



County of San Diego

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August 31, 2023

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A.B. AND JESSIE POLINSKY CHILDREN'S CENTER RESPONSE TO 2022 INSPECTION REPORT

The A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center (PCC) serves as a 10-day Temporary Shelter Care Facility under the administration of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), Child and Family Well-Being Department. PCC provides services to children ages 0 to 17 years old who cannot safely remain with their family of origin due to abuse and/or neglect. The Juvenile Justice Commission (Commission) conducts a comprehensive inspection of the operations of PCC and provides recommendations annually.

The Commission's thorough inspection of PCC and recommendations are immensely appreciated. HHSA has reviewed the recommendations and the attached report provides a detailed response.

For any questions, please contact Dr. Kimberly Giardina, Director, Child and Family Well-Bring Department via email at Kimberly.Giardina@sdcounty.ca.gov or via phone at (858) 616-5815.

Sincerely,

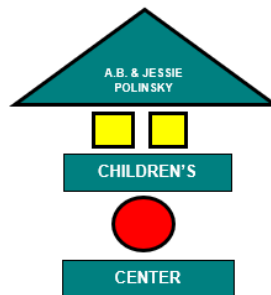
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c: Helen N. Robbins-Meyer, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

County of San Diego
Health and Human Services Agency
Child and Family Well-Being

A.B. AND JESSIE POLINSKY CHILDREN'S CENTER

RESPONSE TO
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO JUVENILE
JUSTICE COMMISSION
INSPECTION REPORT 2022



INTRODUCTION

The A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children’s Center (PCC) 2022 Inspection report includes a thorough review of the conditions and operations of PCC focused on 1) Administration/Management, 2) Security and Control, 3) Hospitalization, Assault and AWOL History, 4) Facility Background, 5) Training, Personnel, and Management, 6) Grievances, Reporting Incidents, and Staff Misconduct, 7) Classification, 8) Counseling and Casework Services, 9) Programs and Activities, 10) Health Services, 11) Meal Service, and 12) Sanitation. This report provides an in-depth analysis of PCC’s operations along with recommendations for system enhancement.

The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) appreciates the continuing efforts of the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) to improve the overall operations and administration of the center. PCC staff strive to implement JJC’s recommendations whenever possible. The JJC’s recommendations from the most recent inspection have been reviewed by HHS staff. The following responses address the JJC’s recommendations.

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1

JJC recommends that PCC makes a concerted effort to recruit volunteers and perhaps restore or exceed pre-pandemic levels of participation by volunteers.

Response #1

Ensuring that all children are safe and supported is a top priority of the County HHS, Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB) department and PCC. Children entering PCC are provided support and services in a holistic manner that are tailored to their unique needs. Volunteers have been instrumental to children at PCC as they provide additional support and enrichment to children at PCC to include daily activities, events, and tutoring. The COVID-19 pandemic required multiple changes to PCC operations to safeguard the health and safety of children, staff, and community partners. As PCC and the community move forward to pre-pandemic levels of participation and additional health restrictions lifted, PCC will continue to follow JJC’s recommendations to make a concerted effort to recruit and rebuild a robust Volunteer Program.

Recommendation #2

The JJC recommends that PCC replaces the use of a portable boom box with a state of the art, cottage-wide sound system in the infant and toddler cottages for purposes of bringing music therapy to the children.

Response #2

PCC utilizes numerous supportive and enhanced therapeutic services for children of all ages. Children at PCC participate in a variety of therapeutic and developmentally appropriate activities including but not limited to listening to music, dancing, collaging, painting. PCC currently utilizes music in the infant and toddler cottages to assist the children during nap times, bedtimes and other activities. PCC understands the importance of music and will thoughtfully consider JJC's recommendation of upgrading the sound system in the infant and toddler cottages.

Recommendation #3

JJC recommends evaluating the 18-page Resident Orientation Handbook, other PCC materials, and the complaint process, to determine if they are developmentally appropriate for PCC's younger children, and if not, to create developmentally appropriate materials and procedures.

Response #3

PCC is currently evaluating and redesigning the Polinsky Children's Center Resident Orientation Handbook, materials, and complaint process. To ensure that the Resident Orientation Handbook and other processes are developmentally appropriate, PCC will collaborate with multiple partners, to include the HHSA's Behavioral Health Program Coordinators and educators. PCC will follow JJC's recommendations of age-appropriate material as applicable. A Resident Orientation Handbook for younger children is being developed.