

Community Initiatives for Program Development

implements special projects and initiatives in Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services and Child Care Licensing.

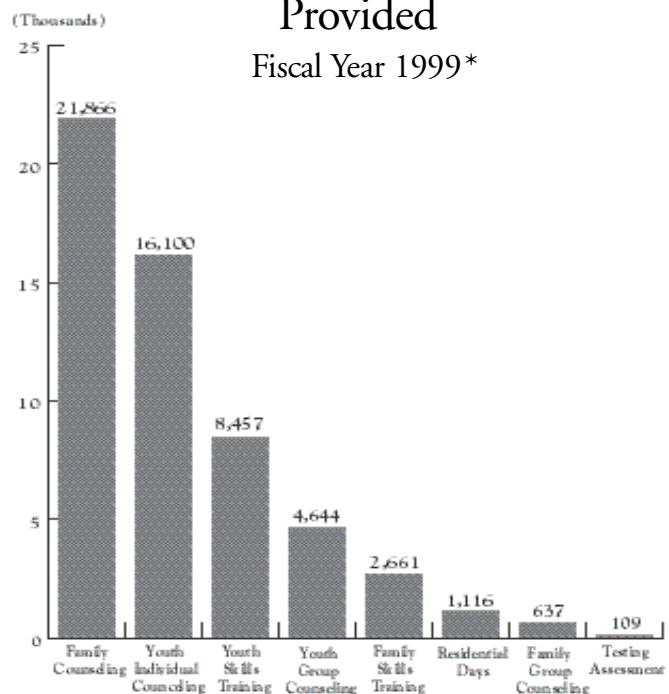
In the 76th Legislative Session, Texas lawmakers focused increased attention on programs designed to prevent child abuse and juvenile delinquency. They named PRS as the primary agency to handle such prevention programs in the state. The governor's office recommended transferring the Community Based Family Resource and Support Grant to PRS and the Legislature made plans to transfer several community based programs to the agency. Those programs include:

- Parents As Teachers
- Dan Kubiak Buffalo Soldiers
- Communities In Schools

The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) is often associated with investigative and regulatory programs that serve and protect vulnerable Texans. However, PRS places a great deal of emphasis on services and projects that respond to citizens' concerns, involve community initiative and innovation, and treat the problems that may lead to abuse, neglect, exploitation and delinquency. To meet these goals, the agency's Community Initiatives Division administers prevention and early intervention projects and develops and

Number of STAR Services Provided

Fiscal Year 1999*



* Clients may have received more than one service

The Community Initiatives Division was also renamed the Division of Prevention and Early Intervention Services effective Sept. 1, 1999.

Programs Benefiting Youth and Families

Services To At-Risk Youth

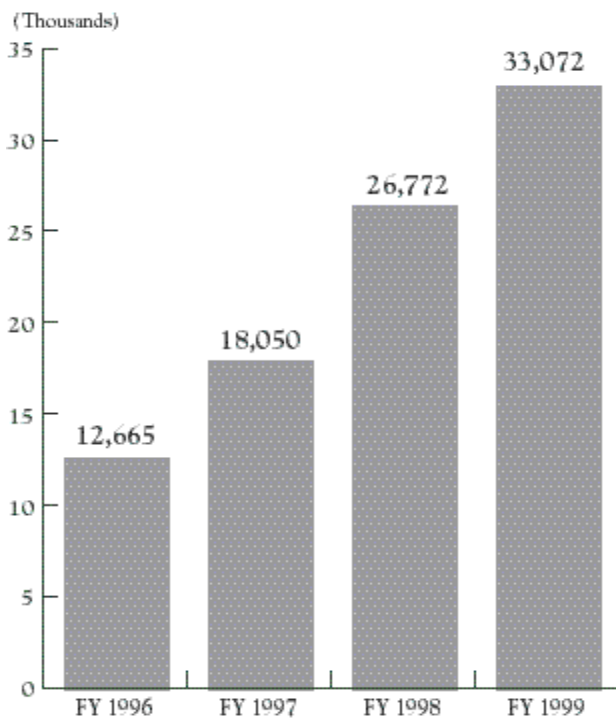
The Services To At-Risk Youth (STAR) program serves young people in at-risk situations. Through contracts with community agencies, STAR offers youths services such as crisis intervention, parent training, mentoring services and counseling. STAR targets youths who are having difficulty at home, have had a brush with the law or have run away. Although these children don't fit the categories traditionally served by social service and juvenile probation agencies, early intervention is critical to help them resolve their problems before they turn to violent or delinquent behavior.

Although the program was originally designed to serve runaways and truants, STAR services were expanded in 1995 to include children ages 7–17 who have committed certain types of juvenile offenses. STAR services were increased as well. Once limited to 55 counties, the program was expanded during 1999 to provide services in all of Texas' 254 counties. In 1999, STAR served 33,072 youths.

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

PRS operates the Texas Runaway Hotline at 1-888-580-HELP and the Texas Youth Hotline at 1-800-210-2278. The hotlines, which include a workforce of about 90 volunteers, offer crisis intervention, counseling services, and information and referrals to youths and families. During 1999, the programs increased public awareness through television, radio and other media. Collectively, the number of calls received by the hotlines increased to 47,829, a rise from 36,091 received in the previous year.

STAR Clients Served



Community Youth Development Grants

In 1999, PRS awarded grants totaling \$6.5 million to 13 targeted communities that design programs to reduce juvenile crime. The Community Youth Development program provides money for after-school and mentoring programs, computer labs, alternative activities, parenting programs, and other projects in ZIP codes with the highest rates of juvenile crime in the state. The program utilizes community steering committees to select a comprehensive array of services aimed at

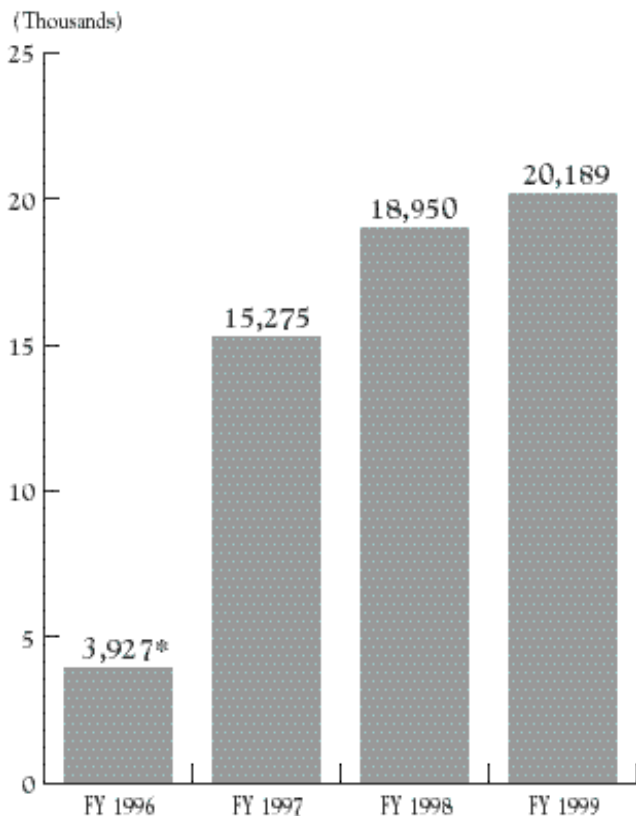


preventing delinquency. Community Youth Development Grant programs are collaborative efforts that bring together local agencies and businesses that historically may not have worked together.

Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment Project

By pooling resources, PRS, the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, and the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation have developed a model treatment project for juvenile sex offenders. This project is in Galveston, where services are also provided to the juvenile's families, victims and victims' families.

Clients Served by Community Youth Development



* Program did not exist through entire fiscal year 1996.



Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

Volunteers like Jenée James are the listening ears behind every phone call to the Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines. Jenée, along with her fellow counselors, talk with callers who face a variety of issues, including family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, abuse and neglect, and running away. Jenee, a psychology major at The University of Texas at Austin, came to the hotline after seeing a news story on the services it provides. She has been working at the hotline for a year and a half. "I feel like I make a difference when I talk to the people who call," Jenée said. "Plus, I love the atmosphere."

Second Chance Teen Parent Program

In 1999 PRS collaborated with the Office of the Governor, Texas Department of Human Services, and Texas Workforce Commission on the Second Chance Teen Parent program. This program provides an array of services to teen parents who are receiving benefits through the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Second Chance is designed to stop the cycle of welfare and reduce and prevent problems experienced by pregnant teens, teenage parents and their children. Program sites implemented in 1999 were located in Bexar, Dallas, Harris and Hidalgo counties.

Programs Benefiting Abuse / Neglect Victims

Greater Texas Community Partners: Rainbow Room and Adopt-A-Caseworker

Children who come in contact with Child Protective Services often do not have items to meet their basic needs. In an emergency, caseworkers often end up supplying clothing, formula, diapers and other necessities out of their own pockets.

To meet this demand, Rainbow Rooms, supported by community contributions, provide



donated clothes, toys, formula and supplies to caseworkers in a store-like setting. The Adopt-A-Caseworker project pairs church and civic groups, businesses, and individuals with CPS caseworkers to help families and children. Participants donate things like birthday gifts, household goods, bus passes, new clothes, gift certificates for children's meals and money to pay for utilities.

Both Rainbow Rooms and Adopt-A-Caseworker initiatives are projects of the Greater Texas Community Partners. Texas Junior Leagues, child welfare boards and other volunteer organizations throughout the state work with Greater Texas Community Partners to bring together local organizations and businesses to help abused and neglected children.

The Community Partners program was the subject of a special evaluation project in 1998 and 1999 by the University of Texas. The study, which involved the University of Texas School of Social Work, the LBJ School of Public Affairs and the University of Texas Data Center, found that Community Partners has had a positive impact on caseworkers, donors and others.

Greater Texas Community Partners and the Texas Junior League won the 1999 Governor's Volunteer Award for collaborating to meet the needs of abused and neglected children in Dallas and statewide.

At the end of 1999 there were 58 Rainbow Rooms, an increase from 37 in 1998, and 259 caseworkers benefiting from the Adopt-A-Caseworker project in Texas, an increase from 217 in 1998. About 33,500 children were served by Rainbow Rooms in 1999.

The Bridge Project

Volunteers across the state also gave many hours of their time to help Adult Protective Services clients. Through the Bridge Project in Longview, youth volunteers have created a store-like setting in which caseworkers can get needed resources for APS clients. In 1999, similar projects were developed in other communities throughout the state.

Programs Benefiting Children and Their Families / Abuse Prevention Efforts

Family Outreach and Crisis Nurseries

Family Outreach is a community-based program that helps families in times of stress. The program enlists volunteers to provide support, encouragement and parenting information under the supervision of a PRS case manager. The goal of the program is to prevent child abuse and neglect by strengthening troubled families. There are 31 Family Outreach centers throughout the state. PRS also participated in two Crisis Nursery projects. These projects provide respite care to children who are at risk of abuse and neglect in Amarillo and Lubbock.

Texas Families: Together and Safe

In 1999, PRS provided funding for 16 collaborative projects in 27 counties to provide health and child abuse prevention services to high-risk families under the "Texas Families: Together and Safe" program. Projects were developed by coalitions of local providers and government agencies to meet the specific needs of their community. Each project is different, but all are designed to streamline access to services and focus on the whole family.

Healthy Families

Healthy Families focuses on building parenting skills and healthy childhood development. Based on the Hawaii Healthy Start program, it serves parents and children beginning prenatally through age 5 and is available to families who are at-risk of child abuse or other unhealthy childhood conditions. Through Healthy Families, clients receive weekly home visits that taper off over time. The program is designed to prevent



When Luis Sanchez was asked to paint a mural inside a Child Protective Services Office in Edinburg, he never imagined how he would become so involved in the agency's cause for an emergency resource room. Sanchez, a freelance artist for 15 years, has spent more than 300 hours making his mural, "There's No Place Like Home," the centerpiece of the Upper Valley Rainbow Room, an in-house resource center that distributes new items, such as clothing, diapers and formula to clients of CPS caseworkers. Sanchez was so moved by news stories about abused and neglected children that he donated another painting, "A Rainbow for Every Child," to raise money for the Rainbow Room.

infant mortality and premature births, disease, developmental delay, child abuse and neglect, school failure, emergency room visits, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, and other negative outcomes for children, youth and families.

The Healthy Families program was evaluated in 1998 and 1999. The evaluation showed the program helped reduce child abuse, substance abuse and repeat teen pregnancies, and it helped increase parents' compliance with child immunization schedules. There are 17 Healthy Families programs in Texas.

Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters

Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a joint program of PRS and the Texas Workforce Commission, with collaboration from the Texas Education Agency. The program targets children ages 3–5 and builds on the basic bond between parents and their children. Supported by easy-to-use activity packets, home visits and group meetings, parents learn to prepare their children for success in school and beyond. Materials are available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. In 1999, PRS funded sites in Austin, Dallas, Denton and Houston.

Young At Heart

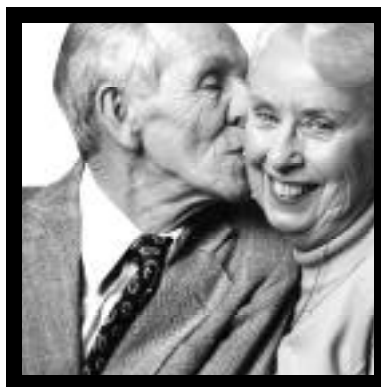
Young At Heart is an intergenerational program to encourage older Texans to volunteer in child-care facilities. The program is administered through VISTA

grants and its steering committee includes several senior advocacy agencies. Young At Heart efforts include recruitment, training, funding, media materials, and volunteer recognition and evaluation. At the end of 1999, there were 11 Young At Heart programs in Texas. In 1999, the program expanded with the creation of Young At Heart Works, which will further encourage participation by older Texans by helping them become employed in child-care facilities.

Child and Adult Abuse Prevention Kits

In 1999 Community Initiatives worked with the agency's Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services divisions to increase public awareness about abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and vulnerable adults by producing community action and information kits. Creation and distribution of the 1999 Child Abuse Prevention Kit was the fourth such agency effort. This year's kit represented continued collaboration between PRS, the Children's Trust Fund and Prevent Child Abuse Texas. The kits contain overviews of the agency's programs, statistics, public awareness materials such as sample press releases and posters, and various resource information about issues surrounding children, families, and vulnerable adults.

Thousands of kits were distributed to individuals, school districts, local agencies, advocacy groups and others. The kits can also be downloaded for free via the agency's web site at www.tdprs.state.tx.us under "Child Protection" and "Adult Protection."





— *The Dallas Morning News*: David Woo

Texas First Lady Laura Bush hugs foster child Chelsee, 13, at the Rainbow Room in Dallas. Chelsee says donated duffels will help children avoid the humiliation of carrying belongings in trash bags.

Together, they announced the Brand New Bag program that gives foster children a duffel bag when they come into state care. The program is a public and private venture among the Meadows Foundation, The Container Store, the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, Greater Texas Community Partners and Wednesday's Child Benefit Corp.

