

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

Name and Location of Facility: Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center
Manitou, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: November 29, 2006

Oversight Reviewers: Ellen Harwell, April Simmons, and Sara Vincent-Spain, Oversight Specialists, and Mark James, PARB Coordinator

Focus of Visit: Biannual Unannounced Visit, 2006

Date: May 8, 2007

General Information

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted a routine, unannounced visit on November 29, 2006, at the Southwest Oklahoma Juvenile Center (SWOJC), located in Manitou, Oklahoma. The facility is a medium-secure training school that receives juveniles who are adjudicated Delinquent and are in the custody of the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). The focus of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities.

Persons Interviewed

- Entry interview and an exit conference with administrative staff
- Twelve residents
- Six staff members

Documentation Reviewed

- Files on four residents
- Five personnel files
- Facility policy and procedures
- Office of Juvenile Affairs Rules
- American Correctional Association (ACA) Standards
- Most recent inspection reports by the Oklahoma State Department of Health, the Division of Child Care of the Department of Human Services, and the Office of the Oklahoma State Fire Marshal

Areas Toured

- Entire facility

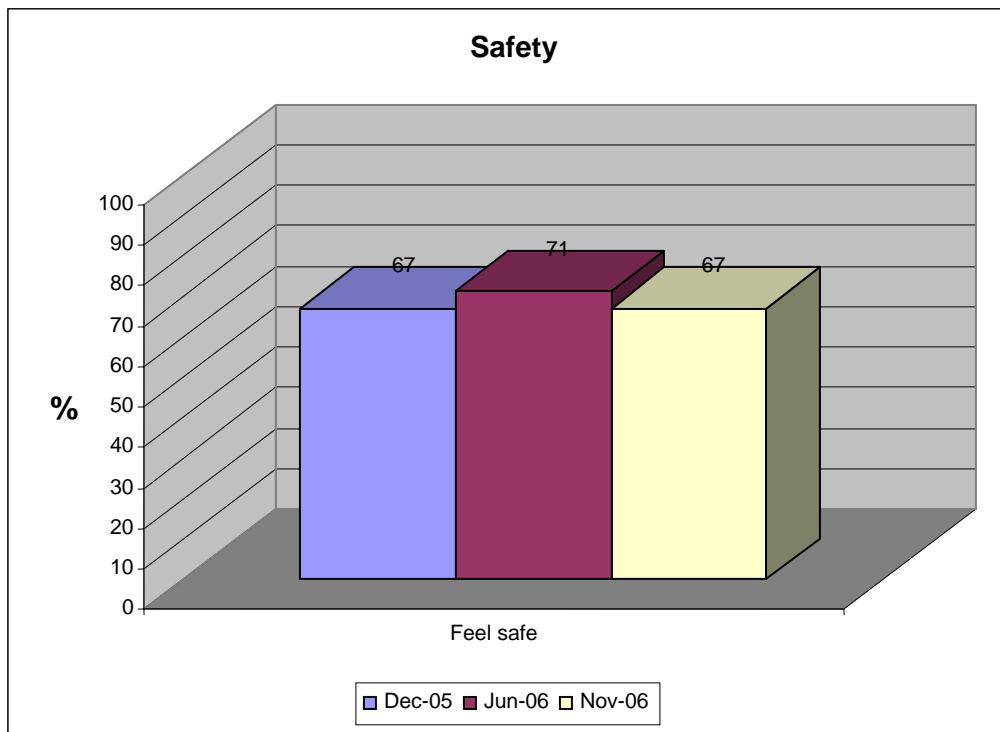
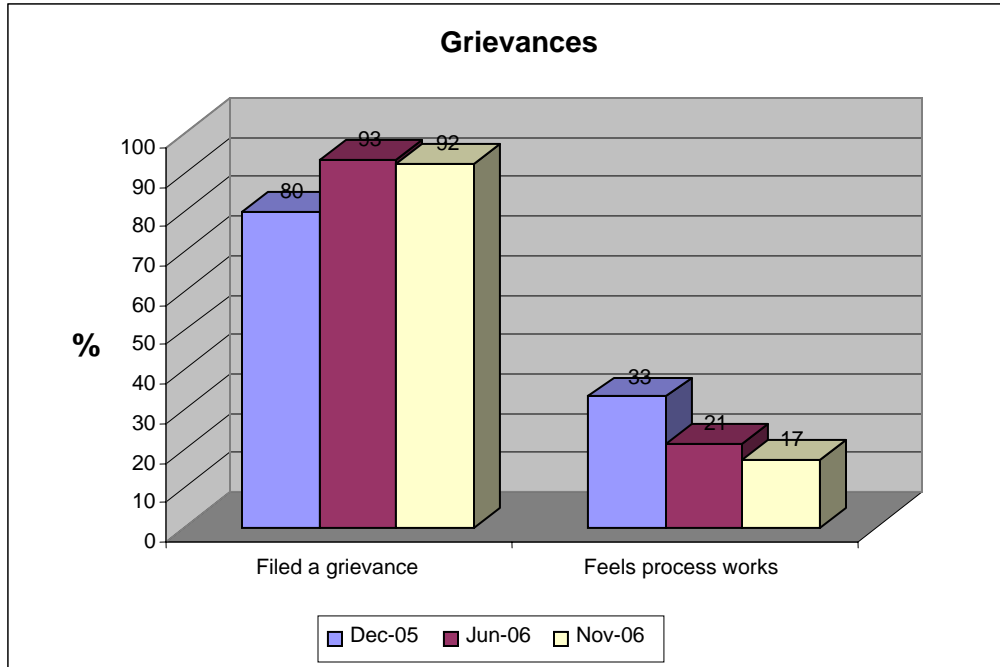
Overview

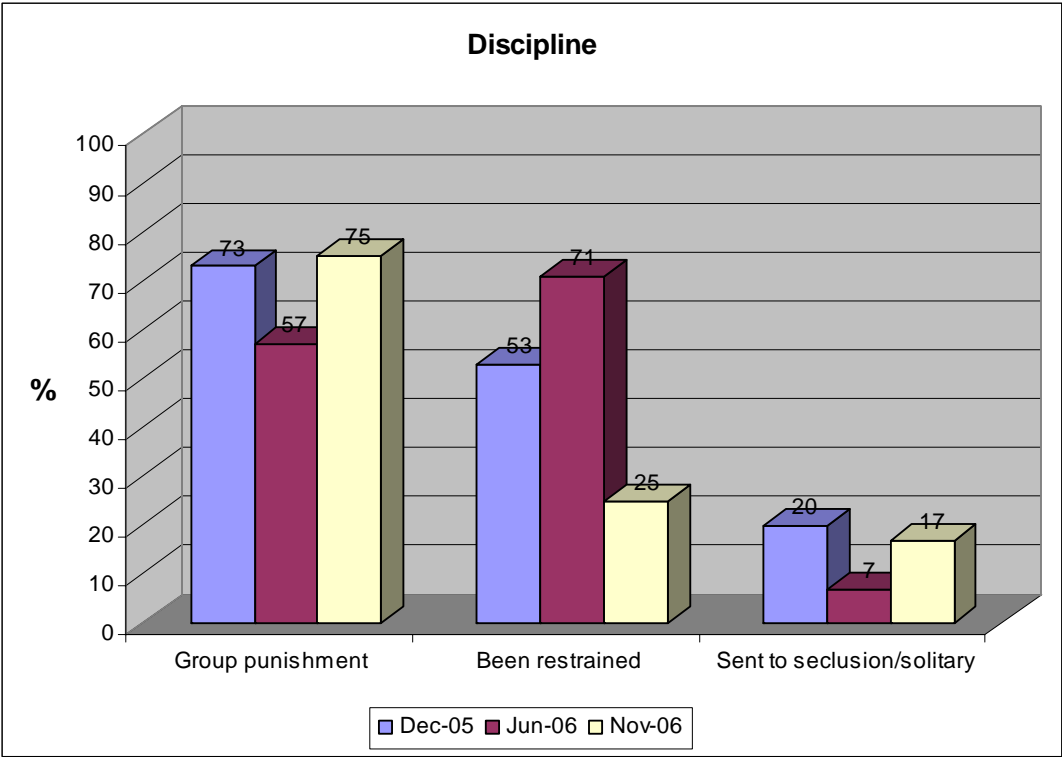
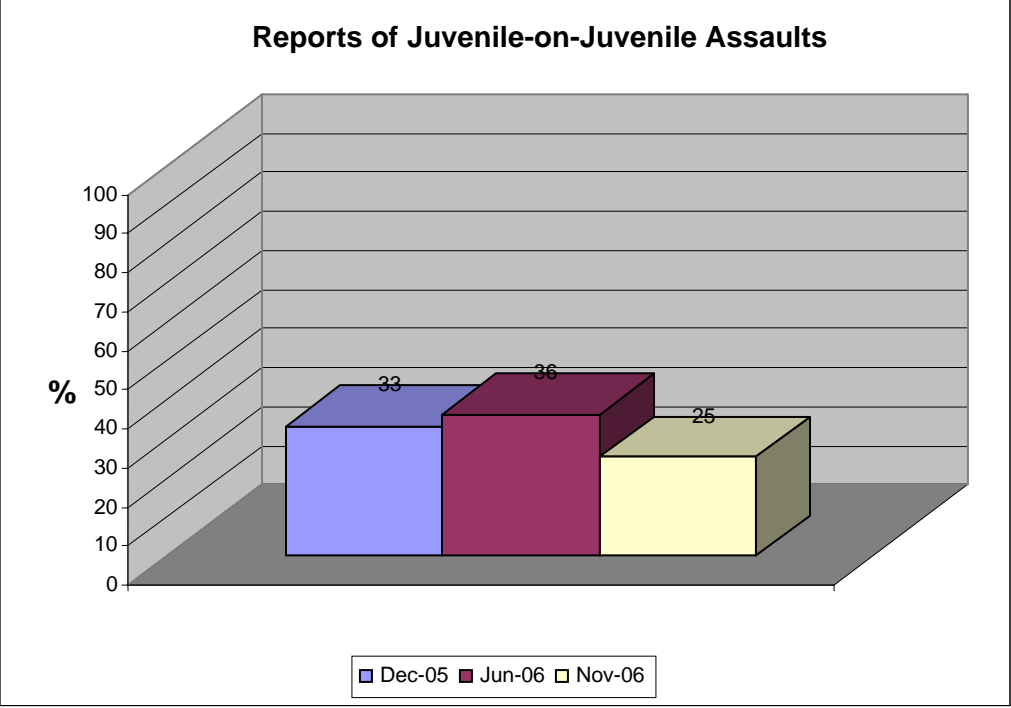
Resident Interviews

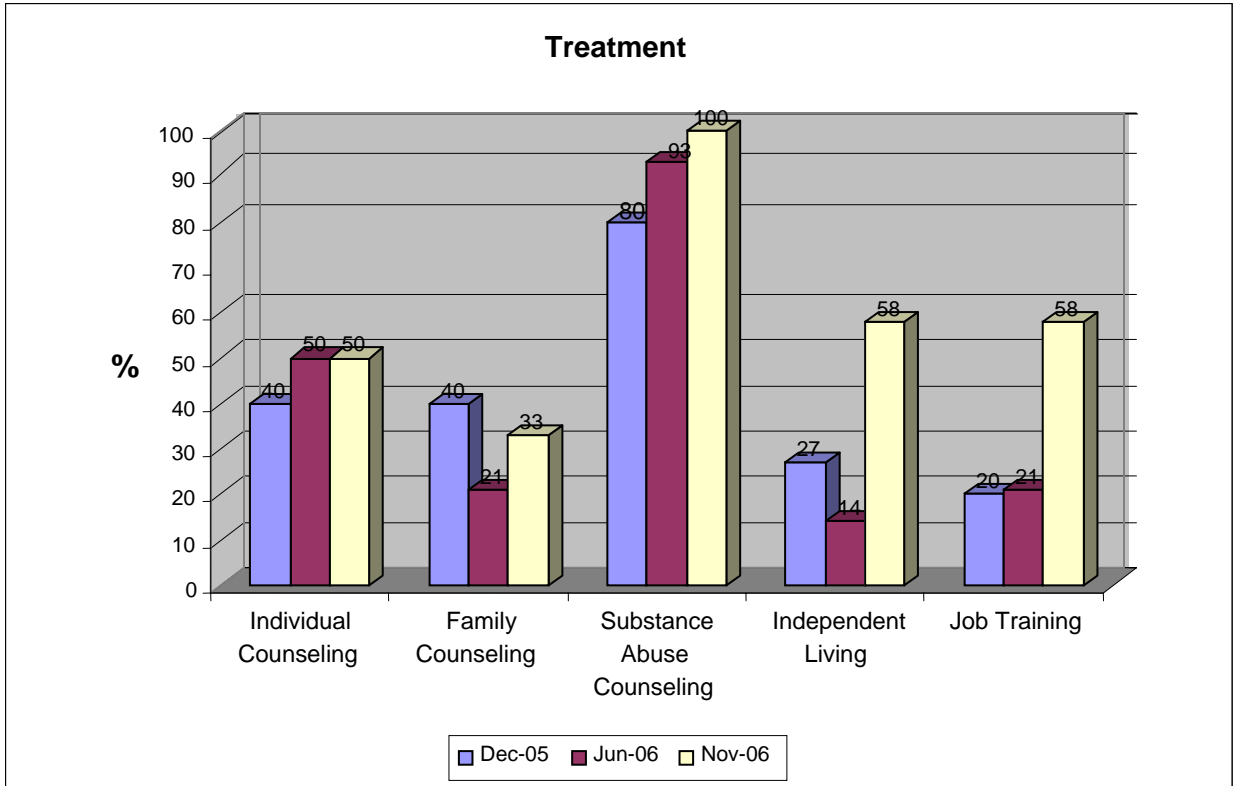
The OJSO interviewed twelve residents to assess their perceptions of safety, program services, the rights of residents, discipline practices, and other residential issues. The residents were randomly selected. The average age of the residents interviewed was 17.2 as compared to 16.9 during the previous oversight visit. Eleven of the twelve residents were seventeen years of age or older. Oklahoma County was the highest reported home county (4 of 12). Lengths of stay ranged from three months to two years. Three residents reported prior placement at an OJA-contracted Level E group home. Two residents reported previous placements at another medium-secure facility; both reported preferring SWOJC. The OJSO noted:

- All residents interviewed reported receiving a copy of the Resident's Rights and written notification of pertinent facility policies.
- Seventy-five percent (9 of 12) reported that program information and rules were explained upon admission.
- All stated that the teachers were helpful at school.
- Eighty-three percent (10 of 12) stated they received enough food.
- Fifty percent (6 of 12) rated the quality of the food as 2, and the other fifty percent rated the food as 3, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best.
- Seventy-five percent (9 of 12) reported the use of group punishment.
- Twenty-five percent (3 of 12) reported having been physically restrained.
- All reported having individualized treatment plans.
- All reported having had medical and dental examinations.
- Fifty percent (6 of 12) reported receiving individual counseling.
- Thirty-three percent (4 of 12) reported receiving family counseling.
- All reported receiving substance abuse treatment.
- Fifty-eight percent (7 of 12) reported receiving independent living services.
- Fifty-eight percent (7 of 12) reported receiving job training.
- All were able to identify career goals. Fifty-eight percent (7 of 12) reported they had shared their goals with staff members.
- Ninety-two percent (11 of 12) reported having filed a grievance.
- Seventeen percent (2 of 12) stated that the grievance process worked.
- Twenty-five percent (3 of 12) reported having been physically assaulted by other residents.
- Seventeen percent (2 of 12) reported having been physically assaulted by staff members.
- One resident reported having been sexually assaulted by another resident.
- Sixty-seven percent (8 of 12) reported feeling safe at the facility.

The following graphs show the differences in residents' reports for oversight visits in December 2005, June 2006, and November 2006.







Staff Interviews

Six staff members were interviewed. The interview questions pertained to staff members' perceptions of program services, the rights of residents, discipline policies, and other residential issues. Five of the six interviewees had been employed at the facility for at least a year and a half. Five staff members reported high school as the highest level of education, and one reported currently attending college. The OJSO noted:

- All staff members interviewed reported having been involved in a restraint.
- Fifty percent (3 of 6) reported having been injured in a restraint.
- Sixty-seven percent (4 of 6) reported seeing a staff member injured during a restraint.
- Eighty-three percent (5 of 6) reported seeing a resident injured during a restraint.
- Sixty-seven percent (4 of 6) stated they received enough information about the residents in their care.
- Fifty percent (3 of 6) stated that residents were not allowed additional servings of food.
- All reported a group of residents could not be punished for the actions of a few.
- Sixty-seven percent (4 of 6) believed their input was valued by administrative staff.

- Morale among staff members was rated as low by three interviewees and as medium by two interviewees. The other interviewee stated that morale varied among staff members.
- Morale among residents was rated as low by one interviewee, as medium by three interviewees, and as high by two.

Resident Files

The OJSO reviewed the files on four residents, with a focus on treatment planning. The files reviewed were current in treatment planning and included treatment plan reviews for November 2006. Treatment goals were identified and progress was summarized in the treatment plan reviews. The OJSO noted, however, that discharge planning was minimal and that specific information of requirements or referrals to be made upon release from the facility was not included. No other areas of concerns were noted.

Staff Files

Five staff files were reviewed. No areas of concern were identified by the OJSO.

Grievances

The OJSO reviewed the grievance logs for August, September, and October 2006. The OJSO noted:

August 2006

- Residents had filed 70 grievances. Eighty-one percent (57 of 70) met the three-day timeframe for resolution.
- Eleven grievances were appealed to the superintendent. Twenty-seven percent (3 of 11) met the five-day timeframe for resolution.

September 2006

- Residents had filed 87 grievances. Sixty-three percent (55 of 87) met the three-day timeframe for resolution.
- Ten grievances were appealed to the superintendent. Fifty percent (5 of 5) met the five-day timeframe for resolution.

October 2006

- Residents had filed 107 grievances. Sixty-seven percent (72 of 107) met the three-day timeframe for resolution.
- Twenty-two grievances were appealed to the superintendent. Seventy-seven percent (17 of 22) met the five-day timeframe for resolution.

Observational Tour

The OJSO conducted a tour of the entire facility. Attached is the OJSO Facility Inspection Form completed during the tour.

Summary

The residents interviewed could identify their treatment and career goals; yet, only fifty-eight percent reported they had shared their career goals with staff members. Sixty-seven percent of the residents interviewed reported feeling safe. When residents were asked why they felt safe, the reasons given were: staff members and the openness of the facility. Resident comments regarding ideas for areas of improvement included more staff and more cameras.

Over the last three oversight visits, the number of grievances meeting the three-day timeframe for resolution has ranged from sixty-three percent to eighty-one percent. Office of Juvenile Affairs policy, OAC 377:3-1-28, General grievance procedure, (a), Informal grievances, (5), states, "If the grievance is not resolved within three working days, the juvenile may appeal to the supervisor." The policy does not explicitly state that the staff "shall" meet with the resident within three days; instead, policy states that if the three-day timeframe is not met, the resident has the right to appeal. At the time of the OJSO review, all appealed grievances had been assigned to the facility superintendent. In addition, the same cite, paragraph 6, states, "The supervisor shall have five days from receipt of the grievance to resolve the grievance." Six grievances had been appealed to the facility superintendent for the month of November 2006, with due dates prior to the OJSO visit. Five of the six met the five-day timeframe for resolution.

Finding

1. Seventeen percent (2 of 12) of the residents interviewed reported feeling that the grievance process worked. More recently, appealed grievances to the superintendent had shown improvement in the five-day timeframe for resolution; however, the number of grievances that met the five-day timeframe for resolution was as low as twenty-seven percent during the months reviewed. Office of Juvenile Affairs Rules, OAC 377:3-1-28, General grievance procedure, (a), Informal grievances, (6), states, "The supervisor shall have five days from receipt of the grievance to resolve the grievance."

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