

Prevention and Early Intervention



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Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Responsibilities

- ◆ Work with Texas communities to develop and improve prevention and intervention services.
- ◆ Support those community-based programs designed to prevent abuse, neglect and delinquency.

Completed Initiatives

- ◆ The governor's office recommended the transfer of the Community-Based Family Resource and Support Grant to PRS, and the Legislature transferred several community-based prevention programs to PRS. Those programs include:
 - Parents As Teachers
 - Dan Kubiak Buffalo Soldiers
 - Communities In Schools
- ◆ PRS, the Texas Department of Human Services and the Texas Workforce Commission are collaborating to support the Second Chance Teen Parent Program. To increase the program's use, eligibility criteria has been expanded.

Progress Continues

- ◆ 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. In the 76th Legislature, Texas lawmakers focused increased attention on these areas. PRS was named the primary agency in the state to handle programs that prevent child abuse, juvenile delinquency, running away, truancy and dropping out of school. The division formerly known as Community Initiatives for Program Development became the Division of Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI). They are mandated to handle prevention and early intervention initiatives, including efforts in Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services and Child Care Licensing.
- ◆ PEI programs are administered through contracts with local community agencies or organizations. PEI has adapted the award-winning technology used by the PRS Judicial Web Page in prevention programs such as Services to At-Risk Youth and Community Youth Development that help identify local community services available to clients.

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The PEI Programs

PEI manages and contracts with community-based programs designed to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation of Texas children, elderly and adults with disabilities. In addition, PEI supports programs that prevent delinquency, running away, truancy and dropping out of school. PEI also helps local communities enhance the services that all PRS programs provide. All services are not available in all Texas communities. For information about services available in your community, visit our Web site at www.tdprs.state.tx.us.

Programs Benefiting Children, Youth and Families

Parents As Teachers (PAT)

Volunteers, mostly former teachers, work with the support of age-appropriate curriculum and parents with newborns to 5-year-old children to minimize developmental problems and lay the foundation for school success. During 2000, PRS funded five PAT programs in Austin, Falfurrias, Garland, Laredo, and Taylor/Callahan counties.

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Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS)

TFTS provides contracted funding to community-based programs that alleviate parental stress, promote parental competency and increase child nurturing while working toward family self-sufficiency. During 2000, there were 17 programs that provided services in approximately 26 counties.

Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

HIPPY delivers services designed to prepare children for school and increase parenting skills. Services are provided to parents of 3- to 5-year-old children. Home instructors, recruited from the targeted community, are trained paraprofessionals who have or have had a child in the HIPPY program. In 2000, there were eight HIPPY programs in Texas. PRS funded four of these programs in Austin, Dallas, Denton and Houston that serve 390 families.

Young At Heart

Young At Heart is an intergenerational program to encourage older Texans to volunteer in child-care facilities. PRS staff members collaborate in the implementation of the program and provide public awareness materials. At the end of 2000, there were 12 Young At Heart programs in Texas.

Communities In Schools (CIS)

CIS develops and coordinates programs, community and business partners, and resources as a one-stop shop to improve school attendance, academic performance, everyday behavior and the Texas dropout rate. At the end of 2000, there were 25 CIS programs that received state contracted funding.

Services To At-Risk Youth (STAR)

Through contracts with community agencies, STAR offers family crisis intervention counseling, short-term emergency residential care and individual and family counseling to youth age 7 to 17 who experience conflict at home, have been truant, have allegedly been involved in a delinquent offense or have run away. In 2000, STAR served 27,667 youths in all 254 counties.

Dan Kubiak Buffalo Soldier Heritage Program

This specialized program is designed to develop honor, pride and dignity in minority and at-risk youth. The goal is to reduce and prevent risky behavior, truancy and juvenile delinquency in males ages 10 to 17. Additionally, the program strives to increase youth volunteer work, community service, leadership and cultural activities. Referrals are received from juvenile probation departments, schools, churches and civic groups. There are five projects located in Bexar, Dallas, Tarrant, Tom Green and Washington counties. In 2000, 450 youth graduated from the program.

At-Risk Mentoring

Adult mentors spend time on a weekly basis with youths. Mentors are supervised during their involvement with the youths to ensure that the relationships are mutually beneficial. Youth served through this program are ages 7 through 17 and at risk of substance abuse, educational failure, dropping out of school, juvenile delinquency, gang activity or running away. In 2000, PRS supported 11 community-based mentoring programs.

Facility-Based Youth Enrichment Services

As a result of legislative action, PRS initiated an after-school and summer youth enrichment program. To receive PRS support, programs must deliver enrichment activities to youth who reside in communities identified as at risk due to indicators such as juvenile crime and high dropout rates. The program began with one contract during 2000.

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 2000, the programs increased public awareness through television, radio and other media. Calls to the hotline have doubled during the past five years from 19,221 calls to 41,846 calls.

During 2000, hotline staff and volunteers provided youth and families with 10,093 referrals to community organizations, including social service agencies and other youth related organizations.

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Community Youth Development Grants (CYD)

The CYD program provides grants to develop juvenile delinquency prevention approaches in communities that have a high incidence of juvenile crime. Mentoring, parenting skills, tutoring, youth employment, career preparation and alternative recreation activities are examples of the approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency. Local communities decide the exact prevention services provided in their communities. In 2000, PRS awarded grants to 13 targeted communities that designed programs to reduce juvenile crime. PRS provides ongoing training and technical assistance for all local CYD programs. PRS also supports an annual youth conference, the Teen Summit, to promote youth leadership and provide training and activities.

Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment Project

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

Second Chance Teen Parent Program

This program provides an array of services to teen parents who receive benefits through the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. The goals of the Second Chance program are to reduce and prevent the problems teenage parents and their children face and to break the cycle of welfare. Services are accessible to teens referred by the Texas Department of Human Services. Priority is given to those youth who can't live at home and are at risk of losing their TANF benefits. Since its inception, Second Chance programs have operated in Bexar, Dallas, Harris and Hidalgo counties and served 805 teens.

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Programs to Prevent or Address Child Abuse and Neglect

Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program (CBFRS)

These grants enable local communities and state networks to plan and provide family resource and support programs aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect. During 2000, PRS worked with 10 communities to develop service models for their areas. The Federal grant—part of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act—also funded child abuse prevention awareness materials and a small respite care pilot project.

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

Greater Texas Community Partners supports two projects that help CPS caseworkers meet the needs of their clients: Rainbow Rooms and Adopt-A-Caseworker. Rainbow Rooms, supported by community contributions, provide donated clothes, toys, formula and supplies to caseworkers in a store-like setting. Adopt-A-Caseworker projects pair church and civic groups, businesses, and individuals with CPS caseworkers to help families and children. Participants donate items such as birthday gifts, household goods, bus passes, new clothes, gift certificates for children's meals and money to pay for utilities. A unique public/private partnership with PRS, local Community Partners groups throughout Texas support more than 75 Rainbow Rooms and 270 adopted caseworkers.

Family Outreach

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. There are 31 Family Outreach centers throughout the state.



Cam Ray volunteers her time regularly to answer the Texas Runaway and Youth Hotlines. She and fellow hotline volunteers provide a variety of services to callers who face issues such as family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, abuse and neglect, and running away. Cam, a Web technologist at Dell Computers, joined the hotline two years ago because she recognized the need for community involvement to address the state's troubled youth problem. "The people I work with at the hotline are some of the most wonderful people I know because they want to be here to give back to their community," Cam said. "It's so rewarding to actually help a child or parent who is in a crisis situation."

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Healthy Families

An intensive home visitation program, Healthy Families is a primary child abuse and neglect prevention program. Healthy Families services begin as early as pregnancy and may continue until the child is 5 years of age. Services are provided by trained professionals and include intensive home visitation, parent education, case management and information and referral. During 2000, there were 2,027 families served by Healthy Families contracted programs.

Parents Anonymous of Texas

PRS contracts with Parents Anonymous of Texas to provide training and technical assistance services to community-based, parent support groups throughout the state. The goal is to promote positive parent behavior that will prevent child maltreatment.

Child and Adult Abuse Prevention Kits

PEI worked with Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services to increase public awareness about abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, elderly and adults with disabilities. That collaboration produced the Child Abuse Prevention Kit and the Adult Abuse Prevention Kit. This year's Child Abuse Prevention Kit represented continued collaboration between PRS, the Children's Trust Fund and Prevent Child Abuse Texas. Both kits contain overviews of the agency's programs, statistics, public awareness materials such as sample press releases and posters, and various informational resources. Thousands of kits were distributed to individuals, school districts, local agencies, advocacy groups and others to increase awareness and provide tools to prevent child and adult abuse. The kits also can be downloaded via the agency's web site at www.tdprs.state.tx.us under "Child Protection" and "Adult Protection."

It's Up To You - Child Abuse Prevention

PEI launched a statewide, multimedia campaign in April 2000 to increase public awareness about prevention of child abuse. This represented the first step in a three-year campaign. Three public service announcements that speak across diverse cultures have been produced and will be introduced as the campaign progresses. In 2000, the focus of the campaign was parental responsibility to prevent child abuse.

The campaign is produced with a combination of public and private funding. It includes the production and distribution of public service announcements for television and radio, and print advertising for billboards, buses, movie slides, etc. The ads were produced in English and Spanish. A special Web site —www.itsuptoyou.org—was also developed as an integral part of the campaign.



Martha Nava Armstrong is a former Communities In School (CIS) student who graduated from St. Mary's University in San Antonio and from the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston. She is now completing her first year of medical residency at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

In 1986, as a middle-schooler, I decided that I wanted to be a doctor. But I didn't realize I would have to make the grades, go to college and take the MCAT's. CIS has been a vital part of those steps. I come from a first-generation Mexican-American family. My parents' education is limited to the third grade. The thought of finishing high school was a big accomplishment to me. A lot of my friends were pregnant; a lot of them had joined gangs. I looked around and I realized I didn't want to do that with my life, but I had no role models. CIS changed all that. They provided me with a mentor, Carol Kemp, the CIS project director at my high school. She organized trips for us to visit different high schools, and provided after-school training to help me advance in my science courses. I was able to get summer jobs at a local hospital, and being around people with a vision and goals just fired me up. I started really visualizing myself as a doctor.

CIS taught us about setting goals and believing in ourselves. When I graduated from high school, I received a Lionel Richie Scholarship through CIS. My first year of residency has been hard but very rewarding. I see a lot of my friends come into the hospital in a very sad state. 'What did you do different?' they ask me. CIS was the difference in my life. Now I look forward to serving my community. I want to help somebody just as I was helped.