

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

Inter-Office Communication

DATE: October 7, 2016

TO: Sup. Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by: Mark Mertens, Delinquency and Court Services Administrator

SUBJECT: **An informational report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, providing an update on Milwaukee County youth being held at the State Department of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) facility of Lincoln Hills School for Boys**

Issue

At the September meeting of the Health and Human Needs Committee, members requested a follow up from the DHHS Delinquency and Court Services Division (DCSD) regarding incidences of self-harm reported by the DCSD Administrator. This report provides a follow up to that discussion as well as other developments that have occurred since the last committee cycle.

Investigation of Self-Harm Reports at State Juvenile Centers

From July 30, 2016 to September 20, 2016, DCSD has received a number of reports from Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake School regarding self-harm incidences by youth placed in those facilities. In response, DCSD instructed the Human Service Worker (HSW) assigned to the youth to contact the social worker at the State Department of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) and obtain as much information as possible regarding the incidences as well as the steps taken by the DJC. DCSD received a total of 16 reports of self-harm from the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake from July 30, 2016 to September 2, 2016. Three of the youth had one or more reports over a few weeks.

The reports of self-harm at Lincoln Hills were emailed by Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake staff to DCSD's dedicated email account for DOC communication. DCSD then forwarded the emails to Wraparound Milwaukee. DCSD requested that Wraparound send a team to Lincoln Hills to assess the mental health needs of the youth. Dr. Steven P. Dykstra, PhD., Director of Wraparound's Mobile Urgent Treatment Team (MUTT), and his staff went to both Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake Schools on September 12, 2016 to visit the youth for which self-harm reports were issued.

The team reported that the self-harm incidents ranged from serious suicide attempts to manipulative attempts to get staff attention. The youth reported that they sometimes have resorted to making an attempt at self-harm to get staff to listen and pay attention to them.

As of September 21, DCSD received notice that investigations on three youth were opened by the State of Wisconsin Child Protective Services.

In addition, Wraparound Milwaukee has called and left messages for FBI personnel who are responsible for the ongoing investigation of the facility.

Please note that the assessments completed by the staff at Wraparound Milwaukee are privileged health information. DCSD is working on obtaining consents signed by the youth's parents to release this information so that it can be used for treatment planning and/or court hearings to present an alternative plan to the court.

Background

Since December 2015, key partners, including the County Executive, Chief Judge, District Attorney, Public Defender, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director, DCSD Administrator, Wraparound Milwaukee Director and other involved parties have been meeting to formulate a plan to address the crisis at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake and ensure the safety of youth. The first step in the plan was to immediately increase staffing capacity to expand the Milwaukee County Accountability Program (MCAP) to 24 beds within the Juvenile Detention Center and to monitor and assess all youth in Lincoln Hills, Copper Lake, and the Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center for needs and any appropriate alternative placements and services in the community.

New commitments to Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake

Month	Number of New Commitments
January	3
February	8
March	6
April	4
May	7
June	4
July	8
August	4
September	9

Assessment and Placement Options of Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake/Mendota Juvenile Treatment Center

A total of 150 youth have been screened by Wraparound Milwaukee staff. DCSD will continue to work with Wraparound to have youth assessed as needed.

Children's Court has granted nine revisions that were filed seeking removal of the DOC order and allowing placement of youth with DCSD. A total of 50 revisions seeking removal of the DOC order and extensions of existing DOC orders were either denied, dismissed or withdrawn. This will be an ongoing process as new petitions for revision and extension of DOC orders are received.

All youth committed to DOC since November 2015 have been assigned to a Milwaukee County reentry program. Return to Success or Wraparound Re-Entry are providing services to these youth in accordance to case plans developed by DOC and include transition planning with an emphasis on family involvement.

DCSD receives an active client list from DOC identifying placements for youth on DOC orders twice a month on varying dates. This reflects youth under a Serious Juvenile Offender (SJO) order or a regular DOC order. A SJO order has the youth placed at the facility for three years with two years of aftercare for five-year sentence. A regular DOC order places the youth at the facility for up to two years. These youth may be released before that time by the Office of Juvenile Offender Review (OJOR) to provide for aftercare in the community.

Please see the chart below:

Location	Lincoln Hills (boys)	Copper Lake (girls)	Mendota (boys)	Total
April 19 Regular DOC Order	87	10	3	100
April 19 SJO	33	1	1	35
Total April 19	120	11	4	135
May 31 Regular DOC Order	74	6	5	85
May 31 SJO	32	1	1	34
Total May 31	106	7	6	119
Change April 19 to May 31	-14	-4	2	-16
June 29 Regular DOC Order	80	9	5	94
June 29 SJO	30	1	0	31
Total June 29	110	10	5	125
Change May 31 to June 29	4	3	-1	6
July 19 Regular DOC Order	73	9	5	87
July 19 SJO	33	1	0	34
Total July 29	106	10	5	121
Change June 29 to July 19	-4	0	0	-4
Sept 16 Regular DOC Order	61	10	7	78
Sept 16 SJO	27	1	2	30
Total Sept 16	88	11	9	108
Change July 29 to Sept 16	-18	+1	+4	-13

As of July 19, 2016, there were a total of 76 youth on State Aftercare in the community. Milwaukee County continues to collaborate with the Department of Corrections to provide services to these youth returned to the community. The Human Service Workers assigned to these cases continue to focus their efforts on developing alternative plans to return youth to the community.

Ongoing discussion with the Annie E. Casey Foundation

DCSD continues to receive support and technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. The Annie E. Casey Foundation has notified DCSD that they are opting to not involve Milwaukee County in the “deep end” initiative at this time. A formal letter will be forthcoming from the Foundation. Instead, the Foundation stated that DCSD can do more on the front end of the system to minimize the need for more deep-end placements.

Communication with Department of Corrections

On July 29, a letter was sent to Jon E. Litscher, Secretary of the Department of Corrections, requesting that the DOC lead a statewide effort for juvenile justice reform. In addition, we asked that the DOC work collectively with us in identifying a cost effective model that will improve outcomes for youth as well as public safety. Unfortunately, we have not yet heard back from Secretary Litscher.

Earlier this summer, we submitted another letter to Secretary Litscher indicating our intent to assume responsibility for aftercare services for youth effective July 1, 2017. This request required a year notice per State Statute. We received a response from Secretary Litscher on July 14, 2016 identifying the functions that will be assumed by the county. Prior to July of 2017, the functions pertaining specifically to youth on aftercare will be developed into a policy/procedure and training will be provided to the human service workers responsible for after care.

Shelter Programming Update

DCSD recently released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for out-of-home care shelter facility. The current contract expires on December 31, 2016 and provides shelter care for up to 22 boys and 11 girls who are pending court. On September 7, the current vendor, St. Charles Youth and Family Services, notified DCSD that it would not be submitting a proposal. The RFP deadline was then extended from September 9 through September 30, 2016 to allow more time for potential vendors to bid but no proposals were received.

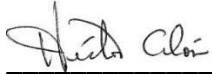
DCSD Administrator and Deputy Chief Judge Triggiano met with St. Charles staff on September 19, 2016 to their intent to discontinue providing shelter care to juvenile justice involved youth in Milwaukee County, along with plans to transition youth.

In the meantime, DCSD is working with other community providers that have expressed an interest in the shelter contract. However, due to the amount of time it takes to find an appropriate facility and set up new staff and programming, etc. there will not be a shelter facility for juvenile justice involved youth as of January 1, 2017.

DCSD hopes to continue to work with potential providers so that a shelter could be operational in the first quarter of 2017. DCSD is also in the process of developing a workgroup of DCSD staff and various stakeholders to review alternatives for youth that will be in shelter placement as of December 31, 2016 and to meet the needs of the youth that are in need of an out-of-home placement while they are pending court.

Recommendation

This report is informational and no action is required.



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