

Detention Action Plan/Response to Recommended Next Steps:

**CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE SERVICES
2007 JDAI DETENTION SELF INSPECTION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Detention Facility

Recommended Next Steps:

- A greater reliance on the RAI by the Department *and* the court will help to reduce unnecessary detainments, which will further improve the facility's youth to staff ratios and improve the facility's service delivery.
- Educate referring agencies (North Las Vegas Police, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police, Clark County School District Police, Henderson Police, etc.) and other community stakeholders about the Detention's RAI and its use in reducing unnecessary detainments.
- Develop formalized agreements with local law enforcement regarding Detention and the use of the RAI in making detainment decisions. Also, hold quarterly meetings to address any problems arising from the RAI and its use.

Action plan: The RAI has been tested and validated. In order to gain a greater reliance on its effectiveness to reduce unnecessary detainments, there needs to be an overall understanding on how the RAI works.

Institutional Programming

Recommended Next Steps:

- Continue to conduct monthly unit meetings (all shifts) to discuss the C.A.S.E. curriculum and provide updates as to its use and effectiveness. A Detention Administrator or designee should be present at *all* unit meetings, whereby changes in the curriculum and/or changes to the program's implementation are addressed. This will help to ensure the program's integrity.
- Continue to develop gender specific program curriculums in Detention and monitor implementation of the programs on a *daily* basis. All Detention programming should be measured for efficacy and efficiency. The implementation of a fully enforced structured program schedule would help to reduce anxiety on the part of the youth and staff, provide structure to the facility and improve youth learning. Reductions in youth rule violations should be realized once regularly scheduled programming is in place.
- Continue with the development and implementation of the girls' initiative.

Action plan: DJJS and Detention Administrators have been and will continue to attend Unit meetings. The CASE committee continues to meet as needed. Program schedules are posted in each unit for easy access by youth and staff. Gender specific programs have been implemented and more are being researched and developed.

Academic Instruction

Recommended Next Steps:

- Advocate for an additional school liaison and/or 504 Counselor for the Detention Center to assist detained youth with classroom management, school re-entry, and follow up.
- Enhance the academic curriculum at the facility to include a General Education Development (GED) curriculum.

Action plan: Continue to meet and lobby with CCSD to assist in these areas.

Physical and Mental Health Care

Areas Of Concern

Detention's contracted physician conducts physical examinations of youth on a weekly basis (Thursdays) at the facility. Generally, however, only those youth pending long-term placement undergo full physical exams. All others receive a medical screening conducted by the facility's nurse at the time of Detention admission. Present screenings fall short of meeting the minimum health care standards set by most health care commissions.

It should be noted that youth may request medical attention and intervention at any time via the use of the facility's "sick call" procedure; but short delays in medical response may be experienced by youth, due to the facility's current medical staffing shortages.

Interruptions in the administration of prescription medications are a concern. Delays are due to a number of reasons, one of which involves the lack of parental follow through with respect to a youth's medical management. Parents/guardians of youth, more often than not, fail to provide current prescriptions to the Medical Services Unit upon a youth's admission to the Detention facility. The facility's contracting physician, when available, is left with the task of contacting the youth's family physician regarding the re-issuing of the prescription medication, etc. Interruptions in medical management of youth contribute to the morbidity of disease and illness at the facility.

In 2006, DJJS Management, with the approval from the Clark County Commissioners' Court, procured a nurse practitioner's position (mentioned above) to attend to the daily medical needs of youth detained at the facility. The nurse practitioner, when employed, will be responsible for providing diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive health care services to youth, which will include prescribing medications.

At present, the facility provides no dental services for youth, other than a preliminary screening at the point of admission.

Recommended Next Steps:

- Employ a full time physician and/or nurse practitioner to provide for the physical health care needs of the 200 plus youth detained at the facility on a daily basis.
- Contract with the UNLV Dental School to provide dental care for youth held at the facility

Action plan: Nurse Practitioner position has been posted for recruitment. Doctors from the Clark County Medical Society have begun volunteering on a weekly basis. Continue to pursue resources to provide dental care for detention youth.

Staff Training

Areas Of Concern

Previously, a heavy focus at the facility was dedicated to custody, control and use of force. The facility's over emphasis on the more aggressive intervention techniques previously led officers', when confronted with unmanageable youth, to resort to using more aggressive interventions (restraint chair and O.C. Spray) rather than relying on less invasive methods and techniques to control youth behavior. In the last twenty-four months, the training curriculum has been re-designed to include greater concentrations on de-escalation and safe crisis management. Overall reductions in the use of the restraint chair and O.C. Spray have been observed as a result.

It is the facility's continued use of the chair and spray that causes some concern. The assessment team recommends a *continued* phasing out of these two interventions, as well as similar corrective techniques.

Recommended Next Steps:

- Continue to expand the facility's training to support a more balanced approach to addressing juvenile delinquency and aggressive behavior. Enhancements to the training curriculum in crisis management, child development, and mental health intervention, will help to improve the level of care and supervision necessary to properly manage youth at the Detention Center.

Action plan: Included in the 40 hours of mandatory training, Detention staff are required to attend 16 hours of Safe Crisis Management training the first year, and 8 hours every year thereafter. DJJS has established a Professional Development Unit to research, develop, and initiate training for the Department. All Probation Officers are required to complete a 288-hour POST Academy, and maintain POST certification annually.

Restraints, Discipline and Due Process

Recommended Next Steps:

- Continue to reduce reliance on room confinements.
- Ensure the C.A.S.E. Grievance Procedure is addressed fully during a youth's orientation to the facility and develop a means to measure a youth's comprehension of the process. Develop response guidelines by Detention Administration and/or the designee for the grievances and monitor progress.
- Continue to move toward the elimination of the use of O.C. Spray and the restraint chair.

Action plan: Room confinements continue to decrease as staff become more confident and consistent in the application of the CASE Positive Reinforcement Behavior Management Program. A new and improved orientation video is near completion, which will enhance consistency and the understanding of the grievance process. Developed the Restraint Chair Alternative Committee to explore policy, procedure, and create a plan that will ultimately eliminate the use of the restraint chair in Detention.

Conclusions

As evidenced, the Department, in the way of systemic change, has accomplished much since the inception of the Annie E. Casey's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. The partnership between the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Clark County, Nevada, Department of Juvenile Justice Services, instigated three years ago, continues to be a driving force in Clark County's development for a stronger and more responsive juvenile justice system. That being said, there still remains a need to commit to deep-ongoing reform that will build on the system's visible beginnings of change, as delineated in various "next steps" presented in the body of the report. It is the sincere hope of the 2007 Detention Self Inspection Team that the observations and recommendations for change documented in this report will motivate high level officials, DJJS personnel and other community stakeholders to commit to action that will result in true lasting system reform and improved service delivery for youth and families coming under the aegis of Clark County's Department of Juvenile Justice Services.

Detention recognized the need for reform and has actively pursued improvements to conditions of confinement. The second Detention Self-Inspection took place in February of this year. The facility has introduced innovative changes over the last three years. Accomplishments to date during 2007 have included but are not limited to the following:

- **Implementation of Guard One Plus monitoring system**
- **Specialized summer programming**
- **Increased mandatory programming in each unit**
- **Detention youth committed to SMYC receiving summer school credits**
- **Hiring of a Medical Administrator**
- **Filling vacant nursing positions**
- **Partnership with the Clark County Medical Society**
- **CASE Newsletter**
- **Youth poems and essays published in *The Beat Within***
- **Youth participating in low ROPES course teamwork elements**
- **Sister to Sister Program**
- **Girl Scout Program**
- **Completed compliance with AB580 reporting on grievances**
- **Began candidacy for Performance Based Standards**
- **Automated daily detention population report**
- **Reduced time waiting for placement at SMYC and DCFS**
- **Implemented Restraint Chair Alternative Committee**
- **Strengthened Use of Force Review Board**
- **Initiated Safe Crisis Management Training**
- **Creation of Assistant Manager for detention mental health staff**
- **Management Analyst position for mental health team**
- **Facility electrical upgrades**
- **Funded door and lock replacement project**
- **Girls Initiative**