

Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission Facility Inspection Report

Facility Name:	Family Life Center – Boys Program
Address:	365 Kuck Lane, Administrative offices, school for boys, main house for boys housing 6, and Tan house for 6 boys, 3539 Skillman Lane off campus housing 6 boys.
Phone	Main office: (707) 795-6954
Contact Person	David Benoit

J.J.C. Inspector(s)	Jody Edwards and Hank Mattimore
Date of Inspection	May 15, 2014
Date of Last Inspection	February 2013
C.C.L. Contact	Pauline Muntzer
Date of Last C.C.L. Inspection	?

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

INSPECTED	S	N.I.	Comments
Grounds	X		The campus has multiple buildings all with large inviting yards and all the trappings of a rural setting in Petaluma. Boys assist in outdoor maintenance at both the main campus and at the off campus homes.
Building Exterior	X		All in excellent condition.
Living Room	X		Very comfortable, inviting and spacious with nicely decorated rooms.
Kitchen	X		We observed the youth eating lunch at the campus. The meals looked very healthy with lots of fruits and vegetables. In the off campus home the boys have one night a week they are responsible for cooking, can do by self or can get help. They plan it and then they all grocery shop together on the weekend.
Bedrooms	X		Two boys per room - all very clean and neat. They have a bulletin board to fill if they choose and there are lots of posters displayed in the rooms. They teach that you keep the rooms clean for yourself not for inspections...the idea is you invest in where you live.
Bathrooms	X		Clean, bath products in showers, towels are in their individual rooms
Fire Safety -Extinguishers -Smoke Alarms -Evac. Plan ?	X		All in order and evacuation plans clearly posted. Fire extinguishers are up to date.
Food	X		There was good, healthy food in the refrigerators.
Health Services	X		Each child gets one-on-one therapy once a week and group therapy three days a week. Family therapy is weekly and dependent on when the youth is ready. For kids from out of the area they will use Skype if the family can't be here.

Medications	X		All locations have secure and locked medication cabinets
Recreation (on site)	X		The day before we visited, the boys went out to the Coast Guard campus to have a basketball game with them. They had been practicing and looking forward to that for some time. At the main site we saw places for recreation outside, baseball, basketball, barbeque areas etc. At the off campus house we saw basketball areas outside as well as the garages have weight equipment.
Outings (off site)	X		They have a "Wilderness Program" where they go camping and teach them about the outdoors. They also have regular off-site outings on weekends. In addition there are a couple boys who were involved in gymnastics when they arrived at FLC. Their policy is to make every attempt to keep them in the extracurricular activities they were in before coming to the program if the boys can demonstrate self-control and self-monitoring.
Education/ Classrooms	X		Larry M. Simmons High School on each of main campuses. We did not see the school on this visit.
Mail/Phone	X		Phone privileges increase based on phase of each child
INSPECTED	S	N.I.	Comments
Family Contact	X		All parents can visit the third Saturday of each month and there are weekly phone calls. Family therapy starts when the boy has reached Phase 3.
Discipline	X		This is a phase based program utilizing points and privileges with a focus on the positive. In the Skillman house which is a family living phase house, there are no points, they can only earn their way there if they know, understand, and can demonstrate the standards expected. One observation we made was that there are two alarm clocks in every bedroom and many clocks in the living areas. This is purposeful for the youth to get up on time and self-monitoring; being some place on time is a big skill to learn.
Library	X		There is a library in the school

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The Family Life Center is a comprehensive Level 12 residential treatment program serving boys and girls aged 12 - 18. It was founded in 1978 and provides on-site school and treatment in a family style setting. The average length of stay is 12-18 months and all the youth come from various counties in California. The boys program is separated from the girls program on two different campuses. The program is development and relationship based and is an exemplary program that provides a structured and caring milieu. The expectations are clear; staff is consistent in its interactions with the youth, and there is an overall positive tenor. The youth are immersed in the culture of the program which is clearly defined and encourages mutual respect and responsibility among all.

There are currently 17 boys in the program with capacity for 18. The center had capacity for 18 boys for many years and grew to 30. This year they decided to cut back from 30 because the needs of the kids have increased, more individualized attention is required as well as specialized interventions. They have seen youth who have experienced more trauma and bullying has increased. Cyber bullying is traumatic; it used to be one, two, or three people that might gang up to bully you, now it is hundreds. Thus in order to have the time and staff to give the treatment necessary, to develop relationships and to maintain quality they have reduced the size of the boys program. Referrals have not slowed down.

Family Life Center is also licensed as an FFA and thus has the capability to certify foster homes when the situation occurs. In fact they have one of their staff who will be taking on a youth from the center who will live in this newly certified therapeutic foster home and come to the center for intensive services.

As they are a teen program, AB12 doesn't affect them. However in planning for the future, they intend to provide more wrap around services. This means bringing services to the kids. The benefit of a residential environment is that you can really control the environment. In a wrap program where the youth go back home each night, you can't control the environment and there will be a slower pace of growth. For example, if a child is going home at 5:00 he may not tell you about his dad beating him up. In addition they are finding that more and more of the youth are eligible for Medicare, as a matter of fact they are having training about Medicare and billing this afternoon.

Youth Interviews

TOPICS	S	N.I.	Comments
			We did not interview youth at this visit. Instead we recognized the winners of our annual essay contest by having gatherings of all the boys and then separately all the girls. In this event we talked about the value of being able to express oneself in writing, congratulated the winners, gave out awards to them and participation awards for all youth who entered a submission.

Inspection Summary

It is evident that the Family Life Center is making a difference in the lives of the youth it serves. Many of the essays talked of staff members in the FLC who made a tremendous difference in the lives of the youth. There is a stable, long serving, well-trained and positive staff that are role models for the residents. Much care is given to the admissions process and making sure youth are appropriately placed to provide for social cohesion, diversity and to further the positive goals so they can transition to society as productive and happy adults.

Hank Mattimore, Commissioner

Next Inspection Recommended: _____ or X Annual Inspection

Chair, Juvenile Justice Commission Date _____

cc: Honorable Judge of the Sonoma County Superior Court
 Commissioner of the Juvenile Court
 Probation Department, Chief of Probation
 Department of Social Services
 State of California, Community Care Licensing
 Juvenile Probation Director
 Facility Inspected