



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

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INSPECTION REPORT FOR DOROTHY KIRBY CENTER (DKC)

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INTRODUCTION

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 2025 Annual Inspections of all of Probation's detention facilities, marking the fifth year of inspections. The POC has found it of critical importance to provide substantial 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 first facility inspected during this annual cycle on March 27, 2025: the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC). The DKC has continued to maintain the division of the premises into three distinct facilities: DKC-Placement, DKC-Camp, and DKC-Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). It has been noted that Probation documents have reverted to calling the DKC-Camp cottage "Camp Scott." 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.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Need for full utilization of the facility** – Two cottages sat empty, and the Girls and Gender-Expansive (GGE) SYTF cottage was at less than 50% usage. On the same day as the inspection, there were youth at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH) on a "DKC waiting list", fully cleared to be moved into the facility pending the available space to do so. The POC recommends that Probation consider moving the GGE SYTF unit to Barry J. Nidorf SYTF and eliminating the girls Hope Center (Diamond Cottage), which would free up 20 rooms. This movement could eliminate waiting lists and potentially be utilized to move additional young people out of LPJH.
- **Trauma-informed services pave the way for youth reflection and progress** – Youth repeatedly reported that the way they are treated at DKC helps them build relationships with Probation Officers and other professionals at the facility which has positively affected their lives, encouraged them to make good choices, and led to being able to envision a different future for themselves. Youth and Officers' accounts of trauma-responsive behavioral interventions aligned and included acknowledgement of the therapeutic environment supported by mental health clinicians at the facility.
- **Family participation and integration** – Regularly occurring LACOE-led activities bring families in to support their detained loved ones' education and were reported to positively impact youth and their families in understanding educational progress, making plans for the future, and celebrating current successes. Reportedly special visits, in addition to regular visits, supported improved family connections for a number of youth in the facility. Youth reported that having more contact and visits with family made them feel more prepared for the adjustment they will face once released, which professionals at DKC identified as a strength of the program.



- **DKC may not be the least restrictive setting for girls dispositioned to DKC-Camp** – Due to the housing of three distinct groups of GGE youth with diverse supervision needs into a large corner of the facility, the need for safety surpasses the ability to provide the camp population with the least restrictive environment possible. Consideration should be made to provide all youth with more appropriate opportunities to exercise pro-social behaviors and to question whether such strict segregation of boys and girls is necessary when they have similar supervision needs (i.e. girls and boys at DKC-Placement).

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 the Board and the public. This report marks the fifth round of annual inspections conducted by this body.

METHODS

At the beginning of the 2025 Annual Inspection cycle, Probation ran six juvenile facilities: one juvenile detention center ("juvenile hall"), three juvenile camps, two facilities solely dedicated to housing young people dispositioned to Secure Youth Treatment Facilities (SYTF). DKC is one of those juvenile facilities which houses youth dispositioned to camp, to secure placement, and to SYTF. In 2023, significant changes occurred on the campus. In August 2023, DKC received its first group of girls and young women dispositioned to a SYTF and dedicated one cottage with 10-person occupancy to house those young people. Dorothy Kirby Center also houses Camp Scott, the only all girls camp in Los Angeles County in one of the campus cottages with 10-person occupancy. In January 2024, the use of the name "Camp Scott" was phased out and replaced with "DKC-Camp", and the names appear to now be used interchangeably by Probation. Given these changes, DKC continues to operate three distinct facilities within its walls, and each was inspected on March 27, 2025.



Information about the inspection of DKC:

- Two POC Commissioners conducted the inspection. Two POC staff members provided support during the inspection.
- The DKC inspection took seven hours to complete.
- Dates for the inspections were coordinated with Probation's executive leadership team and leaders from the facility were aware in advance of the inspection.
- The BSCC does not have a required template for the inspection report, so 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 information below depicts data gathered directly from the DKC inspection. It should be noted that the data is a "snapshot" of information recorded only to the day of the inspection. Data about the "facility's rated capacity," "population" and "staffing" (page 2) was provided to the POC staff directly by the facility's Director or Assistant Director. The only two numbers which required calculation in this report were the "Staff to Youth Ratio" and the "Number of Graduates." The 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.

GENERAL DATA FOR DKC

- **Address:** 1500 S. McDonnell Avenue, Commerce CA 90040
- **Facility Type:** Placement, Camp, and Secure Youth Treatment Facility
- **Housing:** Ten cottages with single occupancy rooms
- **Rated Capacity:** 92¹
- **Youth population present at facility:** 65²
 - **Boys:** 44 (all in Placement)
 - **Girls and Gender-Expansive Youth:** 22
- **Number of girls in Placement:** 9
- **Number of girls in Camp:** 10
- **Number of girls in SYTF:** 3³
- **Youth at court/medical:** 1
- **Total number of Probation employees assigned to the facility (sworn and non-sworn):** 169
- **Probation Officers on duty at time of inspection:** 36

¹ BSCC records dated April 22, 2025 indicate a rated capacity of 84 for "L.A. Camp Dorothy Kirby" and eight for "Los Angeles Secure Youth Treatment Facility at DKC".

² Probation provided numbers which appear to double count the one youth who was at court/medical, though they were excluded in the total "Youth Population Present at Facility"

³ Actual data reported by Probation was three girls in SYTF, but the POC observed two girls and one youth who self-identifies as gender expansive.



FACILITY AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The facility and grounds appeared spacious, clean, and well-kept. As in 2024, the Dorothy Kirby Center (DKC) is divided into three separate functions, DKC-Placement, DKC-Camp (also known as Camp Scott), and DKC-Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF). The whole facility is comprised of ten cottages to house youth, eight of which regularly house youth and two fully equipped cottages which are less often utilized as “Hope Centers.” DKC-Placement reserves use of six of the cottages, five for boys and one for girls and gender-expansive youth (GGE). DKC-Placement is a residential locked placement specialized in meeting the mental health needs of the youth screened by an interagency placement committee for placement there. It was shared that although the screening committee was collaborative amongst partner agencies, the intake process was not, as agencies interacted with the young people separately. Probation DPO II Treatment Counselors conduct the intake process, and the assigned Treatment Counselor gives the young people their permitted phone-calls and supervises those calls.

In the cottages used to house youth in DKC-Placement, there was an average of seven (7) youth per boy’s cottage on the day of the inspection. The girls’ cottage was full. One DKC cottage was used as DKC-Camp, also known as Camp Scott, which holds up to ten GGE youth and at capacity on the day of the inspection. Another cottage was used to house GGE dispositioned to DKC-SYTF. On the day of the inspection, there were three (3) youth in the DKC-SYTF cottage.

Cottages appeared clean but aged. The young people assigned to the cottages appeared to differ significantly in age. Conflicting information was received about the cottage assignment process. Facility leadership indicated that cottage assignment was based on needs, however, partner agency staff shared that cottage assignment was based on space. There were cottages with 13- and 18-year-olds, which multiple Probation Officers expressed mild concern about during interviews.

Each cottage had a communal living space with hard plastic couches and chairs where young people could watch television, play video games, and engage in programs. Each cottage had a refrigerator and folding tables that could be pulled out for meals (which are eaten inside the cottage) to seat all the young people comfortably. All the cottages visited were clean and mostly free of tagging. The girls’ cottages had some decorations up on the walls and the boys’ cottages were mostly plain. One boy’s cottage appeared to have five televisions, which was reported by staff to help keep the peace amongst youth with varied interests and maturity. The lighting in the common areas of the cottages was observed to be kept dark, which at least one Probation Officer reported to help keep a calm mood in the cottage.

Young people observed and interviewed throughout the day appeared clean and well groomed, though they shared several concerns about undergarments and clean clothes. At DKC, each cottage has a laundry room where youth wash their own clothes and are



not required to wear clothing previously used by other youth⁴. Young people interviewed shared that they received four pairs of underwear, and were allowed to wash only once per week, causing them discomfort in having to reuse dirty underwear multiple times each week. This was of particular concern for girls, citing concerns about their ability to keep themselves clean.

Numerous young people throughout the day shared that they had a positive rapport with Probation Officers and talked about how their preferred staff members go out of their way to understand what youth are going through and to provide guidance. Much of the positive experiences that young people described at DKC was reported in contrast to their previous experiences at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall (LPJH), though youth were asked questions specifically about DKC and not LPJH. Youth are dispositioned to DKC after a pre-disposition period at LPJH. One youth reported that their experience “was so bad [at LPJH], it makes this place [or DKC] seem like heaven”, which was a sentiment echoed by various youth during interviews. Youth interviewed reported a high level of willingness to participate in programming at DKC (including mental health services such as substance abuse and psychotherapy groups) because of feeling like the people working at the facility were “invested, and really care about us doing something positive with our lives.” This sentiment was echoed by multiple youth during the inspection.

Probation Officers and other professionals interviewed acknowledged the importance and collective understanding that their interventions should be rooted in connection, relationship building, mentorship, and must be trauma responsive. Many Probation Officers interviewed reported that the culture amongst Probation Officers in the facility is to question, “What happened, and to think about why, and not jump to blame” when incidents occur with youth. Various youth reported appreciation for the Probation Officers’ approach as it differed from their previous experiences. Many Probation Officers indicated their understanding that while youth may act out, it is their job to help youth understand what is driving those behaviors and to help youth recognize other behaviors that will better serve them and those around them. Probation Officers interviewed reported their understanding that many youth in the facility have experienced severe trauma, and that approaching youth by trying to understand them, rather than forcing compliance, makes the work easier and creates a positive culture at the facility. Many Probation Officers discussed their work with pride and shared breakthroughs they had with youth that they found challenging. Several Probation Officers also shared stories about youth who were known to call or visit the facility after release, wanting to connect with Probation Officers they knew while detained.

KITCHEN AND FOOD

The kitchen area appeared clean and well kept. Meals are prepared and plated in the kitchen and then taken to the cottages where the young people eat in a variety of arrangements in the living areas. Sometimes the whole population of the cottage eats together at a fold-out table. At other times, young people eat at different television and

⁴ During the [2024 Annual Inspection](#) cycle, youth at multiple facilities made complaints regarding hygiene, dignity, and other issues related to shared clothing.



video game stations within the cottage. It was reported that Probation Officers are always present during meals, often eat alongside youth, and the young people are permitted to converse during meals. Although the lunch hour was not observed, commissioners did receive a lunch plate which consisted of three double-layered hard shell ground beef tacos with shredded lettuce and cheese. The meal appeared ample, nutritious, and appetizing. Probation Officers noted that the meal servings had recently been doubled due to popular demand from the young people.

Feedback from youth on the food available at DKC was mixed. Some young people shared that they hated the food, threw much of it away, and “have not been asked for feedback” while others reported that they thought the food at DKC was an improvement over other facilities. The kitchen staff reported that there were attempts to get youth input on food choices, providing opportunities for some youth to participate in taste-testing, since they believe that youth want flavors most similar to those they have had in the past. This was evidenced by an example they gave where they had multiple youth try four different types of chocolate milk and were surprised when the youth indicated a preference for a very common and affordable brand versus other options viewed as higher quality and more expensive. Kitchen staff reported that, at times, vendors vary their products without consultation with the facility which results in flavor changes to food.

Kitchen staff reported that the kitchen is short staffed and that they currently have two open positions. As a result of short staffing, overtime is used on a regular basis to provide coverage. The head cook reported that while all kitchen equipment works, there is a need to update various appliances, starting with the grills.

EDUCATION

- **Full-Time Teachers: 7**
 - **Assigned: 3**
 - **Long-Term Substitutes: 4**
- **High School Students: 61**
 - **High School: 58**
 - **Suspended: 3**
- **Youth with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs): 32 (52%)**
- **High School Graduates: 5**
- **College Students: 4**
- **Dual Enrollment Students: 20**
- **College(s) Supporting this Facility: East Los Angeles College (ELAC)**

On the day of the inspection, LACOE was hosting a special event to mark the culmination of a unit of their Road to Success Academy (RTSA). Family members were invited to attend to learn more about the educational opportunities offered at DKC, including RTSA and dual enrollment in community college via the Rising Scholars Program. Various family members attended the event, including one mother who reported that this was her second time attending such an event and that she was pleased with the progress she observed in her student which she credited to her child’s program at DKC. Two students gave a



presentation to the participating families and the POC, including Spanish translation, to discuss education and their perception of the opportunities available to them at DKC. Families were then invited to visit classrooms for additional presentations about what youth were learning.

The students in two of the boys' classrooms appeared engaged and vested in the concept of "Self-actualization." They were able to explain the concept, articulate what it meant to them, and differentiate "self-esteem" from "self-actualization". Not only were the ambassadors engaging, but also the most reticent of students spoke knowingly about the subject.

In another classroom, there were two teaching assistants, one teacher, and a student ambassador who was incredibly thoughtful. Most students appeared engaged, and the curriculum was thought-provoking and culturally relevant. Two Probation Officers were standing in the classrooms, and the young people understood them to be there for security. All classrooms visited were adorned by student work and closely mirrored what one would expect at a school in the community. The teachers and aides appeared to have close and engaging relationships with the boys, and one of the Probation Officer sitting in the classroom reported collaborative and positive relationships with LACOE counterparts in the classroom.

The girls' classrooms did not have the same level of engagement or focus as observed in the boys' classrooms. In one of the girls' classrooms, there were three Probation Officers and two long-term substitute teachers. Commissioners observed the science and math classes, which had young people working either through packets or computer work, but there was no actual instruction observed. The girls interviewed could not articulate the concept of self-actualization when asked though it was the section just completed and the reason for the family visits. In the math class, one girl shared that the work was too easy and that she was assigned to a lower math level because her classmates were behind in math. She reported that she found the work unchallenging and was just going along until she was released. Some students requested to do Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training and another application called Odyssey rather than their math assignments. Throughout these classes, there were technology and password issues on the Chromebooks that delayed the start of work. Girls also complained that restrictions on the use of technology made it difficult to research and gain access to information they needed to complete their work, with one student saying, "I can't get enough information to really learn" and demonstrated the limitations on the search engine software applications.

Despite these issues, there appeared to be obviously positive rapport between the adults and students in the classrooms, and the tone of conversations was respectful, lighthearted, and comfortable.

The three SYTF GGE youth were all high school graduates and appeared restricted to the unit for their educational needs and programs. The Rising Scholars representative shared challenges with providing services including limited access to computers for



school and homework time. Computer access was scheduled on weekdays from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The SYTF college population can enroll in classes with East Los Angeles College (ELAC). Classes are asynchronous, meaning there is no live instruction (virtual or in person) but rather students view videos and submit written assignments. Interaction with professors is limited to email correspondence on Canvas. This population did not have access to trade or certification courses. A young person shared, “I have to wait until I get out to be challenged.” These concerns were echoed by Probation Education Services staff, who elaborated that security, hours of availability, and dual enrollment issues were obstacles to fully realizing the educational experience of high school graduates housed at DKC. It was reported that due to limited laptop access, Probation Education Services have advocated for students, requesting that professors are flexible to change due dates for assignments. It was also reported that requests have been made for ELAC to provide live instruction, but the college has not yet responded.

There were some reports throughout the day of continued resistance to changes to education services within the facility and that cooperation and acceptance of new programs needed to be embraced by LACOE. It was reported that there was a sense of possessiveness over which students “belong” to LACOE and that Probation Education Services staff would like more access to those pupils to get them interested in college classes.

GRIEVANCES

- **Total Grievances Reviewed⁵:** 33
- **Grievance system:** Paper only
- **Emergency grievances:** None

Grievance rules and procedures were posted throughout the facility, including in all cottages. Interviews with youth indicated that they understand the grievance procedure. All grievances reviewed were responded to within three business days as required by [Probation’s Grievance Policy](#).⁶

Grievances included building issues, basic needs for clothing, programming and services issues, concerns about Probation Officers and partner agency staff, and other issues. No emergency (Prison Rape Elimination Act/Health/Suspected Abuse) grievances were observed. Most grievances noted that young people declined a copy of their grievance. This information was written in on the grievance form, as there was no “declined” option for the young person in the “*Received a copy of grievance*” section. Probation Officers reported their belief that youth did not want to risk being viewed as a “snitch” if they were to receive a copy of the grievance.

⁵ POC generally requests to review all grievances from the current calendar year, unless that number is deemed too small to get a reasonable sense of common grievance themes for the facility. The grievances provided and reviewed were from January 2025 onward.

⁶ [Los Angeles County Probation 2020 RTSB Policy Manual](#)



DISCIPLINE/POSITIVE BEHAVIOR REINFORCEMENT

The facility uses two positive behavior intervention programs: the Developmental Stage System (DSS) and the Behavior Management Program (BMP). The DSS was used for the SYTF population and the BMP for DKC Placement and DKC-Camp. The differences between the two models were not immediately clear, but each cottage had information posted for youth to see how to earn points and to highlight special events that were planned as a reward for periods of time that were “incident-free”. Youth were observed wearing different colored polo shirts at school which they reported were tied to their earned privilege level. The facility had a canteen store where the young people were able to use their earned points from participating in their program as currency to purchase snacks and other brand name personal care items to supplement products provided.

In addition to the desire to achieve new privilege levels and have additional material items, special activities were reported to be regularly scheduled for cottages with the best behavior. These events included the use of the DKC game room in the auditorium which had table games such as air hockey, participation in a classic car show, attendance at the DKC prom, among others. Youth reported enjoying the special events and feeling motivated by them.

What appeared to be one of the most impactful aspects of behavior reinforcement at the facility were youth reports about the way they felt they were treated by the professionals within the facility. Youth reported that feeling respected changed the way they acted. One girl said, “The staff all treat me real respectful; they pull me aside and talk to me when things go wrong because they want me to do good.” Many Probation Officers described their interventions with youth in ways that affirmed what the youth reported. It was reported that one of the first steps Probation Officers take when youth arrive at DKC is to inform them that they are no longer in the juvenile hall and that expectations for Probation Officers and youth are different at DKC. It was reported by youth and Probation Officers that youth are encouraged and empowered to use their voice to self-advocate and resolve problems as they arise by talking with staff first. Many Probation Officers reported frustration that youth labeled as problematic or violent come to DKC and display no such behaviors. One Probation Officer stated, “They are exactly the same kids, the only difference is us.”

ACCESS TO MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Department of Health Services’ Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) reported hours of operation from 6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., seven days per week including holidays. Youth reported ease of access to nurses and medical services at DKC and that to see the nurse, they usually ask staff to call the nurse, and they are attended to without necessarily needing to write a formal request.

Department of Mental Health (DMH) reported hours of operation from 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., seven days a week and access to a 24-hour on-call psychiatrist for psychiatric emergencies occurring after-hours. DMH staff provide Dialectic Behavior Therapy (DBT) in collaboration with Probation Treatment and Counseling (TNC) DPO IIs. DMH staff



provide transportation to families for family therapy sessions. DMH staff noted that there were no assigned private offices to provide services at DKC. Services were provided in the administrative conference room which had to be scheduled ahead of time, or in the young person's cottage where other young people and Probation Officers could potentially hear their sessions. Despite space constraints, young people interviewed reported that they had a strong, positive rapport with their therapists. Young people reported feeling respected and listened to by their therapists, and one Probation Officer recounted a story of girls who cried with their therapist on her last day due to the bond they shared, and discussed the attachments made in the therapeutic relationships youth have with therapists and how difficult it is for youth to have those ties severed once a bond has been established.

DMH shared that three young people were on an enhanced supervision level, and the young people received treatment based on their needs ranging from one session per week to several. Youth reported that they were able to meet with their assigned clinicians when they wanted to, and that Probation staff often facilitated contact by calling clinicians as needed.

AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

JCHS staff described their relationship with the Probation Department as "good." JCHS reported that over the last year, they observed departmental improvements that benefited the young people and the daily operations at the facility. One example was the observation that changes to transportation occurred that resulted in youth receiving prompt transportation to medical appointments outside the facility.

DMH staff shared: "Overall Probation works with us. Although there are monthly interagency meetings, there are no obvious changes in Probation operations." Probation Officers interviewed throughout the day reported positive relationships with their DMH colleagues and found them to be supportive of the creation of the trauma-responsive culture at the facility. Some Probation Officers expressed concern about the loss of clinicians at what some described as a high level of turnover in recent years, especially when youth made behavioral improvements and other therapeutic gains attributed to working with those clinicians. Probation Officers reported strong collaboration with DMH partners in day-to-day tasks, including the facilitation of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) which is an evidence based psychotherapeutic group service offered weekly in each cottage within the DKC Placement. The therapy is aimed at helping youth to cope with intense emotions, impulsivity, and to improve interpersonal functioning.

STAFFING

- **Deployed Staff (AM):** 2
- **Deployed Staff (PM):** 3
- **Callouts by supervision staff (AM):** 1
- **Callouts by supervision staff (PM):** Data not provided
- **Staff on Leave(s):** 33
- **Staff on Overtime:** Data not provided



Interviews at DKC indicated that most considered the facility to be slightly short staffed and that while there were no mandatory holdovers occurring, most shifts relied on people working voluntary overtime to maintain sufficient staffing. A few Probation Officers reported an interest in working overtime due to the financial benefit, while many reported that they were more motivated to work overtime to support the overall environment of safety for youth and their colleagues. During the inspection, many Probation Officers shared concerns about the recently released Global Plan⁷, and how it would affect the facility and facilities around the county. Probation Officers expressed some feelings of learned helplessness, as multiple individuals reported a repeating pattern of disregard for their input, few opportunities for input, and a lack of acknowledgement of their contributions to the well-being of girls at the facility from Probation's Executive Leadership Team. Some expressed frustration about the focused attention, human resources, and money poured into the juvenile hall, and their sense that the positive cultures of DKC and other facilities could be eroded to try to save the juvenile hall. One Probation Officer rhetorically asked, "Can they tell us what we've done wrong to have the girls moved away?" One Probation Officer working in the girl's camp cottage supported moving the camp girls out of DKC, stating: "When we had our own space, I would keep the doors open all day, and we stayed outside a lot. We can't do that here because of the supervision needs of the other girls⁸, so we can't keep the doors open." Some Probation Officer highlighted a desire to see more gender-specific and individualized programming regardless of facility changes. Numerous Probation Officers expressed concerns about the lack of information about upcoming facility changes, timelines, the possibility of reassignment, and impact to youth at the facility. None interviewed openly indicated interest in volunteering to change their worksite.

ROOM CONFINEMENT

The facility had two cottages reserved as HOPE Centers, which may be used as a place for youth to "cool down" or for special housing assignment as needed, with one cottage for boys and one for girls and GGE youth. During the inspection, there was briefly one boy in the HOPE Center. The GGE HOPE Center was empty. No instances of room confinement were observed during the inspection in the cottages.

PROGRAMMING

The programs listed on the facility schedule matched the operations of the day. Commissioners observed Million Little in one of the cottages, where several activities were going on including music making, tie-dying clothes, airbrushing apparel, painting small canvases, jewelry-making, hat-making, shirt-making, and shoe-painting. All the young people appeared to enjoy the program as they were engaged and participating.

⁷ Probation's February 18, [2025 Global Plan overlaps with the later released Depopulation Plan and both have been discussed interchangeably by staff as both plans outline the planned future usage of Probation's detention facilities throughout Los Angeles County.](#)

⁸ The reference to other girls includes those dispositioned to DKC Placement and DKC-SYTF.



Reports from young people about their experiences with programming were overwhelmingly positive with youth again comparing the quality and quantity of programming they enjoy at DKC to their experience at the juvenile hall. Youth reported that program providers show up when scheduled and that they had good relationships with the providers overall. Some young people reported that they disliked the credible messenger program. Facility leadership shared that although the facility had access to credible messengers, they currently did not have one due to an incident occurred involving a credible messenger which prompted Probation's facility leadership to request a different credible messenger to be assigned to the facility. The facility was working on finding a replacement through the Department of Youth Development and expected someone to be assigned within the next week or two. Another youth reported interpersonal conflict with the substance abuse counselor, as they felt they had been threatened with consequences for not participating in a group and in turn, the young person did not trust them.

The young people in cottages throughout the facility expressed that they wanted more vocational and trade programming options on a regularly occurring schedule. It was shared that due to the capacity of current available vocational programs, many youth were excluded from participation. Vocational programming was minimal at the facility, as there was only one vocational program offered by East Los Angeles Community College (ELAC).

In one cottage, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) was occurring. Some young people were engaged and participating in the program. The topic of the day was how emotions manifest physically. Out of respect for the seriousness of the conversation, commissioners ended the observation quickly.

HARM REDUCTION

All Probation staff interviewed were carrying Narcan on their utility belts. There was also a Narcan supply inside each of the defibrillator boxes in each of the cottages. Young people were not formally trained to identify the signs of opioid intoxication and did not have access to Narcan.⁹ Partner agencies such as DMH shared that Probation leadership at the facility was beginning the process to empower their staff to carry Narcan by arranging trainings, though Narcan had not been distributed or made available yet.¹⁰

It was reported that after the suspected overdose of a youth and Narcan deployment in December 2024, Probation leadership at the facility was preparing for a series of "Man-down" drills to help all professionals and youth in the facility learn what their roles could look like in the event of a medical emergency.

It was also shared that while illicit substances were not common contraband in the facility, vigilance was high. It was reported that there had been two events in the preceding six

⁹ In the March 7, 2023 Board motion: [Addressing Emergent Illicit Substances and Contraband Entering the Los Angeles County Juvenile Halls](#), Probation was directed to "make Narcan readily and easily accessible to youth".

¹⁰ November 26, 2024 Motion: [Empowering Probation Providers to Carry Naloxone](#) November 26, 2024



months where one or more drones flew over the entrance way of the facility. The Los Angeles County Sheriff Department was contacted and used a device to disable the drones on both occasions. It was reported that despite a thorough search for any contraband after each event, none was found.

OC SPRAY

Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray is not an available use of force option within DKC.