

# **Fouts Springs Youth Facility**

## **2003 – 2004 Grand Jury Report**

### **I. Reason For Investigation**

The California Penal Code §919 (b) mandates that the Grand Jury inquire into the condition and management of public detention facilities.

### **II. Procedure**

The Grand Jury

- Interviewed Fouts Springs Youth Facility staff
- Toured Fouts Springs Youth Facility grounds and buildings
- Spoke with wards at Fouts Springs Youth Facility

### **III. Background**

1. Fouts Springs was established in 1959 as an all male facility for the Juvenile Courts of Solano, Colusa and Placer Counties as an alternative placement to the California Youth Authority (CYA). A program for females was added in May 2003.

2. Fouts Springs is located at a remote site in the Mendocino National Forest in Colusa County on land leased from the Federal Government.

3. The facility is operated under a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) among the counties of Solano, Colusa and Placer. Many other California counties also send juvenile wards to Fouts Springs.

4. Solano County is designated by the JPA as the administering county for the purpose of being the designated employer for facility staff, providing budget and accounting functions, claims processing, purchasing, etc.

5. Nielson High School, located at Fouts Springs, operates out of the office of the Colusa County Superintendent of Schools and has a graduation rate of 95%. The school has 6 teachers, 5 aides, 1 secretary and 1 registrar. All wards are required to attend school. 25 percent have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

6. Fouts Springs has a capacity of 160 wards and at the time of the Grand Jury visit had 88 wards, 81 males and 7 females.

7. The staff at Fouts Springs consists of 6 Administrators, 3 Supervising Group Counselors, 7 Senior Group Counselors and 27 Group Counselors.

8. There is one hour of family visitation per week. Female wards receive visitors on Saturday, males on Sunday.

#### **IV. Findings And Recommendations**

*Each finding is referenced to the background paragraph number.*

**Finding #1:** Fouts Springs is not being used to its capacity by the JPA counties. (3)(6)

**Recommendation #1:** JPA counties should look into assigning more wards to Fouts Springs and increase efforts to promote the use of Fouts Springs by other California counties.

#### **V. Comments**

**Fouts Springs Mission Statement: To protect society by restructuring unacceptable anti-social behaviors of youth.**

After observing the Fouts Springs staff and wards and comparing their success rate with other juvenile detention facilities, it seems that the JPA communities should explore the possibility of making more use of the facility. Fouts Springs changes the behavior of its wards and the recidivism rate suggests they have a strong program.

#### **VI. Affected Agencies**

- Solano County Board of Supervisors
- Solano County Department of Probation
- Colusa County Board of Supervisors
- Placer County Board of Supervisors