

## COURT DELAYS INTERVIEWS AT DRUG CENTER

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An appeals court has put a hold on plans by state officials to interview youths enrolled in a controversial drug and alcohol treatment program in Lake Worth.

Officials with Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services are investigating claims that employees at Growing Together Inc. have emotionally abused young drug and alcohol abusers there and have used physical force against the youths.

HRS investigators want to interview 11 youths enrolled in the program, and they want to conduct the interviews in private, without the youths' parents present. Circuit Court Judge Howard Berman approved that plan Tuesday, but parents of the youths appealed his decision to the Fourth District Court of Appeal.

The appeals court ordered the interviews delayed until it hears arguments on whether the parents or their attorneys should be allowed to attend the interviews. Appellate judges gave the parents until Monday to submit their arguments.

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