

Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission Group Home Inspection Report

Facility Name:	Greenacre Homes (Occidental Group Home)
Address:	On file
Phone	707 953-0835 (c)
Contact Person	Timothy Dimick, Program Director

J.J.C. Inspector(s)	James Weathersm, Richard Miller, Susan Moreno
Date of Inspection	October 7,2014
Date of Last Inspection	February 18,2013
C.C.L. Contact	Pauline Muntzer
Date of Last C.C.L. Inspection	6-23-2014

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

INSPECTED	O	S	N.I.	Comments
Grounds		x		Grounds and building are well maintained. Although the front area has only a small area for outdoor recreation there is a larger area behind the house with a basketball hoop and plenty of space that can be used for outdoor games. Home is located in a pleasant rural setting.
Building Exterior		x		Exterior of the building appears to be well maintained. Residents and staff have decorated for Halloween. A porch runs the entire front of the building with an older comfortable couch, which the students sometimes use for a "cooling off" period. Motion activated lights are installed on the exterior of the house which are activated at night.
Living Room		x		Living room was large with two sofas, coffee table, several bookshelves, TV and a computer. Books lined the shelf above the computer terminals and there were a variety of movies and video games present. There was also a game table with a jigsaw puzzle in progress. All furniture, while obviously not new was sturdy, in good repair and comfortable. Living room has a "lived" in atmosphere. There is a staff office off of the living room nwith a glass window to observe the hallway leading to the bedrooms.

Kitchen		x	<p>The kitchen and eating areas were clean and well maintained</p> <p>Sharps are locked in another room. Most foods used by all five Greenacre Homes are delivered to the Eddie Street facility and sent from there to the other houses twice a week. Weekly menu is posted in each house and is in compliance with ADA and State nutritional guidelines.</p> <p>The refrigerator was adequately stocked and no out dated left overs were noted.</p> <p>There was an adequate supply of plates, flatware, glassware, pots and pans and cooking utensils.</p> <p>The dining table was of sufficient size for all house residents and staff.</p> <p>Sharps were locked in a locked cabinet in the locked office along with meds. At the suggestion of one of the commissioners vanilla and other spices with high alcohol content were also moved to the locked cabinet.</p> <p>Snacks were available on the counter and consisted of a variety of fresh fruits.</p> <p>Additional supplies of canned and dry foods were stored in the pantry.</p>
Bedrooms		x	<p>Two residents occupy each of the three bedrooms at this group home. Each resident has their own desk, chair, bed and dresser. One overhead light fixture is the sole source of lighting in the bedrooms.</p> <p>The possible need for additional lighting such as desk lamps was discussed with staff. Individual desk lamps had been removed in the past due to breakage. Other possible alternatives such as replacing the globes over the lighting fixtures with clearer glass are currently being considered.</p> <p>Residents personalize their own rooms with posters and pictures on their half of the room.</p>
Bathrooms		x	<p>The two bathrooms in the facility were in good repair. Toilets and showers were clean.</p>
Fire Safety --Extinguishers		x	<p>Two up to date and fully charged fire extinguishers are strategically located in easily accessed places in the facility. There is one hard-wired pull alarm located in the hallway.</p>
Fire Safety --Smoke Alarms		x	<p>Each room has a battery powered smoke alarm. The hallway has a fire alarm, smoke and CO2 alarm. Emergency lighting is hardwired and exit signs are posted above each exterior door.</p>
Fire Safety --Evacuation Plan		x	<p>Evacuation plan was prominently posted in two areas. The facility holds evacuation drills at least once each month. There are three exit doors in case of an emergency evacuation. Gathering area is a safe distance from the house.</p>
Food		x	<p>As noted above the kitchen, refrigerator, and cabinets were well stocked. The refrigerator contained fresh vegetables, milk, eggs etc. The freezer was filled to capacity with frozen vegetables, meats, hot dogs, and bread etc. Meal planning takes into consideration any religious or medical restrictions. There appears to be limited supply of dry goods: cereal, etc. However, additional supplies of such foods are stored and available.</p>

Emergency Supplies		x		Emergency supplies such as first aid kits, additional food and water etc. were stored in a locked pantry. Additional supplies are also kept at the Eddie St House and can be distributed to the other Greenacre Homes should the need arise.
Health Services		x		As with the other facilities maintained by Greenacre Homes, children are routinely scheduled for yearly medical exams with additional visits as necessary. Dental exams are scheduled semiannually with follow up treatment as indicated
Medications		x		Medicines are in a locked drawer in the staff office, which is also locked. Other toxic chemicals and cleaning material are also stored under lock and key when not being used by staff. Prescribed medications are distributed by staff and charted in a log kept in the locked desk with the medications
Recreation (on site)	x			On site recreation consists of TV, video games, some board games and reading. There were a variety of balls and other recreational material available to the residents. Each resident has his own bike and helmet and staff encourages biking.
Outings (off site)	x			Outings include such things as visits to baseball games, bike rides, hiking, movies, and visits to San Francisco on occasion.
Education & Classrooms		x		Two of the residents as Occidental go to public school while the other four attend the Greenacre school. Students are driven to class and returned to the house afterward.
Mail/Phone		x		Each of the residents has access to the home's telephone and computers Incoming and outgoing mail and e-mail is unrestricted unless special circumstances are involved. Both the phone and computer utilize a sign in sheet with time spent on each noted. Residents are on the honor system as to how long they use the computer.
Discipline		x		As with the other Greenacre homes, discipline is two pronged consisting of rewards for "good" behavior and defined penalties for unacceptable behavior. Rewards consist of a possible increase in the allowance each child receives, increased outings, etc. Penalties include restriction of outside activities and in some cases restriction to the resident's room. Restrictions to room are generally limited to one day. Restrictions of more than one day require the authorization of a supervisor. As well as the couch on the front porch there is an "opportunity room" for residents to use voluntarily (or involuntarily should the need arise) for de-escalation or reflection during stressful incidents. While the door is not locked, staff is always in attendance. If the opportunity room is used, there are not any follow-up consequences, making it a safe environment to get oneself together without a negative connotation. Staff indicate that consequences should be intellectually relevant to the particular child involved. This facility is authorized to do physical containments as needed.

Library		x		In addition to the reading material there was a variety of video games and movies in bookcases in the living room. Several residents had books in their rooms.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Unlike most group homes in Sonoma County Greenacres accepts residents who are both developmentally delayed and emotionally challenged ages 8-18 (with exceptions some residents are older). The Occidental House usually houses boys fourteen to fifteen, however, currently there are some residents close to “aging out”.

They take level 14 and level 12 kids

Accept regional center clients

Very low staff turnover. Charles, the house administer has been with Greenacres for about 20 years and Paula ten years. Greenacres prefers to hire and promote from within which can improve consistency with residents and facilitate relationship building.

As with all other Greenacre Houses staff input in decision-making and program development is encouraged. Charles is the resident trainer for all Greenacre staff.

Internship program requires interns to work minimum of 20 hours a week and agreement to a 1-year commitment. This is a paid internship and requires intern to stay past his or her own academic school year. Paid internships are rare so this is a very positive incentive and interns often stay on after their internship is finished.

Community involvement of residents where appropriate.

Staff are knowledgeable about residents with both developmental issue and emotional concerns.

Each resident is associated with a regional center. Currently 15% of their residents are from Sonoma County.

Youth Interviews

TOPICS	O	S	N.I.	Comments
Evaluation of Program		x		All youths interviewed were complimentary about program.
Program Understood		x		Residents interviewed seemed to understand and appreciate the program.
Levels (Privileges)		x		Residents given in-depth orientation upon arrival along with a handbook containing the house rules and regulations. Residents’ allowance is provided weekly and is based on their completion of chores, how their room is kept and their behavior. Additional dollars are earned by behavior in the school setting and successful participation in the Vocational Training School Program. Resident #1 stated that you can lose points if you don’t follow the rules. And can be put on “room safety” for certain infractions; means you stay in your room.

Grievances		x		Residents' Rights as well as the JJC posters were posted prominently in the hallway.
Discipline		x		Residents seemed to understand and accept the disciplinary policies in place. The intake and assimilation process at Occidental House takes about two weeks during which residents get accustomed to their new home, the rules and the daily routine. House rules are generally fair and accepted.
Staff Evaluation		x		All residents interviewed felt staff were fair and could be talked to. The relationship between residents and staff seems to be very positive. There is a warm, family like atmosphere among the staff and residents.
Health Services		x		Residents confirmed that the policy regarding regular twice a year medical and dental exams was being followed and that additional appointments were made when necessary.
Counseling/Therapy		x		Resident states they do not have a counselor but see their regular doctor when they get their medication adjusted.
Chores & Allowance		x		Each child has assigned chores based on age and ability, which are posted weekly. Everyone receives a basic allowance, which may be augmented based on additional duties and satisfactory behavior. See above.
Laundry		x		Residents help with the laundry of their own clothes under the supervision of facility staff. Laundry supplies are in a locked cabinet and controlled by staff. Laundry is done regularly once each week however at the residents' request it may be done more often.
Clothes		x		Clothes are either their own or from group home supplies. If things get "old" they can pick new ones. Residents' clothes were clean and there was additional clothing in the bedroom closets.
Food		x		Residents were complimentary about both the quality and quantity of the food.
Snacks		x		In addition to regular meals and scheduled snacks, each resident has access to fruit that is available in the kitchen.
School		x		Four of the six residents at Occidental House attend Greenacre school while two attend public school.
Library		x		Residents make use of the books, video games and movies available in house.
Activities & Entertainment	x			Residents interviewed stated they enjoyed going to the movies and on field trips. They described going to A's games (although a number preferred the Giants) bike riding, and participating in community events like the Mud Run.

Money		x	Can earn funds based on age and chores. In addition some residents earn additional money at the school or part-time outside jobs. All residents interviewed, like the idea of having their own money to spend.
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ADDITIONAL NOTES & SUGGESTIONS BY YOUTH

Lighting in bedrooms could be enhanced. Covers for overhead room light could be changed to something less opaque allowing improved lighting in room for deskwork.

Access to mental health counseling on a more frequent basis.

Inspection Summary

In the opinion of this review team, this facility meets or exceeds all the criteria to be rated as a fine group home serving the youth of our county. Of particular note is the positive interaction between the staff and residents. All during our visit one or another of the staff was engaged with one or more of the residents either playing a game or just talking.

James Weathers/Richard Miller/Susan Moreno
 Inspection Commissioners

Next Inspection Recommended: _____ or x Annual Inspection

 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