

**Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission  
San Mateo County, California**

**Group Home Inspection**

**Facility Name:** Canyon Oaks Youth Center

**Phone Number:** (650) 839-1810

**Address:** 400 Edmonds Rd, Redwood City, 94062

**Date of Last Inspection:** Sept. 7 & 20, 2022

**Dates of Inspection:** August 23, 2023

**Facility Capacity:** 12 ( 11 since pandemic)

**Annual Population:** Average 9-10

**Population at time of inspection:** 8 youth in residence (4 female/4 male); 1 youth AWOL; all current residents are from San Mateo County; since date of last inspection, all youth have been referred through Special Education/IEP

**Contact Person:** Victoria Valencia, Head of Service, Clinical Services Manager

**Facility Commission Inspection Team:** Monroe Labouisse (Lead), Susan Swope, Karin Huber-Levy

**School Commission Inspection Team:** Melissa Wilson, Whitney Genevro, Wesley Liu

**Presiding Juvenile Court Judge:** Hon. Susan Irene Etezadi

**Facility Overview**

Canyon Oaks Youth Center (COYC) opened in August 2003 as a Level 14 group home. To comply with the policy changes of AB403 (Continuum of Care Reform, 2015), COYC converted to a Short Term Residential Treatment Program (STRTP) facility, receiving their permanent STRTP license on June 1, 2019. COYC is a co-ed facility with 12 beds, located at the Cordilleras site in Redwood City, and operated by the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division of San Mateo County Health. The program serves seriously mentally ill and emotionally disturbed boys and girls, ages 12-18. Serving as an alternative to psychiatric hospitalization for youth in crisis, the program's "crisis beds" are used to stabilize out-of-control, dangerous behaviors so that youth can be returned to the community as quickly as possible. The program also serves the most challenging youth that require out-of-home treatment for a longer period of time. Intensive individualized services are provided to these youth, engaging families as working partners in the treatment process. Youth in COYC can also be AB12 youth (extended foster care). The program is designed to work closely with all levels of service providers within BHRS and the referring agencies of Children and Family Services, Juvenile Probation, and local Special Education Departments, to provide effective and well-integrated services.

Before placement, residents are certified by the County's Interagency Placement Review Committee as youth who require residential treatment services at an STRTP that provides intensive mental health services. The objective of the program is to help youth reduce symptoms, gain stability, and transition into the least restrictive setting in which they can succeed. The typical resident spends one year at Canyon Oaks.

COYC is guided by a program philosophy that provides placement for youth who face serious emotional and behavioral challenges: they strive to ensure that youth are not discharged as a result of their prior or current challenging behaviors. This is referred to as a 'no eject, no reject' philosophy. If the treatment team is unable to meet a youth's needs safely or adequately, a treatment plan is made for the youth to be transferred to a facility that can better meet their needs. A plan is made for a youth to return to COYC once they have been stabilized. The ultimate goal is always to return the youth, in the least amount of time possible, to the least restrictive setting in which they can succeed.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Commendations**

We visited Canyon Oaks Youth Center on August 23, 2023 to interview Victoria Valencia, Head of Service. During our visit we interviewed Ms Valencia, toured the facility, and reviewed key documents.

Our overall impression of the facility is that it is professionally run by a knowledgeable and dedicated staff large enough to present a very favorable staff-to-resident ratio, and that despite the fact that teens in an STRTP setting will often have some complaints, they are generally well cared for and appear to appreciate the team at Canyon Oaks and the services provided to them. The facility is commendable and does a very good job of serving the youth entrusted to their care.

One specific commendation this year is that last year's inspection team's concerns about procurement and the slow pace of repairs being made has mostly been mitigated. The physical condition of the facility is very good, the basketball court has finally been resurfaced, a new generator installed, and repaired tech equipment provided. There are always repairs and replacements that a facility would like to have but can't get immediately, but Canyon Oaks largely seems to have what it needs from the County's procurement department.

### **Concerns & Recommendations**

As stated above, the facility is commendable for the treatment, services and opportunities provided for residents. The physical facility is well maintained and provides a positive, supportive environment for residents. The laundry machines are still in need of upgrading, but a new washer and dryer are on order with BHRS procurement. In the meantime, bed linens and towels are sent out to a commercial service for laundering.

**Other Notes:**

**Access to Youth**

JJDPC Commissioners are permitted to interview and view the records of youth who have been placed at COYC by the court. COYC confirmed that all youth placed at COYC since the date of the 2022 inspection have been referred by their school district. Accordingly, the 2023 inspection team did not have access to youth records or conduct any interviews with youth during this inspection. This was the first year in any Commissioner’s memory that the inspection team had not been able to interview youth who are residents.

**Response to COVID-19 - Update:**

**What were the biggest challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic?** COVID-related restrictions on visitors and day and overnight passes have been lifted. School has also now returned to its pre-pandemic format and is entirely in person. Online education is occasionally used to enhance in-person offerings.

**What protocols and practices have been kept in place?** The facility staff still offers Zoom visits for convenience, however most youth and their families prefer in-person visits, as do staff, for the wellbeing of the residents. All therapy sessions are in person. Staff are no longer required to be masked; youth are not required to wear masks unless they have tested positive for COVID. On site COVID testing (both PCR and rapid) is available. Vaccinations are not mandatory.

**REPORTS**

**Fire Inspection Report:**            ✓ Yes  No            Date: 7/26/2023, satisfactory / no violations  
Comments:

**Resident’s Handbook:**            ✓ Yes  No            Date: no changes since last year  
Comments: Also available in Spanish

**Licensing Inspection:**            ✓ Yes  No            Date: 5/25/2023  
Rating: No deficiencies

**Note:** In addition to reviewing the Fire Inspection Report, the inspection team also reviewed COYC’s “Field Operating Guide for a Temporary Shelter” which lays out in detail the procedures to be followed in the event that COYC needs to be evacuated due to wildfire, earthquake or any other incident that requires evacuation. Commissioners were concerned that because of the location of COYC that it might be especially vulnerable to a wildfire in the area. In the event of wildfire, CalFire is the agency that would “have jurisdiction over the incident scene” and take command of ensuring that the prescribed procedures are followed.

## AREAS REVIEWED

### Quality of Life

- ✓ Physical Buildings
- ✓ Meals/Nutrition
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Physical/Dental Health
- ✓ Religious Services
- Volunteer Involvement
- ✓ Visiting

### Programs

- Education
- ✓ Vocational/Employability
- ✓ Community Service
- ✓ Individual/Group Counseling
- ✓ Substance Abuse
- ✓ Other: Recreation / Field Trips

### Persons Interviewed

- Youth
- ✓ Director
- Youth Supervisor/Staff
- Food Services Staff
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUTH GENERAL INFORMATION

**Target population of youth:** The Mental Health Services at COYC serve emotionally disturbed youth aged 12-18 years old (up to 19 years old if Non-Dependent Minor) who are in residence at the CYOC, Short Term Residential Treatment Program. Youth are referred to COYC by Juvenile Probation, Children & Family Services of San Mateo County, and by school districts throughout San Mateo County per the IEP process. Placement is paid for by the referring school district. Each youth served will have been certified by the County's IPRC (Interagency Placement Review Committee) as requiring residential treatment services at an STRTP facility providing intensive mental health services. Canyon Oaks takes youth whose challenges are appropriate for the type of therapy they provide, which is dialectical behavior therapy. For example, they do not take on youth with intellectual disabilities. Youth need to have at least a 5th grade level reading ability.

All of the youth currently in residence were referred by school districts and their exit will be determined by an IEP team meeting or by a parent or guardian. One youth in residence is on informal probation, referred by a social worker.

**Age range of youth:** 12-19

**Ethnicity of youth:** "Mostly Latinx", per the Head of Service.

**Youths' home counties & number of youth per county:** San Mateo County only, by design, so that youth remain close to their families.

## STAFFING

**Describe staff specialties:** Clinical staff includes two full-time therapists (one is starting end of September 2023), plus an occupational therapist (Tina Jenson) and an art therapist (Pearl Krownauer). In addition, the Head of Service (Victoria Valencia) and Supervisor for Direct Care (Laketha Parker-Rodriguez) are also therapists. There is also a co-occurring AOD therapist (Wesley Kobashigawa). A psychiatrist (Dr Osher) visits the Center two times per week (Wednesdays and Fridays) and is otherwise available as needed by telephone 24/7. BHRS assigns a replacement when Dr Osher is on vacation. Dr Osher is also available to staff, who consult her frequently.

**Describe staff including numbers, background, ethnicity, language:** Staff include a Supervising Mental Health Clinician (1), Mental Health Program Specialist (1), Psychiatric Social Workers/Marriage and Family Therapists (2.5), Creative Arts Therapist (1), Occupational Therapist (1), Psychiatrist (.25), Residential Counselors (19 plus per diem relief staff) and a Medical Office Specialist (1).

The 19 full-time Residential Counselors (RCs) provide care and coaching for residents and provide for their safety. Residential Counselors are the primary caregivers for residents and are on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Canyon Oaks also retains 12-13 'relief' RCs (may have up to 15) who are called on when full-time RCs need to take time off. Canyon Oaks always has at least one bilingual (Spanish-speaking) therapist on staff, and at least 3 of the RCs are bilingual. Regarding ethnicity of staff: 6 of the 19 full-time RCs are LatinX and bilingual; the remaining are biracial or African American/Black. Currently, there are 41 persons on staff at the Center.

**Educational requirements for staff:** All clinicians have at least a Master's degree. RCs are required to have at least a Bachelor's degree, and several have Master's degrees as well.

**Training provided for staff:** All staff receive a minimum of 40 hours of training every year, including the year they're hired, as required for STRTPs. At onboarding, RCs and clinicians receive direct training from more senior staff, e.g., 8 hours of shadowing, in addition to using the Relias online training system (a state-approved system for STRTPs) for start-up training. Ongoing training includes trauma-informed, cultural, suicide prevention, and County-required training. There is also a separate 40 hours (2 ½ days) training (similar structure) for clinicians. Proact Advantage training for hands-on situations includes trauma-informed care, cultural competence, and psychotropic medications. Clinicians also have required training of 36 hours every two years to maintain their license.

### **Staff to Youth Ratio**

**Awake:** RCs are on duty seven days per week: four for the morning shift, and six for the afternoon shift (10am to 6pm). In addition, during weekday work hours, the four staff clinicians/therapists are on site, plus the Head of Services and Supervisor for Direct Care. Teachers rotate in for different subjects during the school day. During the day on weekdays, staff often outnumber clients/youth.

**Sleeping:** Three RCs remain onsite for the overnight shift, seven days a week. One additional shift is being added, with one RC onsite from 5pm to 1am.

**How is staff backup handled during graveyard shift?** The 'relief' RCs are available to backup staff during the grave-yard shift. Several relief RCs prefer working grave-yard shifts. Normally, three RCs are staffed overnight, and even if the facility was at capacity with 12 youth and only two RCs were able to work, the facility would still be in compliance. Clinicians are onsite Monday through Friday.

In addition to RCs, either the Head of Service or Supervisor for Direct Care, both clinicians, are always on call 24/7, including during grave-yard shifts and on weekends to respond in the event that law enforcement must be called on site, e.g., for a 5150 call when a youth is a danger to themselves or others. Only the Head of Service or Supervisor for Direct Care are authorized to call law enforcement.

**Describe staff turnover, including frequency and reason:** There is little to no turnover amongst RCs at Canyon Oaks; most have a tenure of around 15 years. The Head of Service has also been at Canyon Oaks for many years. Staff clinicians turn over more frequently, which the Director described as typical when serving youth like the residents of Canyon Oaks. Staff clinicians tend to be clinicians early in their career who are still working on their licensing, and after a few years at Canyon Oaks, once they are licensed, most move on to other types of clinical work.

**Describe general staff and youth interactions:** We were unable to meaningfully observe staff and youth interactions because of the restrictions on access to youth described above.

#### **CONDITIONS OF BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

**Give a general description of the property:** The building is a one-story structure on the edge of a wooded area on three sides and a fire station and mental health hospital on the road leading up to it. There is a walled court inside the entrance. The building looks neat and maintained from the outside. The interior courtyard contains an area of artificial turf (installed last year), benches and tables, a freshly resurfaced basketball court, and planting boxes. Generally the recreation area looks more inviting than at our visit last year. . There are several small vegetable/flower beds that have been planted and are tended by the residents. Up the hill on the property are storage sheds and a garden in development. The building and property are relatively small, however this is not unreasonable given the small number of youth in residence.

**Give a general description of the main facility including housekeeping and sanitation:** There is a wing that has a lobby, two classrooms and a therapy room. There is a dining room with a connected kitchen and a pass through window at which food is served for pick up by the residents. There is a hall with bedrooms on either side that leads to a living room area furnished with armchairs and bean bag sofas, exercise equipment, a bookcase, large screen TV, and a chalkboard wall. The area with the large screen TV, chalkboard wall, and bean bag sofas includes a memorial area designed by residents to honor a long-time and beloved RC who passed away last year. On the other side of the living room, there is another hall with bedrooms on either side. At the end of that hall is an office for the therapists, a laundry room, a safety room, and a therapy room. A janitor comes in every day Monday through Friday. The facility looked clean and well organized. A generator for power outages has been installed.

**Lawns:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Artificial turf is new.

**Playing Fields:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable. ✓ NA

**Blacktop:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Newly resurfaced

**Paint:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: \_\_\_\_\_

**Roof:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: \_\_\_\_\_

**Drains and Gutters:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: \_\_\_\_\_

**General Appearance:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Condition of Interior of Building**

**Walls:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Paint:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: The interior walls are touched up periodically where needed.

**Floors:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: The carpets are steam cleaned annually, and looked clean and well maintained when we inspected the facility

**Ceilings:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Drains:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Plumbing Fixtures:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Did not observe closely. No issues noticed.

**Air Vents/Heating/Windows:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Did not observe closely. No issues noticed.

**Smoke Alarms:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Did not observe closely. No issues noticed.

**Storage of Cleaning Fluids/Chemicals:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Stored in a locked closet.

**Recreation/Sports Equipment:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Hallways Clear/Doors Propped Open:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Sleeping Rooms:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Either single or double occupancy

**Beds:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: twin beds

**Art, Books, Personal Items Allowed in Rooms:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Youth may decorate their rooms as they wish, however, overtly sexual, violence promoting, gang affiliated decorations, or anything they could use to harm themselves are not permitted.

**Graffiti Present:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: None evident

**Ample Blankets:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Study Area:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Adequate Lighting:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Temperature:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Center has air conditioning and was at a comfortable temperature.

#### PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF YOUTH

**Appearance:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Notwithstanding the restrictions in speaking with youth, we observed several youth during our visit.

**Showers (frequency, privacy, supervised):** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

Youth may shower as often as they like in am, pm, or on request. There are 2 showers and 1 bathtub available. Each youth has a basket of toiletries they can access for use when bathing or showering.

**Condition of clothing (clean, fit, etc.):** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

**Clothing appropriate to current weather:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable:

#### YOUTH ORIENTATION

**What is the intake process for the facility?** The Interagency Placement Review Committee notifies the Head of Service when they have a youth to recommend for admission. The youth's social worker or school guidance counselor provides information about the youth. The Head of Service interviews the youth wherever they are at the time (hospital, YSC, home, school) to get a sense of the child; typically this takes place outside of Canyon Oaks for a first visit. The child would then be brought to Canyon Oaks by the parent, guardian, school counselor, social worker, or probation officer.

**Are youth oriented to the house rules and procedures?** ✓ Yes  No **Explain:** The orientation includes reviewing the house rules and grievance process verbally, providing a copy of the Resident Handbook, and having the youth fill out an orientation questionnaire to see how much they heard and understood.. The referring school district gives a copy of the handbook and orientation packet to the youth's parents before admission.

**Are house rules and grievance procedures posted?** ✓ Yes  No **Explain:** These are posted in the hall.

**What is in place to ensure that these rules and procedures are understood by youth?** Staff go through the handbook with the youth and quiz them on it to be sure they understand. Also, youth are held accountable to rules and procedures through an incentive and phasing system. As residents learn and demonstrate compliance with rules and procedures, they advance through phased levels: 1) Orientation, 2) Learning, 3) Practicing, and 4) Succeeding. With each new phase, youth acquire new privileges. Once they attain a phase, they don't lose it even if they stop behaving in accordance with their level, however, they may temporarily lose certain privileges.

**Are clothing and possessions inventoried on arrival and departure? How are youth's clothing and possessions protected or stored?** Youth wear their own clothes. Staff inventories everything at orientation, and takes away anything that could be used for self harm or is inappropriate, e.g., overly revealing. They also do not allow anything gang-related, including gang colors, if the youth has gang orders from the court. Youth cannot keep a mobile phone unless they need it for a job. Clothing and possession inventories are updated upon return from each day or overnight pass. If appropriate for their development level, youth may have a lockbox in their room to safely store their possessions.

**Pre-Plan for Emergencies:**  Yes  No **Date of Last Drill:** unknown

**Interviewed Youth:**  Yes  No

## MEALS/NUTRITION

**Kitchen:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Food, including raw ingredients and prepared items are supplied by Sysco Foodservices (primary) and BiRite Foodservices, who deliver food to the hospital, where food is prepared and then frozen or refrigerated. Food is then transported to San Mateo Medical Center (5-10 minutes transport) and then delivered on to COYC. Menus for COYC are approved for nutritional content by the head dietician at San Mateo Medical Center, Nutrition Services. A dedicated dietician (Sharon Woo) visits bi-weekly and regularly audits the kitchen. She attends staff meetings and has introduced "Chef's Choice" to expose residents to different cultural food offerings. She arranged a coffee tasting last week.

**Do the youth share in preparation of meals?**  Yes  No: Youth will occasionally cook during the holidays and at breakfast on weekends. Ms Jensen also does a cooking program with older teens.

**Are meals served family style?**  Yes  No: Youth come to the window between the kitchen and dining room to pick up their plated meal. They have a choice of the scheduled menu or an alternate.

**Are youth permitted to converse during meals?**  Yes  No:

**Are staff present and supervising during meals?**  Yes  No:

**Are weekly menus posted?**  Yes  No: In accordance with regulations, each menu must be posted for 3 weeks. A month's worth of menus is posted in the dining room next to the kitchen door.

**Are servings ample, nutritious, appetizing?** ✓ Yes  No: We did not closely observe a meal, but are unaware of any issues with meals. All meals are created by a nutritionist to meet all dietary requirements.

**Weaker youth protected from having food taken from them?** ✓ Yes  No: This is not a problem.

**Are snacks and beverages available?** ✓ Yes  No: AT 7:30 am, 10:10 am, 12:10 pm, 2:30 pm, 5 pm, and 8 pm. Youth can purchase snacks with points they've earned. They just ask the staff. Snacks they can choose are in a closet in the dining room (small mall). Fruit is available all day long.

**How does the facility meet special nutritional needs?**

When a special need is identified, e.g., diabetic, vegan, appropriate meals are prepared as needed.

**Length of time allowed to eat?** Up to an hour. They can be at dinner as long as they want.

**Mealtimes** (no more than 4 hours between meals, breakfast to dinner, without a snack - meals are also available from staff on a flexible schedule to accommodate activities and individual needs). A chef is onsite from 7am to 2pm.

**Breakfast:** 9-10:30 am summer/ 7:30-8:45 school year **Lunch:** 12:10 - 2:30 pm summer/12:20 PM school year **Dinner:** 5 pm all year (unless they are off-site)

**MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH**

**Access to Medical and Dental Services:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: Each youth has a physical within 30 days of admission. They can choose to go to their own doctors if they have one. Otherwise they are taken to the teen medical clinic in San Mateo.

**Access to Mental Health Services:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: The most common mental conditions of the residents are depression, anxiety, PTSD, and trauma. Some have bipolar, other psychotic disorders. Clinicians check in with them all the time. They have meals with them. They check in with the school teachers every other week to see how they are doing academically. Individual and family therapy are provided.

**Individual Counseling:** ✓ Acceptable  Unacceptable: The trauma-informed psychosocial skills-based/therapeutic attachment model focuses on increasing each resident's ability to form and sustain more gratifying and supportive relationships within the program, their family, and the greater community. Through the development of an individualized, strength-based, family-centered *Needs Appraisal and Service Plan*, the program facilitates acquiring skills necessary for youth to reunite with their family or move to a less restrictive setting/lower level of care.

Each youth is provided with a minimum of one hour of individual psychotherapy per week and one hour of family therapy per week. Additional psychotherapy sessions are offered as needed depending on emergent needs and phase of treatment, reflective of the youth's needs as indicated in their *Needs Appraisal and Services Plan* and their BHRS treatment plan.

**Group Counseling:** ✓ Acceptable □ Unacceptable: Dialectical Behavioral Therapy groups are offered 3 days/week, focusing on the acquisition and generalization of dialectical behavioral skills to improve functioning in areas of mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal effectiveness. The goal is to learn to reduce self-harmful behavior, interpersonal conflicts, emotional lability, impulsivity and aggression. They have two groups by age: one for 12- to 14-year olds, the other for 15- to 18-year olds. Groups meet twice a week for 90 minutes. They have art therapy twice a week for 45 minutes and occupational therapy three times a week for 45 minutes.

**Substance Abuse Counseling:** ✓ Acceptable □ Unacceptable: The AOD Counselor (half-time) provides counseling from Monday through Thursday at 4pm-8pm and Friday at 9am to 1pm. AOD counseling is also integrated with individual counseling therapy. If youth in residence are in need of it, AA groups are brought onsite, or youth may attend sessions with an outside group.

## **PROGRAMS**

**Recreation (type, amount, etc.):** ✓ Acceptable □ Unacceptable: There is a weekly trip to Square Pegs, a local ranch in Half Moon Bay, for equine therapy (two sessions: a.m. for up to two residents; p.m for up to 4 residents). There are therapeutic walks. The facility has completed a contract to provide access to programs at the Riekes Center for Human Advancement in Menlo Park. Residents also go to museums, parks, and movies. For example, youth went to Great America last week, and a trip to the Marine Center in Sausalito was planned for the upcoming week. COYC also have a free membership to the Exploratorium. Youth are also permitted to go home whenever they choose; some return home for visits several times per week.

**Exercise (daily schedule, amount, etc.):** ✓ Acceptable □ Unacceptable: They have PE at school. Other than that, any exercise is voluntary. They have exercise activities with staff and one RC is a body builder.

**Access to Religious Services:** ✓ Acceptable □ Unacceptable: Access is on request. They will take youth to services, they may attend with their parents, or online services are also an option. There have been no requests in the past year.

**Victim Awareness Classes:** □ Yes ✓ No: This is not relevant to this population. Youth at COYC who are at risk for trafficking are identified for Rape/Trauma Services and will have a team assigned to work with them through a non-profit organization who also provide trainings for COYC staff. They have used them a lot this year.

**Gang Awareness Classes:**  Yes  No: N/A

**Sexual Harassment Classes:**  Yes  No: Staff address this if it comes up. It is covered in the house rules.

**Parenting Classes:**  Yes  No: However, if a youth is pregnant or has a child, staff would arrange appropriate classes for them..

**Vocational Classes:**  Yes  No: The occupational therapist tailors classes for youth as needed with the goal that all youth be employable in a vocational pathway in the future.

**Work Program:**  Yes  No: Some residents do have jobs. One resident is currently working at Whole Foods. The occupational therapist arranges as needed.

**Internet Access and Use of Technology:** Technology is available as needed.

## **YOUTH DISCIPLINE**

**Describe the discipline process of youth:** COYC utilizes a phase system which is detailed in the Resident Handbook. Each phase has a set of criteria that measures the client's engagement in treatment. There is also a Color System, also explained in the Handbook, which sets out behaviors and corresponding program expectations/limitations as consequences. The Handbook also sets out specific disciplinary procedures along with the therapeutic interventions, and limit-setting techniques employed by staff. A list of strategies and techniques developed to aid staff in planning interventions is also detailed in the Handbook.

**Describe incident reports:** We were unable to review incident reports because of restrictions on access to youth records described above.

**Describe interactions with law enforcement:** We were not able to access the details, but were informed by the Director that there were contacts with law enforcement in the past year, as is typical at Canyon Oaks and required by law for reporting of 5150s (risk of harm to self or others) and runaway youth (it is not a locked facility; youth under 18 years of age who leave without consent are considered runaway and missing persons reports are filed).

## GRIEVANCES

**Grievance Process:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: The San Mateo County BHRS grievance process is set out in the Resident Handbook. Upon admission to COYC, all youth and their parents/caregivers or authorized representatives are given written information about the grievance processes. Staff reviews the written material with them and a copy of the State-mandated Clients Rights is visibly posted in the lobby area, with contact information for BHRS - Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) and Community Care Licensing (CCL). BHRS Problem Resolution Request Forms are also openly available in the lobby area. Youth, caregivers, or authorized representatives may file grievances with BHRS-OCA, or they may report them directly to the Head of Service or Supervisor for Direct Care. Any grievances received in person or by telephone that are resolved by close of business the next day following receipt are exempt from the requirement to send a written acknowledgement and resolution letter, however they still are logged and included in reports to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

If the youth is not satisfied, they can report their grievance to the Office of Consumer Affairs and OCA will investigate. Youth can also call Community Care Licensing at any time. In addition to grievances filed, OCA also sends out a satisfaction survey to youth and their families twice a year.

**Number of grievances this year:** We were unable to review the grievances file because of restrictions on access to youth records described above. Ms Valencia informed us that there have been three grievances filed by residents this year. Grievances are submitted to BHRS-Office of Family & Consumer Affairs, who visit Canyon Oaks twice per year to conduct surveys with the residents and encourage youth to speak about any issues. Any type of dissatisfaction identified in the surveys is considered a grievance. BHRS investigate grievances and loop back with the result to the youth who filed the grievance.

**Trends and/or Comments:** Last year's inspection team brought to the attention of the Director of COYC, an issue of perceived retaliatory responses to youth grievances filed, and their consequent reluctance to use the grievance process. COYC leadership addressed this issue with further training for staff. We have no reason to believe that there has been any resistance to that training or that the trend noted last year has continued.

## COMMUNICATION

**Access US Mail?**  Yes  No:

**Postage Free?**  Yes  No

**Incoming/Outgoing Mail (screened? Confidential?):**  Yes  No:  Someone who is authorized for contact with the youth will open mail to check for contraband. They do not read the message.

**Access to Telephone?**  Yes  No: They can only call people on their approved contact list.

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**Visiting Schedule:** Flexible, based on the needs of the youth and their families. Usually week to week and parents arrange their visits with the youth's therapist.

**Do all youth have access to visitations?**  Yes  No: Unless there is a court order prohibiting them.

**Under what circumstances would visitation be restricted?** The court may restrict visits. The youth can say if they don't want to see a person, including a parent.

**Are visitation logs kept?**  Yes  No: Visitation schedules are only kept for one week. There is no long-term tracking of visits.

**Adequate Space:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Youth and families can use a therapy room, a classroom, or use the bench and table in the courtyard (although this location does not preserve privacy as youth windows are open to the courtyard)

**Staff Supervision:**  Acceptable  Unacceptable: Canyon Oaks staff do not supervise visits. The youth's social worker may.

**Privacy Provided:**  Yes  No:

**Games or Activities Provided:**  Yes  No: They are free to choose to play any games, watch TV, read, or play video games.

**Signature of Commissioners preparing this report:**

Monroe Labouisse Monroe Labouisse

Date: 10/3/2023

Karin Huber-Levy Karin Huber-Levy

Date: //2023

Susan Swope Susan Swope

Date: 10/3/2023