** While the model used by Probation and county co-located partners at CVK appears to work well for youth at the facility, actions of the Department show little commitment to ensuring full implementation or maintenance. The integration of outside models appeared redundant and does not align with the Board's established priorities regarding the L.A. Model.
- **An underutilized gem-** It was reported that the population is capped at 20 possibly due to insufficient infrastructure including plumbing and insufficient staff housing. Research should be launched by the Department to remedy these issues so the facility can be used to provide more youth a chance to exit Barry J. Nidorf-SYTF. Two cottages that could house 12 youth each sit empty.
- **Lack of human resources leaves state-of-the-art facilities unused-** While facilities were built to provide numerous physical, vocational, and educational opportunities, the inability of Probation and LACOE to sufficiently staff the facility leaves a state-of-the-art student kitchen and woodworking shop

completely unused. If county staffing options are limited, partnerships with community-based organizations should be explored to utilize these resources to provide vocational training on site.

Similar to last year, the POC's primary inspection findings described within this report points out a continued need for the Probation Department to commit to the full installation of a practice model which emphasizes a youth-centered, rehabilitative, trauma-responsive, and teamwork-focused approach to serving youth in detention. Until there is a unified goal around what practice should look like, outcomes will continue to rely on the individual choices and behaviors of officers, rather than an intentionally created departmental culture of care.

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles County Probation Oversight Commission (POC) was established in 2021 as a civilian-led oversight commission focused on systemic reform of the Probation Department. The POC advises the Board of Supervisors (Board) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (Probation) about progress and challenges within Probation. The POC has considerable authority and responsibilities directly related to juvenile institutions. Specifically, Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations, section 1313 (f), requires the POC to conduct annual inspections of the buildings, grounds, and services delivered to the young people detained in each of the County's juvenile facilities on an annual basis. The Board also granted the POC specific authority to "as permitted by law... conduct unannounced inspections of any facility, and its non-confidential records, where any juvenile probationer can be held or where probationers receive services and "prepare reports on inspection findings" for the Board (LACC Sections 3.80.040(B) and 3.80.050(A)). The POC submits these annual reports to the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), a statutory agency that inspects for compliance of standards of detention facilities in California, by December 31st each year and shares the report with Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the public. This report marks the fourth round of annual inspections conducted by this body.

METHODS

At the beginning of the 2024 Annual Inspection cycle, Probation ran six juvenile facilities: one juvenile detention center ("juvenile hall"), four juvenile camps, and two facilities solely dedicated to housing young people dispositioned to Secure Youth Treatment Facilities, including Barry J. Nidorf- SYTF and Campus Kilpatrick (CVK).

For the CVK Inspection:

- Three POC Commissioners conducted the inspection. Three POC staff members provided support during the inspection.
- Dates for the inspections were coordinated with Probation leadership and leaders from the facility were aware in advance of the inspection.
- The BSCC does not have a required template for the inspection report. The POC developed a

detailed facility inspection template that was updated this year and reviewed by Probation and the BSCC.

- Within the inspections template, key themes are included to ensure a thorough inspection of both physical structure and environment. The template also highlights the need to examine practices and the treatment of youth at the facility.
- The CVK inspection took nine hours to complete.

The information below depicts data gathered directly from the inspection. It should be noted that the data is a “snapshot” of information recorded only on the day of the inspection. The data collected about the “facility’s rated capacity,” “population” and “staffing” (page 3) was provided to the POC staff directly by the facility’s Director or Administrative Director (AD); each of these numbers was directly reported in this report. The only two numbers which required calculation in this report were the “Staff to Youth Ratio” and the “Number of Graduates.” Staff to Youth ratio is calculated by dividing the number of total active staff by the total youth population. For clarification, these ratios do not reflect the actual staff to youth ratios per shift, but rather a broad staff to youth ratio for each facility. The findings stated in this report are a compilation of POC Commissioner and staff observations made while conducting the inspections.

FINDINGS

Inspection #1 – Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC): 1500 S. McDonnell Avenue, Commerce, CA 90040

Facility Rated Capacity: 92

Youth Population (Physical)	Youth at Court/Medical	Total Staff (Payroll)	Total Active Staff ¹ (DPO’s and GSN’s)	Staff to Youth Ratio (Number of Staff at time of Inspection / Youth Pop.) rounded to whole number	Line staff on Duty at time of inspection	Total Credentialed Teachers (LACOE)	Number of High School Students	Number of High School Graduates
20	0	54	50	2:1	20(am), 19(pm)	2	2	18

Access to Medical and Mental Health Services

Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 6:30 AM - 10:00 PM
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	Services Offered: 7 days / week	Coverage: 8:00 AM - 6:30 PM, 9:30 AM - 8:00 PM (Staff Shifts: 10-hour days, Sun - Wed or Wed - Sat.) plus 24-hour access to on-call DMH psychiatrist

¹ Probation’s reports of Active Staff and Line Staff on Duty includes individuals with work hardening, or light duty.

FACILITY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

CVK sits nestled up against the hills in a small canyon in Malibu. The buildings are modern and clean as the facility was re-built from a previous configuration and re-opened in July 2017, making it the newest construction of any of Probation's facilities in Los Angeles County. Upon entry to the facility, there was a security guard present and a scanner apparatus for all to enter through, though searches were not conducted of POC commissioners nor staff, which was a concern amongst commissioners considering the possibility of contraband entering the facility. During the morning visit to the school, commissioners came into a room with an open door, and found an unattended cell phone charging.

The grounds are comprised of an administrative building which connects to a cafeteria, kitchen, and gym, multiple cottages for living units, and a school wing of the campus with the name above the gate that reads, "Road To Success Academy". The grounds offer exercise equipment, a volleyball court, a large grassy field, a swimming pool, and basketball courts.

Two cottages were in use on the day of inspection, housing a total of 20 young people who previously resided at Barry J. Nidorf after receiving a disposition to a Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). Three additional cottages housed no youth. Inspectors questioned why the number of available spots for youth at the facility has remained at 20 or less since the facility transitioned from a residential treatment facility, i.e. "Camp", in 2022 despite a rated capacity of 48. Various issues with the facilities were shared including a problem with insufficient sewage capacity. Staff reported that with current population, the sewage pump is running at 90% capacity. When population was higher, staff reported that Probation had to pay \$10,000 a month to have a truck cart away sewage. Insufficient staff sleeping quarters were also referenced since the facility was built with just 15 staff sleeping rooms despite the fact that Probation officers at the facility work a highly compressed work schedule (the "56") that necessitates sleeping at the facility.

Oak Cottage housed 12 of the 20 youth at the facility, and Alder Cottage housed 8. The outside of the cottages were clean, graffiti free, and one has a garden on the side. Commissioners learned that one young person was heading the garden project where flowers, fruits, and vegetables such as strawberries, artichokes, and parsley were being grown in large planter boxes. The garden appeared well maintained and added a refreshing pop of color to the beige exterior of the cottage. The inside of the cottages displayed many individual style choices from the youth housed there. Youth at CVK have their own sheets, decorate the walls above their beds, and have keepsakes and photos on their windowsills. The cottage has two "sides" with two sleeping areas of three or four beds on each side. In the center of the cottage is a living room area replete with a large, mounted television, sofas, and a table in the center. No graffiti was observed in either cottage.

During the afternoon, one young person was observed lounging on the couch using the television to stream a video about real estate investing on YouTube while two other young people had a smaller mobile television and gaming console wheeled into the bedroom area and were laughing and playing a

sports video game. One Probation officer was in the cottage and was sitting at a table watching over the young people in a relaxed way as they engaged with their chosen activities. The cottage environment was calm, and all young people appeared to be comfortable in the space. Clean bathrooms and showers were also observed in both cottages with appropriate privacy curtains in place. All plumbing fixtures, doors, locks, and other machinery in the cottages appeared to be in good working order, including microwaves.



STAFFING

CVK boasts a level of stability and longevity of Probation staffing reportedly unmatched at any other Probation facility. It was shared that all Probation officers on staff have worked for the Department for at least 10 years. Through interviews, Probation officers, leadership, and co-located partners at the facility remarked repeatedly that the culture of the facility instilled through the implementation and practice of the L.A. Model has led to a team of exemplary Probation officers who work with integrity, respect for the young people, and value co-located professionals and community-based providers who work alongside them. It was reported that the culture of the facility directly leads to the high morale, low call out rates, and low turnover at the facility. It was reported that utilization of the 56-hour work week² also contributes to a high level of work satisfaction, allowing officers to participate in significant self-care and restorative down time between shifts.

ROOM CONFINEMENT/HOPE CENTER

Given the open layout of the cottages, there is no opportunity for any type of room confinement at CVK and there is no HOPE Center. Various Probation and county co-located partners described collaborative efforts to de-escalate youth on the occasional basis that it is required, and a few stated that there would be no need for a Hope Center even if one existed due to the youth-centered, collaborative de-escalation methods used at CVK. It was reported that there have been only two physical fights at the facility since it opened as an SYTF.

GRIEVANCES

There were two grievances filed for the period of January 1, 2024 through May 16, 2024. Grievances were addressed in a timely way and did not indicate any emergencies. Young people interviewed throughout the day indicated that they were aware of the grievance procedure and of their ability to make complaints to the ombudsperson. Multiple young people shared that they felt they had no need to write grievances because any time they asked for something, they were responded to by a probation officer or administrator. There was no report of any hesitation or concerns expressed by any young person throughout the day about how they would be treated or perceived for filing grievances within the facility, though one commissioner noted during conversations with youth that there is an accepted general belief that when disagreements occur between youth and Probation officers, the Probation officer's viewpoint eventually will win out, rendering the grievance process useless for addressing interpersonal issues.

² The 56-hour work week is a highly compressed work schedule utilized at Probation's Residential Treatment Services Bureau Facilities with the exception of the Dorothy F. Kirby Center. For more information, please read the POC's 2022 report: [LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION: 56-Hour Work Week Study_\(lacounty.gov\)](#).

DISCIPLINE AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOR REINFORCEMENT

CVK is being used as a step-down facility from Barry J. Nidorf-SYTF (BJN), which is a privilege that youth can earn by working their way through the “Developmental Stage System” (DSS) which is a rewards-based behavior modification program adopted within the last year by the Probation Department for use with young people dispositioned to SYTF. According to the CVK youth handbook, the DSS “is built upon the core principles of the Positive Youth Justice Model³” a model which has not been formally adopted by the county⁴. While at BJN, youth are on level one through five of the DSS, and promotion to level five is understood to indicate readiness to move to CVK, where youth may achieve promotion to levels six, seven, and eight through the completion of various activities. On the day of the inspection, a DSS promotion ceremony took place where youth prepared statements about their personal growth, goals, and values which they presented in front of their peers, CVK staff, and program providers. Almost everyone in the facility was at the promotion. After each young person spoke, the professionals in the room spoke on the strengths they observed in each youth, highlighting the successes and improvements made in the areas of school, personal accountability, planning for the future, interpersonal functioning and communication, among others.

Alongside the DSS, there appears to still be a Behavior Management Program (BMP) run by Probation, in which LACOE and DMH also participate by reporting youth participation in various programming so that youth may earn daily points. With the points accumulated, youth are able to “purchase” items like snack foods and brand name personal care products from the CVK “store”. The Probation officer tasked with stocking the room shared that requests from youth are taken into consideration in selection of the product rotation.

During the inspection, it was apparent that L.A. Model training facilitated by consultants from Missouri that took place years ago appeared to still be driving the discipline models used by staff at CVK. Probation officers and leadership discussed teaching young people housed there through a trauma-responsive lens while emphasizing mutual respect, mentorship, strength-based communication, and accountability. It was reported that the groups of officers that originally went through the cross-departmental training were still at the facility, but that cross-departmental trainings were no longer a regular occurrence. Some individuals expressed concern that without ongoing investment in keeping the culture of partnership established, the environment created was made vulnerable by staff deployments, retirements, and leadership changes. One young person interviewed articulated that the difference in treatment that they received at CVK versus other county facilities made a significant difference in their behavior and progress through the SYTF program.

³ [Positive Youth Justice Model handbook](#)

⁴ Multiple models are accepted by the county which are or could be applicable for use within the Probation Department, drawing question toward the integration of concepts from another source. Currently approved models include the LA Model ([culture-of-care-long-final.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](#)) which is tied to the larger concept of Youth Justice Reimagined ([Youth-Justice-Reimagined-2020.pdf \(burnsinstitute.org\)](#)). Other Los Angeles County departments, including such key Probation partners as the Department of Children and Family Services and Department of Mental Health, as well as multiple jurisdictions across the state of California have adopted the Integrated Core Practice Model ([Integrated Core Practice Model ADA \(ca.gov\)](#)), which was formulated to also guide Juvenile Justice service delivery.

SCHOOL

The school in the facility has modern and bright classrooms with smart screens and white boards in each. On the day of the inspection, there were four classrooms, one for high school students, two for college courses, and one classroom available as a study hall for college students. One of the classrooms visited had two students assigned to one teacher, and one of those students was outside of the classroom participating in the Apex credit recovery program, which is utilized to rapidly bring high school students up to grade level credits. The teacher in one classroom shared that in prior years he was a literary specialist, who was reassigned to take on teaching for this school year since he has full credential to do so. He reported that his previous position had not been filled, and there was currently no Literary Specialist available to youth. Teachers reported a high level of satisfaction with their roles and work at CVK, including perspectives of the youth as capable students and partnerships with Probation and other co-located county departments.

The sole concern expressed was regarding the online software textbooks and other outdated textbooks used for juvenile court schools while sharing that higher quality textbooks are purchased for other LACOE schools. Examples of text with minimal details in various subjects were shared with the emphasis that students deserved more content robust, up-to-date textbooks.

It was reported that the school had only one suspension during this entire school year (September-May). The suspension occurred just before lunch after multiple attempts to help the young person deescalate and decompress, but ultimately it was decided it was necessary to suspend him for the remainder of the period. The young person reportedly returned after lunch to complete the rest of the school day. It was reported that team (Probation, LACOE, DMH) co-facilitated de-escalation is commonplace at CVK, which professionals said was directly attributed to LA Model training that occurred years before.

The school offers a level of flexibility in its use due to the majority of the population at CVK already having completed high school. It was reported that at 9:00 AM in the morning all students who have a prescheduled class come to school, and the college students are offered an open study hall in one classroom. College students completing self-paced courses have the freedom to decide to come to school or they can stay in the cottage to do so. It was reported that for the previous and coming semester, Mission College declined to offer a dual enrollment program at CVK due to the low number of high school students.

At the school building, there is large woodworking shop which has been unused due to having “no instructor” to supervise the facilities for student use. The principal shared her dream for the shop, which included bringing mathematics learning to life through hands-on experiences, but such plans remain indefinitely on hold. At the POC’s inspection of CVK in 2023, the same issue was brought to the attention of the inspecting commissioners and staff, indicating a multi-year abandonment of these facilities.



KITCHEN AND FOOD

The kitchen at CVK appeared new, very clean, and equipped with newer appliances than those observed at other facilities. All meals take place in a dining hall where youth and staff from both cottages eat all together at the same time. The lunch meal was observed during the inspection. Youth were seen eating their food while laughing and talking throughout the meal. It was shared by youth that most of the meals were “alright”. Kitchen staff reported that the fresh foods often remain un-eaten, and concerns were expressed about the many processed snack foods that youth have access to throughout the day as an alternative to fresh foods. On the day of the inspection during the lunch observation, many salads were eaten, though the majority were left behind.

At CVK, there is a kitchen that was built alongside the main kitchen for the purpose of offering cooking classes to the young people at the facility. It was reported that the kitchen has remained unutilized since the onset of the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020. LACOE and Probation shared that there is no staff designated for the role, but that the kitchen theoretically could be used if there were an adult available to lead. One DPO with a passion for all things coffee and a barista background had informally begin to mentor a small number of youth in the facility to learn the trade in the time that she could spare from her regular duties to do so.






ACCESS TO MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Youth reported a high level of ease in accessing medical and mental health care. Numerous youth reported little need to submit requests to see a nurse or mental health clinician, stating that all they had to do was ask or wait a while for someone to show up to the cottage. Probation officers reported that they would simply call the nurse if a youth requested it. It was observed throughout the day of the inspection that mental health clinicians spent time on the living units throughout the day to interact with young people and other co-located county and contracted partners. Positive rapport was clearly established amongst all partners with young people, so much so that during a DSS level promotion ceremony that took place in the afternoon, nurses and clinicians made encouraging comments alongside Probation on observed growth and functional strengths they had witnessed over time in various young people.

CVK
DEVELOPMENTAL
STAGE SYSTEM
PROMOTIONS

MAY 16, 2024
4:00 PM



Student Mental Health Support

<p>WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?</p> <p>Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It can affect how we think, feel, and act. When a person has a mental illness, the potential for a crisis can occur. A plan should be written down with a trusted adult and the person in crisis outlining sources of support and coping strategies.</p>	<p>WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THINGS THAT CAN IMPACT OUR MENTAL HEALTH?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biological factors Conflict with family and friends Environment Inability to manage time effectively Lack of sleep Lack of support system Negative thoughts Not eating regularly Stress Sudden changes to routines The loss of a loved one Unhealthy ways of coping
<p>HOW CAN I TELL IF I AM STRUGGLING WITH MY MENTAL HEALTH?</p> <p>If you start to notice any of the following behaviors in yourself or your friends, you may be struggling with your mental health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too much or too little sleep Over/under eating Difficulty concentrating Lack of motivation Wishing to be alone for long periods of time Lack of interest in things that used to be enjoyable Irritability Hearing voices or seeing things that are not there Thoughts of death or dying 	<p>WHERE CAN I GO TO GET HELP?</p> <p>At School: An administrator - Ms. Whitaker Academic Counselor - Mrs. Benjamin Behavior Counselor - Mr. Watkins Transition Counselor - Ms. Garbutt School Psychologist - Ms. Rodgers School Nurse - Ms. Scott-Bowens Teacher - Mr. Earl Coach - Mr. Breuninger Trusted Adult - Mrs. Sharp</p> <p>At Home or in your Community: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 988 Crisis Text Line - Text "Home" to 741741 The Trevor Project Lifeline - 1-866-488-7386 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Hotline - 1-800-662-4357</p>
<p>WHAT CAN I DO TO MANAGE MY MENTAL HEALTH?</p> <p>The following are positive coping skills that you can practice when you notice your feelings, thoughts, or behaviors are becoming harder to manage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breathing Community circles De-escalation techniques Meditation Open-dialogue Talk to a counselor/therapist 	<p>BE MINDFUL OF COPING SKILLS THAT MAY BE MORE HARMFUL IN THE LONG RUN</p> <p>Some coping skills may make you feel relieved and improve your mood temporarily. However, they can have longer-lasting negative effects on your mental health. Be careful about engaging in certain activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drug and alcohol use Irritable/angry mood Isolating from friends & family Self-harming behaviors Verbal & physical aggression

Developed by the LACOE School Mental Health Team with funding from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)
 Sources: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) & Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 In compliance with EC 49428.5 and AB 748
 Phone: 1-818-878-6111 Address: Santa Monica Mountains PALI, 427 S. Encinal Canyon Road, Malibu, CA 90265

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

A calendar of the programs and services available throughout the month was provided in advance of the inspection. The calendar for the month appeared to consistently offer regular services from credible messengers, substance abuse counseling services, group psychotherapy, religious services, and various music and arts offerings. On the day of the inspection, Jail Guitar Doors, a community-based organization which works with youth on a one-on-one to create their own music, delivered programming on both cottages of the facility. The program occurred according to the schedule and was popular amongst the youth interviewed.

A popular program called Marley's Mutts, which brought the responsibility of learning to care for a dog to youth at CVK, was mentioned several times throughout the day as a popular program that abruptly stopped. It was reported that the funding provided by the Board of Supervisors ended, and with it, the program. Youth reported wanting the program to resume as soon as possible.

Some young people reported that while they found benefit in what is currently offered, they need opportunities to develop a variety of vocational skills prior to community reintegration.

The Probation Officer responsible for creating the program calendars expressed pride and organization skills related to ensuring that calendars match programs provided. She stated that she treats community-based organizations as partners and that regular communication alleviates issues with scheduling.

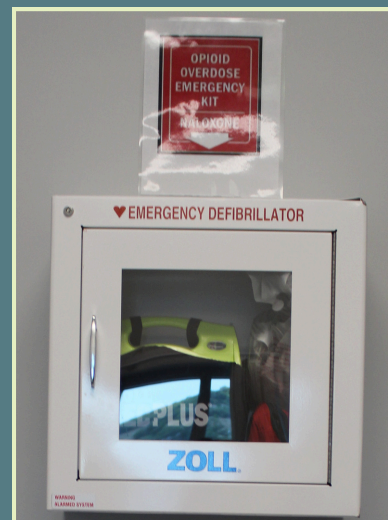
HARM PREVENTION PROGRAMMING AND INTERVENTIONS

While illicit substance related contraband was not a major concern at the CVK inspection, it was reported that one vape pen had recently been recovered. The contraband was believed to have entered when a youth transferred to CVK from Barry J. Nidorf-SYTF. Substance abuse prevention services at the facility appeared to be robust. Department of Public Health- Substance Abuse and Control (DPH-SAPC) had a contract provider offering both individual and group services in the facility five days a week. Young people reported that they found the DPH-SAPC provider relatable, and helpful in preparing them to reach their personal goals around substance use when they are no longer incarcerated. It was also reported that as-needed, youth had the opportunity to use Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and individual therapy sessions as a place to further discuss any substance abuse related issues.

At CVK, some probation officers carried naloxone, an opioid overdose reversal medication also known as NARCAN, on their person while others reported keeping it in their bag or with the fire extinguisher in the cottage. The school had naloxone in the front office which included a log of the expiration date of the naloxone they had on hand to ensure that the supply is replaced appropriately.

Young people at the facility reported that they had not been trained in identifying the signs of opioid intoxication nor naloxone deployment. Youth at CVK do not have access to naloxone. It was reported by JCHS that while Medication Assisted Treatment is available at the facility, there is currently no one utilizing the option, though in the past one youth had.

Cut down equipment and a defibrillator were found in each cottage.



AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships between county co-located partners remained strong since the last inspection of CVK, which employees of each department attributed directly to the cross-departmental training they received in the LA Model training roll out and guidance from mentors from Missouri that occurred in 2017. Thanks to the low turnover of staff at the facility, the culture of partnership revolving around the creation of a trauma-responsive environment has been maintained, though some interviews throughout the day indicated a waning fidelity to continuing some of the practices found most helpful in creating the environment including cross departmental trainings and refreshers and formalized interagency meetings.

OLEORESIN CAPSICUM SPRAY

Oleoresin Capsicum spray has not been an available use of force intervention at CVK during the last year.

