

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission San Mateo County, California

Group Home Inspection

Facility Name: Our Common Ground Facility Capacity: 24

Address: 631 Woodside Road, Redwood City, CA Current Population: 11

Contact Person: Cris Morales Annual Population: NA

Phone Number: 650 361 8656 Average Population: 14

Date of this Inspection: 2/20/2014

Date of Last Inspection: 9/10/2012

Commission Inspection Team: Moneisa Carson, Gurjeet Chalal and Susan Swope

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge: Susan Irene Etezadi

Major Concerns, Observations, and Recommendations

The inspectors all were very impressed with the program. We did note that the flooring in the residential building common areas, halls, and kitchen was worn, cracked and chipped. We would recommend that it be replaced, perhaps with an inexpensive bamboo wood, or simulated wood flooring to give those areas a more inviting and homelike feel and so that they can be kept demonstrably clean.

More importantly, there is not Health Department Inspection report, which is required annually for facilities housing more than six youth.

Fire Inspection Report: Yes No Date: 2/10/2014

Health Department Report: Yes No Date: _____

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Miscellaneous: There is no health department inspection report. They do have a Food Program Inspection Report from San Mateo County Environmental Health that notes deteriorating flooring around the refrigeration and pantry areas.

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: To provide substance abuse, trauma, and mental health treatment depending on the individual client's needs

Type of operating license: Level 12 Group Home CCL

License number: 410508628 and 4156002090

Most recent licensing inspection: About 7 months ago (June 2013)

Rating level: 12

Target population of juveniles: Adolescents

Age range of juveniles: 12 to 18 (rarely do they have any under 13)

Juveniles' home counties: San Mateo, Sonoma, Fan Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Alameda. They have had some from Southern California and from other states.

Pre-Plan for Emergencies: Yes No Date of Last Drill: 1/24/2014

Comments: They have to do all their drills at least once per quarter. They have emergency plans and drill for fire, emergencies, shooters, e.g.

Staffing

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Describe staff specialties: They have mental health clinicians with Masters and Ph.D.s, behavior health with Bas and field experience, Certified alcohol and drug counselors (CADAC), plus administrative staff and an intake coordinator.

Describe staff including numbers, background, ethnicity, language: They have a total of 20-25 staff members, including on-call staff. They are white, Hispanic, African American , South Sea Islanders (Tongan), and Native Americans. A number of them speak Spanish.

Educational requirements for Staff: Clinical staff must have an M.S.; psychologists must be licensed. They night manager has 10 years experience. Overnight staff have at least 3 years experience.

Training provided for staff: Staff receive regular in-service training by Managers, the Director or people from outside. They require 24 hours of training for each staff member per year. It's an CCL requirement.

Staff to minor ratio: Awake 8:1 Sleeping 10:1

How is staff backup handled during grave-yard shift?: A clinician, mental health or behavioral professional is always on call.

Describe staff turnover, including frequency and reason: Turnover for full-time staff is very low. They tend to stay from 4 to 16 years. Most part time (on call) staff are going to school, have other jobs, or ar looking for full time work and leave when they get it. Interns generally stay six months to a year.

Describe general staff and minor interactions: It is open, professional, friendly. There is a fine balance between maintaining a human and a professional relationship.

Comments: _____

Conditions of Grounds and Building Exterior

Give a general description of the property: There are several buildings. There are administrative offices in a small house facing Woodside Rd., A larger residential building has dorm rooms set up for 2 or 3 residents, a kitchen, 2 restrooms with showers, and a common area for dining and recreation. There are two smaller trailer-type buildings with offices. There is a two-story school in a separate building, with the boys' classroom on the first floor and the girls' on the second floor. There is also a separate apartment that the girls currently use for their recreation, although they sleep in the main dorm building. There is a hard-top, open-space courtyard behind the administration building and between the residential building and the trailer-based offices. At the back of the property is a large open area with BBQ area, half basketball court and a grassy area for recreation.

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

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The sleeping rooms looked comfortable and homey, with residents' "decorating touches." The floors are worn black and white linoleum set in a checkerboard pattern throughout. It would make a huge difference if the flooring were a hardwood look. The kitchen floors definitely need replacing and the common room would be much more inviting with some redecoration and refurbishing.

Lawns: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Playing Fields: Acceptable Unacceptable: ½ Court basketball

Blacktop: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Paint: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Roof: Acceptable Unacceptable: Looking at it from ground level

Drains and Gutters: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

General Appearance: Acceptable Unacceptable: With exception of flooring

Condition of Interior of Building

Walls: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Paint: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Floors: Acceptable Unacceptable: Tile is chipped and cracked. Should be replaced.

Ceilings: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Drains: Acceptable Unacceptable: Did not check

Plumbing Fixtures: Acceptable Unacceptable: Did not check

Air Vents/Heating/Windows: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Smoke Alarms: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

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

Recreation/Sports Equipment: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Hallways Clear/Doors Propped Open: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Sleeping Rooms: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

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Beds Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

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

Graffiti Present: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____ None observed

Ample Blankets: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Study Area: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Adequate Lighting: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____ Common room seemed to have low light.

Temperature: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Orientation of Minors

What is the intake process for the facility? It depends on the referring agency, whether it's Probation or Social Services. If the client goes to court and is assigned to OCG, the referring party contacts OCG's intake person and send information on the client to OCG to review. They have some exclusionary criteria. If the client is appropriate, they accept them. If the client is a Kaiser patient, they have outpatient CDRP programs that they are sent to first. If the client fails in the outpatient program the parent can ask for inpatient setting. The admission process is the same.

Are minors oriented to the house rules and procedures?: Yes No Explain: They have a welcome interview when the rules are reviewed and agreed to and the new client is assigned a Bib Brother or Sister from among current clients who are doing well. They also have a particular staff member who tired to get to know them. The resident mentor orients them for the next three days.

Are house rules and grievance procedures posted?: Yes No Explain: They are on the bulletin board, the Community Board. The resident also gets an orientation packet that has their rights, the grievance and other policies.

What is in place to ensure that these rules and procedures are understood by minors?: A system of peer-oriented accountability. They use the therapeutic treatment model. They book each other for breaking rules each evening during the wrap up. The staff goes through the bookings. They hold each other accountable every day. If one client gets booked for the same thing frequently, staff uses a learning experience. If the behavior continues, the client's counselor is made aware of it.

Are clothing and possessions inventoried on arrival and departure? How are juvenile's clothing and possessions protected or stored? Yes. The staff member and the client sign off on the inventory. Clients store their belongings in their rooms. They have a safe in the office for valuables.

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Interviewed Minors: Yes No Details: We spoke with one minor, who was happy with the peer-run program. He said it has helped him learn to deal with people. He said that staff don't usually step in. He said the food was good, although he would like more variety. He said the rules used to be stricter and he liked that better. There aren't as many long-time residents there right now. He especially appreciates that they facilitate special visits for him with his little brother who is in foster care.

Meals/Nutrition

Kitchen: Acceptable Unacceptable: We were there right after dinner. The kitchen probably looked messy because the youth had not yet cleaned up. However, the floor in the kitchen looked worn and cracked with parts of tiles missing and it should be replaced.

Do the youth share in preparation of meals?: Yes No Details: On the weekends. There is a cook who prepares meals Monday through Friday.

Are meals served family style?: Yes No Details: There is a steam table in the dining room where some residents serve the others.

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: On the refrigerator in the kitchen, which is open to the residents.

Are servings ample, nutritious, appetizing?: Yes No Details: The cook gets feedback from the residents and works with them to provide food they will like.

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

Our guide has never seen a resident even attempt to take food from another in 10 years. Youth can have seconds if they want, so there's no reason to try to take another's food.

Are snacks and beverages available?: Yes No Details: They are required to provide three snacks a day. They have fresh fruit available for residents 24/7.

How do you meet special nutritional needs? The cook is made aware of any special needs— allergies, diabetes, etc.

Length of time allowed to eat?: 30 minutes. Servers get more time.

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

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Breakfast: M-F at 7 am Lunch: 1210-110 Dinner: 5:15-5:45 or 5:30-6

Weekends vary. With breakfast at 8 on Saturday and Brunch from 11 to 11:30 am on Sunday.

Comments: _____

Personal Appearance of Minor

Appearance: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Showers (frequency, privacy, supervised): Acceptable Unacceptable: There are two individual shower stalls. Residents can sign up for the time slot they want for 15 minutes either in the morning or the evening.

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

Clothing appropriate to current weather: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Comments: _____

Programs

Recreation (type, amount, etc.): Acceptable Unacceptable: They have video games, basketball, volleyball, football, soccer ball, weights. They go to the YMCA on Hudson twice a week and have 60-90 minutes to swim. They have hikes and other outings on the weekends.

Exercise (daily schedule, amount, etc.): Acceptable Unacceptable: They have physical recreation daily. PE isn't required. They have time for walks.

Access to Religious Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: If a resident wishes to attend a church service, they will find an appropriate church and facilitate attendance. They also give them time for religious observance on site if they wish.

Access to Medical Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: Their staff medical liaison sets up appointments locally or with the resident's family doctor. Any medications are self-administered.

Access to Mental Health Services: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Individual Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: Weekly or every other week, more if needed

Group Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: 10 groups available each week. They are required to attend one every day.

Substance Abuse Counseling: Acceptable Unacceptable: Available if needed

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Victim Awareness Classes: Acceptable Unacceptable: Incorporate in group when appropriate.

Gang Awareness Classes: Yes No Details: When needed

Sexual Harassment Classes: Yes No Details: Incorporated in group when needed

Parenting Classes: Yes No Details: Incorporated in group when needed.

Vocational Classes: Yes No Details: They provide ILSP (Independent Living Services Program) monthly. Some get paid to take life skills classes. They get resume building classes.

Work Program: Yes No Details: Phase 4 helps them find a job.

Other: _____

Discipline of Minors

Describe the discipline process of minors: See section on orientation, page 5

Comments: _____

Grievances

Grievance Process: Acceptable Unacceptable: If a resident has an issue with staff they will first try to solve it in an encounter group. If that doesn't work they will fill out a grievance form for the Program Director who will try to solve the problem. If that doesn't solve it, the grievance is submitted to the Executive Director.

Number of grievances this year: In last 12 months, maybe 5 or 6

Trends and/or Comments: Usually it's against a staff member who held them accountable.

Correspondence / Telephone

Access US Mail?: Yes No Details: _____

Postage Free?: Yes No Details: OCG provides the postage.

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

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Access to Telephone?: Yes No Details: Residents can make calls based on an approved list. Phone calls are private. They are allowed up to 15 minutes per call.

Visiting

Visiting Schedule: Weekdays 6:30-7:30 pm Weekends Sun 1-3 pm Special Events _____

Do all minors have access to visitations?: Yes No Details: Unless prohibited by court order. Visitors' list must be approved by the resident's family therapist.

Under what circumstances would visitation be restricted?: _____

Are visitation logs kept?: Yes No Details: _____

Adequate Space: Acceptable Unacceptable: _____

Staff Supervision: Acceptable Unacceptable: Visual, not within hearing distance.

Privacy Provided: Yes No Details: _____

Games or Activities Provided: Yes No Details: Whatever is always available for the youth. They have lots of board games and puzzles.

School

List the schools your residents attend: School is on site. It is staffed by the Sequoia Unified School District. They also have some outpatient students in the school. There are three teachers.

How is transportation to school provided: NA

Are students able to participate in school-based extra curricular activities?: Activities are on site.

Is tutoring available?: Yes

Adequate Supplies, Books, Paper, Computer?: Each student has his/her own computer

Access to computers/Internet? How is this managed? : They use web-based tools. The teacher's computer controls the students' computer access. The teachers monitor usage. They can see what's on the students' screens and can take control of the student's screen if necessary.

Describe the relationship between school and staff: Relatively strong. They try to communicate frequently among staff and share each other's perceptions of how residents are doing. They also try to establish a healthy relationship with each resident.

Comments: _____

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Comments

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

OCG has Four Inpatient Phases for Its Residents

1. Arrival—orientation, learning the program, its philosophies, dressing and behaving appropriately

2. Self-reflection and therapy

3. Home passes

4. Transition—looking for a job, what's next, performing 20 hours of volunteer work.

Signature of Commissioner(s) preparing this report:

Susan Swope

Date: 19 March 2014

Moneisa Carson

Date: 19 March 2014

Gurjeet Chalal

Date: 19 March 2014