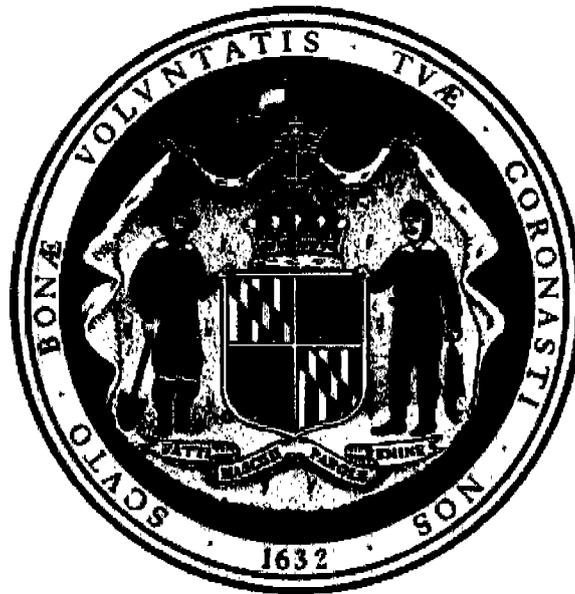


QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY 1, 2004 – MARCH 31, 2004

INDEPENDENT JUVENILE JUSTICE MONITOR



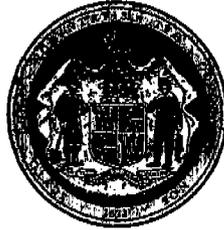
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. – Governor
Michael S. Steele – Lt. Governor
M. Teresa Garland, Esq. – Special Secretary,
Governor's Office for Children, Youth, & Families

State of Maryland Executive Department
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

ROBERT L. EHRlich, JR.
Governor

M. TERESA GARLAND
Special Secretary

MICHAEL S. STEELE
Lieutenant Governor



MEMORANDUM

To: M. Teresa Garland, Special Secretary, Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families
Kenneth C. Montague, Jr., Secretary, Department of Juvenile Services

From: *R.T.* Ralph B. Thomas, Executive Director, Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor, Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families

Subject: Quarterly Report for January 1, 2004 – March 31, 2004, Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor

Date: June 14, 2004

I am pleased to present the most recent quarterly report of the Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor.

As required by Article 49D, Office for Children, Youth, and Families of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 45(b)(2), the Office of the Juvenile Justice Monitor "...shall report quarterly to the Special Secretary and the Secretary. A copy of the report shall be provided to the State Advisory Board for Juvenile Justice and, in accordance with Section 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly. The report shall include: all activities of the Office; actions taken by the Department resulting from the findings and recommendations of the Independent Monitor, including the Department's response; and a summary of any violations of the standards and regulations of the Department that remained unabated for 30 days or more during the reporting period."

This quarterly report encompasses the period from January 1, 2004 to March 31, 2004. It notes conditions found within the Department of Juvenile Service's facilities by the Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor as well as those matters that have remained unabated since the issuance of the last quarterly report. As required, this report also includes the Department of Juvenile Service's response to the comments offered by the Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor. The Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor does not necessarily endorse or concur with the responses offered by of the Department of Juvenile Services.

I hope that this report serves to provide an accurate assessment of conditions within Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services' facilities and assists in the development of strategies to enhance programs and services to youth.

The Office of the Independent Juvenile Justice Monitor looks forward to continuing in its work with you in transforming juvenile justice within Maryland.

**MONITORS' ASSESSMENTS OF FACILITIES AND THE
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES RESPONSE**

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MONITORS' ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES RESPONSE

The **Allegany County Girls Group Home** (ACGGH), located in Cumberland, Maryland, is operated by the YMCA on property that is owned by the Department of Juvenile Services. ACGGH accommodates up to 9 girls, who stay in the program for an average of 9 months. A "Healthy Home" model of treatment intervention is utilized. This model includes the use of community resources for schooling, health, mental health services, and recreation. ACGGH has continued to strengthen the program, as the staffing team has been working to establish an even more consistent, positive culture within the group home. A primary concern as of this writing is the reduced utilization of the program by DJS. Though ACGGH is a very viable program for girls, and the State needs additional treatment beds for young women, apparently DJS is seeking cost containment by reducing out of home placement expenses. ACGGH has experienced a drastic reduction in referrals from the Department. This unfortunate trend could effectively eliminate ACGGH as a resource, and this would be a great loss for the State and for youth needing this effective program.

- The ACGGH facility is attractive and kept in good shape. The staff and the youth work together to maintain and beautify the facility. However, the steep and curving road leading to the house has been in very poor condition for some time. There are a number of large and growing potholes that make the road dangerous to vehicles and to the occupants of those vehicles. The Department has been made aware of this condition numerous times without any action being taken to improve the road. This matter should be addressed by the DJS and immediate repairs made.

Response: The Department has requested the necessary \$20,000 to repair the road from DGS. We are still awaiting approval of this funding.

- Because of the lack of utilization by DJS, the Allegany County Girls Group Home must undertake an immediate public relations and education effort in order to make their unique services known to potential referral sources throughout the State and beyond.

Response: The ACGGH Program Administrator has e-mailed DJS Resource Coordinators from all regions about the group home's dwindling referrals. In addition, the group home has contacted several Case Managers regarding upcoming surplus of beds available in June. The group has had approximately five responses in the past month. The group home is also in the process of creating a new brochure about the program. This brochure will be mailed to resource people all over the State.

The Department of Juvenile Services **Youth Centers** are State-owned and operated programs located in Allegany and Garrett Counties of Western Maryland. There are four Centers: **Green Ridge, Savage Mountain, Meadow Mountain, and Backbone Mountain.** Meadow Mountain operates specifically as an addictions program. The average length of stay in the programs is six months. A total population of 156 youth is served in the Youth Centers.

A major problem facing the Youth Centers at this moment is lack of staffing. Currently, the Youth Centers are approximately thirty-three positions short. As "staff secure" facilities, effective programming, safety and security is completely dependent upon maintaining a full complement of trained and experienced staff. Apparently, DJS, due to budget constraints, is seeking savings by reducing positions in the Youth Centers and elsewhere. This is completely untenable, as trained direct care staff are by far the most vital component of DJS. This not only potentially puts youth and staff at risk, but the community as well. Staff morale has suffered greatly as a result of the loss of positions, motivating some to seek employment elsewhere; thus, further compounding the problem.

It is largely because of the level of staffing, the experience and training of staff, and the strength of programming, that in the past, few incidents have taken place in the Youth Centers. Recently, however, a very serious incident did occur during which a female counselor was abducted and forced to drive a youth off campus in her car. Fortunately, this incident did not end in tragedy, and the youth was later apprehended. One of the contributing factors, however, was that one staff had charge of twelve youth, and he was engaged in several different tasks. When unnoticed by staff, the youth left the dormitory, and followed another staff to her car as she was preparing to leave.

- The Office of the Independent Monitor has supported that chronic "non-violent" offenders is an appropriate criteria, and should be enforced by the Department. With the omitting of the "non-violent" proviso in the admissions criteria statement, it is the concern of this Office that the Youth Centers could come under pressure to take even more serious offenders. It is also of concern that the public be informed as to the nature of youth being served in the open, staff-secure Youth Centers.

Response: We have received the new guidelines for admission dated 02/24/04 approved by the Program Services Deputy Secretary. It gives us guidelines to follow and lets us look at each admission and determine if the youth is suitable for our program.

- The Youth Centers have developed a procedure manual for the operation of the Centers. There are, however, no standards by which to monitor DJS commitment care programs. COMAR 01.04.04 offers standards for residential facilities serving youth, and should be applicable as well to DJS commitment care

programs. It is the understanding of this office that DJS will establish a committee by April 30, 2004 to develop standards for commitment care programs, and that a representative of the Office of the Independent Monitor will participate on that committee.

Response: The committee to develop standards for committed facilities has been established and began its efforts in May 2004. The reporting Independent Monitor for DJS Youth Centers is a participating member of this committee.

- The Youth Centers' group process programming is very dependent upon adequate numbers of staff to provide direction, safety, and security in the open programs. During the last quarter it was reported that 21 contractual positions have been lost. As of this writing the number of vacancies is approximately 24, including the loss of PIN positions. This is completely untenable, and greatly affects staff morale, and the quality of treatment, as well as jeopardizing safety and security.

Response: The Youth Centers will aggressively recruit to fill any vacant positions. As funding becomes available, additional positions will be added as needed.

- **Unabated 30 Days or More:** The Youth Centers' educational program operates without a certificate of approval, as it has not been determined as to how the educational programs are to be approved. This should be addressed and a certificate of approval provided. DJS Educational Administrators, without regulation authority, have maintained their cutback of educational days in the Centers from 220 days to 180 days, matching the public school model. Additionally, snow days have not been made up; thus, further reducing the educational days in the Centers. The days of instruction that have been taken from these students constitute a loss in credits gained, and they should be returned to the youth.

Response: According to the Managing Director of Education, the current school year has 231 days for students and 248 days for teachers. The MSDE only gives certificate of approval to "non-public" facilities. DJS schools operate under the same COMAR regulations that govern the local school systems.

- Family relationships and treatment with family members is often difficult for youth to maintain while in the Youth Centers. More needs to be done in programming to increase family and extended family participation in the treatment process to promote better youth reintegration into the family and community upon release.

Response: Visitations are limited for security reasons. Parents and grandparents are always welcome. Others are sometimes allowed to visit for various reasons on a case-by-case basis. We are not able to provide the supervision needed to open visitation up to the entire family network. I agree that family counseling with extended families, siblings, etc., definitely needs to be done, but with the help of the aftercare worker.

- While Probation Officers are doing a better job overall in making the necessary visitations to youth while they are in the Youth Centers, some visit rarely, if at all. Field Services needs to be required and supported in making monthly visitations to the Youth Centers to maintain contact with youth in their caseload.

Response: Community Justice Case Manager visits are improving, also youth may place calls to their Case Manager upon request. Community Justice Case Managers are required to visit youth at least once a month, and as needed for treatment service plan development, crisis intervention and discharge planning.

- Under the leadership of Superintendent Dale Schroyer, the Youth Centers Administrators and Supervisors have begun to undertake more teambuilding efforts, including meeting with the Independent Monitor on a monthly basis. The Youth Centers have a number of very talented and experienced staff that have much to offer in the process of strengthening the overall programming in the Centers. In order for the programming in Youth Centers to continue to improve, and avail itself of this talent, it is recommended that more intensive teambuilding, and trust building exercises take place at each Center and between the Centers and Youth Center Headquarters. While staff meetings do take place, it is very important that the process be developed to create better communication, openness, and trust. Requiring that the youth participate in group processing, it is incumbent upon all staff, regardless of position, to model those same values in problem identification, and problem resolution.

Response: The Department appreciates the monitor's acknowledgment of efforts to enhance staff team building.

The **Young Women's Facility of Maryland at Waxter** is a State-owned and operated detention/residential treatment facility located in Laurel, Maryland. The facility houses females under the age of 18 and is comprised of one detention unit and three programming units. The facility is operated under DJJ Detention Standards and other DJS policies and procedures.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Incidents of assault and use of force continue to occur at a rate of nearly 1 every other day.

Response: Staff Training for gender specific programming is being developed and will take place in June, 2004. Training will help and create an environment of less violent type behavior. Enhanced evening and weekend programming and the behavior management incentive program have helped to reduce incidents. In addition, more mental health groups are being implemented to help residents deal with emotions and self-esteem. In addition, the facility has started a regular newsletter put together by the youth.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** There remains no written protocol between DJS, MSP and CPS to address the issue of child abuse/neglect investigations.

Response: Facility administration is arranging a meeting between with State Police, DSS and DJS on this issue.

- Some staff persons being investigated and/or charged with physical abuse have remained employed at the facility. Although administration has assigned these individuals to receptionist duties during the period of investigation, emergency situations within the facility might allow these individuals the opportunity to come into contact with youth during their time of employ.

Response: When staff are being investigated, they are removed from direct contact with youth pending resolution of the case.

- Medical personnel are not familiar with the proper reporting procedures for child abuse/neglect cases that occur within the facility. This Monitor spoke with medical personnel and they advised that they were not aware that they should report suspected abuse/neglect that occurred within the facility directly to CPS.

Response: Medical personnel are familiar with the reporting of abuse/neglect cases.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Computers are still needed throughout educational areas of the facility.

Response: We agree, and are working to provide more computers, as funding permits.

- A youth who needs intense mental health counseling due to past victimization in several abuse incidents is placed at Waxter, although the caseworker believes that this facility does not have the resources to provide required treatment. The youth was criminally charged in a violent attack against staff and subsequently

attempted suicide while in seclusion. This Monitor interviewed the youth and determined that the youth had an extensive history of sexual abuse. The youth's DJS caseworker, mother and the local police were contacted and it was verified that there might have been several incidents of abuse and rape involving the youth. The police (API) are conducting an investigation into her past victimization.

Response: This particular case is a very difficult placement due to her past and present behaviors and her failures to comply with rules of various programs and placements. Efforts continue to place this youth in an appropriate program.

- The facility needs to hire a coordinator for substance abuse. As of 3/26/04, there was no coordinator for the substance abuse program. DJS has been interviewing for the position.

Response: At present, Dr. Keith Hannon, PhD is overseeing mental health and substance abuse services. She is licensed as a Certified Associate Counselor - Drug and Alcohol. The Superintendent, who is licensed as a Certified Associate Counselor-Drug and Alcohol, signs off on work done by Addictions Counselors.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The education staff have been observed providing good instruction and there were some outstanding assembly programs provided for the youth. However, staff persons continue to complain that more vocational instruction is needed.

Response: We agree with the need to enhance vocational programming at Waxter. The Educational Services Unit hired a vocational (cosmetology) teacher who has been at Waxter since December 2003. Education Services also requested a trailer to house the cosmetology class. We continue to explore getting a trailer in order to implement the program.

- Teachers advised that biology books and dictionaries are needed.

Response: The Acting Teacher Supervisor requested biology books in March.

- An inspection of the kitchen revealed a need for equipment repair (dishwasher and reach-in refrigerator) and power supply repairs. The inspection also revealed that all temperature logs were not being properly maintained.

Response: The power supply has been checked, but continues to blow out. The company that installed the equipment have been notified. It is understood that the temperature logs are done on a daily basis as required.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The gate area between the recreation yard and the education trailers still has sharp metal rods protruding from the ground that could cause a youth or staff to trip or would produce a serious injury if a youth or staff person fell onto the metal.

Response: The metal rods have been removed.

Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center is located near downtown Baltimore City. It has the capacity to house 144 male youth solely for detention. The property is owned and operated by the Department of Juvenile Services and is governed by DJS Secure Detention Standards. The facility opened on October 30, 2003.

- **Unabated 30 Days or More:** DJS must repair all glass that is breakable in areas accessible by youth, including bedrooms and dayrooms.

Response: The Department of General Services is in the process of developing a corrective action plan.

- **Unabated 30 Days or More:** The shower doors and associated hardware are not tamper-proof and must be replaced. In addition, lighting fixtures in the bedrooms and showerheads are not tamper-proof and must be replaced ASAP.

Response: These adjustments are part of Capital Planning's Security Enhancement Request to the Department of General Services. DJS is awaiting DGS's corrective action plan.

- **Unabated 30 Days or More:** Remove/replace beds and desks in bedrooms with furnishings and equipment that are suicide resistant.

Response: These adjustments are part of Capital Planning's Security Enhancement Request to the Department of General Services. DJS is awaiting DGS's corrective action plan.

- The immediate installation of surveillance cameras in the gym and dining room would assist staff greatly in the supervision of youth. Consideration should also be given to installing cameras in other high traffic areas within the facility.

Response: The Department will review and determine the appropriate action based on available funding.

- In addition to the above referenced architectural and design issues, DJS should secure the services of a professional architectural and design firm specializing in secure correctional facilities in order to review all equipment and furnishings to ensure that it meets acceptable standards for a secure detention facility.

Response: The Department will review this recommendation and determine the appropriate action.

- This facility has almost doubled its population. As of March 31, 2004, the population was 75, however, the facility is only staffed for 48 youth. Additional staff must be hired immediately to meet the needs of the escalating population, safety and security standards, and to allow the Public Defenders Office and the Mental Health Unit to deliver services to the residents in a safe and secure environment.

Response: The facility has hired 12 new staff between mid-April to mid-May. They are constantly recruiting to fill existing vacancies.

- There have been 91 critical incidents reported during this quarterly period. These incidents include youth on youth assaults, use of force, suicidal ideation, physical child abuse, youth on staff assault and physical plant problems. It should be noted that only 2 cases are still pending investigation by OPRA; the rest have been closed. Of the 91 critical incidents, 66 were youth on youth assaults.

Response: The facility continues to work to reduce incidents through training for staff, programming for youth, Behavior Management Incentive Program, and holding staff accountable to follow policy and procedures.

Maryland Youth Residential Center (MYRC) is a Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) owned and operated 24-bed shelter care facility located in Baltimore City.

- The bathrooms on the first and second floors are continually flooding, impacting the programming and security. It should also be noted that much of the wall space has rotted in those areas.

Response: The Department's Support Services Division is reviewing to determine the appropriate corrective action.

Mount Clare House is located on the fringe of downtown Baltimore City. The facility is a two-story house owned by the Department of Juvenile Services. The vendor for this facility is First Home Care Corporation. This is a twelve-bed group home that serves male youth (ages 15 ½ - 18) who have emotional and behavior problems. The length of stay is nine months to one year. A cook on-site prepares meals. Although licensed by DJS, the group home also contracts four beds with the Department of Human Resources (DHR); four beds with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and is governed by COMAR.

- The kitchen floor has had a water leak that floods the basement office of the secretary.

Response: DJS Maintenance Unit has been instructed to contact a plumber to determine the cause of the leak and make the necessary repairs.

William Donald Schaefer House is a nineteen-bed locked door facility for male youth who have a history of alcohol or drug abuse. The property is owned and operated by the Department of Juvenile Services. This is the only DJS-operated facility that is regulated and licensed by COMAR. It is located in a residential setting in north Baltimore.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** As referenced in the last two quarterly reports, the program's success rate is still not known.

Response: The Department's Research Unit will provide results of the evaluation, once completed.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** As referenced in the previous report, repairs on the second floor bathroom have not been made.

Response: Maintenance Unit has been instructed to contact a plumber to make the necessary repairs.

Catonsville Structured Shelter Care (GUIDE) is a privately operated non-secure facility located on Department of Juvenile Services' property. The current license allows for a capacity of ten male youth. The current vendor is held accountable for its services by Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) and certain Maryland Department of Juvenile Services licensing requirements.

- The dining room, kitchen and bathroom floors are sinking and need to be repaired immediately.

Response: Funding has been requested from DGS for a kitchen upgrade at this facility. We are awaiting DGS funding approval.

- This program would benefit from access to the ASSIST Program, the DJS electronic case management system.

Response: We are reviewing the feasibility and fiscal impact of equipping the private provider with ASSIST access.

The **Charles H. Hickey School** has been a privately run facility located on State property. The facility is comprised of detention units and programming units designed for 30 days to 6 months programs. Correctional Service Corporation (CSC) was the most recent vendor in the facility until the expiration of their contract on March 31, 2004. The Department of Juvenile Services has been managing the facility since that time. The facility and program were/are held accountable for servicing Maryland's youth by Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) and certain Maryland Department of Juvenile Services licensing requirements, Detention Standards and Conduct Standards.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Occurrences of child neglect/abuse, assault and use of force incidents continue at a rate of 2.5 per day. During this quarter, several staff members have been administratively and criminally charged in cases of physical abuse, neglect and assault. There has also been a neglect investigation due to a lack of heat in one of the unit's bedrooms and an investigation of unsanitary conditions in the infirmary. Both investigations revealed there were significant problems and maintenance concerns that need to be addressed by the facility and DJS.

Response: Abuse or neglect of any child will not be tolerated; any staff member involved in such an act will be disciplined up to termination. Staff members will continue to address negative behavior. Since the State assumed management of Hickey April 1st, staff are being provided 40 hours of training focusing on de-escalation, crisis prevention management, suicide prevention and safety and security. The training began on April 25, 2004.

The infirmary will be cleaned and maintained to appropriate standards through daily monitoring.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** There are still some problems with investigations not being coordinated between DJS, the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Maryland State Police (MSP). The appropriate DJS investigators are not consistently attending multi-disciplinary meetings for child abuse and neglect. The Baltimore County Interagency Agreement on the Investigation of Child Abuse and Neglect at the Charles Hickey School, though was signed by all parties in mid April. Completion of this written agreement will help solidify the

responsibilities and requirements of each agency. Examples of the above referenced issues include:

1. On 2/20/04, one youth threatened to set another youth on fire with a cigarette lighter while both youth were in the bullpen area of Master Control. This Monitor contacted DJS/ICAU on 2/24/04 to determine the status of their investigation into the incident and was advised that they had just received the case and they were looking into it. Another incident report about the incident was filed by Hickey on 2/23/04, three days after the incident occurred. This Monitor contacted an investigator from DJS/ICAU again on 2/25/04 to determine if the police were involved in the investigation and he advised me to contact the investigation supervisor because he did not know who was handling the case. This Monitor then contacted ICAU and expressed concern about this case not being referred to the State Police. This Monitor was advised to contact another investigator to determine what had been done. The case was subsequently reported to the State Police for investigation.

This Monitor contacted the State Police on 3/4/04 and learned that no criminal charges would be filed, although one DJS investigator advised this Monitor that the victim youth stated the other youth held the lighter to his clothing and threatened him with it. DJS advised they would continue to investigate only to determine how the youth was able to conceal a lighter in the bullpen area.

2. On 2/23/04, one staff and four youth were charged with assault in a large fight. Staff on a detention unit incited a youth into an altercation which led to a fight involving several youth and staff. According to the State Police, one staff and four youth were charged with assault. A nurse's statement on the incident made the following post assessment: "Both staff and students were out of control. Students who were escalating [the situation] were not immediately removed. No one person took a lead in directing activities." As a result of the incident, information was obtained that the accused staff made threatening statements in the parking lot area that he was going to "blow somebody's head off." This writer contacted the State Police on 2/25/04 to determine if they were familiar with the threat and they said they were not. A great deal of confusion followed as the police tried to determine where the original statement came from and a DJS investigator who heard the statement was questioned by the police. There appeared to be a lack of coordination between DJS and the police. A DJS investigator subsequently charged the staff with unnecessary use of force and unbecoming conduct. The staff person was terminated from employ at the facility.

Response: Staff will be held accountable for failing to follow established policy and procedure. The Department's OPRA/ICAU Unit works in collaboration with the MSP. The Baltimore County Interagency Agreement

regarding investigation of abuse allegations is a positive step forward for all parties.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Youth and staff continue to complain that vocational programming is insufficient at the facility. The Applied Learning Center has been closed off and on due to asbestos removal or flooding problems. However, the programs do not meet the needs of the youth at the facility and some programs, such as the construction shop and the horse care programs, have not been operating at all. The Director of Education for Hickey agreed that there was a significant need for more vocational programming at the facility. General programming is lacking throughout the facility. An unannounced visit was conducted at a detention unit on Wednesday 3/10/04 at 10:00 AM. The visit revealed youth playing cards, watching television and listening to loud rap music. According to the direct care staff, the youth were participating in life skills.

Some staff and teachers are concerned that Special Education is not being provided for certain youth who need one-on-one services or a self-contained class setting. This Monitor observed one youth in a one-on-one setting with a teacher sitting in the middle of the hallway where numerous other youth and activities were going on. There is also a classroom on one unit that is not used for self-contained classes although it is easily accessible.

Response: Applied Learning Center would not be operated by MSDE because the shops did not meet standards, the shops were closed.

The Special Education Director and her staff have done a remarkable job of getting information about special education students back on a data base so that services can be provided per the IEPs. Special education teachers all have schedules that include working within the inclusion model and providing one-on-one services. A meeting is being scheduled with Delmarva's to discuss providing counseling.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The pedestrian sally port gate was not operating during most of this Monitor's visits to the facility.

Response: The hydraulic pump motor for the sally port gate became inoperable. A new pump was ordered and took four weeks to get installed. However, we continued to experience problems with the gate. Replacement of the sally port gate is scheduled for July 1st.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** There are continuing problems with the door locks on many of the units behind the fence. Repairs were completed on the Clinton Hall detention unit, but some of those doors have already been rendered inoperative due to youth wiping hair grease on the magnetic contacts. A visit to another detention unit, Mandella Hall, revealed that only 6 or 7 bedrooms have functional locks. Roosevelt Hall reported there were several broken locks on doors but the group leader did not feel there was a security risk. A visit to Ford Hall revealed that none of the bedroom locks were operational and a Jackson Hall visit revealed numerous problems with bedroom locks. These malfunctioning/broken locks constitute serious safety and security problems as youth are capable of returning to the bedrooms during unauthorized times. This prohibits staff from maintaining a constant level of supervision of youth, especially during the overnight shift.

Response: Since the State assumed management April 1st, a plan to address maintenance issues has been developed. Ford Hall was closed for complete renovation, including repairing the locks. The locks on Mandela and Roosevelt Halls have been repaired. Broken locks on any other units will be repaired as well.

Unabated for 30 Days or More: This Office has previously recommended the installation of cameras in the dorms and a central point of monitoring and recording the video to assist in the supervision of youth. This would enhance safety and security within the facility, and possibly serve as a deterrent to acts of violence. This would also serve as an aid in the managerial and investigatory review of incidents.

Response: The Department agrees with this recommendation and is exploring options for installing cameras, as funding permits.

- A staff person with questionable character was arrested for assaulting a youth at the facility and his case file had previously been audited by DJS/OPRA in September 2003. This Monitor conducted a review of a file of a CHHS employee who had recently been terminated for unnecessary use of force and assault on one of the adult residents at the facility. Previous to that incident, he had been terminated on 8/19/02 for excessive use of force and was rehired on 10/21/02 after a CPS investigation was unsubstantiated. He also had a criminal history for robbery and assault. OPRA investigators had reviewed the employee's file in September 2003 (twice) during an audit of employees' files. The Human Resources Administrator at Hickey advised that the investigators advised her that a report would be forwarded pertaining to the audit, but she stated that she never received a report.

Response: The State assumed management of the Hickey School on April 1, 2004. At that time, background checks were conducted on all current Hickey School employees to determine if they met DJS hiring standards based on MCTC requirements.

- Recent suspensions, terminations and transfers resulted in a lack of qualified staff in key administrative/supervisory positions to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the facility. As of 2/10/04 there were vacancies in the following positions: Assistant Facility Administrator for Support Services, Chief of Security, Director of Detention, Director of Enhanced Programs and Director of Maintenance. DJS has taken over management of the facility and must make sure key positions are filled.

Response: The State's Transition Management Team filled these key positions with experienced State employees.

- There is a shortage of mental health counselors/therapists due to recent resignations. Conversations with staff persons and the supervisor for DelMarva on 2/27/04 revealed there were only 4 counselors for the entire facility. Group counseling appears to be somewhat satisfactory, but one-on-one counseling is rare. There is no substance abuse coordinator and court evaluations are way behind.

Response: DJS has contracted with Delmarva to provide mental health services. In addition, the Department is exploring other options to enhance mental health services (i.e., hiring a second contractor)

- Staffing patterns reveal that Hickey usually attempts to maintain a 1:8 ratio during the day and 1:11 ratio during the night shift; however, recent terminations and resignations have strained the ratio severely. Staff persons were already routinely working double shifts, but after many staff persons were released or failed to return to work, the strain became even greater. A visit to Ford Hall on 3/31/04 revealed only 1 staff person with 30 youth who were generally milling around without any structured activity and had not attended school. This Monitor immediately notified the Facility Administrator and extra staff persons from transportation were sent to supplement the unit. It was also determined that only 1 staff was working on the unit from 6 AM to 9 AM on 3/22/04. This Monitor had called the supervisor on the unit on 3/26/04 after learning of such information and the staffing supervisor falsely stated there was no shortage on the unit on 3/22/04.

Response: After the State assumed management, employees from other areas of the Department were detailed to Hickey School. There has been ongoing recruitment of staff, resulting in 60 new hires since April 1st.

- Staff are not always alert and properly monitoring the youth as evidenced by the high number of youth on youth assaults. This Monitor visited Roosevelt Hall on 3/10/04 and found a youth using the telephone in the front dayroom area. The staff advised he thought the youth had gone to the bathroom and did not know the youth was on the phone.

Response: The State assumed management of Hickey School on April 1, 2004 and has mandated a higher level of accountability by staff and youth.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The ceiling vents on the bedroom units are not suicide-proof. This has been a repeated finding by this Office over the last three years.

Response: The Department is exploring options to replace the ceiling vents, as funding permits.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The lack of sufficient lighting in the area behind the fence has been cited previously as a safety/security hazard for both staff and youth. There continues to be a lack of sufficient lighting and some staff express concern for their own safety when walking to their areas of assignment after dark.

Response: Estimate from contractor to install lighting has been received and we are awaiting funding approval to proceed.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Repeated citations have failed to remedy the problem with trashcans not being covered with lids. A visit to Clinton Hall revealed that trashcans were uncovered, and there were brooms, buckets and mops sitting in the hallway unattended. Visits to the infirmary, King Hall and Ford Hall also revealed uncovered trashcans.

Response: The trash cans will be covered with lids.

- This Monitor has observed numerous toilets clogged or otherwise inoperable on many of the units and in the infirmary. A visit to Ford Hall revealed that the back hallway sink was completely clogged. Visits to the infirmary and seclusion areas have resulted in observations of clogged toilets and feces that have not been flushed.

Response: Repairs and maintenance are ongoing.

- The overall appearance of the facility reveals neglect in building and grounds maintenance. Trash and broken/unused objects/furniture is often seen littering the grounds. This Monitor has observed broken windows, locks and other maintenance issues that have not been repaired. One detention unit has had a water fountain in the dayroom hanging off the wall for several weeks. Staff persons advise that the administration is not always making repairs due to the upcoming expiration in the vendor's contract. An electrical fixture was hanging in a bedroom in room number 29 on Roosevelt Hall. Although the room was not occupied by a youth, the hazard was accessible because the door to the room did not lock. DJS was notified of the danger and repairs were made by the next day.

Response: Repairs and maintenance are ongoing.

The **Thomas O'Farrell Youth Center** is a privately run facility on State property that houses 43 adjudicated delinquent young men and an off-campus Transitional Living Continuum (TLC) shelter care houses 7 more.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** There remains a lack of vocational training at the facility. Vocational programs do not include any training for manual labor. A new vocational coordinator has been hired to address this issue, but there must be more than just training to fill out job applications, interviews, etc. Some youth in the transitional living continuum work off-campus but they make up a very small minority of the total number of youth. Youth could participate in appropriately guided learning activities on the facility grounds to build structures, paint, maintain equipment, garden, and improve the appearance of the grounds.

Response: The new Vocational Coordinator was been hired to teach pre-vocation and life skills. Residents are anxious to have off-campus jobs. However, off-campus jobs are based on phase level and educational requirement.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Teachers and youth continue to complain about the lack of dictionaries, textbooks and computers. This Monitor has observed the lack of these items at the facility.

Response: All necessary materials are available in the classroom. Additional items have been purchased to aide teachers in the classroom. A computer lab is being developed to house the computers donated from DJS.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Youth continue to complain about not having large muscle activity every day and having insufficient vocational education. This problem has been cited in previous monitoring reports (March – June and July – September, 2003). Youth advise they have been participating in volleyball more often, but youth are not as interested in that as they are in basketball. Although recreational activities should be varied and meet the needs of all youth, the main problem is failure of the program to provide large muscle activity every day, not just a few times a week.

Response: Currently, monthly activity schedules indicate a diverse variety of activities. Additional equipment has been purchased.

- A DJS Child Advocate was not assigned to the facility for more than three months.

Response: A DJS Child Advocate has been assigned to the facility. She has already begun visiting the facility.

- Furniture and equipment should be kept in good working order. Milk crates were observed under some beds to keep them from falling and there is a need for brooms that do not fall apart when sweeping. The brooms are made of straw and they fall apart when the youth use them for sweeping.

Response: A new maintenance person has been hired and starts on 6/7/04. He is aware of the need to repair all furniture. A new vacuum was purchased in 2/04.

The **Sykesville Shelter Group Home** is a privately run structured shelter care home located on State property. The facility houses up to 10 females, but due to space limitations, 8 females can be housed comfortably.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** There is still no alarm system available for staff persons to be made aware of an AWOL, although DJS has reportedly been researching the suggestion. The facility is located within a community with stores, transportation and a State highway in close proximity. Youth cannot be forcibly detained if they choose to leave, but the staff would be able to notify authorities in a much more timely fashion if some type of alarm system was in the facility. The facility is reportedly being relocated to another building on the Springfield State Hospital grounds some time in the future, and AWOL alarms should be installed prior to occupancy.

Response: The Department will review the recommendation and respond by the end of FY 2004.

- The facility is not being utilized by DJS to maximize the outstanding programming. Visits during the three-month period reveal that the population is normally between 6 and 8 youth.

Response: A liaison has been established with the Confinement Review Team assigned to Waxter in an ongoing effort to identify appropriate candidates for shelter care.

The **J. DeWeese Carter Children's Center** is a 24-bed detention facility located in Chestertown, Maryland. The facility houses both males and females between the ages of 12 and 18 years. The facility operates under DJS Detention Standards and other DJS policies and procedures.

- The facility was designed to house 15 youth and on average, the total population has been below 20 youth.

Response: The Department appreciates the monitor acknowledging the reduction of incidents at Carter Youth Facility.

- The number of violent altercations has been reduced. During this quarter, there were only 16 incidents and half of those involved one youth suffering from severe mental health issues. The youth was eventually transferred to a mental health facility to be stabilized but will return to Carter upon release.

Response: The Department appreciates the monitor acknowledging there is adequate staffing present.

- The Superintendent successfully keeps an adequate number of staff on duty. The facility is short only one youth supervisor. The Director of Group Life position was recently filled with a qualified shift supervisor.

Response: The Department appreciates the monitor's comment regarding positive programming.

- The facility's educational program continues to be a major part of the youth's rehabilitation. Every month the teachers plan a full event calendar. The youth are provided innovative lessons in music, history, and art along with the other core courses. In February, youth completed an art project by creating "shadow boxes" of different blacks and their contributions in celebration of Black History Month.

Response: The facility will continue to strive to provide creative activities and programming for youth and appreciates the monitor's acknowledgment of same.

- The Independent Monitor assigned to Carter participated as a judge in the facility's first game of "It's Academic". Three teams of youth and coaches/teachers competed by answering educational questions asked by the Teaching Supervisor. The other youth cheered on their peers from the audience. Every youth was engaged and excited about providing answers. Many off duty staff also came to support the youth.

Response: The Department appreciates the monitor's participation in this activity and acknowledgment of positive programming at this facility, as well as the dedication of staff who come in on their day off to support the youth. This type of commitment occurs regularly but is not often acknowledged.

- The DJS Investigator/Advocate for the Eastern Shore has become a very valuable asset to the facility. He arranged a meeting with the directors of the eight Eastern Shore facilities that he monitors. He also invited the Office of the Independent Monitor.

Response: No comment.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The number of females in detention has increased to approximately 8. The OIM questions whether the lack of shelter space for youth from the Eastern Shore has resulted in more females being placed in detention. Due the January 11, 2004 closing of the Eastern Shore Structured Shelter Care, the Carter Center is forced to transfer shelter eligible youth to the Cheltenham Youth Facility Shelter in Prince Georges County, the Sykesville Shelter in Howard County, or Maryland Youth Residential Center in Baltimore City. Shelter eligible youth from the Eastern Shore should have the opportunity to be placed in close proximity to their homes to allow for frequent parental visitation and interaction in their community.

Response: The Department will be developing detention alternatives as resources permit.

The **Alfred D. Noyes Children's Center** (Noyes) is a State-owned and operated detention facility in Montgomery County that houses both males and females under the age of 18. The facility operates under DJS Detention Standards and other DJS policies and procedures.

- Noyes is a small facility with four housing units. At times, the youth engage in physical altercations. Staffing shortages have made it difficult to ensure two staff members are assigned to each unit.

Response: The facility aggressively recruits to fill vacancies as they occur and deploy current staffing resources to ensure safety and security.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The facility continues to house youth from Western Maryland because the Western Maryland Children's Center has not opened its additional twelve beds, resulting in overcrowding.

Response: There are still contract issues at the Western Maryland Children's Center that prevent any additional admission of residents. The Department is working with DGS to resolve these issues.

- **Unabated for 30 days or More:** The facility is in need of a commercial washer and dryer because the current ones breakdown after 2-3 months use. Similar commercial washer and dryers were purchased for the Cheltenham and Waxter facilities. Although Noyes lacks the space to place the machines in the same closet, one may be placed on each side of the facility.

Response: Adequate space and water supply must be identified before the purchasing of commercial washer & dryer, the current wash rooms are not large enough for one commercial machine.

- **Unabated for 30 days or More:** The traveling barber/beauty shop cuts the boys' hair on a weekly basis. Although the barbers will cut the girls' hair, the female staff help the female residents maintain their hair. Female residents should also have the opportunity to have their hair groomed professionally. Chemical treatments should be applied only by trained professionals and not by facility staff.

Response: Currently, the superintendent is researching vendors for cosmetology services to determine whether the facility has a conducive environment in accordance with the State of MD Health & Safety Regulations.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Adjudicated youth continue to be housed at the facility for longer than 30 days.

Response: The Department continues to attempt to place youth as soon as possible. Some of the more difficult, high needs youth take longer to plan than others. To help address this issue, the Department has developed a Confinement Review Unit (CRU) whose sole purpose is to reduce the inappropriate and unnecessary use of detention and expedite the placement of committed youth.

- In February, a Noyes staff member and a Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center staff member were involved in a physical altercation in the cafeteria at the Maryland Correctional Training Academy on the Camp Frettered federal army base. The Military Police had to stop the fight after the staff assaulted each other and threw chairs. Both staff remain employed by the Department and are responsible for the supervision of youth.

Response: The above matter has been addressed administratively.

- In March, a youth pretended to swallow his medication then gave it to another youth in exchange for an evening snack. The nurse had checked the youth's mouth but he was able to hide the pill under his top lip. The second youth took the unauthorized medication and was rushed to the hospital after his tongue swelled along with other reactions. He returned to the facility a few hours later. The superintendent adjusted the facility's medication pass policy to require include a direct care staff member to stand beside the youth to ensure all medication is administered properly.

Response: The Superintendent has implemented corrective action to address, as stated above.

- A temporary clerical staff member allegedly forged her timesheets and defrauded the State of approximately \$40,000 in overtime pay and was not detected for over a year.

Response: The temporary staff person was terminated and the matter is currently under investigation.

- The teaching supervisor continues to supervise the movement of youth to and from school by two-way radio. The use of educational staff to perform security functions was cited as a contributing factor in the October 2003 escape from this facility. This Monitor has continued to witness on several occasions the teaching supervisor using the radio to supervise the movement outside to the school building. This practice is inconsistent with standard security practices. Movement of residents should be controlled by the shift supervisor who is trained to directly supervise facility operations by making sound and just decisions for the well being of youth and staff.

Response: All staff are provided hand held radios for constant communication. The Shift Supervisor is responsible for youth movement and security. We will review procedures based on the monitor's comments.

- A community organization, "Class Acts", provided arts and crafts classes to the youth during this reporting period. During the month of April the group will be providing drum classes. The youth will learn how to play the drums and participate in a performance for staff at the completion of the course.

Response: The facility will continue to provide creative activities for the youth. We appreciate the monitor acknowledging these activities.

The Cheltenham Youth Facility (CYF) is a State-owned and operated facility located in Cheltenham, Maryland. Within this reporting period, the facility's population decreased to 70 but has since increased to approximately 100. The facility has four detention units and one 24-bed shelter and operates under DJS Detention Standards and other DJS policies and procedures.

- As a result of violent altercations within CYF and the Charles Hickey, Jr. School in Baltimore County, the MSP has been required to monitor the violence within the facility by making periodic checks throughout the day on a daily basis.

Response: No comment.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Physical confrontations continue to occur on a daily basis. The staff continues to be overworked, under trained, and morale is extremely low. These issues may have lead to many instances where the safety of youth was placed in jeopardy.

Response: The OIM and DJS have partnered with the NJDA for the technical assistance to address the training needs of staff and to improve the culture within this facility. A select group of management and line staff participated in storyboarding exercise with NDJA representatives on April 14 and 15, 2004 to develop a CYF training curriculum. NDJA is currently developing curriculum with implementation to hopefully follow. Facility specific training conducted for all cottages on May 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 2004 covering Policy and Procedures, Level System, History and Trends in Juvenile Services, Youth Rights and Therapeutic Treatment of Juveniles. Also, a Behavior Management Incentive Program for youth was implemented. We are also recruiting aggressively to fill all vacancies.

- In January, the Rennie Cottage unit manager and three of his staff members were charged with assaulting a youth in November after he refused to go to his room. All four staff members had already been terminated for violating DJS policy and procedure.

Response: No comment

- Also in January, one staff member was terminated after he allegedly assaulted a youth with a two-way radio. The youth alleged the staff member retaliated against him due to previous confrontations between the two of them. MSP filed charges against the staff member.

Response: No comment

- Two staff members were disciplined after leaving their assigned cottage without authorization from the shift commander. They left approximately twenty-five youth alone with one inexperienced staff member while a few volunteers were providing church services to some youth. The unit became disruptive resulting in an exit door being opened accidentally with some youth threatening to escape, chairs being thrown around the dayroom by the youth, and the grievance box being broken and grievances thrown in the trash. The incident was not reported to the shift commander for approximately two hours after it occurred and was not accurately documented in the facility logbooks. This Monitor reported inaccuracies in staff statements and the logbooks to administration and the DJS investigator.

Response: When staff fail to appropriately execute their duties or follow policy and procedure, they are held accountable.

- Suicidal youth are housed in the infirmary to receive increased supervision but over the past year, many youth have attempted suicide in the infirmary. The staff continuously fails to provide the necessary supervision for this special needs population. During this reporting period, many staff members were disciplined for failing to provide adequate supervision to a suicidal youth on various occasions.

Response: Re-issued Departmental and Facility Suicide Policy and Procedure. Re-issued and Post One-on-one supervision protocols. Re-issued and strictly enforce facility search procedures. Retrain all Residential Health Center staff in proper One-on-One supervision techniques. Staff are held accountable for not following established policy and procedures.

- In March, a Rennie Cottage staff member reported that two youth were planning an escape and advised staff/administration keep a close watch of both boys. Staff left the youth unsupervised in the school building enabling the youth to walk out the front door without anyone noticing. The youth climbed to the roof of the building, then eventually broke into a condemned housing unit and hid for approximately seven hours. They planned to escape through the facility's back

environment. Henry Cottage youth are less mature and less aggressive requiring the least secure environment. These two cottages have been combined in one classroom in the morning and afternoon. The shelter youth are combined with detention youth in classrooms.

Response: The special education services at CYF were never eliminated. Special Education youth their education via inclusion models at CYF; i.e., these youth are educated with their normal peers. Two special education teachers have been hired and will begin on June 23rd and July 1st 2004. We are still recruiting one more special education teacher as well as a special education coordinator. The special education coordinator from HQ ensures that the special education inclusion model is appropriately administered. The daily school schedule has been adjusted to allow youth to be in classrooms with residents from their cottage only.

- The maintenance staffing at the facility is low. There are four maintenance men and one supervisor assigned to handle the five housing units, dining hall, school building, administration building, office building (Neal Cottage), intake (McGuire Cottage), and the outside grounds keeping. Daily issues such as running out of hot water for showers, repairing the night-lights in the rooms, and carpentry work are all scheduled and completed by contractors.

Response: The Department will review its maintenance staffing and determine appropriate action to take.

The newly-opened **Western Maryland Children's Center** (WMCC) is designed to house up to twenty four youth, but only serves twelve at this point. Because of physical plant problems, two of the three pods cannot be opened. This facility is experiencing numerous and severe problems due to poor quality of construction and operational systems. Especially problematic is the lack of heating capability, lack of hot water, and the control panel that cannot be relied upon to give accurate information as to whether doors in the facility are locked. Such is the liability that the Assistant Superintendent of the WMCC had to file an "incident report" on the facility with the Department for investigation by the Office of Professional Responsibility and Accountability.

In spite of the numerous physical plant problems, the staff at the Western Maryland Children's Center are developing a model of treatment programming within the detention setting that is creative and reflective of a high level of professionalism, dedication, and care.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Vitreous china fixtures are still present in the youth sleeping rooms and bathrooms used by youth. Because of the injuries incurred as a result of youth breaking these fixtures and using the sharp shards as weapons, the Department has agreed to incrementally replace these fixtures with

stainless steel. However, as of this writing, no action has taken place. Specifically, the Department agreed to the following: to replace the vitreous china fixtures with stainless steel in two bedrooms immediately; to replace the vitreous china fixtures with stainless steel upon any breakage or damage; and to retrofit the remaining vitreous china fixtures with stainless steel within a three year period.

Response: We appreciate the monitor's office working with the Department to address this issue. As previously reported, the use of vitreous china fixtures was a policy decision from the former administration. Since removal of the seats, the facility has not experienced further damage. However, the Department is working on a plan to incrementally replace the fixtures in phases, as funding permits.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** The beds used in the facility have holes and posts that could be used to attempt or complete a suicide. DJS has indicated that it is reviewing the situation in order to determine appropriate action. The Department should act immediately to remedy the problem before a youth harms himself by using a bed to tie off on a suicide attempt.

Response: The beds will be fitted with a fabricated piece of metal to close the openings in the beds and all posts will be removed to be flush with the deck of the bunk.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** As reported previously, the desks in the sleeping rooms have swing out seats that pose a threat to youth by providing a tie off place to attempt suicide. As reported in the last writing, that threat has turned to reality, as a youth has attempted suicide by tying off a sheet to the stool arm. As recommended in numerous reports, the desks and seats should either be removed or replaced with suicide-proof furniture. Again, the Department says that it is "reviewing" to determine appropriate action, however, immediate action should be taken in order to prevent a needless tragedy from occurring.

Response: The desk and seats were designed to provide youth with a normalized environment. However, the monitor's comments are noted and we will pursue funding for replacements or review the possible removal of the seats. We appreciate the monitor working with the Department to address this issue.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** As noted in the last Quarterly Report, one youth managed to pull down a sprinkler covering in his room and set off the sprinkler. The vulnerability of these coverings to tampering by youth also poses the risk that an exposed sprinkler head could be used as a tie off in a suicide attempt. DJS once again says it is "reviewing" to determine appropriate action. Immediate

action should be forthcoming in order to keep this type of incident from occurring again.

Response: This is a new building and the coverings are designed to be tamper proof. We will monitor to determine appropriate action.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** ADA handrails are still present throughout the facility in bathrooms and showers used by youth. Except for the minimum number of required ADA-equipped bathrooms and showers, the Department should either remove these rails, or make them solid to the wall in order to prevent a youth from tying off in a suicide attempt. Thus far, the Department has not committed to making the changes recommended, but says it is "reviewing" to determine appropriate action.

Response: We will work with the monitor to address this issue.

The Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center (LESCC) is a State-owned and operated facility located in Salisbury, Maryland. The facility continues to operate at half capacity (12 beds) because the additional staffing needed to operate the other two pods have not completed the Maryland Correctional Training Academy. The facility operates under DJS Detention Standards and other DJS policies and procedures. The facility is located on the grounds of the Wicomico County Adult Detention Center and shares its building with DJS transportation officers, electronic monitors, and the fiscal manager for the Eastern Shore.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Several areas in the facility bedrooms pose a risk for suicide attempts. The rooms have desks with seats attached by a bar that swings outward and could be used as a tie off during a suicide attempt. Western Maryland Children's Center has similar desks but removed the seats due to an attempted suicide. The beds have a number of openings on the frame and are similar to the bed used in the March 2002 completed suicide at the Waxter Children's Center in Laurel. The beds also have protruding posts extending from the frame that may be used as a tie off in a suicide attempt. Although the OIM cited these issues during the construction of the facility, the Department opted to use construction materials that were not designed to prevent injury or suicidal conduct.

Response: The beds will be fitted with a fabricated piece of metal to close the opening in the beds. All posts will be removed to be flush with the deck of the bunk.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Each room is equipped with a porcelain toilet with a plastic toilet seat attached. Several porcelain toilets were broken by youth

at the Western Maryland Children's Center. The broken porcelain can be very sharp and used to injure staff or youth. In separate incidences at LESCC, two youth broke off the toilet seats and one youth caused extensive damage to his room while using the toilet seats as a weapon. Western Maryland Children's Center removed the toilet seats from the porcelain toilets. The OIM cited this issue during the construction of the facility.

Response: We appreciate the monitor working with the Department to address this issue. As you know, putting in porcelain fixtures was a policy decision made by the former administration. Since the removal of the seats, the facility has not experienced any further damage to the fixture. We are working on a plan to replace the fixture in phases, as funding permits.

- **Unabated for 30 Days or More:** Each room is also equipped with a porcelain sink that has a plastic cover attached to cover the exposed plumbing below. The sink may not support a youth who stands on it and the cover could be removed by kicking it. This exposed plumbing poses a risk for suicide attempts. The OIM cited this issue during the construction of the facility.

Response: To date, no youth has removed the plastic cover. We will monitor to determine if corrective action is required.

- The facility has a Life Skills classroom equipped with a kitchen to teach the youth cooking skills. The boys learned to bake bread in March.

Response: We appreciate the monitor acknowledging the positive programming at the facility.

- The superintendent hosted a meeting at the facility with the Department of Social Services, the Maryland State Police, the DJS investigator assigned to this facility, and this Monitor to discuss the process for reporting and investigating child abuse and neglect allegations involving the detained youth. The tri-county area of the Lower Eastern Shore has a child advocacy center responsible for investigating child abuse and neglect allegations within that area. Each case is assigned to a team that consists of a police officer and a DSS caseworker.

Response: We appreciate the monitor acknowledging this positive development by the Department to systematically review abuse allegations.