

Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission Group Home Inspection Report

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| Facility Name: | Children's Village House A |
| Address: | On file |
| Phone | On file |
| Contact Person | Anjana Utarid |

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| J.J.C. Inspector(s) | Richard Miller, James Weathers, and Susan Moreno |
| Date of Inspection | September 4, 2014 |
| Date of Last Inspection | July 6, 2013 |
| C.C.L. Contact | Pauline Muntzer |
| Date of Last C.C.L. Inspection | August 27, 2014 |

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

Action

| INSPECTED | O | S | N.I. | Comments |
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| Grounds | x | | | The outside grounds are in very good order. The gardens appear to be well cared for, lending an almost park like atmosphere to the facility. A House has a small garden, directly outside its front door, cared for by its residents. |
| Building Exterior | | x | | The fronts of the residences are in good shape however the fences in the rear of all the houses might benefit from a new coat of paint in the near future. An inspection of the exterior of the house showed the house to be in good repair. All windows had screens. I again noted, and pointed out to Taylor, and is the case in all homes, the gutters are positioned to dump water immediately adjacent to the house foundation rather than being diverted further into the yard. This could, over time, cause erosion and damage to the foundation. There are very easy, cost-effective solutions to this problem. |

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| Living Room | | x | <p>The living room is spacious with two 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. The worn out dining table noted in the last evaluation has apparently been replaced.</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 relax. There was a supply of CDs, DVDs, games and books in the living room.</p> |
| Kitchen | | x | <p>The kitchen was clean and well stocked. The unclean conditions noted in the last inspection seem to have been ameliorated. However there was some cooked on residue on some of the stovetop burners. There appears to be adequate dinnerware for the residents and all sharps are kept in a separate locked room. There was a sign on the freezer saying to not use it. When asked why, I was told the temp wasn't holding at 0 degrees (food was in garage chest freezer). When the freezer in the garage was checked, there were some hot dogs, hamburger patties, and ribs. No chicken, bread, or frozen vegetables. The kitchen was clean and tidy. Ample plates, glasses, utensils, cookware. Sharps are kept in the locked cabinet with the meds – which are kept in the locked office. Plenty of fruit on the counter – apples, bananas, oranges.</p> |
| Bedrooms | | x | <p>Currently A House houses five residents ages 7 to 13. At full capacity it would house six residents. The rooms appeared to be well lighted. The individual residents often decorate the bedrooms with their own artwork. Floors were clear of clutter. As opposed to our last inspection, floor lamps have been added to each bedroom so that residents now have ample light when doing homework or working at their desks. There is an adequate supply of linen and bathroom towels.</p> |
| Bathrooms | | x | <p>Bathrooms were clean. No mold or soap scum build up was noticeable in the fixtures. There were no missing tiles or cracked or broken fixtures.</p> |
| Fire Safety --Extinguishers | | x | <p>There were two fire extinguishers with full charges charged and with current inspection dates placed in the main hallways.</p> |
| Fire Safety --Smoke Alarms | | x | <p>There are smoke alarms in each child's bedroom and emergency lighting in stairwell. Fire drills are conducted every six months.</p> |

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| Fire Safety --Evacuation Plan | | | Although there were two evacuation plans posted (one on the first floor and one on the second), they were posted high on the wall much above the eye level of the children. One of the children interviewed indicated that they had fire drills two times each month. One potential problem is that the doors open inward. In the event of a panic this might represent a problem. |
| Food | | x | Kitchen refrigerator and kitchen cabinets were not adequately stocked. There was insufficient supply of emergency food in freezer in garage, certainly not a two weeks supply that 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. There was not sufficient fresh food in the refrigerator for a week let alone the evening meal. There was no bread, no eggs, or fresh vegetables. There was only a small amount of milk, which was inadequate for five children to have at the evening meal. We were there at around 4:45 and there was approximately a half-quart of soymilk and a half-quart of regular milk. This was brought to the attention of Taylor who was escorting us on our inspection. He told someone who apparently either went to the store or borrowed milk from another house on campus. Food in the pantry was also inadequate and not remotely close to being two weeks of staples. Only a few canned goods were stocked and breakfast cereal was minimal. |
| Emergency Supplies | | x | 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. |
| Health Services | | x | 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 the dental professional recommends braces. |
| Medications | | x | 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. |

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| 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 this house. Besides the library books, television and recorded material available there were a number of board games for their use. Art classes are conducted on site in the recreation hall.</p> <p>One child is very interested in gymnastics and even has a balance beam in her room.</p> <p>Although there were no computers in the house, there were several available for the children's use in the Recreation Center. There is a community garden on site.</p> |
| Outings (off site) | | x | | <p>Children participate at various school functions as well as organized hikes at the nearby Taylor Regional park. This summer several children attended Owl Camp, an outing held at Rancho Mark West and sponsored by the Land Paths Organization "In Our Own Back Yard (IOOBY). Residents state that they also enjoy going to the movies, swimming and just going to the mall.</p> |
| Education & Classrooms | | x | | <p>Children all attend public school. They are transported to their various schools via unmarked vans.</p> |
| Mail/Phone | | x | | <p>One landline is available for the children's use while in the house. Cell phones are provided when children offsite on weekends or in evenings</p> |
| Discipline | | x | | <p>Rules of behavior are gone over at time child begins residency and are posted on bulletin board.</p> |
| Library | | x | | <p>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.</p> |
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ADDITIONAL NOTES

- . The children's living area is composed of four two-story 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, bathroom 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 did 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.
- 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

- Capacity 6 youth, 5 currently in residence. There is one set of 3 siblings in residence.
- Current resident ages range from 7 to 13.
- Amanda house contact, friendly and willing to answer questions if asked.
- Many of the residents in this house were off campus at various activities.

Youth Interviews

| TOPICS | O | S | N.I. | Comments |
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| 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. |
| 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. One child interviewed indicated that several residents had filed a complaint against a particular staff person who was subsequently removed indicating not only understanding of the process but demonstrating that the process worked. |
| Discipline | | x | | The disciplinary process is apparently understood and residents interviewed seemed to feel it is fair and administered equitably. |
| 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. Says staff is approachable if issues arise and need to be discussed. |
| 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 from this organization were quite thankful. Routine medical and dental check-ups are scheduled twice a year. |
| 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. |

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| 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. |
| Laundry | | x | | The laundry rooms were clean and appliances in good order. Each child brings his/her laundry to the laundry room but the staff administers the detergent, which is kept in a locked room. 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 staff controls the laundry chemicals. |
| Clothes | | | | There is a considerable amount of donated clothing of good quality available for the children. In addition many bring clothes from home. |
| Food | | | | The weekly meals menu is posted in the kitchen and appeared to provide for a well-balanced diet. Residents stated that they have a say in the preparation of the weekly menu. They don't always get what they want but do a lot of the time. The resident occasionally helps in the kitchen and says that they have the ability to occasionally provide input or request menu items. They also help in the CV garden where they have fruit trees and grow vegetables. Fruit, vegetables and herbs find their way into the meals that are provided. |
| Snacks | | x | | The posted menu also provides for snacks at specific times during the day. In addition a variety of fresh fruit is always available in the kitchen. |
| School | | x | | Students attend public school. One child commented that she liked the fact that the vans that take them to school are not marked labeling the kids as residents of a group home. |
| 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. House C seemed to have a significantly fewer number of books than the other houses inspected. |
| Activities & Entertainment | | x | | The residents indicated a variety of activities and interests such as reading, watching TV, bike riding, hiking in the nearby park, board games etc. Computer is sometimes used to correspond with friends far away. The resident uses the rec room to access the internet and communicate with friends. On the weekend the resident is able to hang out with friends and go to the mall, go shopping or to the juice shack. |

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| Money | | | 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. |
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ADDITIONAL NOTES & SUGGESTIONS BY YOUTH

- Resident says they did receive information at their intake orientation, but was not given anything written to refer to later. They were not assigned a peer mentor upon arrival to help them acclimate. They stated that they could see the information on rules and expectations if they wanted, but it is kept locked in the office so not easily accessible.

Inspection Summary

- Improved lighting for bedrooms.
- Inadequate food supplies in this home.
- Written orientation information should be provided to each resident to keep.

_____ Annual Inspection
Inspection Commissioner

Next Inspection Recommended: _____ 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