

SUMMARY OF THE RECENT EXPERT REPORTS ON CYA

Report on General Corrections Review

- “The CYA suffers from a serious problem of violence in its institutions.” This includes excessive use of force by staff, as well as ward-on-ward and ward-on-staff violence. p. 42
- “...[A]n intense climate of fear permeates California’s state youth corrections facilities.” p. 18
- Staff resort to use of chemical agents designed for outdoor riot control to extract wards from their cells. This results in chemical burns and a serious possibility of fatal asphyxiation. p. 30
- Wards are sometimes forced to spend long periods of time on their knees, sometimes on sharp surfaces, with their hands bound behind their backs. p. 30
- Some wards are forced to sleep in their underwear on concrete in cold rooms. p. 30
- In CYA detention facilities, at any given time more than ten percent of wards are kept in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day. During the one hour per day they are permitted to leave their cells they are either shackled or caged. These lock-down units have inadequate lighting and temperature controls. pp. 51 -53
- More than half of the wards on lock-down lack basic hygiene materials such as soap and toothpaste. p. 53

Report on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment

- “The mental health care provided by CYA is not adequate and does not conform to community standards...” p. 9
- A previous report found that 85% of wards have substance use issues. p. 20
- Rehabilitation and substance abuse programs are inadequate. p. 20

- “The vast majority of youths who have mental health needs are made worse instead of improved by the correctional environment.” p. 17
- There are not enough psychiatrists. p. 15
- Medication is improperly prescribed, administered and distributed. p. 19
- Policies on the use of force and restraint do not distinguish mentally ill children. p. 18
- Use is made of dangerous restraining beds and cages. p. 18

Report on Sex Offender Treatment

- Sex offender treatment in the CYA is inadequate. p. 12
- Only 160 wards are receiving sex offender treatment. p. 12
- Over 900 sexually abusive wards receive no treatment at all. p.12
- The female population is offered no sex offender treatment. p. 12
- The programs that do exist are inadequately staffed. p. 44
- Family involvement in treatment is virtually non-existent. p. 25
- Wards exhibiting sexually inappropriate behavior are routinely sprayed with teargas as a form of punishment. p. 32

Report on Education

- “[T]here are an inadequate number of credentialed teachers to provide a comprehensive academic program to all wards.” p. 5
- “All sites report an inability to employ and maintain the number of credentialed teachers needed to provide a sufficient number of general and special education classes.” p. 11

- An average of 20-30% of wards are absent from class on a given day. p. 8
- “Wards in all main high schools were observed being pulled from general and special education classes to attend other programs, ...without regard to their educational needs.” p. 8
- Wards that do attend receive as little as two hours of instruction at some facilities. p. 21
- Some wards are kept in cages in their classrooms. p. 44

Report on Health Care

- “The CYA’s medical and dental staff is not appropriately trained because there are no adequate orientation and training programs, policies and procedures, nor clinical guidelines to guide staff.” p. 14
- “[T]he credentialing process for physicians is inadequate and does not ensure that competent physicians will be hired.” p. 14
- “Once hired, clinical supervision of physicians is virtually non-existent.” p. 14
- Medical screening of incoming wards is inadequate. p. 33
- Other than syphilis, male wards are not screened for sexually transmitted diseases. p. 39
- “CYA policies and procedures, and actual practice do not ensure that wards have timely access to medical care.” p. 42
- “There is no existing policy to guide the practice of medication administration.” p. 48
- Access to narcotic pain medication is withheld in cases where it “...is unprofessional conduct, unethical, and cruel.” p. 51
- “CYA policies and procedures, and training do not adequately prepare staff to respond to emergencies.” p. 62

- While mace is used extensively in the CYA, “...there is no specific medical policy governing treatment of individuals who sustain mace exposure.”p. 63
- “Physicians did not seem to have knowledge of how to provide basic diabetes care. One of the patients, based on my interview with him, seemed to have better basic knowledge of diabetes than the physician treating him.” p. 72

Youth Authority Confirms Reports’ Accuracy

- In a Chronicle article, Youth authority spokeswoman Sarah Ludeman is quoted as saying, “[t]he disparaging claims are ‘substantially correct.’” (Sebastian, *Moratorium urged for CYA - S.F. Public Defender says ‘it’s a criminal training ground,’* S.F. Chronicle (Feb. 10, 2004) p. A-17.)