



## DCFS pulls teens from school

Rockford youth treatment facility is being investigated.

The Associated Press

ROCKFORD, Ill. -- The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is pulling 22 teenagers out of a Rockford residential school called The Mill as it investigates recent incidents there -- a move that may threaten the nonprofit facility's future.

Officials at the treatment facility for emotionally and mentally troubled youth recently reported an allegation by one female resident that another female resident had been having sex with a male staff member. The staff member also allegedly gave both girls marijuana.

"Less than 24 hours later, I got a call from DCFS saying they were going to begin to remove all of their youth from The Mill," said Jim Spruyt, president of facility. "It shocked me. I was stunned."

Spruyt said the state's action would force the center's closure, putting 110 staff members out of work.

An investigation has been opened, agency officials confirmed.

"The department will no longer place youth at this facility," said DCFS spokesman Kendall Marlowe. "The 22 youth in DCFS care who are currently at this facility are being relocated as quickly as possible to appropriate placements."

The Mill met with a rash of problems in 2004 when DCFS officials imposed a reform plan.

The agency also temporarily stopped sending state wards there this year.

Cook County's top child welfare official this year has warned state and court officials about problems at the center.