

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

Name and Location of Facility: Thunderbird Youth Academy
Bravo Company
Pryor, Oklahoma

Date of Visit: February 16, 2006

Oversight Reviewer: Cliff A. Aldridge, Oversight Specialist, and Kristal Nicholson, Trainer/Consultant, of the National Resource Center for Youth Services (NRCYS) of the University of Oklahoma

Subject: First 2006 Oversight Visit

Date: October 4, 2006

General Information

The Office of Juvenile System Oversight (OJSO) conducted an unannounced visit on February 16, 2006, of the Thunderbird Youth Academy (TYA), Bravo Company, also known as the Thunderbird Regimented Training Program. The purpose of the visit was to assess compliance with established responsibilities and facility policy and procedures and to investigate a complaint involving caretaker misconduct by staff and a reported riot by residents. The Bravo Company operated through a contract between the Oklahoma Military Department (OMD) and the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) to provide residential placements and treatment for OJA-custody juveniles. On the day of the OJSO visit, Bravo Company's census was twenty-eight.

Persons Interviewed

- Entry interview with the director of Bravo Company
- Six residents
- Two direct care staff members
- Exit de-briefing with the director and several of his staff

Documentation Reviewed

- Case records on two residents and one resident discharged during the cycle
- Training records and personnel files of two direct care staff members
- Cadet roster

- Inspection report, dated January 6, 2006, by the Division of Child Care of the Department of Human Services (DHS)
- DHS Residential Child Care Facility License
- DHS Office of Client Advocacy (OCA) referral logs
- OCA investigation report
- OMD incident reports
- Inspection report, dated October 26, 2005, by the Oklahoma State Department of Health

Areas Toured

- Residential area for females
- Residential area for males

Overview

Interviews

Six of the residents were interviewed relative to their participation in program activities, their perception of the staff, and their residential care. No consistent themes of concern were identified from the resident interviews.

The two staff members interviewed demonstrated familiarity with facility policies and reported receiving training in compliance with the OJA regimented juvenile training program (RJTP) and DHS licensing standards. No concerns were noted from the staff interviews.

File Reviews

The case records on two residents were reviewed for compliance with DHS licensing standards, RJTP standards, and American Correctional Association standards. Both files were complete for admission documentation requirements. The service plan of one resident was not signed by the custodian of the child and did not document the reason for the non-availability of the custodian. The Grand Staffing Report for the resident documented a discharge plan; however, the discharge plan was not documented on the service plan. The service plan in the other file was not signed by the custodian or the resident. The OJSO recommended that separate signature lines be added to the initial service plans and the service plan reviews for the OJA caseworkers and the parents.

The personnel files and training records of two staff members were reviewed for compliance with DHS licensing standards and OJA RJTP standards. One of the files was complete for required documentation. The other file was of a new employee hired at the beginning of the month. The new employment documentation was complete except for three pre-employment references. The file documented ongoing orientation for the new employee.

The DHS Division of Child Care's inspection report of January 20, 2006, documented only minor physical plant deficiencies that were to be corrected by immediate submission of work orders to the maintenance department. The report noted that the DHS Division of Child Care would request a fire inspection.

Observational Tour

The male and female residential quarters were toured. The accommodations appeared to be clean and were sparsely furnished but adequately maintained. No issues were identified from the tour.

Complaint Investigation

The report of caretaker misconduct had been referred to the DHS OCA for investigation. The OJSO has reviewed the findings of the OCA investigations and the corrective actions taken by the facility. No further concerns were noted. The report of a resident riot was reviewed by the facility in disciplinary board hearings. The OJSO reviewed the corrective actions and report of the hearings. No further concerns were noted.

Findings

1. The service plan for one resident was not signed by the custodian of the child and did not document the reason for the non-availability of the custodian as required. The Grand Staffing Report for the resident documented a discharge plan; however the discharge plan was not documented on the service plan as required. The service plan in the other file was not signed by the custodian or the resident. Department of Human Services licensing standards, Section 154, Social Services, (b), Service planning, (1), Comprehensive service plan, (A), and (B), (iv) and (vi), states, "The facility involves the resident and parents or custodian in the development of the service plan. If the parents or custodian do not participate in the development of the service plan, the reason for non-participation is documented in the service plan. The service plan identifies and includes goals and anticipated plans for discharge [and] the names and signatures, with the date, of those participating in developing the service plan."
2. The file of the new employee did not document three pre-employment references as required by DHS licensing standards, Section 153.1, Personnel, (g), Employment requirements, (1), References, (B), states, "The facility obtains a minimum of three references for all staff prior to employment. Copies of references are maintained in the employee's personnel record."

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