

Sonoma County Juvenile Justice Commission Group Home Inspection Report

Facility Name:	TLC Coast House
Address:	On File
Phone	On File
Contact Person	Andy Day/Lyz Moneckel

J.J.C. Inspector(s)	Jane Person, Cathy Brooks
Date of Inspection	August 3, 2016
Date of Last Inspection	July 10, 2015
C.C.L. Contact	Pauline Muntzer
Date of Last C.C.L. Inspection	Last Annual Inspection—March 2013. Last official Contact—June 2014.

**O = Outstanding *S= Satisfactory or exceeds *N.I. = Needs Improvement/corrective*

Action

INSPECTED	O	S	N.I.	Comments
Grounds		X		Rural setting. Barn at back of property. A fence at the rear of the property is still in need of repair that was noted in the last inspection. However, it is not a hindrance nor danger to staff or girls. Brush is cut back to prevent fire. There are the beginnings of a vegetable garden on the large country property.
Building Exterior	X			Well kept building exterior. Large wooden deck with very nice views, picnic table, chairs.
Living Room	X			Large living room was in use by the girls while we were visiting. Girls were watching a movie while they waited to transition from one scheduled activity to the next. One girl was working on a computer. The living room appears bright and cheery with lots of books, games, and videos. The furniture is in good repair.
Kitchen	X			Large kitchen, clean and well maintained, is open to the living room. The kitchen contains three refrigerators—one clearly taped shut and marked as broken—not to be opened or used. It needs servicing—just recently not working. The other refrigerators were full of food, including fruits and vegetables. With permission, the girls may go into the refrigerators. There were fruits on the kitchen counter to be eaten for snacks. Cupboards and drawers are labeled for convenience.
Bedrooms	X			The home is licensed for 10 residents. There are five bedrooms on the ground floor and five on the second floor. Each girl has her own room. Nine girls, ages 14 to 17, are in placement at this time with a new resident expected next week. The bedrooms were comfortable. One of the bedrooms on the first floor has been designed with furniture that is fixed in place. This bedroom has been used with girls who might move a bed in front of a door or throw furniture. However, without being aware of the

			fixed furniture, the room appears no different than the other bedrooms. The residents decorate their own individual bedrooms according to their tastes. Some have wall-to-wall pictures and some have little decoration. All were reasonably neat.
Bathrooms	X		There are four bathrooms. We inspected one that was clean and well organized.
Fire Safety --Extinguishers	X		Fire extinguishers were inspected 4/16.
Fire Safety --Smoke Alarms	X		Observed in all the rooms that were inspected.
Fire Safety --Evacuation Plan	X		One time per month, there is a safety drill. The girls evacuate the house to the front paved driveway.
Food	X		Planned and prepared by staff. One task on the chore board is working in the kitchen. The girls on their respective birthdays pick the meal. One girl about to celebrate her birthday is choosing pizza and cake.
Emergency Supplies	X		Disaster supplies are kept in the barn on the property. The supplies include sleeping bags, tents, and disaster buckets containing among other items—water.
Health Services	X		A physician sees the girls in the first 30 days of placement unless there is a more urgent need. Dental care is provided.
Medications	X		Met Rachael, the medical coordinator, who described the medication process and showed us Coast House's meds security system—a locked file cabinet within a locked room (with an additional an additional locked safe for meds requiring a third level of security). Medications are organized into a folder for each girl. Medications are generally distributed at 8 AM and 8 PM with additional times per need.
Recreation (on site)		X	TV, entertainment center, books, games. There are no outdoor activity or sports areas.
Outings (off site)	X		TLC was preparing for a camping trip. The trip was opened to 8 teenagers from the three houses. Those who wanted to attend applied. No one from Coast House is going on this trip—one girl who applied decided not to go due to work and another girl is not going due to behavior. The girls recently got back from a rafting trip. This summer they also have gone to Six Flags, day hikes, and camping.
Education & Classrooms	X		Most of the girls attend Journey School. One is attending public school. The students at Journey all have IEPs. There is an emphasis on teaching Independent Living Skills at this time.
Mail/Phone			
Discipline	X		When interventions are needed, the staff tries (usually successfully) to deescalate the situation by giving space and then by listening to the teen. There is discussion about alternatives.
Library		X	Books seen on shelf in living room.

Resident Interviews:

Resident Interviews:			
TOPICS			
Evaluation of Program		X	The girl leaving the program would like to have less emphasis on points as she feels it can set up unhealthy competition.
Program Understood	X		Both girls said they understood the program including the teen who had only been placed for a brief time
Levels (Privileges)	X		Understood. One girl is on level 1 and one is on level 3.
Grievances	X		One of the girls spoke about talking through problems with staff.
Discipline	X		Girls seem to like the staff. Outbursts are dealt with through de-escalation, patient listening, and problem solving.
Staff Evaluation			Not discussed.
Counseling/Therapy	X		From Staff: Girls receive counseling at school when it is in session and on site when not. Additionally there are regular group meetings within the house for the residents.
Chores & Allowance	X		The girls said they can earn up to \$15 per week with allowances based on levels and doing extra chores. The girls pointed to a board that listed chores and the individual responsible.
Laundry	X		Laundry room seen but laundry not discussed with girls.
Clothes			Not discussed. But the girls we saw for the interview and in the living room were dressed like most teen girls in Sonoma County. Needs more discussion at next inspection from both the staff and girls to understand how the girls get clothes when they enter the program and how they get clothes they need at other times.
Food		X	One girl would like more food but when questioned said she could have seconds.
Snacks			Fruit for snacks was seen as available. The girls were not asked about snacks.
School		X	The older girl attended and graduated from Journey School. The younger will attend Journey when school resumes in the Fall.
Library			Not discussed.
Activities & Entertainment	X		The girls were observed watching a movie on TV and using the computer in the living room.
Money	X		Girls said they can earn \$4 to \$10 per week based on level and extra chores. "Warm and Fuzzies" are house "money" which is earned by going out of ones way to do something for another. The warm and fuzzies can be used for soft drinks and other small items.

ADDITIONAL NOTES & SUGGESTIONS BY YOUTH

Of Youth Interviewed: 2

Two girls were interviewed together. Both minors had been in multiple placements prior to coming to TLC. One would rather be at home but is ok about being at TLC. She hopes to return home within the year. She maintains contact with her family who visit TLC. The other girl has just graduated from high school and will be leaving TLC soon. She has served as a mentor to girls when they enter placement.

A change one of the girls might like is increased food. Although when asked the girl who brought this to our attention said that she can always get second helpings. The other girl wanted less meat. One girl would like less emphasis on points awarded. She believes it sets up in unintended competition that she does not believe is helpful. The other girl finds the point system helpful.

One just coming into the program felt the other girls and staff were most welcoming and have made her transition easier. She feels that she understands the point system and program. She was assigned a mentor—peer to assist her in the transition to TLC placement.

During this latest inspection, I was able to observe teen girls relaxing between planned activities. The girls seemed genuinely happy. Further the level of “joy in the job” that two staff members projected was impressive. This is a comfortable place with a program that both protects the residents and allows them to grow through clearly defined boundaries and goals and through the behavior of a most patient staff.

The population of the house is of interest. Only two of the nine girls are Sonoma County residents. Four of the nine are products of troubled or failed adoptions. I believe their placements are funded by Aid to Adoption. I do not know if the length of these placements will be governed by AB 403 constraints.

The only thing that I observed which seemed to be missing were outdoor activities on site. However, it seems that many of the summer activities happen outside, just not on Coast House grounds. Additionally there is a garden that the girls could work in if they so desired. Of interest at the next inspection might be what provisions are made for the girls to get exercise both during the summer and during the school year.

ADDENDUM:

TLC received National Reaccreditation in July 2016. Quoting from the Sebastopol times:

Inspection Commissioner

Next Inspection Recommended: _____ **or** _____ **Annual Inspection**

Mary Cone, Commissioner/Report Review

Dennis Ruggiero, Chairperson

cc: Honorable Judge of the Sonoma County Superior Court
Commissioner of the Juvenile Court
Probation Department, Chief of Probation
Sonoma County Family Youth & Children's Services
State of California, Community Care Licensing
Facility Inspected

Revised 7/10/2016