# County of Los Angeles
## DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 351-5602

PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director



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May 11, 2012

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

**CHILDHELP USA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Childhelp USA (Childhelp) Foster Family Agency (FFA) in July 2011, at which time they had 23 placed DCFS children in 11 homes.

Childhelp is located in the Third Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) foster youth. According to Childhelp's program statement, its stated goal is "to provide foster care and treatment for abused and neglected children while re-unification services with their families are being explored and/or completed." Childhelp is licensed to serve children ranging from birth through 17 years.

For the purpose of this review, six children were selected for review. One placed child was interviewed. The other five children were not interviewed as they were non-verbal. All six children's files were reviewed. The placed children's overall average length of placement was four months and the average age was two. Two Certified Foster Parents' (CFP) files were reviewed and both parents were interviewed. Five discharged children's files were reviewed; and five staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements.

None of the placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication.

## SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Childhelp's compliance with the County contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of: the Childhelp's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, six placed children's case files, and five personnel files. Two certified foster homes were visited to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children and we conducted an interview with one placed child to assess the care and services he was receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

## SUMMARY

During our review, the interviewed child reported feeling safe in the home; being satisfied with the care and provision of appropriate services, being comfortable in his environment, and being treated with dignity and respect. We also observed that the non-verbal placed children appeared to be safe at the time of our review and were receiving appropriate care and supervision.

We noted one deficiency during our review in the area of Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being, as two sampled children did not have a life book/photo album.

In conclusion, Childhelp continues to provide a high level of care and service to the children and families they serve. Childhelp's Director and her staff were accessible, cooperative and expressed their willingness to make the necessary correction.

## NOTABLE FINDINGS

There was one notable finding during this monitoring review period.

- While visiting one of the homes it was noted that two children did not have Life Books. The foster parent did take pictures of the children at various outings on her cell phone, but the children did not have personal life books/photo albums. The Childhelp representative stated she will ensure that foster parents transfer the pictures to a life book/photo album.

## EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held July 14, 2011. The agency has hired several new staff and they are excited about the future of the agency.

**In attendance:**

Jennifer Quinn, FFA Director Childhelp and Thomas Manning, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

**Highlights:**

The Foster Family Agency Director was in agreement with the results of the monitoring review. During the Exit Conference, she stated that Childhelp continues to work to provide excellent services to the children and families they serve.

We will assess for full implementation of recommendations during our next review.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:RS:KR:
EAH:NF:tm

Attachment

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sara O'Meara, Executive Director, ChildHelp
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

**CHILDHELP USA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**
**CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW-SUMMARY**

**1743-A Orange Tree Lane**
**Redlands, CA 92373**
**License Number: 366404114**

| | Contract Compliance Monitoring Review | Findings: July 2011 |
|---|---|---|
| I | **Licensure/Contract Requirements** (6 Elements)<br><br>1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation<br>2. SIRs Documented and Cross-Reported<br>3. Runaway Procedures<br>4. Community Care Licensing Citations, Out-of-Home Care Management Division Reports on Safety and Physical Deficiencies<br>5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training<br>6. FFA pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| II | **Certified Foster Homes** (13 Elements)<br><br>1. Home Study Prior to Certification<br>2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD<br>3. Safety Inspection Prior to Certification<br>4. Timely DOJ, FBI, CACI<br>5. Health Screening prior to Certification<br>6. Required Training Prior to Certification<br>7. Current Certificate of Approval on File Including Capacity<br>8. Home Inspection/Evaluations for Re-certification<br>9. Completed Training Hours for Re-certification<br>10. CPR/First Aid/Water Safety Certificates<br>11. CDL/Auto Insurance<br>12. Other Adults: DOJ/FBI/CACI<br>13. Transportation | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| III | **Facility and Environment** (8 Elements)<br><br>1. Exterior Well Maintained<br>2. Common Areas Maintained<br>3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained<br>4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment<br>5. Sufficient Educational Resources<br>6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food<br>7. Disaster Drills Conducted<br>8. Allowance Logs | Full Compliance (ALL) |

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| IV | **Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery** (11 Elements)<br><br>1. DCFS CSW Authorization to Implement NSPs<br>2. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs<br>3. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Foster Parents<br>4. Children's Progress Towards Meeting Goals<br>5. Timely Developed Initial NSPs with Child<br>6. Timely Comprehensive Initial NSPs with Child<br>7. Therapeutic Services Received<br>8. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented<br>9. DCFS CSWs Monthly Contacts Documented<br>10. Timely Developed Updated NSPs with Child<br>11. Timely Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child | Full Compliance(ALL) |
| V | **Education and Workforce Readiness** (7 Elements)<br><br>1. Child Enrolled in School Within Three Days<br>2. Child Attended School as Required<br>3. Agency Facilitates Child's Educational Goals<br>4. Child's Academic and/or Attendance Increase<br>5. Current IEPs Maintained<br>6. Current Report Cards Maintained<br>7. Agency Facilitates Children's Participation in YDS/Equivalent/Vocational Programs | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| VI | **Health and Medical Needs** (6 Elements)<br><br>1. Initial Medical Examinations Conducted<br>2. Initial Medical Examinations Timely<br>3. Follow-up Medical Examinations Timely<br>4. Initial Dental Examinations Conducted<br>5. Initial Dental Examination Timely<br>6. Follow-up Dental Examinations Timely | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| VII | **Psychotropic Medications** (2 Elements)<br><br>1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication<br>2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review | Not Applicable (ALL) |

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| VIII | **Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being** (13 Elements)<br><br>1. Children Informed of Foster Home's Policies and Procedures<br>2. Children Feel Safe<br>3. Satisfaction with Meals and Snacks<br>4. Foster Parents' Treatment of Children with Respect and Dignity<br>5. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System<br>6. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls, and Correspondence<br>7. Children Free to Religious Services/Activities<br>8. Reasonable Chores<br>9. Children Informed About Psychotropic Medication<br>10. Children Aware of Right to Refuse Psychotropic<br>11. Children Informed About Voluntary Refusal of Medical and Dental Care<br>12. Children's Participation in Ato Home, School, Community Activiities<br>13. Children Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| IX | **Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-being** (8 Elements)<br><br>1. Clothing Allowance<br>2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity<br>3. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quality<br>4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing<br>5. Provision of Personal Care Items<br>6. Minimum Monetary Allowances<br>7. Management of Allowance<br>8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book | 1. Full Compliance<br>2. Full Compliance<br>3. Full Compliance<br>4. Full Compliance<br>5. Full Compliance<br>6. Full Compliance<br>7. Full Compliance<br>8. Improvement Needed |
| X | **Discharged Children** (3 Elements)<br><br>1. Stabilization of Placement Prior to Discharge<br>2. Discharge Summary Completed<br>3. Child Completed High School | Full Compliance (ALL) |
| XI | **Personnel Records** (14 Elements)<br><br>1. DOJ Timely Submitted<br>2. FBI Timely Submitted (After January 1, 2008)<br>3. CACIs Timely Submitted<br>4. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely<br>5. Education/Experience Requirement<br>6. Employee Health-Screening Timely<br>7. Valid Driver's License | Full Compliance (ALL) |

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| | 8. Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures<br>9. Initial Training Documentation<br><br>10. One-Hour Training of Child Abuse Reporting<br>11. CPR Training Documentation<br>12. First-Aid Training Documentation<br>13. Ongoing Training Documentation<br>14. Social Workers Appropriate Case Ratio | |

**CHILDHELP USA FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**
**CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

**1743-A Orange Tree Lane**
**Redlands, CA 92373**
**License Number: 366404114**

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the July 2011 monitoring review.

## CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on our review, Childhelp was in full compliance with 10 of 11 sections of our contract compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Certified Foster Homes; Facility and Environment; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medications; and Personal Rights; Discharged Children; Personnel Records. The following report details the results of our review.

## PERSONAL NEEDS/SURVIVAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Based on our review of six children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Childhelp fully complied with seven of eight elements in the area of Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being.

We found that two of six children did not have life books. Foster parents used their cell phones to take pictures. The Agency representative stated they will ensure that foster parents transfer the pictures to a life book/photo album.

**Recommendation:**

Childhelp management shall ensure that:

1. Certified foster parents assist all children in placement with making and maintaining their own personal life books.

## PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S REPORT

### Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the Auditor-Controller's (A-C) prior monitoring review dated October 8, 2008.

### Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the last A-C's October 8, 2008 report were implemented.

**Results**

The prior monitoring report contained eight outstanding findings. Specifically, Childhelp was to ensure that staff adequately monitored foster homes to ensure they complied with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations; that foster parents adequately secured knives, alcoholic beverages and other items that could pose a potential safety hazard to children; foster homes were maintained in accordance with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations; foster homes had operable smoke detectors in the hallways leading to the children's bedrooms; foster home assessments were completed for homes where more than two children were placed; NSPs were updated within the required timeframes and contained goals that were specific, measurable, and time limited; NSPs were approved by the DCFS social worker and contained documentation that the children and foster parents were offered the opportunity to participate in the development of the NSPs; and that Quarterly Reports were prepared within the required timeframes and contained an Emancipation Preparation Contract for children 14 years of age or older.

Based on our follow-up of these recommendations, Childhelp fully implemented all outstanding recommendations from the A-C's contract review of October 8, 2008.

## MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

The Auditor-Controller has not posted a fiscal review of Childhelp.

Childhelp®
Founded in 1959
by Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson
PREVENTION *and* TREATMENT *of* CHILD ABUSE

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
OF CALIFORNIA
1743-A Orange Tree Lane
Redlands, California 92374
T 909-335-1164
F 909-793-7466

Department of Children & Family Services
County of Los Angeles
Attn: Thomas Manning
9320 Telstar Ave, #206
El Monte, CA 91731
mannita@dcfs.lacounty.gov

March 26, 2012

**RE: Proposed Corrective Action Plan – Foster Care Services Contract Exhibit A, Section 3.7.16 Life Book/Photo Album**

Mr. Manning,

As per your verbal request, this letter serves as a Proposed Corrective Action Plan regarding a Life Book/Photo Album deficiency, based on your most recent monitoring visit at Childhelp Foster Family Agency.

In order to encourage our foster parents to assist each placed child in creating and updating a Life Book/photo album of items that relate to childhood memories, Childhelp's action plan includes the following:

1) In February/March 2012, a new Life Book was provided to every child in placement, by the assigned Clinical Coordinators during home visits.
2) On 2/16/12, Clinical Coordinators, Placement Coordinator and staff were trained by Director, Jennifer Quinn, on the requirement of every child having a Life Book/photo album.

To ensure the corrective action is maintained,

2) As of March 2012, a Life Book is included as part of the Admissions/Orientation process/packet for each child at placement.

3) Life Books/photo albums will be included as a Goal in the Needs and Service Plans for each child.

Services provided by the foster parents, including the use of Life Books or photo albums for the children will be monitored by Childhelp in several ways:

a) Clinical Coordinator will view and document in the Quarterly Reports that a Life Book/photo album for the child has been created and is being maintained,

b) Documentation of every foster child having received a Life Book or photo album will be logged in Foster Track, and included as part of the foster child's personal property.

In addition, Childhelp provides Life Book training to newly certified families within their first year of certification. Also, a refresher training regarding Life Books is scheduled for April 11th, at the Childhelp office and will be conducted by Assistant Director, Kristie Bott, LCSW. The Childhelp agency newsletter for April also includes an educational article regarding Life Books.

It is Childhelp's commitment to remedy any deficiencies in a timely manner and protect the well being of children while in foster care. Please contact me should you require anything further, or recommend any changes to the Proposed Corrective Action Plan.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Quinn, Psy.D.
Childhelp, Inc. Foster Family Agency Director