

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

Name and Location of Facility: Oaks Indian Mission
Oaks, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: December 7, 2006

Oversight Reviewer: Cliff A. Aldridge, Oversight Specialist

Subject: Announced Visit, 2006

Date: February 15, 2007

General Information

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an announced visit on December 7, 2006, to the Oaks Indian Mission, located in Oaks, Oklahoma. The purposes of the visit were to assess compliance with established responsibilities and facility policy and procedures and to investigate the allegations of complaints regarding the facility. The Oaks is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and serves children of Native American ancestry. The facility was licensed for fifty-eight residents by the Division of Child Care of the Department of Human Services (DHS). On the day of the OJSO visit, the census was twenty-nine.

Persons Interviewed

- Entry interview with the managing director
- Brief entry interview with the attorney for the board of directors
- Four residents
- Four houseparents
- Exit briefing with the managing director and the attorney for the board of directors

Documentation Reviewed

- Case records on two residents
- Personnel files of two houseparents
- DHS Division of Child Care inspection report of August 18, 2006
- Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal inspection report of August 16, 2005
- Oklahoma State Department of Health inspection report of August 11, 2005
- DHS Residential Child Care Facility License, No. K8500024
- Staff and resident cottage assignment roster

Areas Toured

- Four residential cottages in use at the time of the visit

Overview

Interviews

The OJSO discussed complaints made to the OJSO regarding allegations of staff behavior at the facility. One of the complaints was referred to and investigated by the DHS Office of Client Advocacy (OCA). The OCA made a finding of Caretaker Misconduct but did not make a finding of abuse. The allegations in two of the complaints were referred to and were investigated by the DHS Division of Child Care. The Division of Child Care did not find violations of the licensing standards. Law enforcement was involved in the fourth complaint but did not make an arrest.

After discussing each complaint, the managing director was advised the OJSO would close the complaints as of the visit. In each instance, findings of violations of established responsibilities were not determined by the OJSO.

The OJSO interviewed one resident from each of the four cottages. Each of the residents gave favorable responses to the interview questions about the care they received from the houseparents and their regular participation in program activities. No concerns were identified from the resident interviews.

One of the houseparents from each of the four occupied residential cottages was interviewed relative to program services and the care the children received. Each of the four staff members indicated they were conscientious about working with the residents; however, the houseparents complained about other houseparents. The OJSO reviewer had concerns with the conflicts between the sets of houseparents and discussed the concerns in the exit conference.

The attorney for the board of directors was present on the day of the visit. He had been in the role of "team leader" and working at the facility one to two days a week.

Documentation Reviews

Both of the resident case records were complete and current for the items reviewed on the day of the visit. The personnel files of two houseparents were reviewed for hiring and training requirements. The files were complete for the items reviewed. The DHS Division of Child Care's inspection report noted physical plant deficiencies that were addressed in a letter of correction dated September 15, 2006.

Observational Tour

The four cottages in use at the time of the visit were toured. On the day of the OJSO visit, the cottages and the outside play areas were clean and were well-maintained. Bleach and tile cleaner were unsecured in one cottage, and an extension cord was being used in another cottage. The managing director gave instructions for both items to be corrected during the visit. No other issues of concern were identified from the tour.

Summary

The OJSO appreciated the helpfulness of the administration and the staff in arranging the interviews, conducting the inspection tour, and providing the necessary materials for the reviews.

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