

Executive Summary

The 2000 Annual Report of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) is an overview of the agency's accomplishments, performance and services. The report covers the period beginning on Sept. 1, 1999, through Aug. 31, 2000. It's companion, the 2000 PRS Data Book, is a descriptive statistical resource of PRS services. The 2000 Annual Report and Data Book can be found on the agency's Web site at www.tdprs.state.tx.us. We hope you find these publications helpful in learning about our mission to *protect the unprotected* residents of Texas.

Philosophy

PRS board and staff embrace the following tenets:

- ◆ Provide high-quality services to clients through an integrated, efficiently managed service delivery system.
- ◆ Recruit, train and retain staff that exhibit a high degree of professionalism.
- ◆ Stress prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation through planning and integration of prevention programs and strategies within the agency and to the public.
- ◆ Behave in a manner that invokes trust, encourages consistency, and promotes positive relationships and partnerships.
- ◆ Be accountable at all levels for agency resources.
- ◆ Accept responsibility for our actions.
- ◆ Recognize that only through involvement of all community members can the State of Texas hope to protect its children and adults who are at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited.
- ◆ Work with other organizations to share responsibility for those in need of protection.
- ◆ Bring forth individual concerns and suggestions in an open and honest manner with corrective action recommendations developed where appropriate.
- ◆ Provide courteous treatment to all clients, complainants, alleged perpetrators and other people who have contact with us.

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Organizational Leadership

The policy making body, the Texas Board of Protective and Regulatory Services, consists of six members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. All members of the board must have a demonstrated interest in the services PRS provides, and two members must represent the public. The board members serve staggered six-year terms with one member appointed by the governor as chair.

The primary duty of the board is to develop policies that define and facilitate implementation of the departmental programs.

PRS is divided into 11 administrative regions with the state headquarters located in Austin. Our staff provides services through four main divisions:

- ◆ Child Protective Services,
- ◆ Adult Protective Services,
- ◆ Child Care Licensing, and
- ◆ Prevention and Early Intervention.

Executive summary

The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) is an agency focused on serving people, specifically the most vulnerable residents of Texas. The 6,698 dedicated PRS employees work in conjunction with a vast network of public and private partners to fulfill the agency's mission of *protecting the unprotected*.

PRS investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect; provides foster care and adoption services; investigates allegations of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation against the elderly and people with disabilities; regulates child care; provides prevention and intervention services; and supports contracted programs that make children and families safe and secure. While we work everyday to fulfill our mission, in 2000 we have concentrated efforts on many new initiatives and innovations.

All four divisions of PRS saw significant changes in 2000 due largely to actions taken by the 76th Texas Legislature. We also received recognition for our work that we want to share with you.

Child Protective Services

The Child Protective Services (CPS) division of PRS improved services to children and families by purchasing more services for children and families, developing better risk assessment tools and upgrading the technology that supports staff. These improvements were possible due to support from Gov. George W. Bush and the 76th Legislature.

Lawmakers increased appropriations for the 2000-2001 biennium to a total of \$1.3 billion compared to funding of \$1.1 billion for the prior biennium, an increase of approximately \$204 million. The Legislature also approved hiring more staff to improve safety of Texas children. The agency's full-time positions for the biennium were increased by a total of 437. PRS has made great strides implementing new programs and initiatives that are a direct result of the 2000-2001 appropriations.

Legislative Impact

The following changes were among the new laws affecting caseworkers and clients:

- ◆ Authorized CPS risk directors in each region to review and evaluate cases to identify those with a high risk to a child's health or safety.
- ◆ Manslaughter of a child has been included as grounds for termination of parental rights to surviving children.
- ◆ PRS will only perform home studies for cases in which the agency is actively involved.
- ◆ PRS will no longer be ordered to oversee supervised visitation in child custody matters unless PRS is a party to the suit.
- ◆ A court will recognize legal standing for a foster parent in any legal suit after the child has lived with that foster parent for 12 months. Prior to the law change, it took 18 months before a foster parent had legal standing.

With funding from the Legislature, PRS worked with an independent consultant and identified specific areas where resources were most needed. These include prevention, intervention and quicker permanency in child protection cases.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS) is responsible for investigating abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults who are elderly or have disabilities. APS identified a need for expanded guardianship services for clients. PRS revised guardianship policies and procedures to enhance safeguards for managing wards' estates and to increase supervisory oversight.

Legislative Impact

The Legislature rewrote Chapter 48, Human Resources Code, clarifying the scope and responsibility for APS and the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) in maltreatment investigations in MHMR settings. As a result:

- ◆ There are more stringent definitions of child abuse and neglect to investigations regarding children in MHMR facilities.
- ◆ Alleged perpetrators are no longer able to seek immunity from civil or criminal liability by reporting abuse, neglect or exploitation that they have committed.
- ◆ PRS does not have to pay for copies of medical and mental health records in the course of an investigation.

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The Probate Code was also amended to require courts to notify PRS before designating APS as guardian of individuals with whom APS has had no previous involvement.

A National Reputation

APS staff coordinated the 16th annual APS Conference in San Antonio in November 1999. With participants from 38 states and several foreign countries, the Texas APS Conference has become the major training event for APS practitioners and related professionals nationally.

Child Care Licensing

Perhaps the most positive support that the Legislature provided for Child Care Licensing was \$8.4 million for a new automated system. The system will provide accessible, user friendly information for parents and child-care providers; information on background checks of child-care workers; increased monitoring capabilities; and improved data analysis capabilities. The Legislature changed the requirements for certain child-care providers to include specialized training on Shaken Baby Syndrome, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and early childhood brain development. PRS has monitoring authority over these mandates as well as new vision and hearing screening requirements in group day-care homes, similar to those required for day-care centers.

Prevention and Early Intervention

New legislation effective Sept. 1, 1999, gave PRS several new programs in its newly created Division of Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), formerly known as Community Initiatives for Program Development. Senate Bill 1574 designated PRS as the state agency with primary responsibility for implementing and managing programs to prevent at-risk behaviors that lead to abuse, delinquency, running away, truancy and dropping out of school.

PEI launched public awareness campaigns to increase the public partnership in the prevention of abuse and neglect of children and elderly Texans. The *It's Up To You* campaign was launched in April as the first of a three-year multimedia effort. In 2000, the focus of the campaign was parental responsibility to prevent child abuse. The following two years will focus on community responsibility and personal responsibility in the

prevention of child abuse. The *Not Forgotten* campaign was launched in May as part of a public awareness effort targeting isolation as the main risk factor that leads to adult abuse, neglect and exploitation. Log on to www.itsuptoyou.org and www.notforgotten.org for more information. PEI also continued successful public awareness campaigns promoting services to youth in crisis or who have run away. For more information on these campaigns, log on to www.texasrunaway.org and www.texasyouth.org.

Impartial Reviews

We recognize that PRS has a great impact in the lives of the people we serve. When they disagree with our actions, they may contact our ombudsman's office at 1-800-720-7777. The ombudsman's office provides an impartial review of cases in which there has been a complaint. The review determines whether the agency's policies have been followed properly. If corrective action is needed, PRS offers a variety of solutions such as administrative reviews, hearings and mediation. During 2000, the ombudsman's office handled 2,163 complaints. Of that number 95.6 percent of agency actions were sustained.

Technology Advances

The agency's mission-critical automation systems all proved to be Y2K compliant and survived a potential service disruption. The Business Continuity/Disaster Preparedness Steering Committee that was formed to ensure the Y2K compliance has adapted a disaster recovery plan to respond to any other disaster that might occur. This will ensure that the agency can provide uninterrupted delivery of mission-critical services that protect vulnerable Texans and fulfill responsibilities to staff, critical providers, suppliers and other partners.

The Information Technology Division (IT) of PRS reached its goal to replace the computers used by PRS staff statewide. The upgrade to Pentium computers included upgrades to Microsoft 2000 and Exchange Mail. This replacement strengthened the productivity tools of the agency and enhance services to clients.

IT coordinated with other PRS divisions to develop a secure intranet site for employees across the state to access up-to-date information. Employees can access agency reports,

management policies and procedures, and employee benefit information.

Internet

In 2000, IT migrated the agency's Web site to its own servers. The homepage for PRS is www.tdprs.state.tx.us. Several domain names were purchased for special services such as the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (adoptchildren.org) and the child and adult prevention campaigns (itsuptoyou.org and notforgotten.org). In November 1999, the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) received a 2002 Adoption Excellence Award for public awareness for their use of Internet technology and videos of children waiting for adoption.

Dell Recognizes PRS

Michael Dell focused on the PRS Web site for his keynote address to the Government Technologies Conference in Austin on Feb. 16, 2000. Dell showcased the PRS site as an example of what can be done to decrease barriers between the public and private sectors and increase government access and services through the Internet. In addition to information for the keynote address, Dell presented a case study of PRS and our Internet site, which is included on Dell's Web site.

Focus On Advancement

We are proud of what we have accomplished *protecting the unprotected* Texans. Our vision and enthusiasm have led us to develop priorities for the next two years. The executive staff will coordinate seven strategic initiatives.

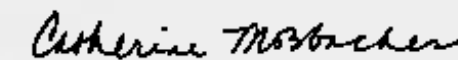
- ◆ Improve overall working conditions for PRS direct delivery staff.
- ◆ Improve outcomes for children and families served by CPS.
- ◆ Improve health and safety of children in out-of-home care.
- ◆ Improve technical support and systems.
- ◆ Revise agency rules.
- ◆ Improve procurement and monitoring of contracted services.
- ◆ Identify executive management practices and roles for improved operations.

We wish to express our appreciation to the thousands of dedicated PRS employees and talented leadership staff for their strength, innovation and perseverance to meet the challenge of our changing times. Their hard work assures that vulnerable children and adults receive the services they so desperately need. We are grateful for the investment the 76th Legislature made in PRS and are proud of what has been accomplished. We look forward to enhancing our programs and advocacy efforts to maximize the contributions of our community and legislative partners.

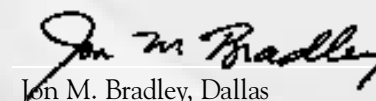


James R. Hine
Executive Director

PRS Board Members



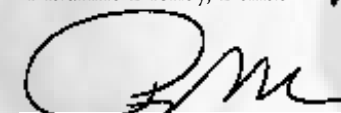
Catherine Clark Mosbacher, Houston
Chair



Jon M. Bradley, Dallas



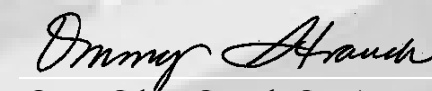
Maurine Dickey, Dallas



Richard S. Hoffman, Brownsville



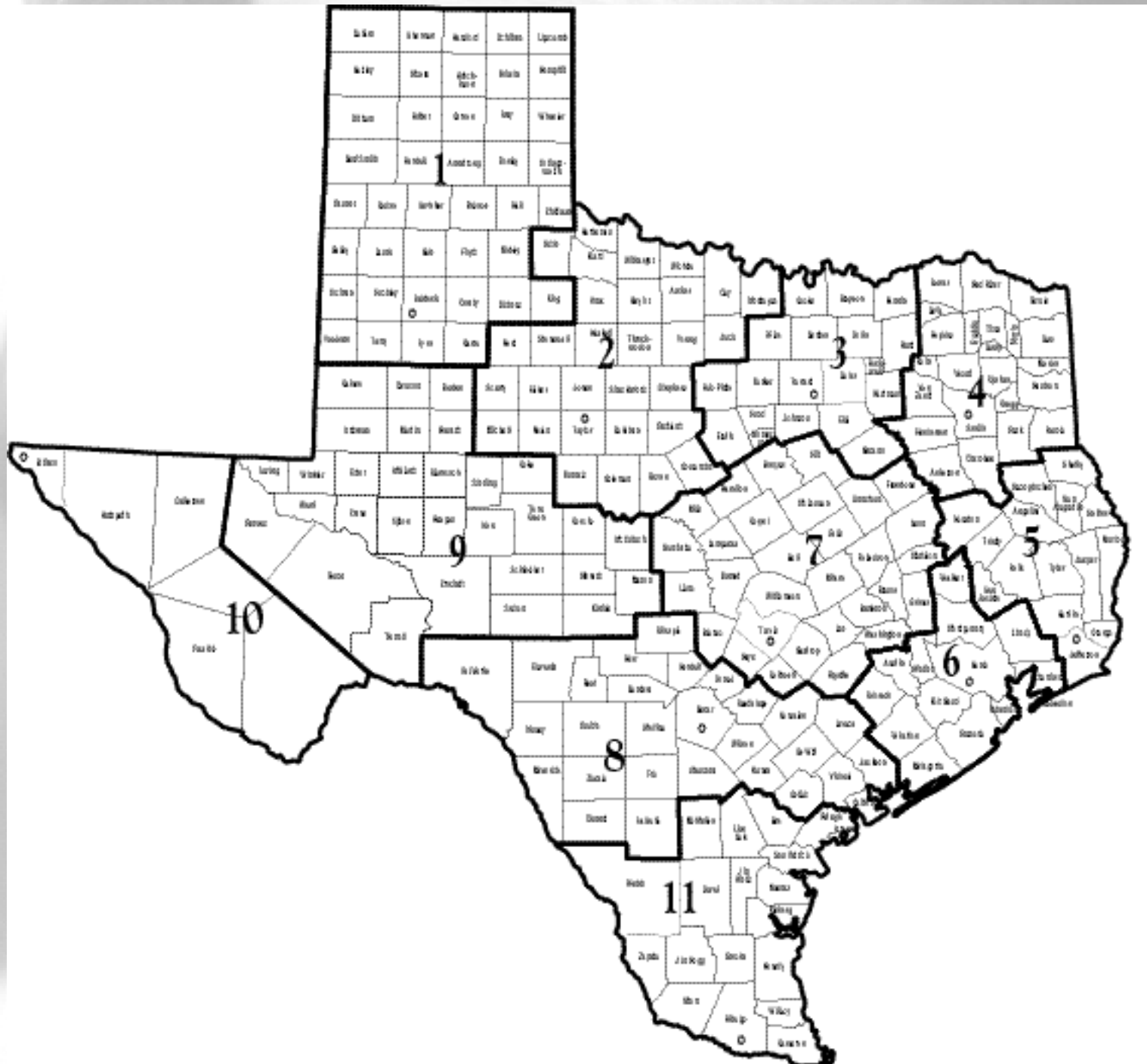
Naomi W. Ledé, College Station



Ommy Salinas Strauch, San Antonio

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Regional Boundaries



Hotlines

Texas Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400
Report abuse, neglect or exploitation of children, the elderly or people with disabilities.

Foster Care and Adoption Inquiry Line 1-800-233-3405
Information on how to become a foster or adoptive parent.

Child-Care Information 1-800-862-5252
Information about child care in Texas.

Ombudsman Hotline 1-800-720-7777
Make an inquiry about an existing PRS case or make a complaint.

Texas Runaway Hotline 1-888-580-HELP
To provide peer counseling to runaways and family members.

Texas Youth Hotline 1-800-210-2278
To provide peer counseling to youth and family members for family conflicts, delinquency, truancy and running away.

Abuse in MHMR Facilities 1-800-647-7418
To report abuse, neglect or exploitation in MHMR facilities.

Agency Web Sites

www.tdprs.state.tx.us Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

www.adoptchildren.org Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE)

www.texasrunaway.org Texas Runaway Hotline

www.texasyouth.org Texas Youth Hotline

www.itsuptoyou.org Child Abuse Prevention

www.notforgotten.org Adult Abuse Prevention

www.rainbowrooms.org Rainbow Rooms