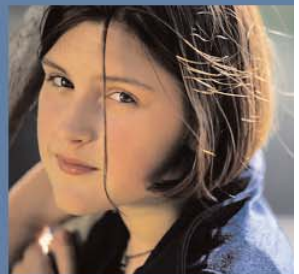




2005 Annual Report

Texas Department of Family
and Protective Services

Our mission is to protect children, the elderly, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by working with clients, families and communities.





Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 2005 Annual Report

Letter from the Commissioner

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) serves the state's youth, families, elderly, and people with disabilities. Our mission is to protect children, the elderly, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by working with clients, families, and communities. We work to accomplish that mission through four programs: Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, Child Care Licensing, and Prevention and Early Intervention.

The 2005 Annual Report is an overview of the department's programs, services, performance, and accomplishments. This report covers the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2004 through August 31, 2005. The companion to this report, the 2005 DFPS Data Book, is a comprehensive statistical resource. The 2005 Annual Report, Data Book, and additional information can be found on the agency's web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us/statistics. In 2005, DFPS began the process of Renewal to make improvements that touch every aspect of the agency and its mission. We laid the foundation for a wide spectrum of reforms and improvements required by Senate Bill 6, the protective services reform bill passed by the Texas Legislature and signed into law by Governor Rick Perry in the 2005 session.

In cooperation with a vast network of public and private partners, dedicated DFPS employees across Texas make tremendous contributions every day to fulfill our mission. I am pleased to present this summary of the services we provide, as well as highlights of the agency's performance and accomplishments.

Carey D. Cockerell
DFPS Commissioner

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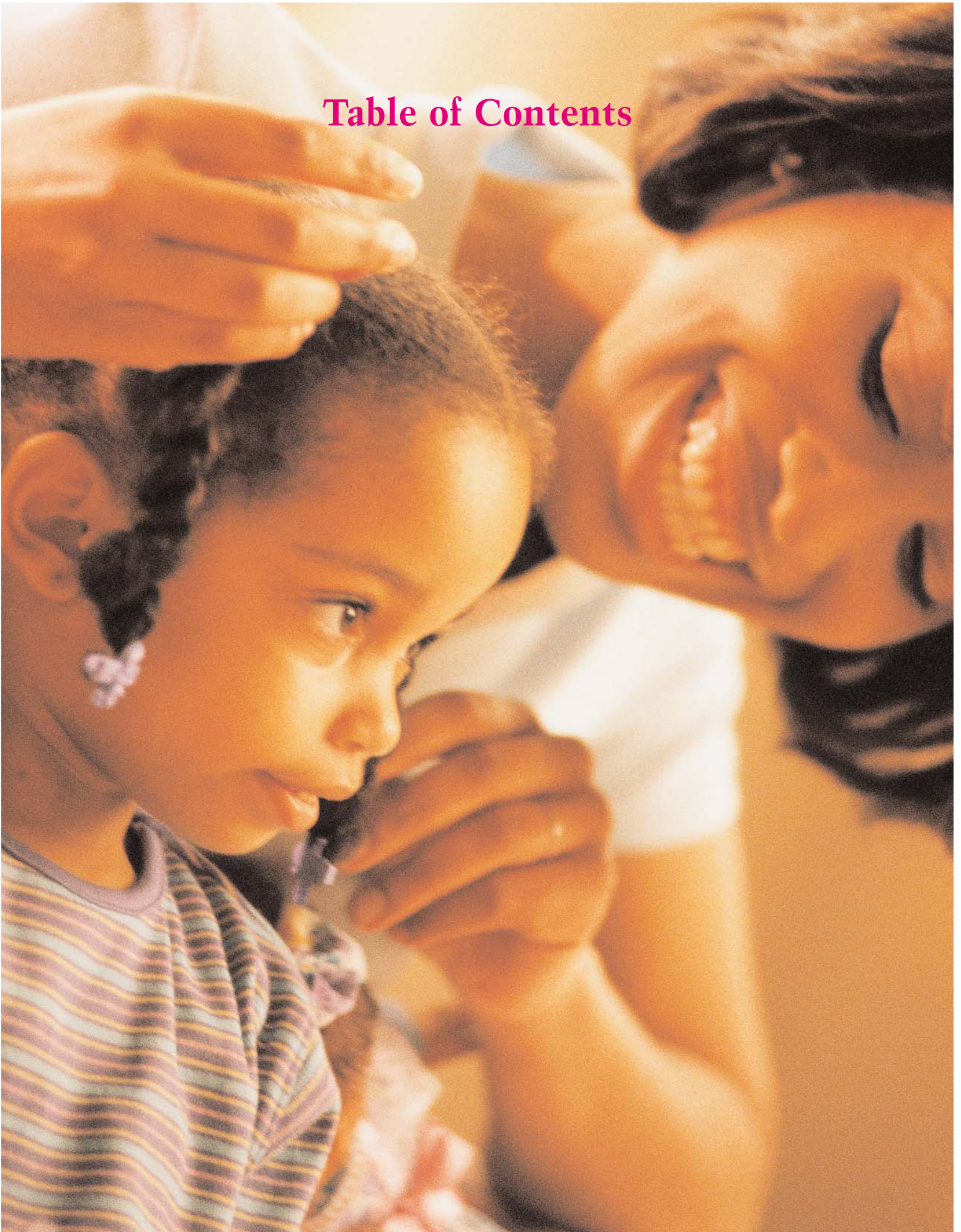




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Executive Summary





Executive Summary

Mission

The mission of The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is to protect children, the elderly, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by working with clients, families, and communities.

Vision Statement

DFPS aspires to be a department that:

- ◆ delivers effective, efficient, and innovative client services that are nationally recognized for excellence;
- ◆ supports its staff, who are highly motivated, well prepared for their jobs, exhibit a strong sense of professionalism, and enjoy their work;
- ◆ builds strong, effective, and mutually valued partnerships with clients, communities, and state leadership; and
- ◆ provides effective leadership that is accountable for its actions and communicates openly with clients and stakeholders.

Overview

A nine-member council appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate makes recommendations regarding the agency's rules and policies. The DFPS Commissioner is appointed by the Executive Commissioner of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and directs approximately 6,700 employees in five administrative districts further divided into 11 regions, and a state headquarters in Austin. Four major programs make up DFPS: Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (APS), Child Care Licensing (CCL), and Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI).

Agency Renewal

In 2003 and 2004, several high-profile abuse and neglect cases ended in tragedy, focusing intense scrutiny on the state's Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS) programs. The state's overtaxed protective services system had reached a breaking point, and expectations were unrealistic considering the resources and systems in place to protect children and vulnerable adults.

As a result, Governor Perry directed the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to investigate and reform APS and CPS. HHSC launched an independent review of relevant laws, cases, training procedures, policies, management and organizational structure, and more. By the end of 2004, HHSC had issued recommendations for reforming DFPS' two largest programs.

In 2005, DFPS responded by organizing 24 workgroups to lay the groundwork for reform, while awaiting direction and funding decisions from the Legislature. The Texas Legislature acted swiftly, instructing DFPS to improve the services it provides to children, families, the elderly, and adults with disabilities. DFPS was given an unprecedented increase in funding and started making far-reaching changes to its CPS, APS, Child Care Licensing (CCL), and Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) divisions. Sen. Jane Nelson and Rep. Suzanna Hupp passed Senate Bill 6, the omnibus DFPS reform bill. The reforms required by Senate Bill 6 and others identified administratively affect all department programs and divisions.

In order to facilitate the required changes, the Legislature appropriated \$2.1 billion to DFPS for the FY 2006-07 biennium, nearly a 22 percent increase compared to the previous budget. DFPS will grow to employ 8,443 workers in FY 2006 and 9,532 in FY 2007. The department will hire more than 2,500 additional workers during this period, representing a 36 percent increase in staff. Most of the new staff will deal directly with clients, including 848 more CPS investigators. The addition of support staff and new technology will further reduce the workload.

Hundreds of improvements were begun in 2005, affecting every aspect of DFPS. These changes will form the basis for strengthening investigations, improving management and accountability, reducing caseloads, and supporting quality casework. Department-wide reform efforts include:

- ◆ developing a comprehensive, consistent community engagement approach;



- ◆ implementing a communications plan that increases public awareness;
- ◆ measuring performance and establishing accountability of the department's programs;
- ◆ increasing funding to improve technology-related issues at the department's abuse hotline, to make hardware and software upgrades, and to enhance the department's casework management system;
- ◆ examining the way the department allocates resources to regions; and
- ◆ developing a better screening and selection process for prospective employees and doing a better job of keeping current employees.

For more information on the department's renewal efforts, visit our web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us

Child Protective Services—Highlights

- ◆ In 2005, CPS reorganized its central administration and regional structure by creating offices of investigation and regional operations. This realignment strengthened:
 - the program's focus on investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect;
 - relations with law enforcement;
 - oversight by management; and
 - overall support for caseworkers.
- ◆ In 2005, CPS began to address systemic factors and identify improvements in practices to address disproportionate representation and disparate outcomes for African-American children and their families within the protective services system. The agency looked at issues surrounding not only the disproportionate rate at which such children enter the CPS system, but also the equity of access to services for children of color and their families. The agency also looked at disproportionate and disparate outcomes for African-American children once they are engaged in the child welfare system, including all phases of service, such as investigation, removal, placement and emancipation.

Adult Protective Services—Highlights

- ◆ APS carried out a number of initiatives to enhance the investigation process and the quality of services. These include:

- increasing the systematic review of cases to facilitate and enhance the quality assurance process;
 - increasing field supervisors' oversight and responsibility;
 - hiring specialized staff in the areas of financial exploitation, risk/self-neglect, resources and external relations, and community initiatives; and
 - requiring caseworkers to engage other community professionals in moderate or high-risk cases.
- ◆ APS implemented a new method to assess clients referred for services. The CARE (Client Assessment & Risk Evaluation) instrument helps caseworkers identify and document problems with a person's living conditions, finances, physical health, mental status, and social relations. With the CARE instrument, APS staff can develop plans to address factors that threaten a person's health and safety.

Child Care Licensing—Highlights

- ◆ During the 2005 session of the Texas Legislature, the Child Care Licensing program worked with elected officials to revise Chapters 42 and 43 of the Texas Human Resources Code. Chapter 42 is the major enabling statute that oversees the regulation of child-care operations and child-placing agencies. Chapter 43 is the law enabling the regulation of child care and child-placing agency administrators. Changes to the law, which went into effect at the beginning of fiscal year 2006, include drug testing for residential child care providers, random inspections of agency foster homes, and increased enforcement tools such as administrative penalties.
- ◆ The Child Care Licensing division took the lead in launching a statewide public awareness campaign to remind parents and caregivers to be vigilant when it comes to children and water safety. The campaign was called "See and Save" (www.seeandsave.org). Child Care Licensing also continued the agency's statewide "Look Before You Leave" campaign to raise public awareness about the dangers of leaving unattended children in hot cars (www.lookbeforeyouleave.org).



Prevention and Early Intervention—Highlights

- ◆ PEI worked in conjunction with the Contract Performance division to continue to develop and refine client outcome performance measures for PEI programs. These performance measures ensure that the services provided by PEI contracts accomplish the goals of the programs and make a positive difference in the lives of those served. Outcome measures were incorporated in FY 2005 contract renewals and are being further developed for subsequent procurements.
- ◆ PEI continued to improve and streamline division policy and procedure, including implementation of a new program summary report provided to contractors twice a year with data on contract performance, development of further efficiencies in the contract renewal process, and institution of a feedback process for contractors associated with on-site monitoring.

Other Changes and Initiatives

- ◆ The time and detail involved in documenting cases has been a workload issue that has affected caseworkers for many years. Often, given the demands on a caseworker's time, driving from house to house on home visits makes it difficult for a caseworker to keep up with entering information in the department's database system for tracking cases. In late February 2005, the department rolled out a mobile-dictation program for CPS, APS, and CCL caseworkers. The service, which is provided by a company called Cyber Secretaries, allows staff to dictate work-related material into a phone and have the recording sent electronically for transcription. A typed copy is then sent back to the caseworker via e-mail. On average, the process is completed within three hours. The text can be cut and pasted into the database system, court reports, letters, or other documents. The service allows staff more time out in the field with clients.
- ◆ DFPS, its mission, and its programs are part of a larger Texas community, a community that is dedicated to protecting vulnerable citizens. In order to provide maximum support to its clients, DFPS has redoubled its commitment to working with families and communities to find solutions for clients, and views effective community part-

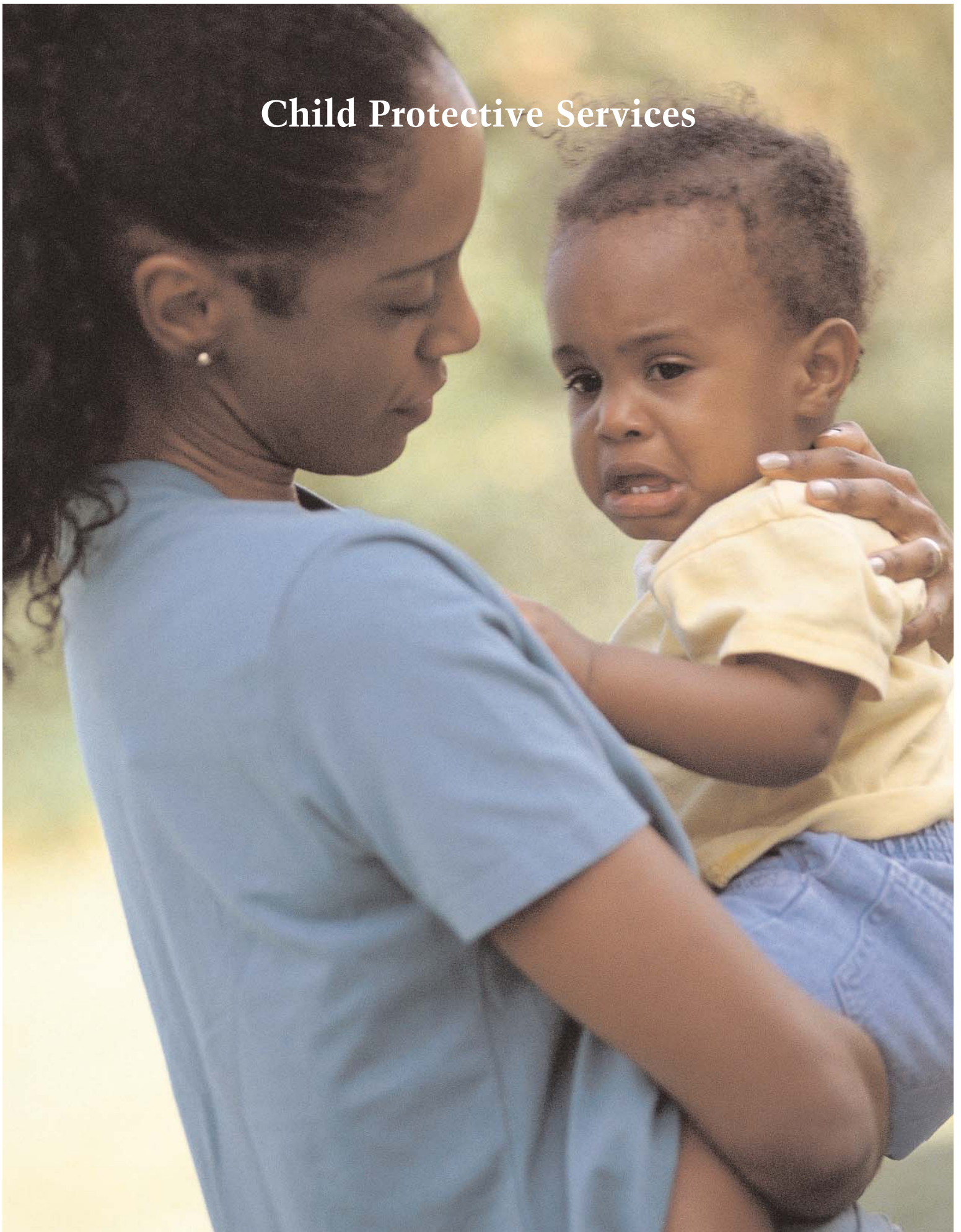
nering as a priority for success. The 79th legislative session made additional resources available to DFPS to support this commitment. In 2005, DFPS enhanced its regional staff dedicated to community engagement in both Adult Protective Services and Child Protective Services. Now, both APS and CPS have in each region:

- a Resource and External Relations Specialist to support relations with providers, law enforcement, courts, physicians, schools, and other service and professional communities in achieving good client outcomes; and
- a Community Initiatives Specialist to assist staff and the civic/volunteer community in building strong partnerships to provide much needed support to clients and their families. DFPS is actively seeking opportunities to work with community members in support of its mission, and welcomes all inquiries.
- ◆ In an effort to reduce future staff turnover, DFPS developed a new process for screening APS and CPS job applicants. Staff identified competencies of exceptional CPS and APS caseworkers and used that information to develop a behavior-based screening tool that measures quality of work, conscientiousness, planning and organization, problem-solving, flexibility and adaptability, ethics, interpersonal communication, and handling conflict.

Office of Consumer Affairs

While DFPS' goal is to have a positive influence on the lives of the people we serve, it is important to respond to complaints. When clients have case-specific complaints about DFPS, they may contact the Office of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-720-7777 for an impartial review of their case. The review determines if the department's policies have been followed properly. If corrective action is needed, DFPS offers a variety of solutions such as administrative reviews, hearings, and mediation. During fiscal year 2005, the Office of Consumer Affairs received 11,404 contacts from various sources including the public, clients, elected officials, other agencies, and DFPS staff. Of the total contacts received, 3,790 were handled as case-specific complaints, and 1,053 were inquiries from elected officials. The validation rate of complaints was 2.9 percent.

Child Protective Services





Child Protective Services (CPS)

Responsibilities

- ◆ Conduct civil investigations of reported child abuse and neglect.
- ◆ Protect children from abuse and neglect.
- ◆ Promote the safety, integrity, and stability of families.
- ◆ Provide permanent placements for children who cannot safely remain with their own families.

Continued Response to CPS Reform

In 2005, CPS continued to reform its operations and policies in response to an executive order from the Governor that called for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to review and reform Child Protective Services (CPS). HHSC identified six priorities for improving CPS. They were reducing caseloads, ensuring a well-trained work force, retaining experienced staff, ensuring compliance with policies and procedures, developing effective community partnerships, and ensuring outcomes that focus on children.

CPS began its response to these changes in fiscal year 2004. In November and December 2004, CPS deployed a rapid response team of 60 staff to San Antonio to assist with completing backlogged cases. In February and March 2005, the rapid response team approach was expanded to other regions of the state.

The HHSC report identified 164 recommendations to improve how CPS does business. These recommendations were converted into initiatives in order to accomplish the changes. The initiatives included strengthening investigations, supporting quality casework, risk and safety assessment, family focus, transitional living services, disproportionality, education, outsourcing, and medical services. Many of the accomplishments below are a part of the CPS response to the recommended changes.

Accomplishments

- ◆ In 2005, CPS reorganized its central administration and regional structure by creating offices of investigation and regional operations. This realignment strengthened:
 - the program's focus on investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect;
 - relations with law enforcement;
 - oversight by management; and
 - overall support for caseworkers.

It also created positions for dedicated investigative caseworkers, case screeners, special investigators, staff with subject matter expertise, and paraprofessional support positions. As a result, CPS began to increase consultation with supervisors and contact with children and families, and reduce paperwork and travel. CPS also revised its training for new staff from 6 weeks to 12 weeks and also retrained supervisors on how families are assessed to determine a risk of abuse or neglect.

- ◆ CPS initiated Operation PUSH (Placing Us in Safe Homes) in April 2005. The program helped mobilize CPS staff and community stakeholders to increase efficiencies and remove barriers such as incomplete home studies and legal issues that may have prevented adoptions from moving forward. Through Operation PUSH, adoptions of 1,800 children were consummated. In 2005, the number of CPS consummated adoptions reached an all-time high.
- ◆ Historically, when a child with special needs came into CPS care, a caseworker was faced with a challenging process of finding the appropriate foster care or residential treatment facility. Through trial and error, the caseworker would call one provider after another until an opening was found. As a result, CPS implemented a centralized process for finding appropriate matches for children needing residential treatment placement. CPS dedicated centralized placement workers throughout the state to facilitate the placement of children, instead of each caseworker attempting to locate a placement. By the end of fiscal year 2005, CPS also created a specialized



Ellen Deckinga, Sharon Berger, and Kelly Louis of Child Protective Services in Round Rock are happy about a new mobile dictation service deployed by DFPS in February 2005. Called *CyberSecretaries*, the service allows staff to dictate information gathered from client visits into a phone, have the recording sent electronically to a transcription service to be typed, and then sent back to the caseworker via e-mail.

"Caseworkers have always known that they needed to be out working with families, but because we have to document everything in a timely manner, we get bogged down," says Berger, the unit supervisor. "CyberSecretaries is phenomenal because it alleviates clerical and administrative tasks for caseworkers so they can spend more time with clients. This is one of the most innovative ideas I've seen—it's a really good step for the state."

Caseworker Kelly Louis says before CyberSecretaries sometimes it would take days before she could type her information into IMPACT, the computer system for tracking abuse cases. "We never now how long we are going to be out in the field. Now when I leave a client, I call into Cyber Secretaries immediately, talk into the phone like I was leaving a voicemail message, and say what happened. Usually by the time I get back to the office, it's ready for me in my e-mail."

Ellen Deckinga says her documentation has improved, which is crucial when finding services for her clients. "Now when I look up a client in IMPACT, I am able to access detailed information at a moment's notice. This is crucial because now we can communicate better about our clients' needs and better document all our contacts with children, parents, foster parents, attorneys, service providers, and others. This also helps my supervisor Sharon because she can see more of the details related to my caseload."

CyberSecretaries is also available for Adult Protective Services and Child Care Licensing caseworkers as well.

Internet web site where residential treatment providers could enter information into a live database regarding the number of openings in their facilities and the type of care they could provide. Caseworkers can now search this database and find which placement options are available for children. The result has been greater success in matching children with appropriate placements.

- ◆ When children with special needs come into CPS care, it is not always possible to find qualified caregivers who live in the same community or region of the state. As a result, children may be placed many miles away from their biological homes. To have contact with these children, caseworkers have traveled from their home offices to the cities where the children were placed. In 2005, CPS implemented the "I See You" program, which assigns a secondary worker in the local office to visit the child. This new procedure ensures children are visited more frequently and that caseworkers are better able to monitor the care being provided.
- ◆ In 2005, CPS began to address systemic factors and identify improvements in practices to address the disproportionate representation and disparate outcomes for African-American children and their families within the CPS system. The program looked at issues surrounding not only the disproportionate rate at which such children enter the CPS system, but also the equity with which children of color and their families are provided access to available services. The agency also looked at the disproportionate and disparate outcomes for African-American children once they are engaged in the child welfare system. Those include all phases of service, such as investigation, removal, placement, and emancipation. By promoting parity, outcomes will be improved for all children and families in Texas. CPS dedicated specific staff to this initiative and has begun to work with community advisory groups in Port Arthur, Houston, and several sites in the Arlington region. The agency provided training statewide to CPS leadership to begin to address systemic factors that contribute to disparate outcomes.



- ◆ DFPS worked with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to develop best practice guidelines concerning the use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care. The guidelines were developed by a panel of child and adolescent psychiatrists, psychologists, and other mental health experts and implemented in March 2005. DSHS posted the guidelines on its web site and distributed them to Medicaid providers. DFPS posted the guidelines on its web site and distributed them to staff and contracted providers of residential child care.
- ◆ In 2005, CPS expanded its implementation of the Family Group Decision-Making Initiative to other cities across the state. In this initiative, the child's family is invited to participate in a facilitated conference along with the extended family and trusted friends. The conferencing process focuses the family on the needs of the child and community resources available so that decision-making is more inclusive and responsive to each child's needs. The process includes identifying the strengths of the family, as well as the family's goals, hopes, and dreams for the children. Family Group Conferencing also addresses the need for CPS involvement, any continuing concerns, and the tasks required for the family to attain their goals related to child safety, permanency, and well-being. When this model is used, there is a higher rate of relative placements and satisfaction in families.
- ◆ In 2005, DFPS helped open a center in Houston for youth ages 16 to 21 who are transitioning out of foster care to adulthood. The transition center assists youth to gain employment, find stable housing, complete general equivalency diplomas (GEDs), and achieve self-sufficiency. The center was created through a U.S. Department of Labor grant given to only five states and is a joint collaboration between DFPS, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission.

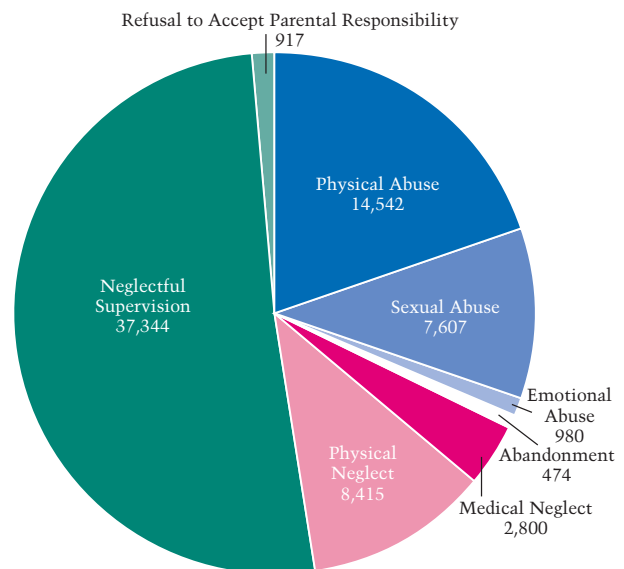
CPS Services

Intake

State law requires that anyone who believes that a child is being abused or neglected report the situation to the DFPS abuse hotline. DFPS administers a toll-free, 24-hour statewide hotline for reporting suspected abuse or neglect of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities at 1-800-252-5400. People can also report online through a secured web site at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>. Anyone needing to report abuse or neglect (in English or Spanish) can reach a professional intake worker. All reports meeting the statutory definitions of abuse and neglect are assigned a priority based on the level of risk to the alleged victim. Law enforcement agencies are also notified of reports regarding children.

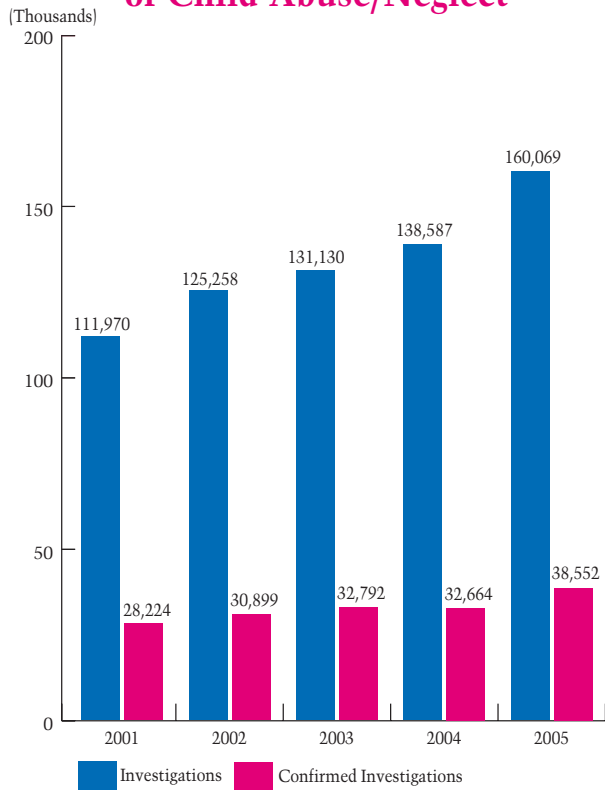
DFPS received 234,383 reports of child abuse and neglect in 2005. During 2005, the general public took advantage of the new option for reporting suspected abuse and neglect through a secured web site (a similar web site just for professionals to report abuse online was implemented in 2004). In 2005, 40,542 web-based reports of abuse or neglect were received

Confirmed Victims of Abuse/Neglect by Type FY2005





Completed Investigations of Child Abuse/Neglect



through this Internet reporting option—a substantial increase compared to 20,883 in 2004.

Investigations

When an intake report is assigned, CPS workers interview children, parents, and others with knowledge of the family. These interviews help determine if child abuse or neglect has occurred and assess the risk of further harm to the child. If criminal conduct is involved, law enforcement may investigate at the same time to determine if criminal charges will be filed. In 2005, CPS completed 160,069 investigations. Even if evidence of abuse or neglect is not found, caseworkers may refer families to services in the community, such as individual or family therapy, parenting classes, or programs offering financial assistance for utilities, rent, and child care.

Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS)

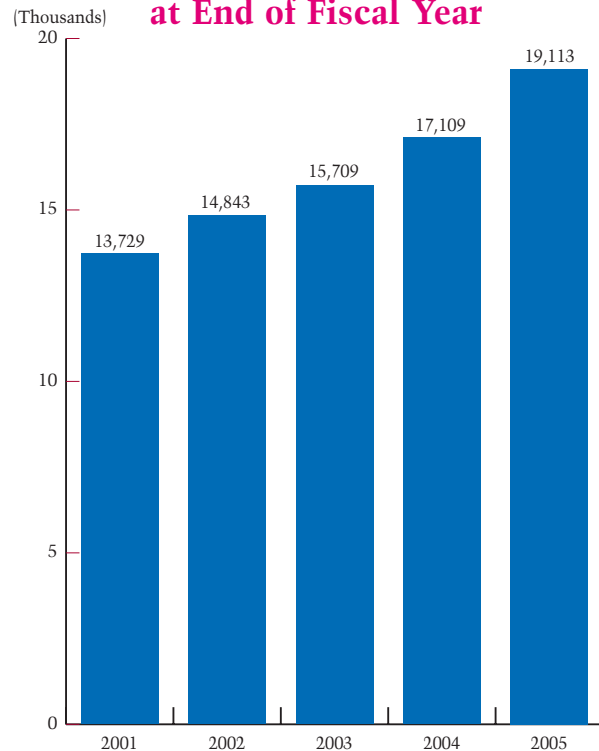
When child safety can be reasonably assured, CPS provides in-home services to help stabilize the family and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Services provided include family counseling, crisis intervention, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, and child care.

Most children served by FBSS continue to live at home while the agency works with their families. In other cases, children may live elsewhere temporarily, usually with relatives or family friends, until the home becomes safe enough for them to return. In 2005, an average of 11,526 families per month received in-home services.

Foster Care

When it is not safe for children to live with their own families, CPS petitions the court to remove the children from their homes. They may be placed temporarily with relatives, a verified foster family, or an

Children in Foster Care at End of Fiscal Year





emergency shelter. Verified foster families provide a safe, nurturing environment for most children in CPS care. Foster families receive reimbursements for the cost of caring for children. CPS is required to arrange all medical, dental, and therapeutic services needed by the child. Some children have special emotional needs or other disabilities that can be difficult to address in a foster home. These children may be placed in specialized group homes, residential treatment centers, or other facilities.

Permanency-Planning Teams

When children are removed from their home and placed in the state's custody, CPS caseworkers, parents, and caregivers work together to develop a written case plan and address the factors that caused abuse or neglect. They also review progress made in the case plan on a regular basis with the input of the other professionals involved in the case. The goal is to ensure that children live in a stable, nurturing environment and do not remain in foster care. This coordination helps all parties concerned to determine a permanent living arrangement for the child, which is known as a "permanency plan." Whether the plan is for a child to return home or be adopted, the team works to avoid unnecessary delays in permanency. In instances where Family Group Decision-Making has been initiated, the family group conference replaces a Permanency-Planning Team meeting.

Kinship Care

For many generations, extended families have raised children in their homes when the birth parents could not. Kinship care helps reduce the psychological trauma experienced by children when they are removed from their homes and families due to child abuse and neglect.

Through Family Group Decision-Making, CPS tries to strengthen the participation of extended family members in planning for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in substitute care. Family Group Conferencing also addresses the need for CPS involvement, any continuing concerns, and the tasks required for the family to attain their goals related to child safety, permanency, and well-being.

CPS has two additional initiatives—Supporting and Educating Relatives As Placements (SERAPE)

Months Spent in State Care for Children whose Adoptions were Consummated



and Comprehensive Relative Enhancement, Support, and Training (CREST)—to provide extended families with services such as case management, training and support groups, family counseling, and day care. CREST is a statewide program and SERAPE is in five South Texas Counties. The SERAPE initiative also provides limited financial assistance.

Adoption

When it is not possible for a child to return home, the court may terminate the parents' rights and legally make the child available for adoption. DFPS completed 3,173 adoptions in 2005. DFPS contracts with licensed private child-placing agencies to increase the number of adoptive homes available to adopt foster children. At the end of 2005, there were 4,580 children in the department's custody waiting for adoption. Of these 2,980 are in placements not intended to be permanent.



*I*t's hard to sum up how the women and men of Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) across the state helped victims of Hurricane Katrina, let alone survived and began to put back the pieces after Hurricane Rita. Yet in a variety of ways DFPS staff helped at least 24,000 evacuees and logged more than 12,000 hours of service.

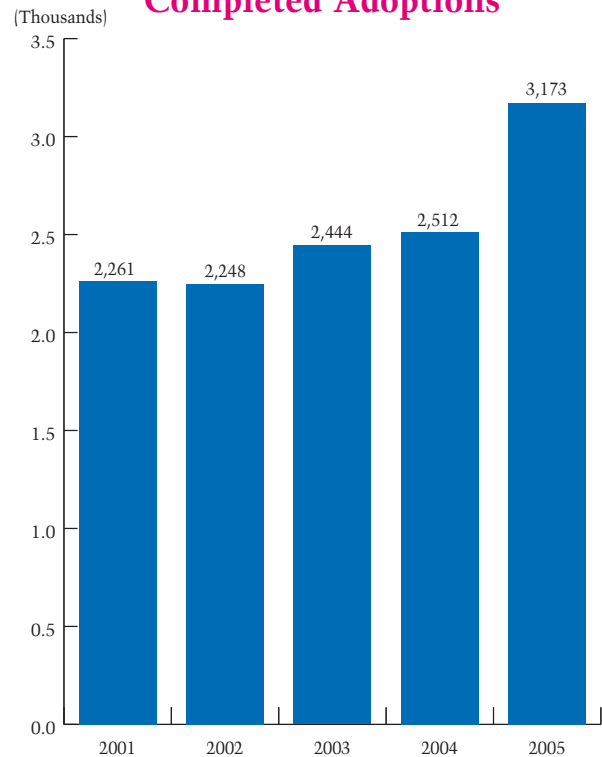
When a boat came by Charnell Francois' flooded house in New Orleans, she didn't really have much choice when they told her they only had room for her 2-year-old daughter Rikaye and 7-year-old son Ikee. She wanted to get them to safety first, even if it meant being separated from them. The boat's "captain" said he'd come back for her later, but he never did. Charnell was eventually rescued off the roof of her house by a helicopter.

Charnell had been under the impression that her children were taken to Lafayette, but soon learned they were actually in foster care in Dallas. "After I got to the shelter, I went on the computer to say that I was looking for them," Charnell said. "Days later a lady and a man from Child Protective Services came and I was sleeping. I woke up when I heard them say my name. It was news that they had found my children and my momma. I'm glad that they found me."

Jose Chapa of Child Protective Services in San Antonio (pictured above with Charnell and her children) was able to persuade Southwest Airlines to fly her to Dallas to meet with her kids. Once they were together again in San Antonio, he relaxed just long enough to hand out lollipops to the children.

Before Hurricane Katrina, all of Charnell's family lived in New Orleans, but now they are spread out everywhere. Charnell decided to try to resettle in Houston. "I am a certified nursing assistant. I was going to switch careers for business management, but I guess I'll stick with nursing. I hope we're not in San Antonio too long. I'm glad we're alive and safe."

Completed Adoptions

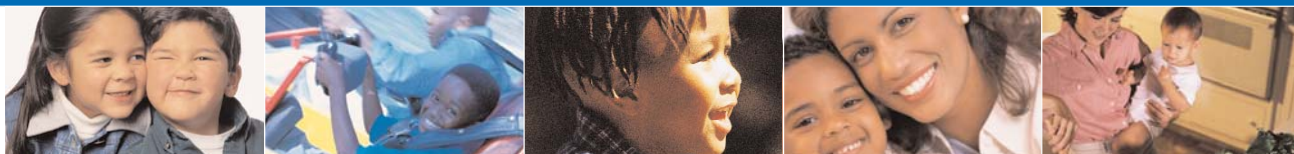


Dual-Licensed Homes

In 2005, 49.2 percent of adoptions were by foster parents. National studies indicate greater opportunities for successful adoptions in these situations because children and their new parents form a bond during the foster care placement. CPS makes a concerted effort to "dually license" homes for both foster care and adoption.

Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Families

CPS actively recruits foster and adoptive families through national, state, and regional campaigns and through the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange web site. Examples include the statewide Foster Care Month in May, Adoption Awareness Month in November, the Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication (CHILD), and the One Church, One Child programs currently in place in Dallas/Fort Worth, Beaumont, Tyler, and Houston.



In 2005, Texas began to use “heart galleries”—a national movement involving photo exhibits of children waiting for adoptive families. Through heart galleries, professional photographers volunteer their time and skills to capture children's personalities and help them find loving homes. The impact on recruitment of foster and adoptive families has been very positive.

During 2005, there was also increased attention to mass adoption events. In recent years, CPS has worked with juvenile courts, adoptive families, attorneys, and others to schedule clusters of hearings for finalizing adoptions to coincide with the month of November, which is celebrated nationally as Adoption Awareness Month. Every year, there is a growth in the number of cities and counties that choose to hold such events.

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) provides information on children waiting for adoption. Photos, profiles, videos, and inquiry forms are on the Internet at www.adoptchildren.org. TARE participates with other adoption organizations during national recruitment campaigns and promotes children on TARE in the AdoptUSKids national web site as well as other web sites. At the end of FY 2005, there were 1,063 children registered in TARE. In FY 2005, 432 children were adopted from TARE, 293 children were pending placement, and 250 children were removed.

TARE offers a toll-free Statewide Adoption and Foster Care Inquiry Line (1-800-233-3405) and the Adoption Family Network (AFN). AFN is a free, self-registration listing of adoptive families and individuals across the United States who are approved for adoptions. Through AFN, families may list their preferences on children they are willing to parent, and this information is available to CPS adoption staff through a searchable database. More than 1,000 approved adoptive families were registered in AFN in 2005.

The toll-free statewide inquiry line receives about 150 to 200 calls a month from prospective foster care and adoptive families across the state. These calls are entered into the Internet inquiry forms and forwarded to their respective regions as soon as they are received.

Faith-Based Collaborations

Begun in 2004, Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication (CHILD) is a unique statewide collaboration between Child Protective Services and Texas' faith-based communities. The purpose is to find loving homes for children who have come into the state's care due to abuse and neglect.

Adoption Support Services

Adopted children who have suffered abuse or neglect often need help coping with the effects of abuse and the loss of their birth families. Each CPS region contracts with private agencies to provide post-adoption services to adopted children and their families. Those services include case management, mental health services, therapeutic services to children and families, parent training, support groups, and respite care for adoptive parents. Post-adoption services were provided to 2,419 children and families in 2005.

Services for Foster Youth Transitioning Out of Care

Preparation for Adult Living

The Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program helps make the transition to adulthood successful for youth in foster care. PAL services include independent living assessments, time-limited financial help, and training in such areas as money management, job skills, educational planning, and interpersonal skills. A statewide youth leadership committee meets quarterly to review policies and practices and submits recommendations to the DFPS Council and other decision-makers to improve services to children and youth.

In 2005, 6,474 youths ages 16 through 20, participated in the PAL program. In addition, 688 teenagers ages 14 and 15 received PAL services. Funds from the federal Chafee Foster Care Independence Act enabled CPS to provide aftercare room-and-board assistance for 922 young adults and case management services for 1,680 young adults ages 18 through 21 who exited foster care.



Education and Training Vouchers

In 2004, CPS received federal funding to create a new program that helps youth who age out of the state's care reach their educational goals. The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program provides additional money for youth who have left CPS care and are going to school to help cover expenses such as rent, computer, day care, and transportation. The program supplements the state's Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program and the state's tuition waiver program at state-funded universities, colleges, junior colleges, and vocational schools.

Working With Partners

Greater Texas Community Partners

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 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. The unique public/private partnership between DFPS and local Community Partners groups throughout Texas supports 113 Rainbow Rooms and 220 adopted caseworkers.

Transfer of Programs

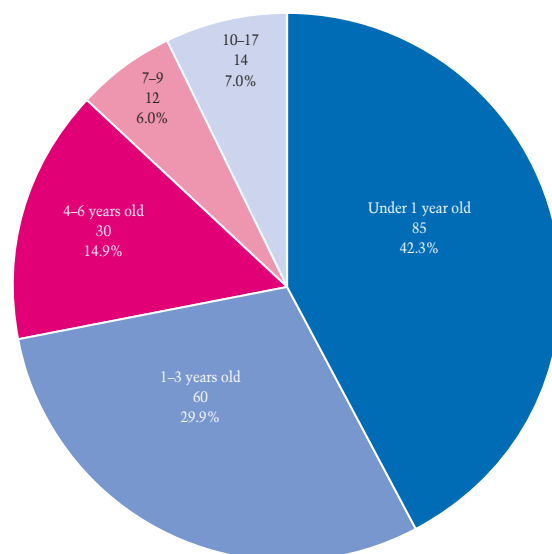
In 2005, the Texas Legislature transferred administration of the Children's Justice Act and Texas Court Improvement Project from DFPS to the Texas Center for the Judiciary. The Children's Justice Act works to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases through a variety of initiatives. The Texas Court Improvement Project is a federal grant to improve judicial proceedings in foster care and adoption cases. The transfer was completed in April 2005. In addition, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission transferred support for the state's

Child Fatality Review Teams from CPS to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

Child Fatality Review

Every year, thousands of Texas children die as a result of automobile accidents, accidental drowning, congenital birth defects, accidental shooting, and many other causes. Child Fatality Review Teams are local, multidisciplinary, multi-agency panels that review all child deaths regardless of how they occurred. The goal of the review team is to decrease preventable child deaths. Members include law enforcement, prosecutors, medical examiners, justices of the peace, health care professionals, educators, and child advocates. These teams are uniquely qualified to understand what no single agency or group working alone can: how and why children are dying in their communities. From their findings, review teams help develop prevention and public awareness initiatives. Child Fatality Review Teams have grown rapidly since their inception in 1992. Today, there are 46 teams that cover 150 counties. Through CPS, DFPS provides technical assistance to the teams and is the state agency charged with maintaining public information associated with the teams.

Age of Fatality Victims Due to Abuse/Neglect





Abuse/Neglect Fatalities

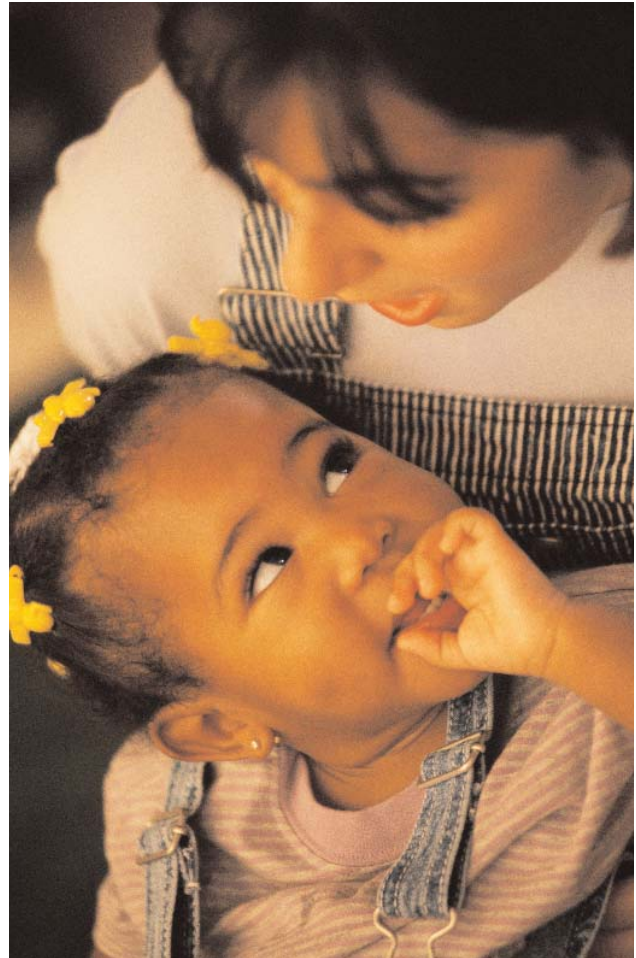
CPS has developed both internal and external mechanisms to review child fatalities due to abuse/neglect. Citizen Review Teams, Child Fatality Review Teams, CPS Risk Directors, Regional CPS Child Death Review Committees, and the state Child Safety Review Committee all review child deaths. While each entity reviews child deaths for unique purposes, a common goal is to help CPS and communities identify the causes of child fatalities and develop strategies, programs, and training to reduce the rate of preventable child deaths, as well as provide intervention services to families and children at risk.

In 2005, of the children who died due to abuse or neglect, 42.3 percent were less than one year old, and nearly 72.1 percent were age three or younger. Of 704 child deaths reported in 2005, CPS confirmed abuse/neglect as the cause of death for 201 children.

Texas State Strategy

The Texas State Strategy is a collaborative systems improvement effort of Casey Family Programs and DFPS. The strategy addresses challenges in the areas of kinship services and foster care transition services in Texas. In 2004, Casey and DFPS addressed the increase in kinship care referrals and began evaluation of a kinship pilot in South Texas.

As part of the Texas State Strategy, a forum brought foster care alumni together with state agency leaders to work on strategies for improving services to children and youth. "Better Together" training was held for foster care alumni and adult partners to work together in communities. Technical assistance was provided for ongoing training of case-workers, care providers, alumni, and other stakeholders on life-skills tools. The web-based Chafee Assessment Supplement moved to the pilot stage.



Adult Protective Services





Adult Protective Services (APS) Responsibilities

- ◆ Investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults who are elderly or have disabilities.
- ◆ Provide or arrange protective services as needed.
- ◆ Investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of clients receiving services in state operated and/or contracted settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation.

Continued Response to APS Reform

In 2004, the Governor issued an executive order that called for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to review and reform Adult Protective Services (APS). In July 2004, HHSC issued a report that identified 252 corrective actions in three areas that needed systemic and organizational changes. They were: improving investigations and delivery of services, increasing efficiencies, and enhancing program accountability.

APS began its response to these changes in 2004 and 75 percent of the 252 corrective actions identified in the report were completed by the end of fiscal year 2005. Improvements include how APS conducts investigations, provides services, trains staff, measures performance, and works with community agencies. Many of the accomplishments below were part of APS's response to the recommended changes.

Accomplishments

- ◆ APS carried out a number of initiatives to enhance the investigation process and quality of services. These include:
 - increasing the systematic review of cases to facilitate and enhance the quality assurance process;
 - increasing field supervisors' oversight and responsibility;

- hiring specialized staff in the areas of financial exploitation, risk/self-neglect, resources and external relations, and community initiatives; and
- requiring caseworkers to engage other community professionals in moderate or high-risk cases.
- ◆ APS implemented a new method to assess clients referred for services. The CARE (Client Assessment & Risk Evaluation) instrument helps the worker identify and document problems in a person's living conditions, finances, physical health, mental status, and social relations. With the CARE, APS staff can develop plans to address factors that threaten a person's health and safety.
- ◆ APS launched the first phase of the Mobile Protective Services (MPS) project with 31 caseworkers from the Arlington, Austin, El Paso, and San Antonio regions that involved the use of Tablet PCs. These computers are equipped with secured wireless internet access, Microsoft Office, map software for finding clients and planning daily routes, voice recognition dictation software, and an APS-custom application that works with the DFPS automated case management system. The project enables caseworkers to review and document cases, review workload assignments, and locate resources. The MPS project won the 2005 Best Application Serving the Public award from the Centers for Digital Government and Education. In FY 2006, the project will be expanded to all APS staff.
- ◆ APS initiated distribution of digital cameras to be used for documenting investigations. The use of digital cameras supports the investigation process and provides an accurate, objective representation of the existence or nonexistence of abuse or neglect. Distribution will be completed in FY 2006.
- ◆ In partnership with the Professional Development Division (PDD), APS revised and enhanced the training curriculum for new employees. APS and PDD developed the agency's first comprehensive self-paced computer-based training for new staff. New employees receive comprehensive computer-based, classroom, and on-the-job training. The new APS training program expanded from three



Linnie Brooks, an APS worker in Houston, works with her supervisor to test new video telephone equipment at a client's home as part of a pilot telemedicine program. Launched in May 2005 in the agency's Amarillo and Houston regions, the program will allow medical staff to assess clients who are elderly or disabled and unable or unwilling to visit doctors' offices. Through the project, nurses accompany APS workers into clients' homes and transmit images and data for further medical and mental assessment by using advanced telecommunications technologies that work with regular analog phone lines. The worker and nurse simply set an "appointment" with a doctor who will be available to make the assessment.

"A lot of our clients don't want to go to the hospital or a doctor," says Brooks. "But we still may need to do an emergency removal to protect the client's health and safety. This equipment can allow a doctor to give a quick medical assessment and communicate their opinion to the nurse. If necessary, then we can call 911 to request an ambulance."

Funded by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the project is being conducted in conjunction with the Baylor College of Medicine Texas Elder Abuse and Mistreatment (TEAM) Institute.

weeks to 11 weeks to ensure staff develop quality caseworker practices prior to receiving a full workload. The revised training curriculum requires all APS workers to attend 18 hours of continuing education each year.

- ◆ The Texas Health and Human Services Commission transferred management of the Guardianship program to the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) in December 2004. On Sept. 1, 2005, DADS will have the legislative authority and legal responsibility over guardianship cases. In FY 2006, DFPS and DADS will develop a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) to derive the roles and responsibilities of each agency in the guardianship process. The MOU will ensure clients receive necessary services in a timely manner.
- ◆ In an effort to reduce future staff turnover, DFPS developed a new process for screening APS and CPS job applicants. Staff identified competencies of exceptional CPS and APS caseworkers, then developed a behaviorally-based screening tool that measures quality of work, conscientiousness, planning and organization, problem solving, flexibility and adaptability, ethics, interpersonal communication, and handling conflict.
- ◆ APS continued working with local community groups to increase public awareness about abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly and adults with disabilities. The agency created a comprehensive plan to enhance the way it engages community organizations, local government, and related stakeholders.
- ◆ APS staff coordinated the 21st Annual APS Conference in San Antonio in November 2004. The conference was successful, drawing more than 350 participants from as far away as Canada and Guam. The Texas APS conference is a major training event for APS practitioners and related professionals nationally. The conference offered continuing education credits to social workers.
- ◆ APS facility staff participated in a University of Kentucky survey about the incidence of sexual abuse in institutional settings.



APS Services

APS clients are adults who live in their own homes, in state operated and/or contracted settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation, or in unregulated facilities. Two program areas serve APS clients: in-home investigations /services and facility investigations. APS in-home staff work closely with DADS staff on cases that require coordination and referral for guardianship services.

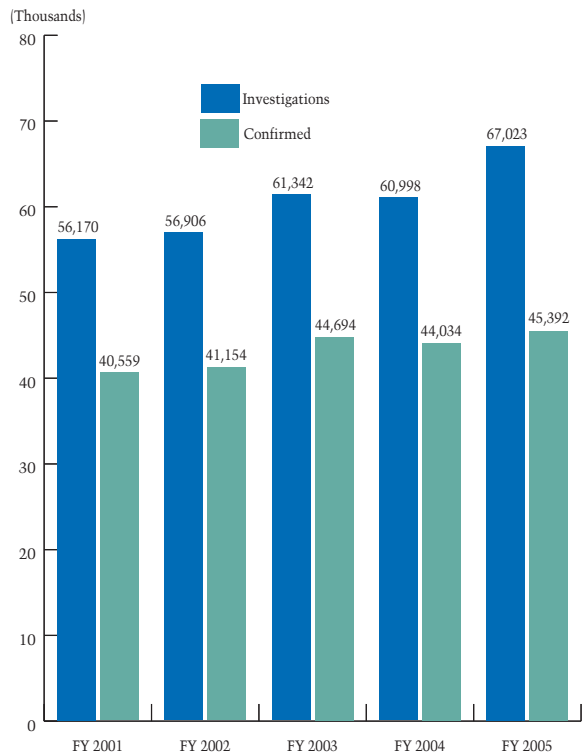
Protecting people who are elderly or have disabilities continues to be a growing issue in Texas. Based on the 2000 Census of non-institutionalized people, Texans who are elderly or have disabilities make up about a quarter of the state's population. In 2005, 2,260,428 Texans were age 65 and older, according to population projections. 10.8% of adults between the

ages of 18 and 64 have a disability, and 43% of people over 65 have a disability. Many of these people live alone or are dependent on others for care.

In-Home Investigations and Services

The largest APS program area is in-home investigations and services. The in-home program investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities. Specifically, APS works with vulnerable adults who reside in their own homes or in room-and-board homes not subject to licensure. APS also investigates allegations of exploitation involving vulnerable adults living in nursing homes who may be financially exploited by someone outside the facility. State law requires anyone who believes that an elderly person or adult with a disability is being abused, neglected or exploited to report it to the DFPS hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

Completed In-home Investigations





An investigation begins within 24 hours of receiving a report. In 2005, APS completed 67,023 investigations of which 45,392 cases were confirmed cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. When maltreatment is confirmed, APS provides or arranges for emergency services to alleviate abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

APS may provide or arrange for services including short-term assistance, shelter, food, medication, health services, financial assistance for rent and utility restoration, transportation, and minor home repair. APS also refers clients to other social or community services, including guardianship services at DADS.

Guardianship is a legal method used to protect the well-being of individuals when they cannot protect themselves. A guardian is court-appointed to make decisions on behalf of an incapacitated person. Guardians can be family members, county attorneys, banks, private attorneys, etc. Guardianship duties may include managing a person's estate, living arrangements, medical treatment, funeral arrangements, and disposal of property.



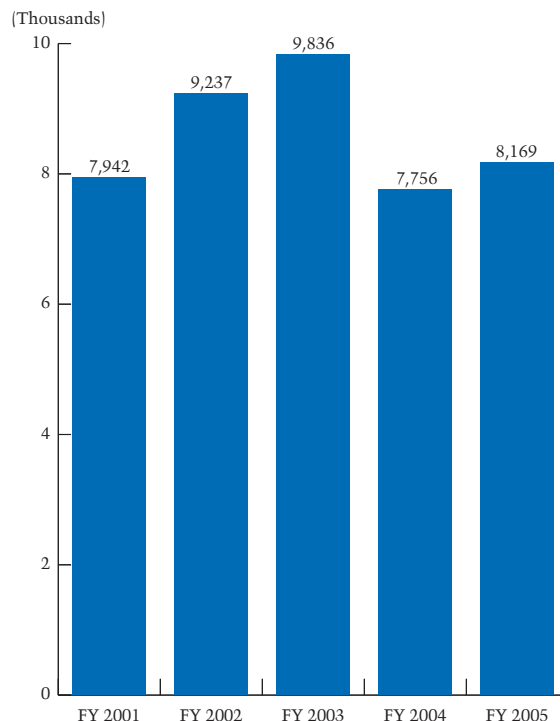
Facility Investigations

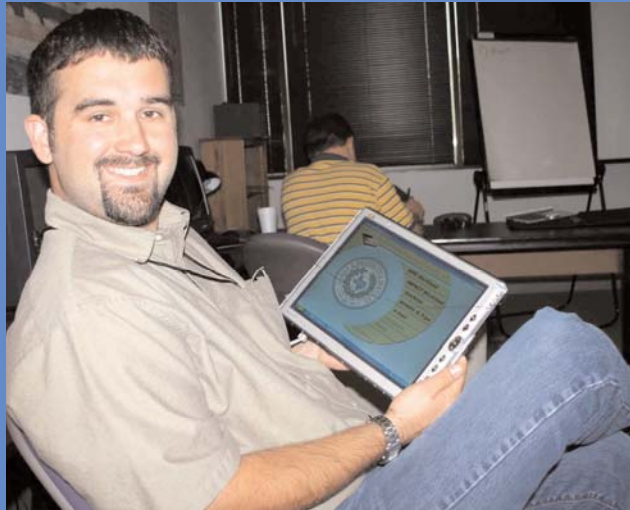
APS is responsible for investigating abuse, neglect, and exploitation of clients receiving services in state operated and/or contracted settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation. Investigations are conducted in the following settings:

- ◆ State schools;
- ◆ State hospitals;
- ◆ State centers;
- ◆ Community mental health/mental retardation centers; and
- ◆ Facility and community center contractors, including home and community-based waiver programs.

During 2005, APS completed 8,169 investigations in state operated and/or contracted settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation.

Completed Facility Investigations





Keith Rohlack, an APS specialist in Belton, admits he is not a techie. But when he learned about a new project that takes advantage of mobile technology, he was happy to be among the few chosen to test it out.

Like many frontline staff, Keith begins each day hoping to spend his mornings in the field with clients and his afternoons typing in all the documentation. Unfortunately, as most workers already know, it's not always possible to type in documentation that soon. "Depending on the intake load, it can take longer to type in my documentation—much longer. Our first priority is to deal with the demands of the cases coming in. By using the speech recognition and digital pen on the Tablet PCs, I think workers will save a lot of time on documentation."

The project, which started in June 2005 with 31 caseworkers from the Arlington, Austin, El Paso, and San Antonio regions, involves the use of Tablet PCs. The Tablet PCs enable staff to view their daily assigned workload and reports, access the agency's abuse database, map routes to visit clients, use its dictation/voice recognition feature, and upload images from a digital camera, among other tasks.

Keith says reaction among staff has been positive because they really want to make use of any technology that will save time. "Using Tablet PCs enables us to bring technology into the field; Internet access to caseload and past cases. Anything I can do at my desk I can do in the field. It's really cool technology."





Child Care Licensing (CCL)

Responsibilities

- ◆ Regulate all child-care operations and child-placing agencies to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children in care, largely by reducing the risk of injury, abuse, and communicable disease.
- ◆ Establish and monitor operations and agencies for compliance with minimum standards of care.
- ◆ Inform parents and the public about child care and about the histories of specific homes, child care operations, and child-placing operations in complying with minimum standards of care.
- ◆ Provide technical assistance to providers on meeting minimum standards of care.

Accomplishments

- ◆ During the first six months of 2005, there were a number of Texas children drowned. Unfortunately as the summer progressed, the number of drowning victims rose. In response, the Child Care Licensing division took the lead in launching a statewide public awareness campaign to remind parents and caregivers to be vigilant when it comes to children and water safety. The campaign, called "See and Save" (www.seeandsave.org), included billboards, paid radio advertisements, and news conferences. CCL worked with Child Protective Services, Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), and the DFPS Office of Communications to hold events across the state with child care providers, law enforcement, emergency medical staff, and others.
- ◆ During the 2005 session of the Texas Legislature, the Child Care Licensing program worked with elected officials to revise Chapters 42 and 43 of the Texas Human Resources Code. Chapter 42 is the major enabling statute that oversees the regulation of child care operations and child-placing agencies. Chapter 43 is the law enabling the regulation of

child care and child-placing agency administrators. Changes to the law, which went into effect at the beginning of fiscal year 2006, include drug testing for residential child care providers, random inspections of agency foster homes, and increased enforcement tools such as administrative penalties.

- ◆ Staff across the state continued to implement the "See The Overall Picture (STOP)" project. Through STOP, Licensing staff are trained on how to better assess child care operations and take a more holistic approach in evaluating child care providers based not only on what they find, but also on the history of each provider.
- ◆ All Licensing staff received joint training with the DFPS Abuse Hotline on how to better recognize signs of sexual child abuse. The training was provided by Lieutenant Bill Walsh, a 17-year veteran of the Dallas Police Department and co-founder of the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center.
- ◆ Licensing staff worked with the department's Information Technology department to plan an improved version of the Texas Child Care Search at www.txchildcaresearch.org. This web-based tool allows the public to search for facilities by type of care and by ZIP code in order to learn about a facility's compliance record with the state's minimum standards. The improved version of Texas Child Care Search is expected to be operational in fiscal year 2006.
- ◆ In 2005, Child Care Licensing continued the department's statewide "Look Before You Leave" campaign to raise public awareness about the dangers of leaving unattended children in hot cars. Licensing staff worked with staff in Child Protective Services, Prevention and Early Intervention, and the Office of Communications to hold events across the state. For more information, visit www.lookbeforeyouleave.org.

CCL Services

Child Care Licensing is responsible for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of Texas children who attend or reside in regulated child care operations. These operations include child care centers, licensed and registered child care homes, residential care operations, emergency shelters, child-placing agencies, foster homes, adoptive



homes, and maternity homes. CCL also licenses child care administrators and now child-placing agency administrators.

Regulating Child Care Operations

Child Care Licensing regulates three categories of child care operations. They are Listed Family Homes, Registered Operations, and Licensed Operations.

Listed Family Homes

Listed Family Homes provide child care on a regular basis (at least four hours per day, three or more days a week, for more than nine consecutive weeks) in the providers' own homes for one to three unrelated children. Providers are required to go through an application process that includes a criminal background check and issuance of a certificate. Listed Family Home providers must be at least age 18; however, there are no minimum standards, orientation, or training requirements. Listed Family Homes are not inspected unless DFPS receives a report alleging child abuse or neglect. CCL would also investigate any facility that is reportedly not properly listed or registered.

Registered Operations

Registered Child Care Homes provide care in the providers' own homes for as many as six children younger than age 14. They may also take in as many as six additional school-age children. The number of children allowed in a home is determined by the ages of the children. No more than 12 children can be in care at any time, including the provider's children. Providers are required to go through an application process that includes completion of an orientation class and criminal background checks. DFPS issues a registration certificate after Licensing inspectors complete an on-site inspection to ensure providers are meeting the minimum standards. Registered homes are inspected every one to three years. DFPS will also inspect them if we receive a report related to child abuse or neglect or standards violations.

Licensed Operations

All licensed operations must follow published standards and are routinely monitored and inspected. To become a licensed operation, a prospective provider must complete an application process that includes

completion of an orientation class and criminal background checks. DFPS issues a license after our staff completes on-site inspections to ensure providers are meeting minimum standards. Licensed Operations are inspected every 5 to 12 months or more often if there are reports of alleged child abuse or neglect or violations of state standards. Licensed Operations include Day Care and 24-Hour Care.

Day Care

- ◆ Child Care Centers care for 13 or more children younger than age 14 for less than 24 hours.
- ◆ Licensed Child Care Homes provide care for less than 24 hours per day for 7 to 12 children younger than age 14.

24-Hour Care

- ◆ Foster Family Homes provide 24-hour care for 6 or fewer children younger than age 18.
- ◆ Foster Group Homes provide 24-hour care for 7 to 12 children younger than age 18.
- ◆ Child Care Institutions provide 24-hour care for 13 or more children younger than age 18 and for the mentally fragile. These institutions include emergency shelters, residential treatment centers, halfway houses, maternity homes, and therapeutic camps.

Child Placing Agencies

A Child Placing Agency (CPA) is a person, agency, or organization, other than the natural parents or guardian of a child, which places or plans for the placement of a child in a child-care facility, agency foster home, agency foster group home, or adoptive home. CPAs recruit and verify foster family homes, foster group homes, and/or adoptive homes. A child-placing agency is also responsible for managing its verified homes and ensuring that they comply with all applicable laws and minimum standards.

Child Placing Agencies licensed by DFPS range in both size and the scope of their operations. Some are very small agencies that offer only private adoption services. Others are multi-office organizations that offer adoptions services, manage networks of foster parents, and provide treatment services to children placed in foster care.



A large collection of licensed child placing agencies serve as the states foster care system, including privately licensed CPAs and Child Protective Services which is itself licensed as a CPA. These CPAs screen, approve, and manage foster homes as well as match children in the state's custody with foster homes and manage their care in those homes. Privately licensed CPA's will continue to play a critical and expanded role in the care of foster children as Texas moves to outsource foster care and case management services.

Training

District CCL representatives, investigators, supervisors, directors, and clerical staff received more than 30 hours of training and professional development on work-related issues like child development, using automation support, regulation and inspection of operations, and health and safety. CCL staff also provided more than 100 training events for more than 5,000 child care providers and caregivers. The topics included minimum standards, health and safety, infant and toddler needs, guidance, discipline, staff/child ratios, and child development. The training was provided through conferences, licensing meetings and orientations, and technical assistance to centers. CCL workers provide training and collaborate with local associations to provide training for providers on a regular basis.

Child Care Facilities in Texas

Number of homes:		
Registered Child Care Homes	7,808	23.9%
Listed Family Homes (LFH)	4,132	12.6%
CPS-Approved Foster Homes	3,176	9.7%
Private Agency Foster Homes	6,494	19.8%
Number of Child Care centers:		
Licensed/Certified Facilities	10,545	32.2%
Number of 24-hour care:		
Residential Facilities & Child Placing Agencies	587	1.8%
Totals	32,742	100.0%



As the summer heat builds, Texans spend a lot of time in and around swimming pools, rivers and lakes.

Unfortunately, a few minutes are all it takes for a child to drown if parents or caregivers aren't paying close attention. By early August of 2005, more than 50 children had drowned in Texas.

DFPS' Child Care Licensing division took the initiative by finding federal grants to pay for a public awareness campaign. Called "See & Save," the campaign involved statewide billboards, radio public announcements, and distribution of thousands of public awareness materials to day care operations and foster homes across Texas.

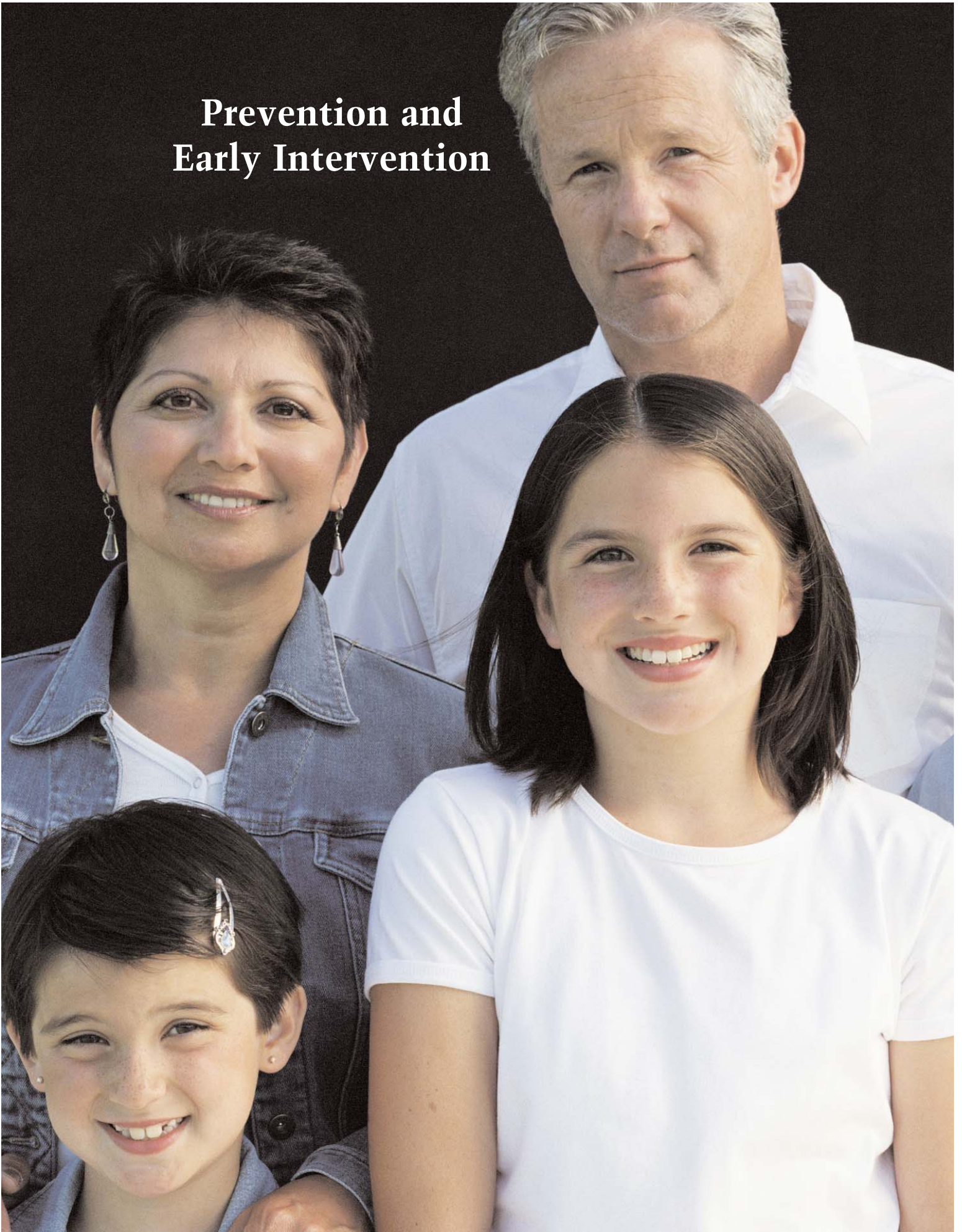
"The message is simple but terribly important," said Diana Spiser, DFPS Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Licensing. "Never leave children around water unsupervised, not even for a minute. If you can't see them, you can't save them."

Eight out of ten drowning deaths occur between May and September and drowning is the second leading cause of accidental injury deaths for children younger than 14 years old. Toddlers are especially vulnerable because they are fascinated by water and usually have not learned to swim.

"It only takes a few minutes for a child to drown and even a small amount of water is enough," said Spiser. "Children have been known to drown in ponds, ditches, buckets, aquariums, and even toilets. It's critical that parents and caregivers remain vigilant in this dangerous period. Always stay with children in water. Please remember that you are the lifeguard."

You can find more information on the new "See & Save" web site at www.seeandsave.org.

Prevention and Early Intervention





Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)

Responsibilities

- ◆ Work with Texas communities to develop services for preventing child abuse and neglect, delinquency, running away, and truancy.
- ◆ Develop and maintain a statewide inventory of prevention programs aimed at preventing child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency.
- ◆ Plan, develop, and administer a comprehensive and unified approach to deliver prevention services to avoid fragmentation and duplication of services.

Accomplishments

- ◆ PEI worked in conjunction with the Contract Performance division to continue to develop and refine client outcome performance measures for PEI programs to ensure that the services provided accomplish the goals of the programs and make a positive difference in the lives of those served. Outcome measures were incorporated in FY 2005 contract renewals, and are being further developed for subsequent procurements.
- ◆ PEI continued to improve and streamline division policy and procedure, including implementation of a new program summary report provided to contractors twice a year with data on contract performance, development of further efficiencies in the contract renewal process, and institution of a feedback process for contractors associated with on-site monitoring.
- ◆ Funds appropriated to PEI in FY 2005 will allow the Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) and Community Youth Development (CYD) programs to be restored to FY 2003 levels during the FY 2006-2007 biennium. Increased funding also allows the procurement of additional at-risk prevention services.

PEI Services

PEI manages and contracts with community-based programs to prevent the abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas children. PEI programs are administered through contracts with local community agencies or organizations. All services are not available in all Texas communities. To find out if your community has services available, visit our department's web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

PEI Programs

Community Youth Development Grants (CYD)

The CYD program contracts with fiscal agents to develop juvenile delinquency prevention programs in ZIP codes that have a high incidence of juvenile crime. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency include mentoring, parenting skills, tutoring, youth employment, career preparation, and alternative recreation activities. Communities prioritize and fund the specific prevention services identified as needed locally. In 2005, the agency funded contracts to serve 15 specifically targeted ZIP codes. Currently, DFPS provides ongoing training and technical assistance for all local CYD programs. DFPS also supports an annual youth conference, the Teen Summit, to promote youth leadership and provide training and activities.

Dan Kubiak Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Program

This program helps to develop honor, pride, and dignity in at-risk youth. The goal is to reduce and prevent risky behavior, truancy, and juvenile delinquency among at-risk youth ages 10 to 17. 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. In 2005, three projects were located in Bexar, Dallas, and Tarrant counties.

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 up to age 17 who experience conflict at home, have been truant or delinquent, or have run away. PEI has 41 STAR contracts that provide services in all 254 Texas counties. In 2005, each STAR provider made universal child abuse prevention activities available, ranging from local media campaigns to informational brochures and parenting classes.

Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS)

TFTS funds community-based programs designed to alleviate stress and to promote parental skills and behaviors that increase the ability of families to successfully nurture their children and work toward family self-sufficiency. The goals of TFTS are to:

- ◆ improve and enhance access to family support services;
- ◆ increase the efficiency and effectiveness of community-based family support services;
- ◆ enable children to remain in their own homes by providing preventive services; and
- ◆ increase collaboration among local programs, government agencies, and families. During 2005, there were 11 programs that provided services in 36 counties.

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

The toll-free Texas Runaway Hotline (1-888-580-HELP) and the Texas Youth Hotline (1-800-98YOUTH) offer crisis intervention, telephone counseling, and referrals to troubled youth and families. In 2005, a volunteer workforce of about 60 people answered the phones. Many callers faced a variety of problems including family conflict, delinquency, truancy, and abuse and neglect issues. The program increased public awareness through television, radio, billboards, and other media efforts. Hotline telephone counselors received 39,680 calls during fiscal year 2005.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

The federal CBCAP grant is made available to states through the National Office of Child Abuse and Neglect, in accordance with Title II of the Child

Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. The Texas CBCAP program increases community awareness of existing prevention services, strengthens community and parental involvement in child abuse prevention efforts, and encourages families to engage in services that are already available. This program also supports respite services and community-based services to families of children who are at risk or have been abused and/or neglected. In response to new federal guidelines, a new initiative called Community Partnerships for Strengthening Families was introduced in 2005. Contracts were developed with local entities in Abilene, Austin, Dallas, Port Arthur, San Angelo, and San Antonio to develop Community Partnerships, comprised of parents, community members, community and faith-based organizations, and government agencies working to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. The Partnership model places a high priority on parental involvement and participation in the design, delivery, and evaluation of community-based programs and activities designed to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Tertiary/Secondary Child Abuse Prevention

DFPS contracts with Family Outreach of America to provide community-based, volunteer-driven services for prevention, intervention, and aftercare for children who are at risk or have been abused and/or neglected. The goals of the program include reducing child maltreatment and the number of families reentering the Child Protective Services system. Additional goals are improving the quality and availability of aftercare services for abused children and enhancing a statewide network of tertiary child abuse prevention programs. For 2005, services were provided in Midland and Bryan/College Station.

PEI Special Initiatives

Child Abuse Prevention Kit

Each April, Child Abuse Prevention Month activities raise awareness about the problem of child abuse and most importantly, about what each of us can do to help prevent the abuse and neglect of children. For the past several years, DFPS has joined forces with other agencies to increase public awareness about



abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children through the Child Abuse Prevention Kit. DFPS produced the 2005 Child Abuse Prevention Kit with help from Prevent Child Abuse Texas and Early Childhood Intervention. The theme was "Children First Safe and Secure." A total of 30,000 kits were distributed to DFPS district offices, schools, crisis centers, and licensed child care centers across the state. These kits serve as a resource for parents, teachers, and communities. Previous versions of the kit can also be downloaded from the department's web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us or at www.itsuptoyou.org.

Partners in Prevention Training Conference

From November 17–19, 2004, DFPS hosted the 4th Annual Partners in Prevention Training Conference in Austin. The conference brought together social services providers, community advocates, and experts in the field of child abuse prevention who were interested in improving programs and sharing expertise. The conference was open to prevention and early intervention agencies that contract with DFPS, as well as all other prevention service providers and interested parties. There were more than 400 people in attendance. Agency co-sponsors for the conference were the Office of the Attorney General, Texas Department of State Health Services, and Texas Juvenile Probation Commission.

"See and Save" Public Water Safety Awareness Campaign

Due to the drowning of numerous Texas children during the summer months, DFPS developed the "See and Save" public awareness prevention campaign. The campaign educated child care owners and staff, parents, adult caregivers, teenage caregivers, and the general public on the dangers of children drowning due to lack of adult supervision. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental injury deaths for children younger than the age of 14. Thirty thousand "See and Save" prevention packets went out to day care operations and foster homes across Texas. The general public was educated through the use of billboards and radio spots, which raised public awareness of the number of child fatalities due to drowning.



Every other Monday for about the last six years, Richard Bolton has left his day job as an IBM financial analyst in Austin a little early so he can put in a three-hour shift as a volunteer at the Texas Runaway Hotline and Texas Youth Hotline. Richard, who found out about the hotlines through a search on the Internet, says he likes volunteering there because it's rewarding work.

"One of the things that caught my attention is the extensive training," says Richard. "It helped me learn how to feel a lot more at ease and confident in my ability to talk to strangers. We learned not only how to refer people to local resources, but how to help guide them in the decision making process so that they could help themselves. Sometimes they're looking for shelter. Sometimes they're looking for ways to survive. There are ways for us to guide them to make the best decisions they can given their circumstances."

Richard says the busiest time is usually late afternoon and early evening. "Kids come home from school and the day's problems add up. It's a time of day when family problems are more likely to lead to people to call the hotline. Volunteer Coordinator Amanda Frazier says Richard is one of their most experienced volunteers. "He is always very dependable, knows a lot, and is a calming influence who doesn't get flustered. Richard is excellent on the phone, whether he is talking to a 10-year-old or an adult. He is very good about helping clients identify problems, what they can do, and coming up with a plan of action."

DFPS operates the 24-hour, toll-free Texas Runaway Hotline (1-888-580-HELP) and Texas Youth Hotline (1-800-98-YOUTH). Both include a workforce of about 50 volunteers and offer crisis intervention, counseling services, and information and referral to youths and families. In fiscal year 2005, they received a combined total of 39,680 calls.



Hotlines and Online Resources

Texas Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400

<https://www.txabusehotline.org>

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities.

Foster Care and Adoption Inquiry Line 1-800-233-3405

Provides information on how to become a foster or adoptive parent.

Child Care Information 1-800-862-5252

Delivers information about child care in Texas.

Office of Consumer Affairs 1-800-720-7777

Make an inquiry about an existing DFPS case or make a complaint.

Texas Runaway Hotline 1-888-580-HELP

Provides peer counseling to runaways and family members.

Texas Youth Hotline 1-800-210-2278

Provides peer counseling to youth and family members for family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, and running away.

APS Facility Investigations 1-800-647-7418

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation in facilities.

DFPS Web Sites

www.dfps.state.tx.us

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

<https://www.txabusehotline.org>

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities

www.adoptchildren.org

Adopt Children Through the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

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.txchildcaresearch.org

Search Texas Child Care

www.rainbowrooms.org

Rainbow Rooms

www.volunteerdfps.org

Volunteer Opportunities through DFPS

www.lookbeforeyouleave.org

Cars Are Not Babysitters

www.seeandsave.org

Safety for Children Around Water

Agency Address

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
P.O. Box 149030
Austin, TX 78714-9030

701 W. 51st St.
Austin, TX 78751
(512) 438-4800



DFPS Organizational Chart

