

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission San Mateo County, California

Group Home Inspection

Facility Name: Receiving Home

Facility Capacity: 6

Address: 31 Tower Road, San Mateo CA

Current Population: 5

Contact Person: La Toya Faulkner-Clayton

Annual Population: 66
(7/12 – 7/13)

Phone Number: (650) 655-6216

Date of this Inspection: August 27, 2013

Date of Last Inspection: July 25, 2011

Commission Inspection Team: Mieke Barrows, Braulio Gonzalez

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge: Judge Etezadi

Major Concerns, Observations, and Recommendations

The Receiving Home is a county run, 30 day shelter for dependent youth. It started in 1959 and the new building was built in 2009.

Recently, the Excell Center closed their home and moved into half of the Receiving Home. This reduced the capacity of the Receiving Home from 12 to 6 (they were usually at 50-70% of capacity prior to this split). Excell used to take both 300 (dependency) and 600 (delinquency) youth but the Receiving Home is a shelter and can only take 300 youth. Since they now share a space, Excell can no longer take 600 youth. They (Excell) can accommodate former 600 youth but they have to be off probation.

The Receiving Home is a level 9 group home while Excell is a level 12 group home. There is crossover with Excell in the kitchen but no other space is shared. Because Excel now uses one of the hallways, the Receiving Home no longer has the ability to house girls and boys in separate hallways. At night, they have a staff member sit on a chair in the hallway to monitor the hallway.

So far staff reports that the split has gone well but added that they haven't really had any tough kids since the split.

The county is in the process of convening a working group to look at how they can increase the overall efficiency of the operation of our Receiving Home and based on the group's decision necessary

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actions will be taken. This might include putting out an RFP for operation of the Receiving Home. The inspectors are concerned about how this would affect the running of the Receiving Home.

Fire Inspection Report: Yes No Date: _____

Health Department Report: Yes No Date: 8/15/2013

Miscellaneous: _____

Areas Reviewed

Quality of Life

- Physical Plants
- Meals/Nutrition
- Mental Health
- Physical/Dental Health
- Religious Services
- Volunteer Involvement
- Visiting
- Other: _____

Programs

- Education
- Vocational/Employability
- Community Service
- Individual/Group Counseling
- Substance Abuse
- Other: _____

Persons Interviewed

- Minors
- Director
- Youth Supervisor/Staff
- Food Services Staff
- Other: _____

General Information

Stated purpose of facility: The Receiving Home is a county run, 30 day shelter for dependent youth awaiting placement. The staff at the Receiving Home also manage short term, long term and medically fragile placements for the county. They support foster homes as well.

Type of operating license: CCL group home

License number: 415650019

Most recent licensing inspection: 06/27/2013

Rating level: As a shelter, it is not rated but is equivalent to 9 or 10

Target population of juveniles: 12 -17 – youth who have not found placement yet

Age range of juveniles: 12-17 years old (occasionally 10 or 11 years old – all youth under 18)

Juveniles' home counties: San Mateo, Tehama (special case)

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Pre-Plan for Emergencies: Yes No Date of Last Drill: Sept 2, 2013

Comments: Documented emergency plan, Canyon Oaks is their backup location. They have several vehicles if they needed to evacuate. Have a 7 day supply of food at all times. Once a month fire drills with Jim Alvarado.

Staffing

Describe staff specialties: Almost all staff are degreed (bachelors, many masters and above). Education liaisons have PPSE; Administrators have group home administrator licenses

Describe staff including numbers, background, ethnicity, language: 10 permanent/full time; 13 extra help (at will, oncall, often have another job). Staff speak Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese

Educational requirements for Staff: Minimum 60 hrs college units - most have bachelors – many masters and above. 2-3 years in social services or group homes.

Training provided for staff: 20 hours of continuing education per year. In house training every 2-3 months.

Staff to minor ratio: Awake 1:4 Sleeping 1:4

How is staff backup handled during grave-yard shift?: Oncall. Supervisors will cover if no one available

Describe staff turnover, including frequency and reason: Don't have much turnover. Pretty stable group

Describe general staff and minor interactions: There was only one youth there while we were there. Interactions were positive. In our discussions with staff, it was clear that they care about the youth and are working to help them as much as possible.

Comments: _____

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Conditions of Grounds and Building Exterior

Give a general description of the property: The Receiving Home is a new building with some recreational area. Located on Tower Road near Gateway School. There are two hall with bedrooms (only one used by the Receiving Home right now), an exercise room, common area, main office and kitchen.

Give a general description of the main facility including housekeeping and sanitation:

The home was clean and neat

Lawns: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Playing Fields: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Blacktop: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Paint: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Blacktop: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Roof: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Drains and Gutters: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

General Appearance: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Condition of Interior of Building

Walls: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Paint: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Floors: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Ceilings: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Drains: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Plumbing Fixtures: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Air Vents/Heating/Windows: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Smoke Alarms: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

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Storage of Cleaning Fluids/Chemicals: Acceptable Unacceptable: Locked closet

Recreation/Sports Equipment: Acceptable Unacceptable: they could use a new volleyball net

Hallways Clear/Doors Propped Open: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Sleeping Rooms: Acceptable Unacceptable: Male and female youth are housed on the same hallway because of changes to facility (Excell now uses half the facility). There is a staff member sitting in the hallway all night.

Beds Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Art, Books, Personal Items Allowed in Rooms: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Graffiti Present: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Ample Blankets: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Study Area: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Adequate Lighting: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Temperature: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Orientation of Minors

What is the intake process for the facility? When a youth comes to the home, they sit with the child and social worker to go through the paperwork and review rules, discipline policy, cell phone policy, grievance policy, etc. They are given toiletries.

Are minors oriented to the house rules and procedures?: Yes No Explain: House rules are described in the Handbook given to every youth . They are reviewed at intake. During their nightly group meeting, they also go over any issues that occurred that day and review the rules.

Are house rules and grievance procedures posted?: Yes No Explain: Personal rights are posted. Rules are in the Handbook.

What is in place to ensure that these rules and procedures are understood by minors?: Nightly group meetings provide an opportunity to review rules and go over any issues that occurred that day

Are clothing and possessions inventoried on arrival and departure? How are juvenile's clothing and possessions protected or stored? Yes. Cell phones are kept in office. They have a safe and a storage room for personal belongings. Can keep cash but staff recommends that they keep it in the office.

Interviewed Minors: Yes No Details: See youth interview form

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Meals/Nutrition

Kitchen: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Do the youth share in preparation of meals?: Yes No Details: They can if they want to. Once a week Help One Child comes in and cooks dinner with the kids (Supper Club)

Are meals served family style?: Yes No Details: _____

Are minors permitted to converse during meals?: Yes No Details: _____

Are staff present and supervising during meals?: Yes No Details: _____

Are weekly menus posted?: Yes No Details: _____

Are servings ample, nutritious, appetizing?: Yes No Details: we were not there during meal time

Weaker minors protected from having food taken from them?: Yes No Details: _____

Are snacks and beverages available?: Yes No Details: _____

How do you meet special nutritional needs? They honor any special requests

Length of time allowed to eat?: see below

Mealtimes (no more than 4 hours between meals, breakfast to dinner, without a snack).

Breakfast: 6-8:40am Lunch: 12 - 1 Dinner: 5:30 – 6:30

Comments: Snacks at 10:30am, 3:30pm and 8:30 pm

Personal Appearance of Minor

Appearance: Acceptable Unacceptable: There was only one youth at the home when we were there. Two or three others were in school but were late coming back and did not arrive back before we left .

Showers (frequency, privacy, supervised): Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Condition of clothing (clean, fit, etc.): Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

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Clothing appropriate to current weather: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Comments: _____

Programs

Recreation (type, amount, etc.): Acceptable Unacceptable: They rely heavily on social workers to decide what the youth can/cannot do. They participate in the Wilderness Program in Half Moon Bay (1-2x a week in summer; 1x month during school year). One of the staff members reported taking the youth on some kind of outing on Sundays (Santa Cruz boardwalk, beach). They also use the CATS program to get tickets to sports events, theater, music, museums, etc.

Exercise (daily schedule, amount, etc.): Acceptable Unacceptable: They have exercise everyday. The full exercise room is now on the Excell side of the facility and unavailable to Receiving Home youth. They do have an elliptical trainer, treadmill and bike available to them. As long as they are 13 or older, youth go on daily walks, up to one hour.

Access to Religious Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: Staff will take them; some staff who are off will take them to services if they are of same religion.

Access to Medical Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: They use the San Mateo Medical Center Pediatrics department (primarily one doctor there) or take the youth to their primary care providers if known.

Access to Mental Health Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: Psychiatrist on call

Individual Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: Youth have access to counseling – facilitated by social worker. Behavioral health has a counselor who is designated for the Receiving Home – she is oncall.

Group Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Substance Abuse Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: They have access to AOD (alcohol and other drug assessment). Social worker handles getting them into a program. They often work with Our Common Ground.

Victim Awareness Classes: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Gang Awareness Classes: Yes No Details: no – can refer to probation

Sexual Harassment Classes: Yes No Details: _____

Parenting Classes: Yes No Details: _____

Vocational Classes: Yes No Details: referred to other programs

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Work Program: Yes No Details: _____

Other: They used to have someone come out from probation to address some of the issues that might be covered in some of the classes mentioned above, but their hours got cut and they no longer come out. They do touch on these issues during their group meetings.

Discipline of Minors

Describe the discipline process of minors: They use a level program where youth earn privileges and allowance based on their behavior and cooperation.

Comments: During a previous inspection, there was a concern that the discipline policy said that youth can be put off program if they refuse placement. They say they do not do this anymore and it has been corrected in the handbook given to residents. It is, however, still written this way in the intake packet. If a youth is not working toward placement, they will take the issue to court and force placement.

Grievances

Grievance Process: Acceptable Unacceptable: Youth are encouraged to talk to staff if they feel comfortable doing so. If the grievance is about stuff (ie, not about another resident or a staff person), they usually handle it on the spot. They can talk to the supervisors about the issue or, if they would prefer, they can contact CCL to files a complaint.

Number of grievances this year: 5

Trends and/or Comments: There was no grievance log. Grievances about staff are put in the file of that staff member.

Correspondence / Telephone

Access US Mail?: Yes No Details: _____

Postage Free?: Yes No Details: _____

Incoming/Outgoing Mail (screened? Confidential?): Yes No Details: mail is not screened

Access to Telephone?: Yes No Details: There are two phones in the office where youth can make calls. Phone privileges end at 9 or 10pm

Visiting

Visiting Schedule: Weekdays no set schedule Weekends _____ Special Events _____

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Do all minors have access to visitations?: Yes No Details: Social worker decides on visitation

Under what circumstances would visitation be restricted?: Visitation can only be restricted by Court or as designated by social worker

Are visitation logs kept?: Yes No Details: _____

Adequate Space: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Staff Supervision: Acceptable Unacceptable: Staff usually do not supervise visits because they are required to be on the floor. Once in a while they will supervise a visit as a courtesy.

Privacy Provided: Yes No Details: _____

Games or Activities Provided: Yes No Details: The room is full of books, a television, microwave, DVD player, and toys for younger children.

School

List the schools your residents attend: Gateway, Burrell Middle School, and Ben Franklin

How is transportation to school provided: Staff drive them

Are students able to participate in school-based extra curricular activities?: Yes

Is tutoring available?: Tutoring is available. They refer the youth to the educational liaisons who are on-site part-time and out in the community during their hours

Adequate Supplies, Books, Paper, Computer?: Yes - supplies provided by the County Office of Education and other donations from the community

Access to computers/Internet? How is this managed? : There are 2 laptops that the youth can use. They are allowed on the internet for school but must be in the common area, with the screen facing the office so that staff can monitor.

Comments

General comments or concerns that should be noted that haven't already been addressed?: _____

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Sometimes psychotropic youth are brought in without their medications or prescriptions. This makes it hard for the staff.

Signature of Commissioner(s) preparing this report:

/s/ Mieke Barrows Date: 9/19/13

/s/ Braulio Gonzalez Date: 9/19/13

_____ Date: _____