

Independent Ombudsman for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department



Second Quarter Report FY 12

December 1, 2011-February 29, 2012

Introduction:

This report is the second Quarterly Report of FY 2012 to be submitted by this office under statute and is intended for the Executive Director of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD), the Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker of the House, members of the Texas Legislature, and the Auditor for the State of Texas. This report will serve to provide a description of the activities of the office during the second quarter of FY 12 spanning December 2011 through February 2012.

Overview of the Work of the Independent Ombudsman

The Independent Ombudsman (IO) was established for the purpose of investigating, evaluating, and securing the rights of the children committed to the Juvenile Justice Department, including a child released under supervision before final discharge. To fulfill the duties of the office, IO staff regularly visit all TJJD secure facilities, halfway houses, and parole offices, as well as all contract care programs. Currently, TJJD operates 6 secure facilities, 9 halfway houses, and 7 district offices. Additionally, TJJD contracts with several additional facilities to provide services to TJJD youth. While the IO seeks to address systemic problems with TJJD service delivery, the office has resolved numerous individual complaints, as well.

During the second quarter of this year, the IO facilitated monthly briefings with the TJJD Executive Management Team (EMT). The purpose of these meetings was to establish open communication between the IO and the EMT regarding issues that have been identified in the individual site visits. The meetings have been productive and solutions resulted or are in the works.

The office successfully visited and inspected secure TJJD facilities, as well as halfway houses, contract care facilities and parole offices to monitor for compliance with best practices for the safety and security of the youth.

In our continued effort to educate youth and their families about the office's services, we mail IO brochures to the families of each new youth committed to TJJD. Additionally, we attended monthly Family Days and other activities held at the facilities.

Special Request

The Independent Ombudsman received a formal request asking the office to study the following:

- The number of youth-on-youth and youth-on-staff assaults, including assaults involving bodily injury, the impact these assaults have on the safety and welfare of the youth and staff in the facilities, and the impact assaults have on the ability of youth to progress in the programming and treatment needed to obtain release.
- Whether youth with disabilities are victimized in youth-on-youth assaults at a disparate rate.
- The injuries youth and staff suffer as a result of youth-on-youth assaults, both in terms of the severity of injury, the impact on medical costs, and the impact on workers compensation claims made by staff as a result of injuries they suffer.

- The number of self-referrals by youth to a security unit within a facility due to fear for their own safety, and the impact these referrals have on a youth's ability to progress through the programming and treatment needed to obtain release.
- Whether youth with disabilities are disproportionately represented in these self-referrals
- The increase in pepper spray use, particularly in the Giddings State School.
- The number of absconds from halfway houses, the reasons for the seemingly high number of absconds, and the impact this is having on a youth's ability to progress through the programming and treatment needed to obtain release.
- If the investigation reveals a problem related to any of the above, the underlying causes to the extent that they can be determined, including problems related to staffing ratios, staff being required to work overtime to meet mandated ratios, and any problems that may be related to staff absenteeism.

The office will be working with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, over the next several months, to determine if there is a problem with any of these items.

All findings will be published in a completed report with recommended solutions or action steps.

Accounting of Site Visits, Youth Contact and Individual Cases

	FY 2011	2nd Quarter FY12	FY12 Total
Site Visits	168	56	123
Number of Youth Interviewed	1289	473	915
Number of Youth Interviews Conducted	1980	543	1256
Closed Cases	641	73	172

Facilities visited by IO staff during the second quarter

Secure Facilities

Corsicana Residential Treatment Center (*Corsicana TX*)
Evins Regional Juvenile Center (*Edinburg TX*)
GainesvilleStateSchool (*GainesvilleTX*)
GiddingsStateSchool (*GiddingsTX*)
McLennanCountyState Juvenile Correctional Facility (*MartTX*)
RonJacksonState Juvenile Correctional Complex (*BrownwoodTX*)

TYC Halfway Houses

Ayres House-*San AntonioTX*
Beto House-*McAllen TX*
Cottrell House-*Dallas TX*
Edna Tamayo House-*HarlingenTX*
McFadden Ranch-*Roanoke TX*
Schaeffer House-*El Paso TX*
Turman House-*Austin TX*
Willoughby House-*Fort Worth TX*
York House-*Corpus Christi TX*

TYC District Offices

AustinDistrict Office
Dallas District Office
El Paso District Office
Fort Worth District Office
San Antonio District Office

Parole Areas (Parole officers not working out of a district office)

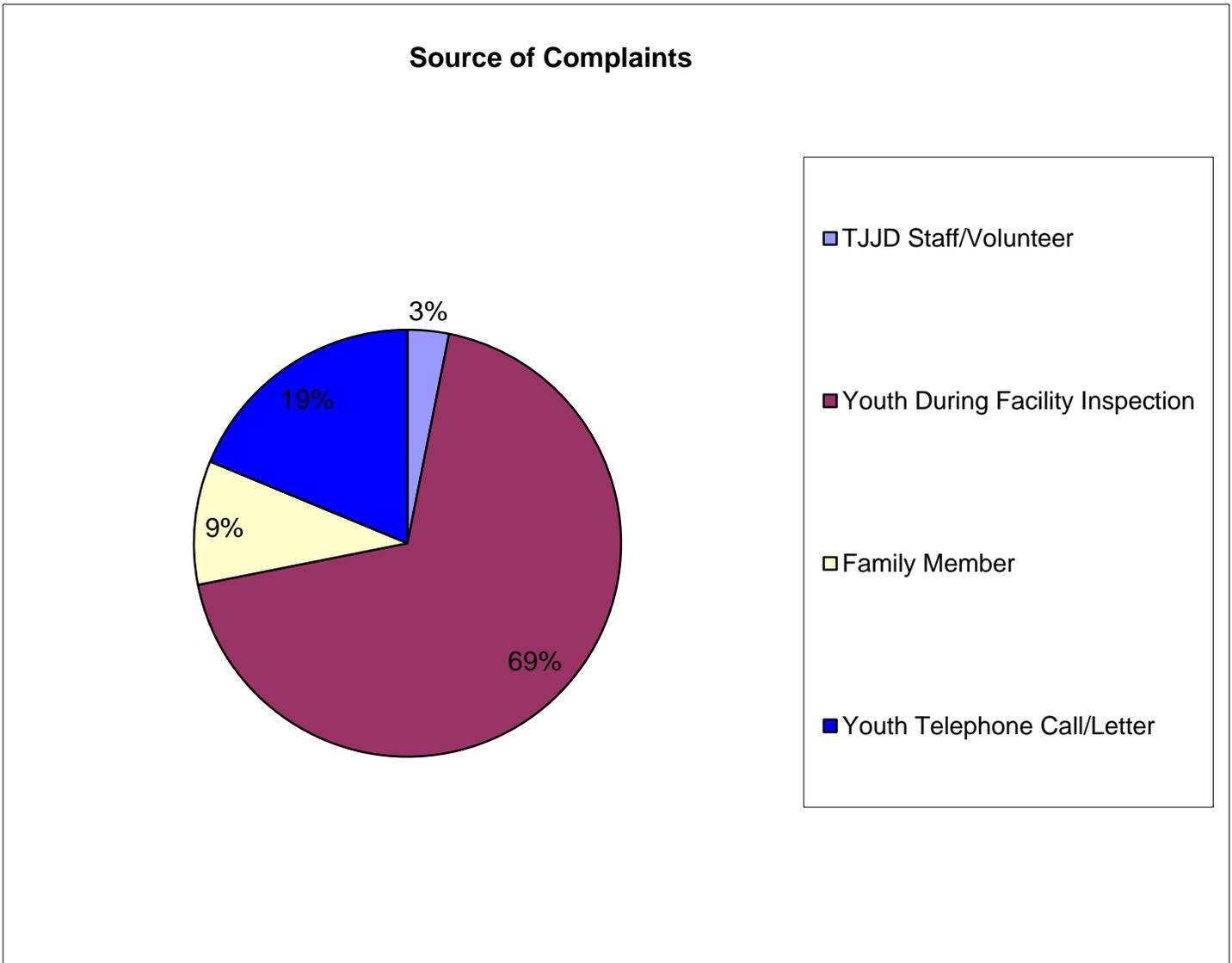
Amarillo Area Parole
Bell County Area Parole
Harlingen Area Parole
Lubbock Area Parole
Tyler Area Parole
Waco Area Parole

Contract Care Facilities

Abraxas Youth and Family Services-*San Antonio TX*
Associated Marine Institutes, Inc. (RGMI)-*Los Fresnos TX*
Byrds Therapeutic Group Home-*Houston TX*
Garza County Regional Juvenile Center-*Post TX*
Gulf Coast Trades Center-*New Waverly TX*
HarrisCounty Psychiatric Center-*HoustonTX*
National Mentor Healthcare LLC East Intermediate-*HoustonTX*
New Day Achievement Center-*Huntsville TX*
Specialized Alternatives for Youth (SAFY)- *Arlington TX*
Therapeutic Family Life-*AustinTX*
Unity Children's Home-*HoustonTX (three locations)*

Anyone may file a complaint with the IO. Complaints can be made via telephone, mail, fax, email, or in person during a facility inspection. The IO received 64 complaints during the second quarter. The majority of these cases were received directly from the youth during facility inspections.

Second Quarter-FY 12

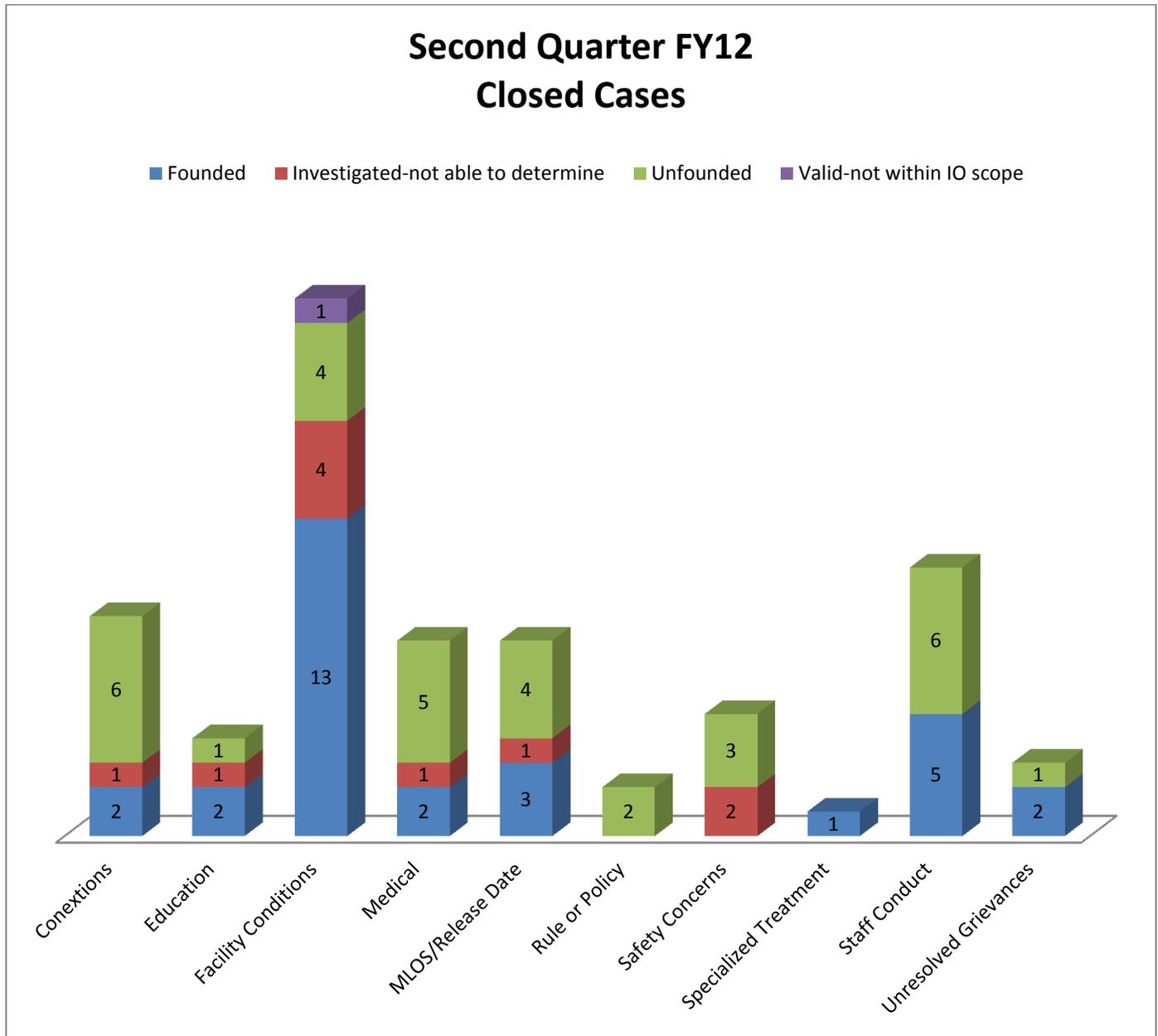


Complaints Received by Facility-Second Quarter FY 12*

Facility	Total for Facility	Conexions	Education	Facility Conditions	Medical	MLOS/Release Date	Other	Rule or Policy	Safety Concerns	Staff Conduct	Unresolved Grievances
Ayres House	2			1	1						
Corsicana Residential Treatment Center	5			1	1	1				2	
Evins Regional Juvenile Center	6			5		1					
Gainesville State School	6			1	1	1	1			1	1
Garza County Regional Juvenile Center	2		1								1
Giddings State School	4					1				3	
McFadden Ranch	6	4	1			1					
McLennan County SJCF	9	2			2	3				1	1
Ron Jackson State JCC	19	2	1	8	1		3	1		3	
Tuman House	2						1	1			
Unity Children's Home-Blue Mountain Rd	1					1					
Willoughby House	2	1			1						

* Facilities without complaints are not listed

During the second quarter, the IO closed 73 cases. Cases are closed in one of four ways: Founded, Unfounded, Investigated-unable to determine, and Valid-not within IO scope.



In addition to the cases that are investigated by IO staff, the office also receives numerous inquiries and complaints that are referred to the appropriate authority. During the first quarter, the IO received 108 inquiries and referrals.

Second Quarter FY12 Inquiries and Referrals

