

# Services to Truants and Runaways Program

## Resources and Services

The Services to Truants and Runaways program began in fiscal year 1984 as a \$3.9 million line item in the department's

budget. Today, the program:

- addresses the needs of runaway and truant youths and their families and diverts the youths from the juvenile justice and child protective services systems;
- determines the number of runaways and truants statewide and examines the

need for services; and

- defines the most effective service model and estimates the cost of providing services statewide.

The program is staffed with a program specialist and a clerk. Services are provided through contracts with public and pri-

Figure 37

## Counseling or Shelter Services Initiated by Providers of Services to Truants and Runaways FY 1987

Provider	City	Youths Served		
		Shelter Services	Counseling Only	Total Served
Abilene Girls' Home	Abilene	17	155	172
Catholic Family Services	Amarillo	71	91	162
Youth Services of Brazoria County	Angleton	17	115	132
Middle Earth Inc.	Austin	170	156	326
Juvenile Probation Department of Jefferson County	Beaumont	16	325	341
Montgomery County Youth Services Bureau	Conroe	4	108	112
Gulf Coast Council of La Raza	Corpus Christi	312	3	315
Promise House	Dallas	149	3	152
The Bridge Association	Fort Worth	79	21	100
Chimney Rock Center	Houston	64	326	390
Central Texas Youth Services Bureau	Killeen	5	27	32
Sabine Valley Mental Health Mental Retardation	Longview	27	63	90
Comal County Juvenile Residential Supervision and Treatment Center	New Braunfels	59	40	99
Youth Alternatives Inc.	San Antonio	520	161	681
Smith County Youth Alternatives	Tyler	79	17	96
Tyler County Youth Development Center	Woodville	55	1	56
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,644</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>3,256</b>

vate community-based programs. During fiscal year 1987, the program contracted with 16 agencies located across the state that serve a varied population. Counseling is the primary service provided to youths and their families by the contractor. Emergency shelter is also available to the youths.

Youths and their families are referred to contractors by juvenile probation departments, child protective services units, schools, law enforcement agencies, parents, and through self-referral. One of the primary goals of the program is to keep

families together by providing crisis intervention counseling. Shelter services are considered a temporary solution and are used only in the most volatile or dangerous situations.

Contractors submit monthly statistical reports to regional contract staff who forward the reports to the state office in Austin, where the data is compiled and used to study the service delivery system and client population.

Figure 37 reflects the number of youths who received counseling or shelter services from individual providers of Services

to Truants and Runaways.

Studies conducted in Texas over the past three years have estimated that as many as 100,000 households have experienced problems with a runaway youth. The studies include the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs study which estimated in 1984 that some 90,000 Texas households had at least one youth who had run away from home. The DHS 1985 Special Texas Census indicated that more than 100,000 households had experienced the problem. Research in this area continues.