**PREA AUDIT: AUDITOR’S SUMMARY REPORT**

**JUVENILE FACILITIES**

**INTERIM** **FINAL**

****

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **AUDITOR INFORMATION** | | |
| **Certified Auditor:** | **Kurt Pfisterer** | |
| **Address:** | **98 Fox Hollow, Rensselaer, NY 12144** | |
| **Email:** | [**kurtpfisterer@gmail.com**](mailto:kurtpfisterer@gmail.com) | |
| **Telephone:** | **(518) 860-5764** | |
| **Dates of on-site audit:** | **April 9, 2015** | |
| **FACILITY INFORMATION** | | |
| **Name of Facility:** | **Zara Cisco Brough Princess White Flower Center** | |
| **AGENCY INFORMATION** | | |
| **Name of Agency:** | **Massachusetts Department of Youth Services** | |
| **Governing Authority or Parent Agency:** | **Massachusetts Department of Youth Services** | |
| **Address:** | **600 Washington St. 4th. Floor, Boston, MA** | |
| **Telephone Number:** | **(617) 727-7575** | |
| **AGENCY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER** | | |
| **Name:** | Peter Forbes | Title: Commissioner |
| **Email Address: peter.j.forbes@state.ma.us** | | **Telephone: (617) 727-7575** |
| **AGENCY WIDE PREA COORDINATOR** | | |
| **Name:** | **Monica King** | Title: State-Wide PREA Coordinator |
| **Email Address: monica.l.king@state.ma.us** | | **Telephone: (617) 727-7575** |

**NARRATIVE:** The Zara Cisco Brough Princess White Flower Center (hereafter referred to as Zara Cisco) is a secure 46 bed facility for female adolescents operated jointly by the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS) and the Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps. The on-site portion of the PREA Audit took place April 9, 2015 and covered the audit period of April 9, 2014 to April 9, 2015. On the morning of April 9, 2015 this auditor entered the facility for purposes of conducting an on sight tour of the facility and interviewing youth, staff, volunteers and contractors. The facility provided a list of all staff by shift and employee job categories and a list of all youth by housing unit. Prior to arrival this auditor reviewed pertinent agency policies, procedures, and related documentation used to demonstrate compliance with the Juvenile Facility PREA Standards. The pre-audit review of documents contained in the Pre-Audit Questionnaire submitted by the facility prompted few questions. Answers to those questions were submitted to this auditor by the facility staff and any additional remaining questions were resolved during the audit. This auditor interviewed eight of the current 14 youth. The youth interviewed were a representative sample from each of the two housing units. Length of stay for those interviewed ranged from one day to 9 months. There were no youth who identified themselves as lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender or intersex and no youth who needed translation services. No youth had specifically requested to speak with this auditor nor had this auditor received any written correspondence from youth or staff. There were no youth currently in the program who made an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual harassment at the program.

During the tour, additional questions were answered by executive and upper-level management staff. Staff and youth interviews followed and were conducted privately in a room with a large observation window. There are no SANE or SAFE staff employed at the facility. These services are available at the local hospital through a state-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This auditor reviewed the MOU to provide SANE and SAFE services, and crisis counseling. This auditor interviewed members of the incident review team and the staff member charged with monitoring retaliation. Administrative investigations (sexual harassment only) are conducted by trained DYS staff and criminal investigations are conducted exclusively by the Massachusetts State Police. There were no volunteers or contractors interviewed as none were at the facility or available during the audit. The agency Executive Director had been previously interviewed by this auditor.

**DESCRIPTION OF FACILITY CHARACTERISTICS:** Zara Cisco is a 46 bed secure juvenile facility operated jointly by the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (DYS) and the Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps. The facility consists of a single brick and mortar structure purpose-built as a secure juvenile facility. There are two distinct programs within the Zara Cisco Center; the Pelletier Assessment Center and the Fay A. Rotenberg School.

The Pelletier Assessment Center is a 10-bed (current budgeted capacity) program for adolescent females who are newly committed to DYS. The mission of the Pelletier Assessment Center is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all residents while building knowledge, developing skills and promoting positive change for the youth in our care. The Pelletier Assessment Center was designed to provide an atmosphere which is female-focused and sensitive to the individual needs of the youth and their families. Pelletier’s goal is to provide the most effective, innovative and comprehensive gender-responsive programming in the state of Massachusetts and to thoroughly assess the needs and potential of youth in care in making recommendations for appropriate treatment and after-care. The youth assessment consists of several parts: Clinical, Educational, Medical, Behavioral, Case History and the youth’s own self- report. Youth are assigned a clinician upon admission. The average length of stay ranges from 30-45 day. On the first day of the on-site audit there were nine youth in the program.

The Fay A. Rotenberg School is unique in that it serves as the Commonwealth’s sole long-term, secure treatment facility for adjudicated adolescent girls. Residents at the Program range from thirteen to twenty years of age. The current budgeted capacity of the program is ten. Those admitted have committed an offense so severe as to mandate their assignment to Rotenberg; others are placed due to their inability to succeed in less restrictive settings. One’s length of stay at the Program is pre-determined by their offense or other circumstances leading to their referral to secure treatment.

The Rotenberg School provides education, therapy and counseling to girls who have suffered from significant traumatic incidents, including sexual and physical abuse, poverty and homelessness, sexual exploitation and/or a family history of violence, child abuse or involvement with the justice system.

The Rotenberg School helps each girl understand, acknowledge and take responsibility for behavior resulting from her traumatic past, and learn the skills she needs to make positive choices when she returns to her community.

Youth attend academic classes on site and many earn their GEDs. The Rotenberg staff combines structure and accountability with compassion and respect. Each girl is assigned an advocate, a staff member who serves as her point person during her stay. Advocates work with the girls to develop individualized behavioral plans, track their performance, and serve as family member-caretaker-disciplinarian-mentor.

Additional services that are available include:

* Life skills training through Dialectic Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
* Individual and family therapy
* Activities such as cooking, yoga, art therapy and exercise programs
* The “Young Women’s Lives” program, a 10-week course providing information on such topics as teen dating, violence, self-esteem issues, relationships, and the influence of the media on young women and their body images.
* Strength-based programming and continuous service.
* Specifically designed activities and groups created to meet the needs of the adolescent girls in our care.

In a team atmosphere, clinicians and residential counselors address: poverty, sexual exploitation and neglect, as well as help with self-esteem building, strengthening coping skills and overall health and wellness.

The Zara Cisco Center maintains 24 hour supervisory coverage as well as an On-Call Administrator.

**SUMMARY OF AUDIT FINDINGS:** Auditor arrived at the facility the morning of April 9, 2015. An entrance meeting was held with the Facility Administrator, who also serves as the PREA Compliance Manager, and the DYS PREA Coordinator.

A complete tour of the facility took approximately one hour. All areas were well maintained. The facility has a video surveillance system which provides coverage for 95% of the facility. The system provides coverage of the recreation areas, dining hall, all housing units, hallways and education areas. There are no cameras in the youths’ rooms. There is a camera view of all doors in areas where youth are permitted. Observed staffing (3 : 1), while this auditor was on site exceeds the standards requirement of 8: 1. Both programs have multi-stall showers and toilets which are appropriately partitioned for privacy and properly supervised when more than one youth is in the room. Youth are permitted to shower and use the bathroom alone if requested. This was confirmed by all staff and youth interviewed, and observation of practice. Sight lines are good in all housing areas (there are no unmitigated blind spots on the housing units).

Youth were observed during work details, in school, during movement, and at meals. Observations of staff supervision practices were consistent with the agencies policies.

The PREA screening for risk is conducted by the clinical staff on the date of admission, and documented. All youth interviewed acknowledged being screened on the date of admission as well as being seen by medical staff within 24 hours of admission.

Administrative investigations regarding allegations of sexual harassment are conducted by trained DYS investigators. A review of investigators’ reports confirmed an aggressive response to all allegations of harassment. Criminal investigations of sexual abuse and assault are conducted by the Massachusetts State Police. Telephone and email contact with the Deputy Chief of Police confirm that there were no incidents of sexual abuse or assault during this audit period. Forensic examinations and evidence collection are performed at the Bay State Medical Center. A state-wide MOU is in place to provide forensic examinations and victims’ services.

This auditor interviewed the following staff titles (number in parentheses indicates more than one staff in that title was interviewed):

* Facility Administrator
* Clinician Coordinator
* Program Director (2)
* Assistant Program Director (2)
* DYS PREA Coordinator
* Nurse
* Group Worker I, II and III (4)
* Supervisor
* Assistant Supervisor
* Senior Shift Administrator
* Administrative Assistant
* Facility PREA Compliance Manager

Random direct-care staff were selected for interviews to include staff from all housing units. Experience levels ranged from three to over 24 years. All presented as very knowledgeable about their jobs and highly dedicated to keeping youth safe. The agency’s commitment to PREA was also very evident during interviews. Staff members were not only aware of their agency’s policies and procedures, but were able to discuss PREA and how it related to the overall mission of the program and the agency’s mission as a whole.

All staff members knew their obligations as mandated reporters and first responders. All felt well supported by facility management, and had no fear regarding retaliation for reporting abuse. All staff have received PREA specific training as first responders and all knew what to do if they were a first responder. All felt empowered to proactively address issues related to sexual violence and were able to describe actions they would take to prevent and/or deter potential and/or imminent threats of sexual violence.

A total of eight (out of 14) youth at the facility were interviewed, and included youth from all housing units. Ages ranged from 16 to 19 years. There were no youth currently at the facility that had made an allegation of abuse that occurred at the facility. There were no youth currently at the facility who had reported an allegation of sexual harassment that occurred at the facility. There were no youth at the program who identified as LGBTI or had been identified as gender non-conforming in appearance. All youth acknowledged being asked about sexual orientation upon admission. All youth interviewed had extensive knowledge of the right to be free from sexual abuse, assault or harassment. All youth were aware of multiple methods for reporting abuse. All youth acknowledged being screened upon admission (screening actually occurs on date of admission, which far exceeds the standard) and receiving information upon admission on their right to be free from abuse in any form. No youth reported ever having fear for their safety while at the facility or at any time during commitment with DYS. All said they currently felt safe at the facility. Many said that they felt safer at the facility than on the streets.

The quality and organization of the documentation provided to this auditor was outstanding. The pre-audit questionnaire completed by the DYS State-Wide PREA Coordinator is one of the better ones I have ever received. The referenced documents in the questionnaire were provided electronically.

The organized manner in which the interviews were facilitated by the PREA Compliance Manager and the DYS State-Wide PREA Coordinator made the process go very smoothly and allowed for lengthy interviews with no wasted time in between.

The Zara Cisco Center is an excellent juvenile justice facility. The scope of this audit (PREA compliance) does not afford the opportunity to go into all the positive aspects of the program.

**STANDARDS DETERMINATION TOTALS:**

**Exceeds Standard – 2 (Two) Standards or approximately 4% of total standards.**

**Meets Standard - 40 (Forty-one) Standards or approximately 96% of total standards.**

**Does Not Meet Standard – 0 (Zero) Standards or 0% of total standards**

**AUDITOR CERTIFICATION**

This auditor certifies that no conflict of interest exists with respect to his ability to conduct an audit of the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services or the Zara Cisco Center.

\_\_**Kurt Pfisterer/s/**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ April 25, 2015

Kurt Pfisterer, Dual Certified PREA Auditor Date