
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Yesterday I had the chance to stop by the Baton Rouge Regional Office to visit with RM Sue Larisey and her staff, and I had the opportunity to sit in on the last part of Service Coordination training. The topic was taking care of yourself. I think everyone in the class agreed that none of us is very good at taking care of ourselves. So I gave it some thought, and checked my schedule for Friday...it looked like I could take a little time off for myself. So that's what I did. This issue of What's Up, Doc? is coming from home today. We all need a therapy day once in a while, and I want to give everyone permission to take a day, with your supervisors' approval, of course.

It's been a busy week – but a really good week. Mark Steward from the Missouri Youth Services Institute visited Jetson this week and was very impressed with what he saw. He visited every dorm and noticed active participation by the kids in LA Mod processes, and staff who were engaged as well. He said the facility looks great and he is extremely pleased.

And – Mark then visited the Legislature. He talked with people there about his observations at Jetson and testified before the House Judiciary Committee at the hearing on SB302 that will allow us to transform a portion of JCY into the regional, therapeutic Capitol Area Center for Youth. After some debate and with a few amendments, the bill passed the committee and will now be heard by the full House of Representatives. We are encouraged that the bill is moving along and we are hoping it will pass.

In the middle of all that, we went through the ACA central office audit. Thanks to Angela Arabie, ACA Accreditation Manager, and the CQIS staff, including Lynne Geromini, for policy coordination, Phyllis Martello, Katie Kirkpatrick and Anne Carter, who prepared and disseminated the policies, Diana Williamson, who drafted policies, and Chief of Operations Ellyn Peterson, who all worked long hours to ensure that our policies and files are in very good order. Everyone at central office pulled together to make sure the building sparkled and all offices and work spaces are in order. All the hard work paid off – the two auditors were very complimentary of the work that we have done and noted that our files and policies are shipshape. The auditors were very impressed with the enthusiastic, upbeat attitude of the staff.

Most of you are probably aware of what ACA (American Correctional Association) is and how it works. Central office's operation was measured against the 139 central office standards. The measurement is obtained based on written documentation, observations and interviews with staff. OJJ-central office attained 100% on all applicable standards. We will join Field Services, which was re-accredited last year with flying colors, and we plan to pursue accreditation at all three secure facilities. We are going to have a major celebration when we can brag that OJJ is a fully ACA accredited agency!

As always, thanks to each of you in every office and facility, for all you do every day, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

“Doc”

Dr. Mary Livers

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