

**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
OFFICE OF JUVENILE SYSTEM OVERSIGHT**

Name and Location of Facility: Cookson Hills Christian Ministries
Kansas, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: April 16, 2008

Oversight Reviewer: Cliff A. Aldridge, Oversight Specialist

Focus of Visit: Routine Announced Visit

Date: July 21, 2008

Introduction

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted a routine, announced visit at the Cookson Hills Christian Ministries (CHCM) on April 16, 2008. The program was licensed for 160 residents by the division of Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS) of the Department of Human Services (DHS). The CHCM was also licensed as a child placing agency.

The CHCM is a small community with a population of approximately 175, including staff members, children of staff members, retirees, and placed children. Approximately 50 buildings comprise the physical plant. The facility features its own school. The facility provides housing for staff members who provide residential care or foster care, other staff members employed on the campus, and retired staff. On the day of the OJSO visit, the facility had 48 children in placement. Twenty-nine of the children were in residential child care homes; the rest were in foster care homes with staff members, in facility housing on the campus. The program accepts children for private placement, from kindergarten-age through the twelfth grade, including sibling groups. Thirty-one staff member children resided on campus with their parents and attended the school. Foster care children and staff children were not included in the reviews or interviews.

Interviews Conducted

- Initial entry conference with a social worker
- Entry and exit conferences with the Executive Director
- Five residents
- Four houseparents

Documents Reviewed

- Case records on two residents
- Personnel files of two houseparent couples

- Residential Child Care Facility License #K85000020
- Child Placing Agency License # K86000115
- Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal inspection report of July 18, 2006
- Oklahoma State Department of Health inspection report of September 26, 2007
- DHS OCCS inspection report of April 18, 2008

Areas Toured

- Three of the six occupied residential cottages
- Main dining hall on the southern part of the campus

Findings

Five residents, ranging from nine to fifteen years of age, were interviewed relative to their residential care, quality of life, and participation in program services. Four individual houseparents, representing four of the cottages, were interviewed relative to residential care practices, use of discipline, and their training for compliance with established responsibilities. No issues of concern were identified from the interviews.

Two resident files were reviewed for compliance with established responsibilities. Both files were complete and current for all of the materials reviewed on the day of the visit. The personnel and training files of both members of two houseparent couples were reviewed. Both files were complete for all of the personnel and training items reviewed.

The CHCM is situated on 1,000 acres along Highway 10. The school buildings are centrally located, with residential cottages and foster homes primarily located either on the southern or northern parts of the campus. The southern part of the campus was referred to as the "80," and the northern part was referred to as the "920." Separate kitchen/dining facilities on the north and the south served meals to residents, residential staff, and other designated staff. The houseparents, their families, and the residents of each cottage ate meals together at their own table as a family. The OJSO joined staff and residents for the noon meal in the 80 dining hall. The kitchen was toured. Three of the four residential cottages on the southern part of the campus were toured. No issues were identified from the tour of the kitchen or cottages.

Summary

On the day of the OJSO visit, the Cookson Hills Christian Ministries appeared to be operating in compliance with its established responsibilities. The OJSO appreciated the helpfulness of the administration and staff for arranging the interviews, providing the necessary materials for review, and conducting the tour of the cottages.

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