



Davenport boot camp scrutinized for resident treatment

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DAVENPORT, Iowa (AP) -- A boot camp for delinquent boys is under scrutiny after a state investigation showed its juveniles often went hungry, were subjected to corporal punishment and were sometimes denied timely access to the bathroom.

SUMMIT's troubles come five years after former director John Bolsinger was charged with molesting teenage boys under his watch. He was convicted and is serving a prison sentence scheduled to end in 2012.

The camp's latest problems were documented in a state report based on interviews and an onsite inspection last month.

It's the second time SUMMIT has been scolded for not giving enough food to the residents or allowing them enough time to eat, state officials noted. A 2001 investigation, done at the same time of the Bolsinger abuse discovery, found several problems that landed the facility in trouble with licensing agencies. The facility ultimately earned back full licensure.

Tom Wilson, executive director of Family Resources Inc., which operates SUMMIT, said he disagrees with some of the state's latest allegations but would not elaborate.

"We still have a full certification of licensure," he said. "That is very important."

SUMMIT -- which oversees teenage boys assigned to the program by juvenile court judges -- will be subjected to unannounced visits by the state and could face licensing sanctions if the problems are not corrected, according to the six-page report.

Wilson said his group is working to cooperate and implement the state's recommendations.

The investigation was the result of a complaint made to the state. Inspectors visited SUMMIT for four days in early January. They reviewed files and interviewed several Family Resources officials, residents and the complainant.

According to the report, residents had no longer than five minutes to eat their breakfast, and were allowed five minutes to clean up after eating, brush their teeth, gather their school work, get their jackets on and line up for class.

"All of the residents indicated they did not get enough to eat, especially on days when there was a lot of physical training," the report states.

One supervisor noted that a resident was punished for sneaking food at night and for taking food out of the garbage. Residents admitted to either stealing food or knowing others who stole food because they were hungry.

The report also cited SUMMIT's corporal punishment, including how residents were forced to stay in the push-up position for up to two hours. One teen said he and other boys had to remain in the push-up rest position for 45 minutes because they weren't fast enough during dinner cleanup, the report states.

Investigators also discovered a few instances in which residents were denied access to the bathroom. In one case, a resident was reported to have urinated on himself during physical training because bathroom breaks are not allowed during that time. Another reported having to complete tasks, including bear crawls, push-ups and

making a bed, before being allowed to go to the bathroom.

SUMMIT -- which stands for Success Utilizing Motivation, Morale, Intensity and Treatment -- opened in 1995. It is one of two highly structured juvenile programs Iowa. The other is in Woodward.

About 20 boys between the ages of 15 and 18 are typically enrolled in the program at a time. The program lasts 90 days and requires residents to attend classes and undergo physical training.

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