

Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission Group Home Inspection Report

Facility Name:	Children's Village House A , B, C, D
Address:	On file
Phone	On file
Contact Person	Anjana Utarid

J.J.C. Inspector(s)	Richard Miller, James Weathers, and Edith Ullman (House A)
Date of Inspection	March 10,2015, September 2015
Date of Last Inspection	September 4, 2014
C.C.L. Contact	Pauline Muntzer
Date of Last C.C.L. Inspection	9/29/2014

***O = Outstanding *S= Satisfactory or exceeds *N.I. = Needs Improvement/corrective**

Action

INSPECTED	O	S	N.I.	Comments
Grounds	x			Grounds are nicely cared for and give the houses a "neighborhood" flavor. There were several outdoor places to play: a climbing structure with wood chips beneath, an astro-turf field, another field with a tether-ball and sidewalks for scooters.
Building Exterior		x		An inspection of the exterior of A house showed it to be in good repair. All windows had screens. At the time of the last inspection it was noted that the fence in the rear of the house could use a new coat of paint. The fence now has new coat of white paint. Also, last year it was noted that the gutters at the residences were positioned to dump water immediately adjacent to the house foundation rather than being diverted further into the yard which could over time cause erosion and damage to the foundation. This has been corrected. House D has patio furniture and broken empty planters, no plants. Each house is beginning to show wear.

Living Room		x	<p>All houses have large living room areas with large couches and several chairs. The dining area is located between the living room and kitchen and has adequate seating for the residents and staff.</p> <p>There is a large flat screen TV in the living room atop a cabinet storing books, games and videos. Living room was clean and tidy. The furniture is sturdy and there are plenty of places to sit and kick back. There was a supply of CDs, DVDs, games and books in the living room. Each house shares the same interior decorations. While each room is clean it does not give the impression that children live there.</p>
Kitchen		x	<p>The kitchen was generally clean and adequately stocked. There appears to be ample plates, glasses, utensils and cookware. The problem with the freezer unit in the kitchen noted in last year's inspection has been rectified. However, the large freezer in the garage of House A had become unplugged and some melting was noted. It was not possible to tell if the food was adversely affected. Staff were notified immediately and the plug was pushed back into the socket. The large freezer in the garage of House C had mold on the lid, staff were notified. It was noted this freezer content was all meat with no vegetables. The emergency supplies in House C were stored in the garage and were inaccessible as they were blocked by couches and other furniture. The same was noted for House D.</p> <p>House D had vanilla in an unlocked cabinet and staff were notified. Staff were unaware of alcohol content of vanilla 35% as indicated on the label. Staff stated it would be locked up in the future.</p> <p>Sharps are kept in the locked cabinet with the meds – which are kept in the locked office.</p> <p>Plenty of fruit on the counter – apples, bananas, oranges in each house.</p>

Bedrooms		x	Currently A House houses six residents ages 6 to 10 and is at full capacity. House C had six occupants. The bedrooms are decorated by the individual residents often with their own artwork. Floors were clear of clutter. In addition to the overhead lights, the bedrooms have freestanding floor lamps and desk lamps so the residents have ample lighting when doing homework at their desks. There appeared to be an adequate supply of linen and bathroom towels. House C did not have a desk or desk lamp. Staff reported that the child living in that room preferred to do their schoolwork at the kitchen table. Desk and lighting should be available. The wall in one house had three large holes. The size of the holes were sufficient to expose the insulation. Each of these holes were measured between 9-12 inches in diameter. Staff in attendance did not know the holes were there. Program Management were also unaware of the damage. There are two siblings in this House A and another has siblings in other houses.	
Bathrooms		x	House A bathrooms were clean. No mold or soap scum build up was noticeable in the fixtures for House A. House C had some mold noted in upstairs bathroom. There were no missing tiles or cracked or broken fixtures.	
Fire Safety --Extinguishers		x	There were two fire extinguishers with full charges placed in the main hallways at House A. Both had inspection dates of 9/2014. Fire alarms in all houses were up to date. The fire alarm box in House D did not have the small hammer used to break the glass. Staff indicated that fire drills are done every 6 months.	
Fire Safety --Smoke Alarms		x	There were smoke alarms in each child's bedroom and emergency lighting in stairwell. Fire drills are conducted every six months.	
Fire Safety --Evacuation Plan			Last year it was noted that although there were two evacuation plans posted (one on the first floor and one on the second) they were both posted high on the wall much above the eye level of the children. This has now been corrected. One continuing potential problem is that the doors open inward. In the event of a panic this might represent a problem although staff indicate that safe egress from the building is stressed during the regular fire drills.	
Food			x	Although there appeared to be an adequate supply of food in the refrigerator for current use the kitchen cabinets did not appear to contain a sufficient supply of emergency canned or dry food nor did the freezer in garage appear to be adequately stocked; certainly not a two weeks supply which is the standard for emergency back up food supplies. Staff indicated that additional reserves of food frozen, canned and packaged were maintained in the main building.

Emergency Supplies		x	<p>In addition to the food supplies kept in the individual houses and in the main building each house has a complete first aid kit for minor scrapes and bruises. Approximately 10 plastic jerry cans store emergency water in the garage of House A. Other houses had emergency supplies but as previously noted some were inaccessible due to being blocked by furniture. These are changed periodically.</p>
Health Services		x	<p>Each child is covered by Medi-cal and Denti-cal. While Medi-cal coverage is adequate dental coverage is extremely limited. Staff indicated that the facility has established relationships with mental health practitioners to provide needed counseling to some of the students. Dental visits are scheduled every six months. Dental and medical services are provided on an as needed basis. <i>Smiles for a Lifetime</i> provides scholarship funds for braces. CV picks up what isn't covered by <i>Smiles</i> when braces are recommended by the dental professional.</p> <p>These homes have no onsite mental health professional. Previous discussion with management indicated this would be remedied by one staff passing the licensing exam. Apparently this has not happened. Review of the 17 trainings provided by CV (Jan-April 2015) indicate two trainings of a clinical nature, including a behavior modification basics.</p> <p>Of the 11 trainings provided between Sept 2014 and December 2014, only 3 had a clinical focus.</p> <p>Mental health services were reported by management to be provided by outside providers including county workers who are onsite "every day". County caseworkers do not as a matter of practice provide mental health counseling. A list of mental health provider provided by CV include MFT Interns who are reported to be considered specialist in various modalities. This is an area of concern.</p>
		x	<p>Medications are stored in a locked cabinet, in a locked closet, in a locked room accessible only by staff. Each child's medical history, prescribed medications, future dental and medical appointments are kept on a computer file and in a binder maintained in the closet. In addition another copy of the binder is kept in a backpack by the closet in case of emergency evacuation.</p>
Recreation (on site)		x	<p>There were number of bikes, skateboards and scooters in the garage area along with the necessary helmets. Actually more than needed for the children currently in residence in House A. Besides the library books, television and recorded material available there were a number of board games. Although there were no computers in the house, there were several available for the children's use in the Recreation Center. The Rec Center also has a music room (with a drum set), a library and an art room.</p>

Outings (off site)		x		Children participate at various school functions as well as organized hikes at the nearby Taylor Regional park. There are various outings (such as Applebee's restaurant and Scandia). This year a trip to Disneyland has been funded by outside donations. Clients have recently returned from their visit to Disneyland and report having had a good time.
Education & Classrooms		x		Children attend public school and many participate in after-school activities, such as swimming or basketball. They are transported to their various schools via unmarked vans.
Mail/Phone		x		One landline is available for the children's use while in the house.
Discipline		x		Rules of behavior are gone over at time child begins residency and are posted on bulletin board, as are the house grievance procedures and the JJC Notice. The rules appear to be understood by most of the children. "Consequences" for wrongdoing were explained to us by two different residents one girl 8 ½ years old and another 10 year old.
Library		x		There was a well-stocked library on the first floor under the television and a smaller library on the second floor. In addition some of the children had a number of books in their own rooms.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- The children's living area is composed of four two-story type houses separated by garages, which are used primarily for storage.
- Each two story unit is structured similarly with a kitchen, dining area, locked office space for medical records and sharps, another locked storage room for cleaning chemicals, living room, bath room and large bedroom downstairs. The second floor contains four bedrooms, a study area, laundry room and bathroom. Each unit has the capacity to house a maximum of six children. All units are similarly furnished but not exactly to the same level.
- Each unit or house has its own unmarked van to provide transportation to and from school as well as other offsite functions for the children. Staff stated that each van has a scheduled maintenance schedule however we not actually view the schedule.
- In addition to the residence units for the children there is a separate building that houses the administrative offices, a large recreation area, storage areas, and classrooms used for art and music classes. There are also living quarters for "grand parents"
- In addition to the small garden patches in front of each of the living units there is a large community garden cared for by the residents and staff
- House A: Capacity 6 youth, 6 currently in residence. Current resident ages range from 6 to 10
- This facility continues to be on Probation with Community Care Licensing due to previous issues.
- Recent call to JJC from concerned citizen indicated children were jumping on van roof with staff in attendance (September 2015)
- Mental health care on site is absent. Previous discussion of this issue not resolved.
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Youth Interviews

TOPICS	O	S	N.I.	Comments
Evaluation of Program		x		Programs seem to vary according to the needs of the individual children. In some cases the goal is the immediate unification of the family in other cases this is not so. One child was unhappy that she could not be in the same residence as her siblings.
Program Understood		x		The children interviewed seemed to understand their particular situation.
Levels (Privileges)		x		All residents get an allowance. Good behavior is rewarded by additional offsite privileges such as shows, shopping, etc.
Grievances		x		Grievance procedures are prominently posted on the bulletin board, as is the contact information for the Juvenile Justice Commission.
Discipline		x		The disciplinary process is apparently understood and residents interviewed seemed to feel it is fair and administered equitably. "Early bed" is a consequence for bad behavior. It starts with a 10 minute earlier bedtime and escalates if behavior does not improve.
Staff Evaluation				Some staff are easier to talk with than others. At times a child may ask one staff member to intercede on his/her behalf with another counselor. This has apparently worked out well. At least one of the residents indicated that some staff is more approachable than others.
Health Services				The facility has made arrangements with "Smiles for Life" to obtain braces for a number of residents and those relatively few children who obtained braces in this were quite thankful. Routine medical and dental check-ups are scheduled twice a year. One child interviewed was receiving currently receiving treatment for a severe facial swelling.
Counseling/Therapy		x		The facility has a special fund for mental health counseling since Medi-cal provides so little in this area. Some counseling is provided through CPI. Absence of on site mental health care remains a concern.

Chores & Allowance		x		A list of chores is posted weekly. The amount of the allowance given each child is not dependent on the chores he or she handles. Other chores include kitchen duty, watering, working in the garden, vacuuming, sweeping the stairs and front and back yard porches, and emptying the garbage. A chores chart is posted outside each room and appeared to be up to date.
Laundry		x		The laundry rooms were clean and appliances in good order. Each child brings his/her laundry to the laundry room but the detergent which is kept in a locked room is administered by the staff. Older children take a more active part in the laundry process e.g. sorting, transferring to the dryer and folding the laundry when completed. In all cases however the laundry chemicals are controlled by staff.
Clothes				There is a considerable amount of donated clothing of good quality available for the children. In addition some children bring some of their clothes from home.
Food				The weekly meals menu is posted in the kitchen and appeared to provide for a well-balanced diet. Some residents help in the kitchen and can occasionally provide input or request menu items. One child interviewed really liked the food and thought it was the best thing about A House while another didn't care for it at all stating it was just "too blah" but did say she certainly did get enough to eat.
Snacks		x		The posted menu also provides for snacks at specific times during the day. All children present were eating the day's snack of cheese sticks and crackers. In addition a variety of fresh fruit is always available in the kitchen.
School		x		Students attend public school. One student felt that Kawana School was good, but recess is her favorite subject. "All we do is math," she complained.
Library		x		Each house contains a variety of books in the downstairs living room and in the upstairs hallway. The number and types of books varies from house to house. There is also a larger library in the Rec Room.

Activities & Entertainment		x		<p>The residents indicated a variety of activities and interests such as reading, watching TV, bike riding, hiking in the nearby park, board games etc.</p> <p>Computer is sometimes used to correspond with friends far away. The residents use the rec room to access the internet and communicate with friends. One resident did cartwheels for us and “played “ us a song on her guitar.</p>
Money				<p>Each child receives a set allowance. “More would be nice.” There is no reward for good behavior, either in the form of increased allowance, good behavior, or doing chores.</p>

ADDITIONAL NOTES & SUGGESTIONS BY YOUTH

of Youth Interviewed: __4__

- One resident interviewed was a very spirited 8 ½ year old. She has a 10 year old sister in House C and another was a 10 year old with two sisters in another house. The only requests made by one of the youths was for more interesting food and that she be housed with her sisters. One young lady recently arrived and so far liked the program; she was concerned about staff at first but quickly resolved her fears.

Inspection Summary

- Insufficient emergency food supplies actually at the house although additional supplies are stored elsewhere on the grounds. Blocked access to emergency food in two houses. Hole in wall that staff were unaware of. Lack of on site mental health care. Reliance on funds to hire outside mental health care. Buildings beginning to show wear. Empty pots for plants. Recent complaint by concerned citizen. Concern about limited clinical training for staff.

Commissioners:
Miller
Weathers
Ullman (house A)

Next Inspection: Annual _____ or _____

Mary Cone, Chairperson

cc: Honorable Judge of the Sonoma County Superior Court
 Commissioner of the Juvenile Court
 Probation Department, Chief of Probation
 Sonoma County Family Youth & Children's Services
 State of California, Community Care Licensing
 Facility Inspected