

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

2006 Annual Report

Texas Department
of Family and Protective Services

2006 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 2006 Annual Report is an overview of the department's programs, services, performance, and accomplishments. This report covers the fiscal year beginning Sept. 1, 2005 through Aug. 31, 2006. The companion to this report, the 2006 DFPS Data Book, is a comprehensive statistical resource. The 2006 Annual Report, Data Book, and additional information can be found on the department's web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us/statistics.

Thanks to the guidance and additional resources provided by the Governor and the Texas Legislature, DFPS made major strides in improving services and making children and vulnerable adults safer through a department wide renewal effort. DFPS Renewal encompasses a wide spectrum of reforms and improvements required by Senate Bill 6, the protective services reform bill passed in the 2005 session. We have strengthened abuse/neglect investigations, put new technological tools in caseworkers hands, and strengthened licensing standards for foster care. While there is still much to be done, I am proud of what our staff has accomplished.

In cooperation with a vast network of public and private partners and with the support of the DFPS Council, 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 department's performance and accomplishments.

Carey D. Cockerell
DFPS Commissioner

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services



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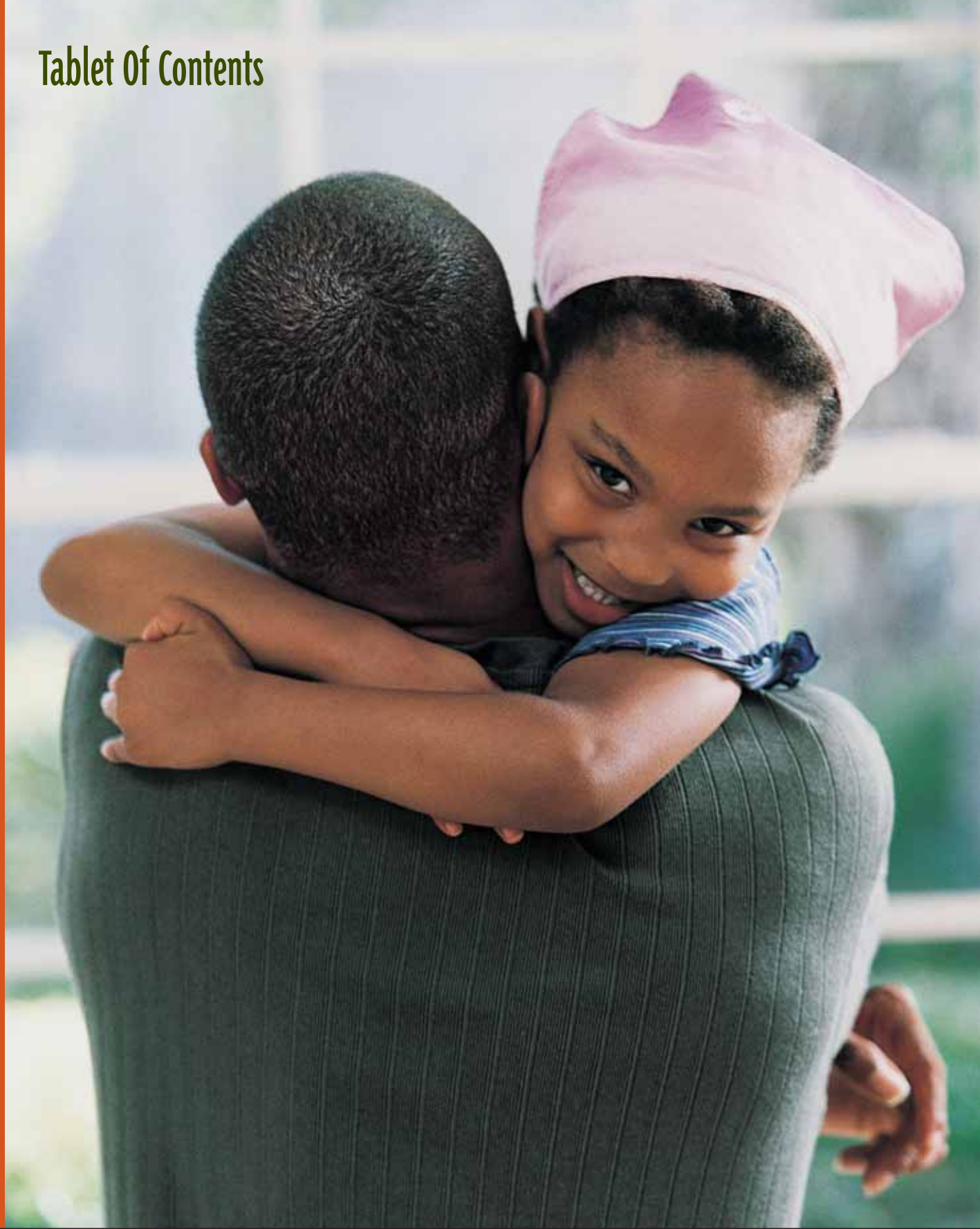


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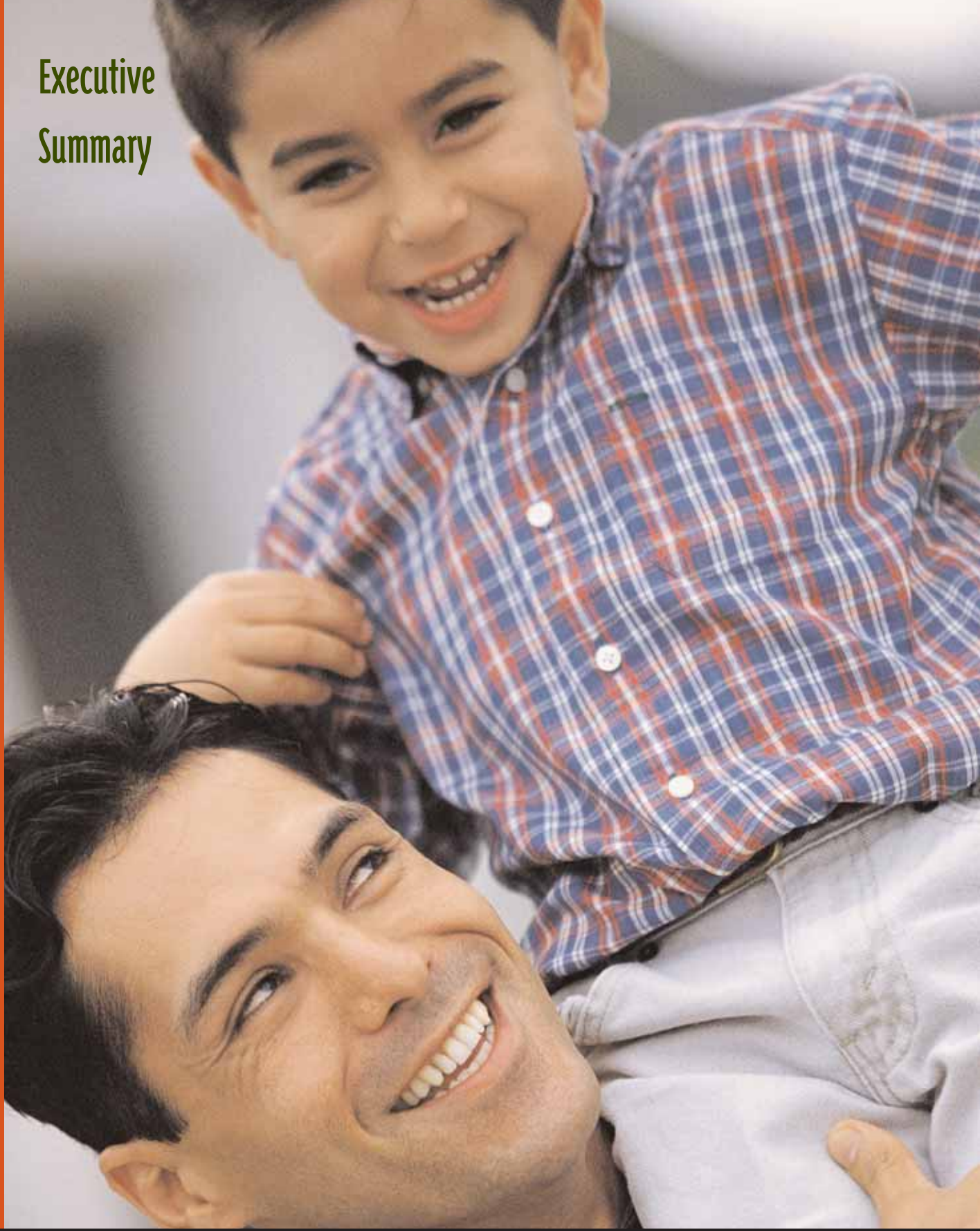
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Executive Summary



Executive Summary

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

DFPS Vision

The Department of Family and Protective Services:

- ◆ Is recognized for innovative, effective services;
- ◆ Builds strong, effective partnerships with clients, communities and state leaders;
- ◆ Provides effective leadership that is accountable for its actions and communicates openly with clients and stakeholders; and
- ◆ Supports staff who are highly motivated, diverse, ethical, well trained, and professional.

DFPS Values

- ◆ We protect the unprotected.
- ◆ We involve clients, families and communities in decision-making.
- ◆ We provide quality services.
- ◆ We are innovative and strive for excellence.
- ◆ We are ethical and accountable.
- ◆ We promote diversity.
- ◆ We value our staff.

Overview

A nine-member council, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, makes recommendations regarding the department's rules and policies. The DFPS Commissioner, who is appointed by the Executive Commissioner of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, directs about 8,500 employees in about 280 local offices. These offices are located in

five administrative districts that are 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).

Department Renewal

In 2005, the Texas Legislature instructed 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 DFPS 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 grew from about 6,938 staff in FY 2005 to about 8,433 workers in FY 2006, with plans to grow to about 9,532 in FY 2007.

In 2006, DFPS continued to build upon hundreds of improvements that were begun in 2005 that affect every aspect of DFPS. These changes have strengthened investigations, improved management and accountability, reduced caseloads, and support quality casework.

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

Child Protective Services—Highlights

- ◆ Child Protective Services continued to transform its operations and policies in response to Senate Bill 6. These initiatives included



strengthening investigations, supporting quality casework, improving services and child outcomes, building community partnerships, and preventing maltreatment.

- ◆ The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded Texas a total of \$4,082,000 for increasing the number of children adopted from foster care, the most awarded to any state. Texas will use the adoption incentive awards to encourage adoptions and enhance our child welfare programs.
- ◆ CPS established a specialized unit of child placing specialists in each region. As a result, there was a reduction in placement disruptions, a reduction in the number of children experiencing emergency shelter placements, and more accountability and oversight when matching children to appropriate foster caregivers.
- ◆ Every three years, states must undergo a federal review of foster care cases for compliance with federal regulations regarding the determination of Title IV-E foster eligibility. For the second time, DFPS had zero errors out of the 80 cases sampled.

Adult Protective Services-Highlights

- ◆ Adult Protective Services continued to transform its operations and policies in response to Senate Bill 6. These initiatives included improving outcomes for clients, increasing capacity to investigate and arrange services, and working effectively with existing and new community partners. By the end of FY 2006, APS had implemented 100 percent of the 252 initiatives required under APS Reform and all of the mandates required in Senate Bill 6.
- ◆ Staff across Texas continued to help survivors of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. Although the disasters struck in late FY 2005 and early FY 2006, respectively, there were still many follow-up issues throughout FY 2006,

such as finding housing or more suitable living arrangements, providing clothing, furniture and other necessities, and reuniting families.

- ◆ APS staff coordinated the 22nd Annual APS Conference in San Antonio in November 2005. The conference was successful, drawing 413 participants, including 50 out-of-state participants, and representatives from outside the U.S. The Texas APS conference is a major training event for APS practitioners and related professionals nationally and offered continuing education credits to social workers.

Child Care Licensing-Highlights

- ◆ Child Care Licensing continued to transform its operations and policies in response to Senate Bill 6. These initiatives included a number of measures design to better ensure child safety and improve regulations.
- ◆ In 2006, CCL completed the process of revising minimum standards for residential child-care. These operations include general residential operations, residential treatment centers, child-placing agencies, and foster homes.
- ◆ CCL initiated a project in 2006 to develop a system that assigns a weight to each minimum standard regulation, based on the risk to children. The goal is to place more emphasis on those regulations that correspond to child health and safety.
- ◆ In 2006, CCL, in cooperation with other agency areas, conducted three statewide public awareness campaigns. The Don't be in the Dark campaign educated Texas parents about the dangers of illegal child care and encourage unlicensed operators to seek proper authorization. The See and Save campaign urged parents and caregivers to be vigilant when it comes to children and water safety. And the Look before You Leave Campaign raises public awareness about the dangers of leaving children in hot cars.



Prevention and Early Intervention-Highlights

- ◆ PEI implemented two new programs, the Family Strengthening Program and the Youth Resiliency Program. These programs build protective factors for families and youth who are directly associated with the prevention of child maltreatment or juvenile delinquency, respectively.
- ◆ PEI programs began moving to evidence-based services consistent with Texas Family Code, Section 265.004. In FY 2006, Community Youth Development, Family Strengthening, Youth Resiliency and Texas Families: Together and Safe were shifted to this approach.
- ◆ PEI worked with the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families to complete a comprehensive statewide inventory of state-funded child maltreatment prevention services (direct- and indirect-impact).
- ◆ The Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) and Community Youth Development (CYD) programs were restored to FY 2003 levels.

Office of Consumer Affairs

While DFPS' goal is to have a positive impact 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 agency'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 2006, the Office of Consumer Affairs received 10,498 contacts from various sources including the public, clients, elected officials, other agencies, and DFPS staff. Of the total contacts received, 4,332 were handled as case-specific complaints, and 938 were inquiries from elected officials. The validation rate of complaints was 3.1 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 2006, Child Protective Services continued to transform its operations and policies in response to Senate Bill 6, the sweeping protective services reform bill passed by the Texas Legislature and signed into law by Governor Rick Perry in 2005. These initiatives included strengthening investigations, supporting quality casework, improving services and child outcomes, building community partnerships, and preventing maltreatment.

Strengthening Investigations

Forensic Investigation/Law Enforcement

CPS created a new division to ensure forensic investigation techniques are incorporated into casework and to improve working relationships with law enforcement. The Investigation Division develops and revises investigation policy and provides technical assistance to CPS field staff. The division also develops best practices and policies and ensures they are part of CPS training.

Subject Matter Experts and Support Staff

In 2006, CPS hired regional subject matter experts and local support staff to assist caseworkers as part of the daily work of CPS. Subject matter experts include child safety specialists who have expertise in risk and safety assessment; law enforcement

liaison staff; nurses; youth specialists; legal liaison staff; substance abuse experts; and investigation screeners who provide additional review when CPS reports are received. CPS hired education and disability specialists in 2005.

Joint Investigations

In 2006, DFPS worked with law enforcement agencies and Child Advocacy Centers of Texas to develop guidelines for conducting joint investigations. These guidelines will help CPS and law enforcement agencies create local multidisciplinary teams. CPS has also begun providing advanced investigation training through the Shaken Baby Alliance.

Risk Assessment Initiative

While CPS has used a formal system for assessing the risk of future child abuse/neglect for about 15 years, staff have not consistently gathered, assessed or used appropriate information to make accurate and timely decisions. Through this 2006 initiative, CPS began the process for improving the risk assessment tool used by caseworkers. CPS updated the risk assessment tool to make it easier to understand and use and will continue making enhancements to it in FY 2007. Child Safety Specialists are helping staff focus on best practices related to ensuring child safety and developing plans with families to mitigate identified risk.

Reducing Response Time

Senate Bill 6 directs DFPS to develop rules, by no later than September 2007, that require CPS to immediately respond to reports that could lead to the death of or severe harm to a child. Highest priority reports must be responded to within 24 hours. All other reports must be responded to within 72 hours. Currently, CPS is already required to respond to the highest priority (Priority 1) cases within 24 hours. However the response time for lower priority cases (Priority 2) is 10 days. In 2006, CPS implemented pilot programs involving shift work schedules in every region to prepare for the transition to quicker response times.



Supporting Quality Casework

Hiring Additional Staff

DFPS hired more than 2,000 CPS direct delivery staff since September 2005, which included 600 former HHSC eligibility staff who were at risk of losing employment due to the implementation of the Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment system. Despite the challenge of high turnover, DFPS had a net gain of 503 CPS staff. CPS also placed on-the-job training supervisors in each region to help prepare new workers and reorganized regional hiring teams to ensure a standard and efficient process is used.

Creation of Functional Units

In FY 2006, CPS divided its direct delivery staff into “functional units.” These units apply to investigations, family-based safety services, and conservatorship programs. Each unit consists of five caseworkers and one supervisor, thereby reducing the supervisor’s span of control and increasing the time supervisors can spend with each worker teaching and guiding them to make sound casework decisions. Each functional unit also has a casework assistant and clerical support to assist caseworkers in meeting the workload demands of their jobs. CPS had a net gain of 743 functional unit staff in FY2006.

Improving Documentation of Cases

CPS enhanced the requirements for documenting cases to streamline the process for capturing information. DFPS also continued to provide Speakwrite transcription service to reduce time spent on documentation and increase the time spent working with families.

Rollout of Tablet PCs

Senate Bill 6 requires DFPS to explore the strategic use of technology to improve effectiveness of operations. After a successful 2005 implementation of Tablet PCs in the department’s Adult Protective Services program, DFPS conducted a statewide

rollout of approximately 3,000 Tablet PCs in 2006 to CPS investigation and family based safety services caseworkers and Residential Child Care Licensing staff. The Tablet PC is a caseworker’s mobile office and it provides immediate assistance to caseworkers who are managing high caseloads. The units provide remote access to case documentation, client history checks, and even a route-mapping tool for caseworkers on the go.

Reviewing Performance and Accountability

CPS implemented tools for management to use on a quarterly basis for reviewing regional performance, as well as accountability tools for delinquent investigations, quality assurance measures, and regional issues. The program also implemented a restructuring plan that strengthens and better supports regional management structure, enhances accountability, and provides clear expectations for regional managers.

Training

In 2006, DFPS revised its initial core training for new CPS Caseworkers by expanding training from 6 weeks to 12 weeks and developing specialized training for different types of services. In conjunction with its Disproportionality Initiative (see below under “Improving Services and Child Outcomes”), CPS partnered with Casey Family Programs to provide cultural competency training on “Undoing Racism” for management staff and “Knowing Who You Are” training for new caseworkers and trainers.

Improving Services and Child Outcomes

Outsourcing

Senate Bill 6 directs DFPS to contract with private entities to provide all substitute care and case management services on a statewide basis by Sept. 1, 2011. This is designed to allow DFPS to increase its focus on protecting children from abuse and neglect and give the private sector a greater role in achieving better results for children and families.



Child Protective Services

In early FY 2006, DFPS and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) released the planned structure, processes, and timelines for transitioning to outsourced services. DFPS asked stakeholders to contribute ideas and recommendations in writing. The agencies also hosted public forums in San Antonio, Houston, Arlington, Lubbock, and Austin.

On April 19, 2006, DFPS and HHSC announced the selection of the San Antonio Region (Region 8) as the first outsourced area of the state. This 28-county region was selected for a variety of reasons, including its existing capacity of foster homes, emergency shelters, and residential treatment centers; its size, diversity, and mix of urban and rural communities; and its wide base of community support.

The department released a Request For Proposal (RFP) for the Independent Administrator on May 1, 2006 and two proposals were submitted by the July 31, 2006 deadline. However, in the fall of 2006 DFPS and HHSC announced an indefinite delay of the announcement of a tentative award.

Family Focus Initiative

Begun in 2005, this initiative is responsible for the cultural change in CPS to a more family-focused philosophy. This initiative matches services to individual family needs by improving family member involvement in the actual case planning process, as well as increasing opportunities to listen to the voices of parents and former foster youth.

In 2006, CPS incorporated this family focus approach into training. CPS also converted the Permanency Planning Team process into one that incorporates and expands Family Group Decision Making principles and increases the kinship program.

Tablet PCs For CPS Workers



In August 2006, DFPS announced the statewide rollout of mobile computers for staff whose jobs are to protect vulnerable children. The distribution of these tablet PCs, which followed a similar effort by Adult Protective Services in 2005, included 3,000 computers for Child Protective Services (CPS) and Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL).

Laura Weiser, a Family-Based Safety Services worker in Hallettsville, was one of the first CPS staff to receive a tablet PC. Weiser, who covers a rural part of the state, works 45 minutes away from her supervisor in Victoria. Her job includes coordinating and providing in-home services to stabilize families and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect.

"I definitely do a lot of traveling as part of my job and it takes a lot of time," said Weiser. "Right now, I have a case that is at least an hour and a half away from the office. All the traveling has hindered my ability to complete documentation. When we see families, we are sometimes required to do random drug tests and visits. It can be very time consuming to drive one way just for a random visit. While we are waiting for a family, we could be entering in documentation instead of just sitting. I think the tablet PC helps save time."

The feedback from staff has confirmed that tablet PCs are not just a tool for doing more work, but for doing that work better. "It is very important to have your documentation accurate," said Weiser. "The more quickly you can get that information written down or typed in, the more accurate it will be. Accuracy is key when you are reporting a court case. I think having this technology will enable me to close cases quicker."



Through Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), CPS engages families in decision-making and development of a plan of service. FGDM recognizes a family's strengths for meeting a child's safety, well-being, and permanency goals. FGDM is more inclusive of family and significant others in the planning process. As of August 2006, 4,611 FGDM conferences were held in many counties throughout Texas. CPS has also integrated family-focused philosophy throughout training, policy, and contract processes.

The Kinship Program is a variety of supportive services for relatives and other designated caregivers who are caring for children in DFPS conservatorship. Families participating in the Kinship Program may be assigned a Kinship Development Worker who can help find community resources and services, attend school meetings, and provide ongoing support and other assistance. Kinship caregivers may receive some financial compensation if children who are related or have a significant symbolic relationship are placed with them and in the legal custody of DFPS. Kinship caregivers qualify for a one-time integration payment of \$1,000 per sibling group, as well as annual payments of \$500 per child for as long as the child remains in DFPS legal custody. If permanent legal custody is awarded to the kinship caregivers, they can receive up to \$500 per child, per year for three years or until the child reaches age 18, whichever comes first.

Disproportionality

In 2006, CPS continued to address systemic factors and identify improvements in practices to address disproportionality, which is the over representation of a race or cultural group in a program or system. In the Texas CPS system, disproportionality means a higher percentage of African-American children are removed from their homes, a lower percentage are successfully reunited with their families, and a higher percentage age out of foster care.

In January 2006, CPS released an analysis of disproportionality and in July 2006 released a remediation plan, parts of which have already been implemented and are making a difference. CPS worked to reduce problems with disproportionality through training, partnerships with community organizations, and hiring a state level disproportionality director and disproportionality specialists in Houston, Arlington, Fort Worth and Beaumont/Port Arthur.

Texas was one of 13 states with teams selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to participate in a Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Reducing Disproportionality. This methodology helps groups generate new ideas, then implement and test them rapidly.

In addition, CPS held town hall meetings in Tarrant, Dallas and Denton counties to build awareness about disproportionality as well as engage the community in discussions about their concerns and invite them to collaborate with DFPS in the development of solutions. CPS is planning to hold town hall meetings in Houston, Austin, and Beaumont/Port Arthur.

Transitional Living Services

In 2006, CPS began the Transitional Living Services Initiative, which is a systematic approach to improving services for youth who age out of the state's foster care system. As a result, CPS:

- ◆ expanded a program called Circles of Support to make services available in one or more areas in each region statewide. The program pairs foster youth with families, friends, and professionals to discuss their strengths, hopes, dreams, and goals, etc.;
- ◆ modified Medicaid coverage so that annual re-certification for 18-21 year olds is not required;
- ◆ developed and provided training for caseworkers on transition planning, resources, and services for youth leaving foster care;



Expert Advice Helps CPS Provide Better Service



In 2006, CPS hired subject matter experts based in each of the 11 DFPS regional headquarters to help caseworkers with their daily work. They include child safety specialists who have expertise in risk and safety assessment; law enforcement liaison staff; nurses; youth specialists; legal liaison staff; substance abuse experts; and investigation screeners. CPS hired education and disability specialists in 2005.

Cheronda Tillman (right) had been through the Texas foster care system. Now as a youth specialist in San Antonio, she is trying to help make CPS better. "Senate Bill 6 enabled CPS to hire youth specialists like me. I'm a former foster youth and I'm an advocate who helps other foster youth through the transition to adulthood."

Tillman's job duties include working with CPS staff to provide a youth/alumni perspective in the program's practices, procedures, and policies related to current and former foster care youth. She also gathers input from youth to give CPS staff a consumer perspective. "I try to advocate on behalf of youth, interact with youth and alumni, and go to the table with elected officials and DFPS to let them know how things are working. I tell them I have been through the system and what steps are needed to make things work better. I make suggestions on how can we collaborate for the best solution to fix problems."

Last July, Laticia Everett, a former foster youth (left) from San Antonio, and Tillman attended an annual teen conference at University of Texas at Arlington. Sponsored by CPS, the event is held for youth in foster care who are age 16 and older, and features motivational speakers and

workshops. Everett helped plan the workshops, work with providers on arranging booths, and more. "The conference gives Texas foster youth the opportunity to meet, learn together, and plan for the future." Everett now serves in the U.S. Army.

Tillman said the conference gives youth an opportunity to see they have potential. "Through the workshops, we are educating them how to better make the transition, access community support systems, better utilize services, and help them gain the confidence and tools they need to become self sufficient."

Both Tillman and Everett are involved with a youth-run organization called Youth and Alumni Initiating Advocacy (formerly known as Youth Advocates In Action). The goal of the San Antonio-based group is to assist emancipated foster youth as they travel on their journey to self-sufficiency. Youth and Alumni Initiating Advocacy is supported by DFPS, as well as Baptist Child and Family Services, Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, Casey Family Programs, and the Alamo Community College District.

In recent years, Tillman worked with the organization to help transitioning foster youth by convincing lawmakers to extend Medicaid from age 18 to 21. One of the organization's recent public awareness and fund-raising efforts includes the creation of a board game called "Life in Foster Care." The board game mirrors what youth experience from the time they first come into contact with CPS.



Tillman said the idea came from Angie Cross, a consultant based in Kyle, Texas. "We sat around the table and decided we wanted to produce something that really mirrored what youth experience from the time they first come into contact with CPS. Everyone who plays the games gets their own little manila folder, just like they are on someone's caseload." Proceeds from the sale of the game support Youth and Alumni Initiating Advocacy.



- ◆ finalized an agreement for cooperative activities between DFPS and the Texas Workforce Commission; and
- ◆ launched the Texas Youth Connection web site at www.texasyouthconnection.org, which contains resources for youth in and transitioning out of foster care.

Psychotropic Medication Reduced

DFPS and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) entered into an interdepartmental agreement to assess prescribing practices and recommend a process for on-going clinical reviews of the use of psychotropic medications in treating children in foster care. A report by HHSC, DFPS and DSHS, "The Use of Psychotropic Medication in Texas Foster Children State Fiscal Year 2005" was published in June 2006. The report indicated that in the five months since the release of psychotropic medication guidelines for children in foster care, there was a 7 percent decrease in the number of foster children prescribed psychotropic medications and a 29 percent decrease in the number of children taking two or more psychotropic medications.

Strengthened Medical Support for Children in Care

Court reports now incorporate the summary of children's medical care. Regional nurses have been hired and will provide medical consultation to regional staff to improve decision-making and child safety. Regional interdepartmental teams, with representatives from HHSC, DSHS, DFPS and Texas Alliance, met quarterly in 2006 to coordinate informing foster parents about the services available through Texas Health Steps and to facilitate referrals for medical case management for children in foster care who have serious and complex medical conditions.

Building Community Partnerships

Community Engagement

Building community partnerships is an integral part of DFPS' work and is critical to providing clients with needed support. As a part of the DFPS department-wide community engagement initiative, CPS has developed a comprehensive strategic plan to improve community engagement.

In FY 2006, CPS placed specialized staff in each region to coordinate community-based and public awareness activities. These staff focus on building alliances with civic and service organizations, as well as partnerships with professionals such as local judicial, law enforcement, medical, and other providers. In 2006, CPS also expanded the community engagement training provided to incoming DFPS staff. As a result of enhancing DFPS volunteer programs, the number of volunteers within the CPS program has increased. At the end of FY 2006, there were more than 3,700 active CPS volunteers.

Co-Location

DFPS began conducting a cost-benefit analysis to determine the feasibility of co-locating CPS staff with other community services such as hospitals, police departments, schools, and child advocacy centers. These opportunities for co-location would enhance services to clients and may help provide additional office space for CPS staff.

Preventing Maltreatment

Drug Endangered Child Initiative

CPS, in coordination with the Texas Alliance for Drug Endangered Children, law enforcement, medical personnel, and prosecutors, developed protocols for investigating drug endangered children cases. CPS has partnered with the Texas



Alliance for Drug Endangered Children to conduct training sessions and formed local drug endangered children teams. CPS also began tracking cases involving methamphetamine manufacturing and signed an agreement with the Texas Department of Public Safety that standardizes how cases are handled when children are found in homes where methamphetamine is being manufactured.

Additional Accomplishments

- ◆ In FY 2006, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded Texas a total of \$4,082,000 for increasing the number of children adopted from foster care. Texas will use these funds to enhance our child welfare programs. The state's adoption incentive award was more than that received by any other state in the US.
- ◆ In FY 2006, CPS established a specialized unit of child placing specialists in each region. As a result, there was a reduction in placement disruptions, a reduction in the number of children experiencing emergency shelter placements, and more accountability and oversight when matching children to appropriate foster caregivers.
- ◆ CPS launched an online database available through an Extranet in December 2005. Through this web site, residential providers can enter/ delete/update vacancies in their foster homes, residential treatment centers, emergency shelters or institutions and includes specific criteria on each of those vacancies. With more than 400 residential providers entering their vacancy data into the database daily, CPS staff can then conduct a search based on a child's criteria to find the most appropriate placement available.
- ◆ Every three years, states must undergo a federal review of foster care cases for compliance with federal regulations regarding the determination of Title IV-E foster eligibility. For the second time, DFPS had zero errors found in the 80 sample cases reviewed, including (for the first time) a special supplemental sample of juvenile justice cases.
- ◆ In 2006, CPS implemented the Relative Diligent Search program. The program identifies relatives of children in substitute care who may be potential placements, may wish to have some form of contact with these children, or have additional information regarding the child's heritage, medical, or family background.
- ◆ In 2006, CPS launched Operation HOME ("Help On Matching Every-child") to focus attention on finding adoptive homes for older children who have a goal of adoption, but are not in permanent placements. The goal of HOME is to place at least 150 children in adoptive homes by Dec. 31, 2006. The initiative was a follow-up to another successful adoption recruitment program, Operation PUSH ("Placing Us in Safe Homes"), which concluded in early FY 2006. Through Operation PUSH, adoptions of 1,800 children were consummated.
- ◆ In 2006, CPS worked with LifeWorks and Casey Family Programs to create a center for providing services to youth transitioning out of foster care. Serving a 30-county area, the center provides increased depth of services to homeless youth and case management, crisis intervention, resource referral, and additional life skills education to youth transitioning out of foster care. In addition, the center serves an additional 65-80 transitioning youth through Casey Family Case Managers working in the Austin area.



Regional Vignettes

Region 1 (Amarillo Region)

Lubbock: In early 2006, foster home placements reached a critical point in the Texas Panhandle. At one point, there were only three placements available in Lubbock, a city of more than 200,000 people. Staff responded by convening a meeting between CPS, DFPS Child Care Licensing (which licenses child placing agencies and foster homes), and independent child placing agencies. As a result, they forged new alliances, established a memorandum of understanding, and shared resources and information. The community held a foster recruitment event that was attended by more than 1,500 people, with plans for additional events in the future. The goal: Recruiting more nurturing foster homes to care for children in need.

Region 2 (Abilene Region)

Wichita Falls: CPS staff took great advantage of two new developments in 2006: They had the opportunity to co-locate with staff from the Juvenile Probation Department and were equipped with state-of-the-art mobile computers, called Tablet PCs. During meetings with juvenile probation staff, CPS quickly noticed how much information both agencies could share on common cases, especially considering that CPS staff were now equipped with Tablet PCs. These portable computers enable caseworkers access to IMPACT, the APS and CPS case management system, as well as perform many other work functions while they are away from their offices.

Region 3 (Arlington Region)

Fort Worth: Due to high turnover rates, the Tarrant County CPS workers who handle children in foster care—known as conservatorship workers—temporarily experienced unusually high caseloads. Regional management asked staff in

other offices if they would be willing to help. The response was overwhelming: Staff from 19 counties, from as far away as Hunt, Ellis, Navarro, Collin, and Denton counties answered the call, as did workers from Dallas, Johnson, and Parker counties. These volunteers took on extra work duties such as filing paperwork, documenting cases, visiting parents, caregivers, and children, and providing transportation. Within three months, managers hired enough additional conservatorship workers to make caseloads more manageable.

Region 4 (Tyler Region)

Tyler: The evidence of CPS staff's commitment to community was phenomenal in 2006. Regional Children's Advocacy Centers and Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) recognized investigation staff for their commitment to and teamwork in protecting children. Texas CASA named John Watkins, a conservatorship supervisor in Sulphur Springs, statewide supervisor of the year. The Texas Foster Family Association chose Jackie Hubbard, a foster/adoption program director in Tyler, as program director of the year.

Region 5 (Beaumont Region)

Beaumont: CPS staff hosted "Girls Night Out," an evening at Junior League House filled with fashion, food, and fun for 20 high school girls in foster care. During the evening, the girls watched a fashion show presented by a local high school, giving them a close-up look at the latest prom styles. Then, the foster youth pieced together their own stunning outfits from hundreds of prom dresses, shoes, jewelry and other chic essentials donated by the local community. Each foster youth received a goodie bag filled with make-up, nail polish, an Outback Steakhouse gift card, and a gift certificate to have her hair styled the night of her prom.



Region 6 (Houston Region)

Houston: Staff from across CPS (investigations, family based safety services, conservatorship) worked with community partners, and Casey Family Programs to tackle the issue of disproportionality, which is the overrepresentation of minority children in the child welfare system. In 2006, Region 6 staff were looking to the future and willing to try different methods to address the issue. This region was the first in the United States to have identified disproportionality specialists.

Region 7 (Austin Region)

Austin: CPS staff set up a monitoring and tracking system for the Kinship Program, which provides support to kinship caregivers who accept placement of related children. Through the system, staff are better able to track reimbursement stipends on a county basis. Staff's goal is to provide equal access to these funds across this 30-county region.

Region 8: (San Antonio Region)

San Antonio: CPS staff worked diligently on a number of collaborations with the faith-based community. Staff held pastoral breakfasts and participated in events such as National Blue Sunday Child Abuse, which included a citywide prayer service at the San Antonio Convention Center on April 30. The faith-based community responded in many ways including hosting the Heart Gallery photos, providing for the needs of children and families, and by participating in the Adopt-A-Caseworker program, a volunteer project through which community organizations such as church groups and Sunday school classes can help meet the needs of abused and neglected children and their caseworkers.

Region 9 (Midland Region)

Midland: CPS developed an educational video to show to all new mothers in hospitals after they give birth. It includes information on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and accidental rollover/smothering deaths, drug and alcohol dangers, water safety, Shaken Baby Syndrome, and car safety. This video was developed at the recommendation of the Region 9 Child Death Review Committee, in partnership with the Midland Memorial Hospital, KWES-TV in Midland, and Abilene and Midland Regions (Regions 2/9) child welfare boards. The video will be distributed to all hospitals in West Texas, and to CPS staff and clients.

Region 10 (El Paso Region)

El Paso: In 2006, CPS conservatorship and family based safety services staff maintained excellent working relationships with the court systems handling drug cases. The region has the first family based safety services drug court in the state and CPS staff report successful outcomes among families participating in these programs.

Region 11 (Edinburg Region)

Corpus Christi: Youth who age out of foster care face extra challenges as they enter adulthood. Many are unaware or fail to take advantages of the services available to help them make this transition. In 2006, local CPS staff stepped up their efforts in planning for these older foster youth to make certain that when they become young adults they have a chance to succeed and be supported in the process.



CPS Services

Intake

State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected report the situation to the DFPS abuse hotline. DFPS administers a toll-free, 24-hour statewide hotline (1-800-252-5400) for reporting suspected abuse or neglect of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. 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 239,102 reports of child abuse and neglect in 2006.

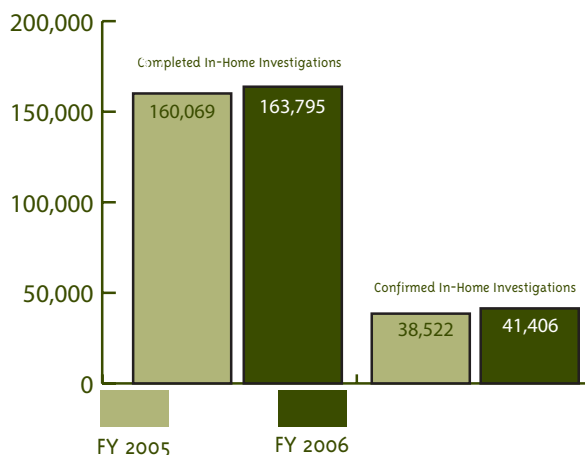
Investigations

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 2006, CPS completed 163,795 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.



Completed Investigations



Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS)

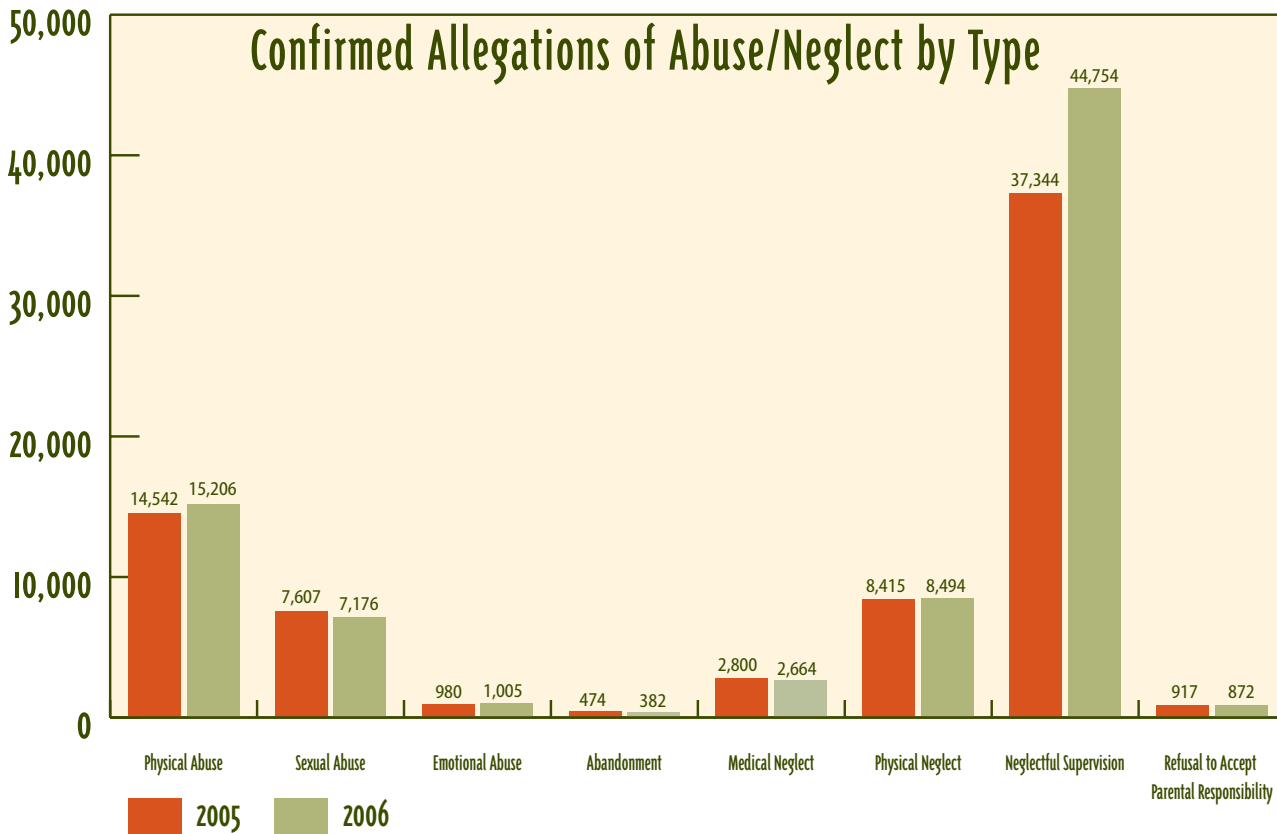
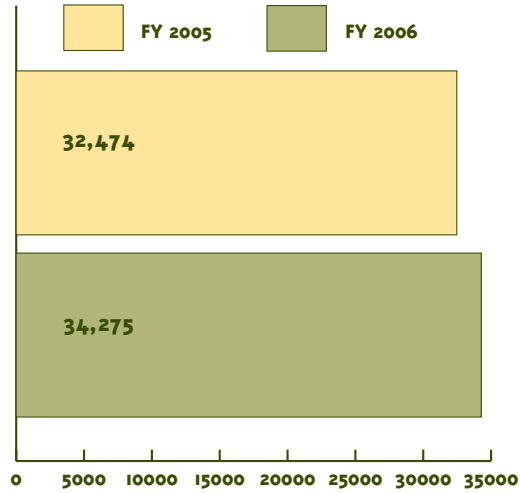
When child safety can be reasonably assured, CPS provides services to help stabilize the family and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Services provided include family counseling, crisis intervention, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, and child care. Most children served by FBSS continue to live at home while the department 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 2006, an average of 12,828 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 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.

Children in Foster Care During Fiscal Year 2006



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 3,376 adoptions in 2006. DFPS contracts with licensed private child-placing agencies to increase the number of adoptive homes available to adopt foster children. At the end of 2006, there were 5,428 children in the department's custody awaiting adoption. Of these 3,850 were in placements not intended to be permanent.



Dual-Licensed Homes

In 2006, 44.8 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 at www.adoptchildren.org. Examples include:

- ◆ the statewide Foster Care Month in May;
- ◆ Adoption Awareness Month in November;
- ◆ faith-based collaborations such as 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;
- ◆ "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; and
- ◆ increased mass adoption events by working 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.

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

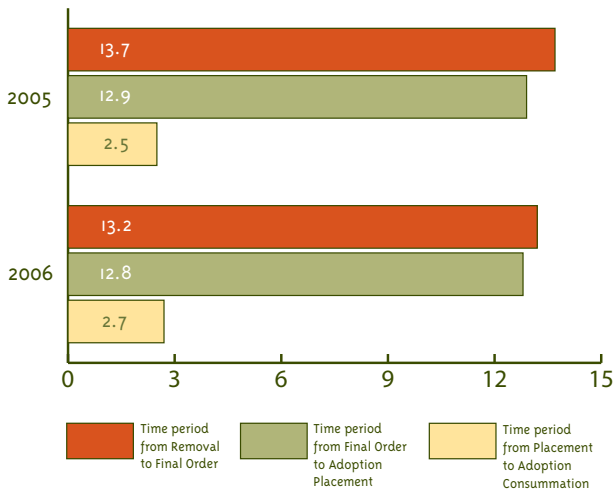
The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) provides information on children awaiting adoption. Photos, profiles, videos, and inquiry forms are on the Internet at www.adoptchildren.org. TARE participates with other adoption organizations



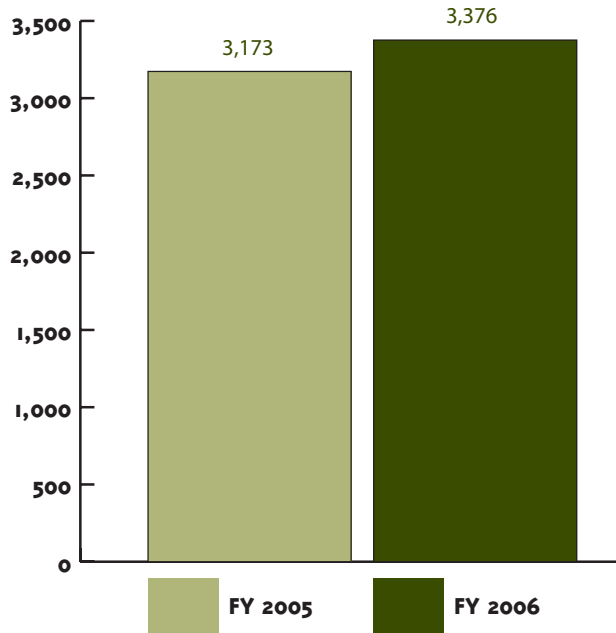
during national recruitment campaigns and promotes children on TARE in the AdoptUSKids national web site as well as other web sites. At the end of FY 2006, there were 1,014 children registered in TARE. In FY 2006, 583 children were adopted through TARE, 158 children were pending placement, 60 were removed due to numerous inquiries from approved adoptive families, and 270 children were removed from TARE due to changes in their permanency plan or medical needs.

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. The AFN has more than 2,000 approved adoptive families across the U.S. who have registered their adoption preferences so that DFPS staff can match them with waiting children.

Months Spent in State Care for Children whose Adoptions were Consumated



Completed Adoptions



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.

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 2,445 children and families in 2006.



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 for children and youth. In 2006, 7,279 youths ages 16 through 20, participated in the PAL program. In addition, 812 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 902 young adults and case management services for 1,513 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 reach their educational goals after they age out of the state's care. 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 a tuition waiver program at state-funded universities, colleges, junior colleges, and vocational schools. In 2006, the ETV program served 435 youth.

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 232 adopted caseworkers at 18 sites.



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 child safety specialists, 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.

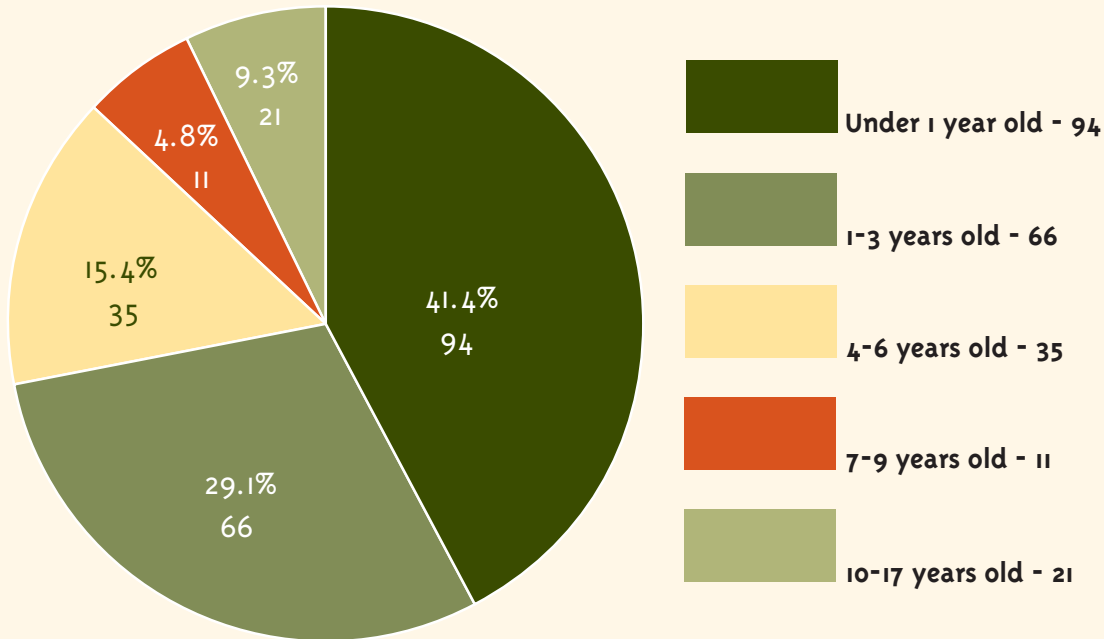
CPS confirmed abuse/neglect as the cause of death for 227 children in FY 2006.



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.

Age of Fatality Victims Due to Abuse/ Neglect – 2006



Adult Protective Services



Adult Protective Services



Improving Investigations and Service Delivery

APS staff updated its policies to clearly articulate the involvement of supervisors at specific points during investigations and delivery of services. The increased supervisor involvement offers additional safeguards to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The policy includes a checkpoint system, which ensures cases are assigned appropriately and staff receive additional guidance in difficult or complex cases. The system also ensures thorough investigations of all allegations in a timely manner, assists staff to develop long-term plans to prevent recurring abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and requires a mandatory review by supervisors on all cases prior to their closure.

APS also added specialized staff in each region with expertise in financial exploitation and self-neglect cases. These subject matter experts provide a critical resource for staff in gathering key evidence that may lead to legal action and in addressing complex medical and social factors to ensure the safety of clients. APS also developed special units to monitor complex investigations in counties with populations greater than 250,000.

Increasing Capacity

Staff Qualifications

To increase program effectiveness and the protection of vulnerable adults, APS hired new staff with professional credentials, while building the skills of current staff and encouraging them to pursue formal education relevant to their jobs. In 2006, DFPS employed hiring specialists to expedite filling new positions, instituted a pre-screening process to select applicants most likely to succeed as caseworkers, standardized the interview process for direct delivery staff, and began an educational

stipend program for existing staff. APS also worked with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to design and distribute a survey to all Texas colleges and universities offering degrees in social work and psychology, outlining the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in APS.

Caseload Reduction

In FY 2006, APS continued to focus efforts on establishing reasonable workloads that enabled caseworkers to provide adequate time and energy to individual clients and ensure positive outcomes. In response to a significant increase in intakes, approval was granted in FY 2006 for emergency funding to add 155 additional APS caseworkers in FY 2007. These caseworkers will be phased-in between September and April 2007.

Training

In 2006, APS introduced a new basic curriculum that includes web-based, classroom, and on-the-job training components. The training for new staff was expanded from 3 weeks to 11 weeks. APS hired additional field trainers in each region to provide new employees with intensive coaching during the on-the-job training phase. The program now requires 18 hours per year of continuing education for all direct delivery staff and supervisors. APS also established a system for tracking the delivery of training on new policy, as well as training for supervisors on case management.

Technology

Innovations in technology have increased caseworker efficiency and improved outcomes for clients through effective assessment and documentation. As of December 2005, all APS caseworkers received new tablet computers. APS caseworkers became a mobile workforce, using tablet PCs and digital cameras as key support tools in the field. These tools eliminated the boundary between the field and the office. Caseworkers in



Adult Protective Services

the field are now able to access case information, resources, and support from supervisors. This mobile technology has improved efficiency by enabling caseworkers to document case activities outside of their office, reducing travel time and increasing time interacting with clients.

- ◆ In May 2006, the Tablet PC and its related Mobile Protective Services software received an award for the “Best Application Serving the Public” in the “Business Evolution Through Mobilizing Field Workers” category at the Mobile & Wireless World Conference hosted by Computerworld Magazine.

Working Effectively With Community Partners

Public Awareness

APS launched a new robust year-round public awareness campaign called “It’s Everyone’s Business” to help enhance public awareness about the problems of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Built around community engagement activities with APS partners across the state, the campaign focused on elder maltreatment, as well as specialized topics featured during the year related to summer heat and financial exploitation. Public service announcements about adult abuse prevention were created and distributed to TV stations across Texas. The campaign also generated newspaper and broadcast media news stories on all the topics of the campaign. DFPS also created an adult abuse prevention kit, which included a variety of educational materials, and was made available to individuals and groups in Texas communities. The materials focused on local information and efforts to help educate people about the problems faced by the elderly and adults with disabilities and how to prevent adult maltreatment. The kit included sections on: APS responsibilities; key definitions about types of abuse, exploitation, and neglect; publicity,

Partnering with Law Enforcement



In February 2006, the El Paso Police Department partnered with Adult Protective Services (APS), and the El Paso District Attorney and County Attorney offices to create the Elder Abuse Task Force. A special victims unit within the El Paso Police Department was formed to work with the task force and is notified of suspected criminal activity by APS staff. According to El Paso Police Chief Richard Wiles, it is the first such police unit in a large Texas city.

Thanks to the task force, APS caseworkers and police detectives have a closer working relationship to ensure the safety of people who are elderly. This effort has resulted in an increased number of referrals and prosecutions. The majority of cases handled by the Special Victims Unit involve people who are elderly and in a state of self-neglect and the second most common problem involves financial exploitation. In its first year, the Special Victims Unit worked on 64 cases, including one that led to the arrest of an alleged perpetrator on El Paso’s “10 Most Wanted List” for felony charges of abuse of a person who is elderly.

“Our staff call the Special Victims Unit on a regular basis to obtain information, to do combined interviews, and to discuss difficult APS cases” said Elizabeth Mariscal, the APS resource and external relations specialist in El Paso. “They are a great asset to our agency because they are always willing to work with us to provide valuable information that is crucial for us to assist APS clients.”

From left to right: APS Investigator Ruben Villegas, APS Investigator Susana Saldaña, APS Specialist Liz Hinojosa, Detective Pete Natera of the El Paso Police Department (Special Victims Unit), APS Investigator Felix Cabrera, and Detective Ramon Torres of El Paso Police Department (Special Victims Unit).



presentation and media tips (including sample materials); issues facing vulnerable adults; how to get involved; and, caregiver resources and other valuable resources. All these materials are available at www.everyonesbusiness.org

Special Task Units

Senate Bill 6 instructed DFPS to work with county governments to create special task units in counties with populations of 250,000 or more. These units provide additional support for complex APS cases by engaging other disciplines to effectively solve problems, identify resources, make recommendations on cases, and serve as catalysts for additional services from the local community. In FY 2006, APS developed a curriculum and manual for the counties and worked with county governments to identify persons to serve on the special task units. Members from the private and public sector may include mental health professionals, attorneys, law enforcement agencies, physicians, and clergy. In 2006, commissioners' courts across the state approved creation of the special task units in 19 counties.

Community Engagement

Also as a result of Senate Bill 6, DFPS developed an APS customer satisfaction survey to send annually to stakeholders, protective services agencies, and probate courts. In May 2006, DFPS sent the survey to 2,300 stakeholders and will publish the survey results in FY 2007. This builds on efforts begun in 2005, when APS hired community initiative staff to focus on enhancing civic and volunteer initiatives, building the base of APS volunteers, and encouraging the development of diverse community boards. APS also hired resource and external relations staff to focus on building relationships with the service and provider communities in order to increase access to services such as home repair and payment assistance for medication and utilities. DFPS staff identified priorities in Texas communities and cre-

ated community action plans to address education and resource development. DFPS also strengthened collaborations with law enforcement agencies, created new extreme weather task forces, financial exploitation education campaigns, and other critical community partnerships.

Additional Accomplishments

- ◆ APS staff coordinated the 22nd Annual APS Conference in San Antonio in November 2005. The conference was successful, drawing 413 participants, including 50 out-of-state participants, and representatives from outside the U.S. The Texas APS conference is a major training event for APS practitioners and related professionals nationally and offered continuing education credits to social workers.
- ◆ Staff across Texas continued to help survivors of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. Although the disasters struck in late FY 2005 and early FY 2006, respectively, there were still many follow-up issues throughout FY 2006, such as finding housing or more suitable living arrangements, providing clothing, furniture and other necessities, and reuniting families. Some workers even made use of recently issued tablet PCs to help assist evacuees at various shelters in Texas.



Regional Vignettes

Region 1 (Lubbock Region)

Thanks to APS renewal efforts in 2005, DFPS funded two positions to help build community partnerships in each region. With community support, APS could create resource rooms for workers to provide clients with goods such as adult diapers, nutritional supplements, toiletries, cleaning supplies, non-perishable groceries, and medical equipment. The new staff located concerned citizens willing to serve on advisory boards, resulting in the formation of Silver Star advisory boards in Lubbock and Plainview. Both boards held their first meetings in 2006. Through various fundraisers, newspaper articles, assistance of churches, and contributions by local businesses, both boards successfully stocked the once empty Silver Star resource rooms. The two boards continue to thrive and their members are enthusiastic in meeting the needs of clients who are elderly or have disabilities.

Region 2 (Abilene Region)

In 2006, APS initiated the APS Honors program to emphasize the importance of partnerships and to recognize individuals and agencies that provided extraordinary care and service to people who are elderly or have disabilities. In collaboration with regional boards, APS Honors presented 19 awards to individuals and agencies throughout the region. Honorees included physicians, sheriffs, volunteers, and service providers. APS staff also increased awareness through presentations to law enforcement academies in Abilene, Wichita Falls, and west central Texas.

Region 3 (Arlington Region)

In 2006, two APS workers were placed in Dallas hospitals. This effort increased communication and understanding of roles and responsibilities between the two organizations. The on-site APS workers are now able to see clients quickly and begin investiga-

New Homes for Hurricane Katrina Victims



Although Hurricane Katrina struck in late FY 2005, Adult Protective Services still had many follow-up issues throughout FY 2006, such as finding housing or more suitable living arrangements, providing clothing, furniture and other necessities, and reuniting families.

One group of New Orleans residents actually found themselves evacuated all the way to El Paso and eventually ended up living at the same apartment complex. Thanks to APS, they were able to locate housing, get their pension and Social Security checks transferred, find medical care, get assistance with transportation, and more.

Ruby Eason and Samuel and Bessie Schoby were waist deep in water when their neighbor Ron Hall helped pull them from Ms. Eason's house. They were all eventually taken by helicopter to the New Orleans airport. It wasn't until they got on a plane that they found out they were going to El Paso.

"I blanked out a lot of what happened during Hurricane Katrina," said Mrs. Schoby. "I can't put it into words. We left with just the clothes on our backs. But we stuck together as neighbors. I miss New Orleans, where I had lived for 50 years, but everyone in Texas has been very nice and courteous. Cyndy, Liz, and a couple others from your agency have been like our guardian angels. They're beautiful people and I will always appreciate them."

From left to right: Elizabeth Morales, APS specialist-self neglect, Cynthia Vizacarra, APS specialist-exploitation, Ruby Hall (sitting) and grandson Jaylen Collins, Ron Hall, George J. Washington, Ruby Lee Eason, Samuel Schoby, and Bessie Schoby.



tions immediately into clients' situations. APS has resources and statutory authority unavailable to the hospital. The APS workers coordinate with hospital social workers to develop service plans that ensure the clients' well-being and safety. The Tablet PCs allow APS workers to perform their jobs in the hospital environment.

Region 4 (Tyler Region)

Staff conducted a very successful conference in May 2006 in coordination with the Area Agency on Aging of East Texas and Trinity Valley Community College Henderson County Campus entitled "Protective Services for Aging Gracefully." The conference held in Athens included breakout sessions featuring agency experts from the Office of the Attorney General, American Association of Retired Persons, the Texas Silver Haired Legislature, DFPS, DADS, HHSC, and the East Texas Area Agency on Aging. Several area businesses and health care organizations also supported the conference.

Region 5: (Beaumont Region)

APS staff participated in the Santas for Seniors program sponsored by a national provider of companionship and home care services. The organization accepts donations and purchases gifts for clients who may or may not have someone to think about them during the year. As one caseworker put it, "It is so very rewarding to see their faces when you touch them with the spirit of the holidays."

Region 6 (Houston Region)

In 2006, staff participated in the Harris County Elder Abuse Fatality Review Team, which strives for justice for elderly and vulnerable citizens who died as a result of interpersonal violence or neglect. The only team of its kind in Texas, it promotes cooperation, communication, and coordination among agencies that respond to

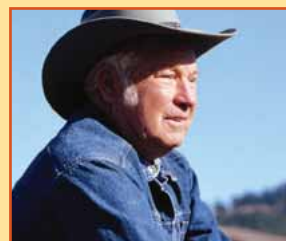
elderly and vulnerable adult deaths. The team reviews cases and makes recommendations to the county commissioner, appropriate state agencies, and local law enforcement on changes to law, policies, and practice in an effort to reduce the number of elder and vulnerable adult deaths caused by abuse and neglect. The team helped form and participated in a town-hall meeting held on June 22, 2006 entitled "Why Tolerate the Intolerable." The focus of the meeting was to raise the awareness and educate community leaders, policy makers, and the public about this growing problem.

Region 7 (Austin Region)

Region 7 APS staff began collaborating with Meals on Wheels (MOW) and More of Austin in 2006 to educate MOW volunteers about abuse, neglect and exploitation of the elderly and adults with disabilities. APS and MOW staff created brochures and distributed them to 3000 volunteers. The Region 7 Community Initiatives Specialist offered training to MOW volunteers on a quarterly basis. MOW also instituted a rapid response team to assist volunteers in identifying symptoms of abuse, neglect and exploitation and referring those cases to APS. The Region 7 community initiatives specialist described the collaboration as "awesome."

Region 8 (San Antonio Region)

In 2006, APS staff continued working with the Elder Fraud Task Unit formed in 2005. Through this task force, APS has enlisted the support of other entities to reduce instances of financial exploitation against adults who are elderly or have disabilities. The task force is comprised of representatives from APS, the Bexar County District Attorney's office, probate court investigators, Frost Bank Fraud Management, the Bexar County Sheriff's office, and the San Antonio Police Department. The task force provides an opportunity to discuss difficult cases, learn about



Adult Protective Services

APS policy, and train and present information to seniors, financial institution personnel, the Bexar County Sheriff's office, the Crime Control and Prevention District Board, the Bexar County Police Chiefs' Association, the Businesses Against Theft Network, and the San Antonio Police Department.

Region 9 (Midland Region)

APS staff began a coalition with Midland/Odessa community centers for mental health and mental retardation to improve communication and increase awareness of policies and changes in each agency. Discussions focused on services, unmet needs, and communication. Participants from both agencies are pleased with the improved relationships and supervisors plan to form coalitions in other cities. Region 9 also continued special holiday projects with banking partners to provide gifts for clients who are elderly or have disabilities, brightening the season for more than 350 clients in the Midland, Odessa, and Big Spring area.

Region 10 (El Paso Region)

APS staff and volunteers worked with the El Paso Extreme Weather Task Force to collect and distribute fans for people who are elderly during the summer months and blankets during the winter months. The Task Force also promoted a buddy system that paired people who are elderly to check on one another and encouraged elderly residents who did not have air conditioning to spend more time in air-conditioned places such as shopping malls and senior centers. The Task Force members provided educational materials and training on the dangers of potential fires from use of space heaters and of carbon monoxide poisoning from using alternate fuel sources. These efforts resulted in a reduction in the number of deaths related to heat, extreme cold, space heater fires, and carbon monoxide poisoning in the El Paso region.

Region 11 (Edinburg Region)

The Silver Ribbon Community Partners Board of Hidalgo and Starr Counties held their first annual "Jackpot of Love" fundraiser in February 2006, netting more than \$30,000 for the benefit of Region 11 APS clients. More than 250 people risked wet, chilly weather to attend the fundraiser. Board members, local dignitaries and attendees rendered warm recognition to APS staff for their devoted service to the most vulnerable adults of the region.



APS Services

APS clients are adults who are age 65 and older or who have a disability and reside in the community. They may also be adults or children with mental illness or mental retardation who receive services in state operated and/or contracted settings, or in unlicensed facilities. Two program areas serve APS clients: in-home investigations and services and mental health (MH) and mental retardation (MR) investigations. APS in-home staff work closely with Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) staff on cases that require coordination and referral for guardianship services.

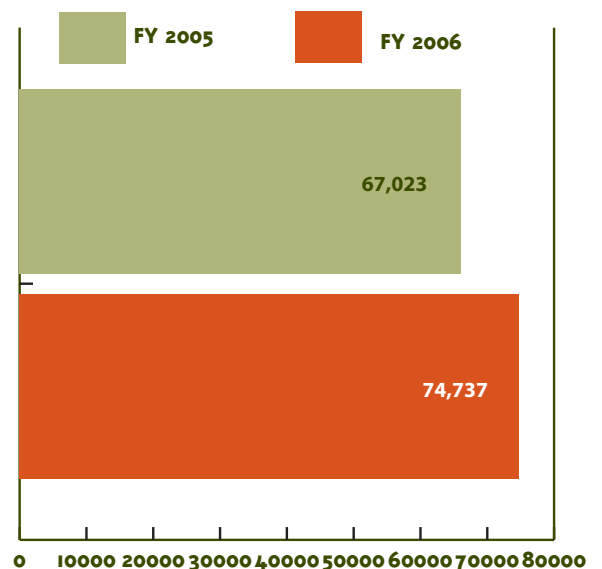
Protecting adults who are elderly or have a disability continues to be a growing issue in Texas. Based on HHSC population projections for 2006, Texans who were elderly or who were adults with a disability made up about 17.2 percent of the state's population. In 2006, 2.3 million Texans were age 65 and older and 45 percent, or 1.02 million, of those had a disability. About 12 percent of adults between the ages of 18 and 64 had a disability. Many of these individuals live alone and depend on others for care.

In-Home Investigations and Services

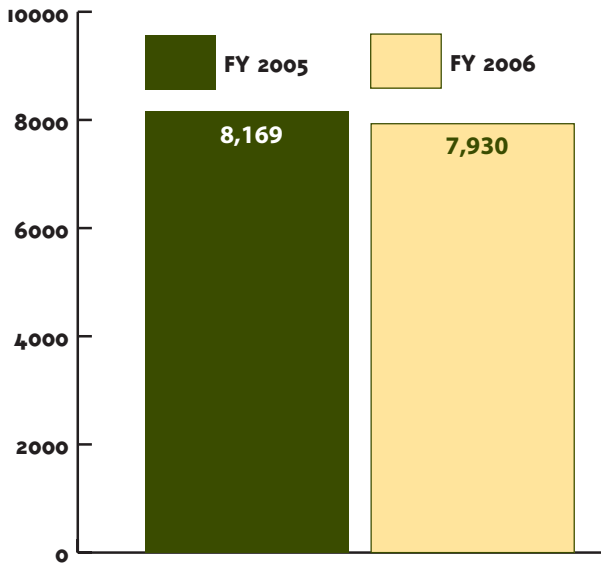
The largest APS program area is in-home investigations and services. The in-home program investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities. Specifically, APS works with vulnerable adults who reside in their own homes or in room-and-board homes not 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>.

An investigation begins within 24 hours of receiving a report. In FY 2006, APS completed 74,737 investigations of which 51,200 cases were confirmed cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. When maltreatment is confirmed, APS may provide or arrange for emergency services to alleviate abuse, neglect, and exploitation 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.

Completed In-Home Investigations



Completed Facility Investigations



MH and MR 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 FY 2006, APS completed 7,930 investigations in state operated and/or contracted settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation.





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.

Continued Response to CCL Reform

In 2006, Child Care Licensing (CCL) continued to transform its operations and policies in response to Senate Bill 6, the sweeping protective services reform bill passed by the Texas Legislature and signed into law by Governor Rick Perry in 2005. These initiatives included a number of measures design to better ensure child safety and improve regulations.

Ensuring Child Safety

Child Care/Child-Placing Administrator License

Senate Bill 6 adds the requirement for each child-placing agency to have a licensed child-placing administrator. This ensures consistency of licensure requirements across all types of 24-hour, out-of-home care and enhances the safety of children. In 2006, CCL created a test instrument and began testing child-placing administrators.

Reports of Abuse and Serious Incidents

Senate Bill 6 added a requirement to Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code that requires residential child care operations and child-placing agencies to report certain serious incidents involving children to DFPS. Serious incidents include:

- ◆ a critical injury to a child;
- ◆ an illness that requires hospitalization of a child; and
- ◆ arrest, abuse, neglect, exploitation, runaway, suicide attempt, or death of a child.

As a result, in 2006, CCL implemented corresponding rules to the minimum standards.

Background Checks

Based on changes to Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code, new rules went into effect on Dec. 1, 2005, regarding background check requirements for all child-care operations. These rules changed several requirements that affect the way in which both day care and residential operations request and receive background check results.

Drug Testing

Senate Bill 6 requires residential child care operations to have a drug testing policy for new and existing employees. In addition, the law required these operations to inform DFPS within 24 hours after becoming aware that a person who directly cares for or has access to a child in the operation has abused drugs. On December 1, 2005, these new rules in Chapter 42 of the Texas Human Resources Code went into effect and CCL implemented the change.

Behavior Intervention Training

Senate Bill 6 requires residential child care operations to provide DFPS approved behavior intervention training to their personnel. The training must include the risks associated with prone restraint of



Child Care Licensing

children. CCL notified residential child care operations in August 2005 to revise their training curriculum and rules in order to fulfill this requirement by March 1, 2006. After that date, residential child care licensing staff began reviewing child care operations for compliance.

Regulatory Action

Random Inspections

In 2005, the Texas Legislature amended Section 42.044 of the Texas Human Resource Code to require Child-Care Licensing to inspect a random sample of agency foster homes. In response, CCL conducted a focus group with representatives from the foster care community to gain insight into the concerns that foster parents and child-placing agencies may have about these inspections. As a result of this meeting, a variety of topics were identified and included in CCL staff training and inspection procedures. In January 2006, staff began to conduct random sampling of the foster homes. Following the process, CCL conducted a survey of those inspected. Feedback from the survey process was positive. Staff will continue random sampling in FY 2007.

Adverse Actions

In the past, there have been concerns that residential child care operations with adverse actions taken against them in another state were able to apply and be licensed to provide child care in Texas. As required by Senate Bill 6, CCL proposed new rules to prevent that from happening. DFPS expects the DFPS Advisory Council will pass the new rules in early FY 2007.

Exit Conference

Senate Bill 6 requires CCL staff to conduct an exit conference with a facility's representative after completing an inspection of a residential child care operation. In addition, the CCL representative must

provide a copy of the inspection checklist. In 2006, CCL implemented new policy and procedures requiring exit conferences.



Supporting Quality Casework

Interviewing and Investigations

Senate Bill 6 requires DFPS to provide new advanced training in investigative techniques and protocols to residential child care licensing investigators. In 2006, CCL began training those investigators on forensic interviewing, investigation techniques and collection of physical evidence.

Rollout of Tablet PCs

Senate Bill 6 requires DFPS to explore the strategic use of technology to improve effectiveness of operations. After a successful 2005 implementation of Tablet PCs in the agency's Adult Protective Services program, DFPS conducted a statewide rollout of about 50 Tablet PCs to Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) investigators in 2006. The Tablet PC is a lightweight, portable computer that is a caseworker's mobile office and it provides immediate assistance to caseworkers managing high caseloads. The device provides remote access to case documentation, client history checks, and even a route-mapping tool for caseworkers on the go.

Additional Staff

In 2006, DFPS hired 60 additional Residential Child Care Licensing staff to ease caseloads,



improve investigations, conduct random sample reviews of foster homes, and thus better ensuring child safety.

Additional Accomplishments

- ◆ In 2006, CCL completed the process for revising minimum standards for residential child-care. These operations include general residential operations, residential treatment centers, child-placing agencies, and foster homes. The revision process included the gathering of information from providers, licensing staff, and provider associations. In addition, the changes were based on reviews of the minimum standards of other states, available research and literature relating to residential child care, and health and safety practices recommended by experts. After a public comment period, the DFPS Advisory Council recommended the final rules at the end of FY 2006.
- ◆ The regulation of child-care facilities and child-placing agencies routinely presents two challenges for CCL staff and permit holders alike: consistency in interpretation of minimum standards and consistency in enforcement decisions and actions. In an effort to address these challenges, CCL initiated a project in 2006 to develop a system that assigns a weight to each minimum standard regulation, based on the risk to children. For example, failure to supervise a child presents a much greater risk than failure to document the name of a child's school in the child's record. The department assigned preliminary weights to the residential minimum standards that will become effective Jan. 1, 2007, using input from Licensing staff, statewide advisory committee members, and external stakeholders.
- ◆ In 2006, DFPS unveiled a statewide public awareness campaign to educate Texas parents about the dangers of illegal child care and encourage unlicensed operators to seek proper authorization. The focus of the "Don't Be in the Dark About Child Care" campaign is to discourage parents from placing children in unregulated child care, and with good reason. 10 Texas children died in unregulated care in 2005, and 8 in 2004.
- ◆ In 2006, a large number of Texas children drowned, especially in the Houston area. In response, the Child Care Licensing division took the lead with 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 and other earned media efforts. 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.
- ◆ Following preliminary work in 2005, Licensing staff worked with the department's Information Technology department to launch 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.
- ◆ In 2006, 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.



Regional Vignettes

Northwest District (Regions 1, 2, 9, and 10)

Abilene, Brownwood, and Wichita Falls: In 2006, CCL played a vital role in creating four major training conferences for child care directors and their staff. These included conferences at Midwestern University in Wichita Falls, Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Be A Champion for Children in Abilene, and Building Bridges in Abilene. Each conference brought in more than 150 participants.

East Central District (Regions 3, 4, 5, and 7)

Various cities: In 2006, CCL specialists created, developed, and revitalized 9 child care associations in 9 cities across Region 4. These professional associations:

- ◆ provide high quality, monthly training to directors and teachers in child care facilities;
- ◆ ensure training meets requirements of the minimum standards for staff development;
- ◆ provide a forum for directors to network and improve compliance; and
- ◆ ensure that free or low cost training is available throughout the region, reducing the expense of traveling great distances to complete training.

Working with CCL, these associations provided quality training to more than 800 child-care professionals. (Note: Minimum standards require 15 - 20 hours of training for child-care staff each year.) In addition, CCL worked with local associations to hold five major child-care conferences, which provided training to about 2,500 early childhood professionals.

Houston District (Region 6)

Houston: In 2006, staff collaborated with the Houston and Harris County Health Departments to provide training to child care providers on

immunization requirements. This ongoing effort with health departments helped increase the immunization compliance rate and were well received by child care providers. The Health Department also developed and printed more than 5,000 copies of an easy-to-read chart that licensing staff distributed to the providers in the district.

South District (Regions 8 and 11)

San Antonio: Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf region on August 29, 2005 causing unparalleled destruction in Louisiana and Mississippi and as a result brought many evacuees to Texas. In the San Antonio area, Kelly USA (formerly Kelly Air Force Base) and Windsor Park Mall set up housing for thousand of evacuees. Along with these shelters, emergency child-care operations emerged. Licensing staff visited temporary child care facilities to ensure they were well staffed and organized and the needed attention was given to the special needs of the traumatized children. Staff provided technical assistance on issues such as sanitation, feeding, and organization for drop off and pick up. Staff also collected funds, donated equipment, bought supplies, mopped floors, and performed other duties as needed. Licensing staff visited the facilities periodically to ensure ongoing safety and support.

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 child-placing agency administrators.



Regulating Child Care Operations

Child Care Licensing regulates three categories of day care operations. They are Listed Family Homes, Registered Operations (Child Care Homes), and Licensed Operations (Day care and 24-hour care).

Listed Family Homes

Listed Family Homes provide child care on a regular basis (at least 4 hours per day, 3 or more days a week, for more than 9 consecutive weeks) in the providers' own homes for 1 to 3 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 Child Care Homes

Registered Child Care Homes provide care in the providers' own homes for as many as 6 children younger than age 14. They may also take in as many as 6 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.

Don't Be in the Dark about Child Care



When Linda Welty (right) decided she wanted to use her skills of taking care of children, the issue seemed simple enough. She had plenty of room in her home and energy and love in her heart. Welty didn't realize that providing care on a regular basis for children who are not related to you is an activity regulated by DFPS' Child Care Licensing division.

"I didn't know about rules and regulations," she says. "But having gone through the process, I can now say the whole thing has been very informative and helpful. There are a lot of issues relating to safety for kids that people may not think about. Everyone was there to help; everyone was interested in the safety of children. Now all the parents can see I'm registered and my child care business is listed on the state's child care search web site at www.txchildcaresearch.org."

In Texas, regulation of child care begins with listing or registration for very small operations located in homes. The degree of scrutiny increases with the size of the operation. Sharon Bolter (left), a Child Care Licensing worker in New Braunfels, helped Welty with the inspection and understanding the regulations.

Working with a variety of community partners throughout the state in 2006, DFPS set out to increase awareness of the dangers of unregulated child care. The focus of the "Don't be in the Dark About Child Care" campaign was to discourage parents from placing children in unregulated child care, and with good reason. 10 Texas children died in unregulated care in 2005, and 8 in 2004.



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 CPAs play a critical role in the care of foster children.

Annual Report of Licensing Violations

Using regulations, licensing staff strive to protect the basic health and safety of children in out-of-home care. The goal of the Child Care Licensing program is the appropriate and consistent enforcement of minimum standards across operations types and across the state. As a result, the consistent enforcement of minimum standards should increase compliance from child-care operations and provide stronger protections for children in care.

The regulation of child care facilities and child placing agencies routinely presents two challenges for licensing staff and permit holders alike: consistency in interpretation of minimum standards and consistency in enforcement decisions and actions. In an effort to address these challenges, Child Care Licensing initiated a project in 2006 to develop a regulatory weighting system (see explanation above under "Accomplishments" section).



CCL analyzes trends in licensing violations cited statewide and regionally to get a better idea of the technical assistance needed by providers during the next fiscal year.

Day Care Violation Trends

The following statewide trends (see Chart, page 41) are derived from analysis of standard violations cited for day care operations during FY 2006. The most frequently cited violations have been categorized into three distinct groups for the purpose of trend analysis: safety violations, record keeping, and caregiver responsibilities. Safety violations represented the majority of violations cited at 55 percent of the total, caregiver responsibility viola-

tions accounted for 27 percent, and record keeping violations accounted for 18 percent of the total. Based on this data the majority of violations cited are safety and caregiver related. (Regional trend data is available upon request.)

Plan to Address Day Care Violation Trends through Technical Assistance

Licensing staff will place additional emphasis on providing technical assistance to providers concerning the most frequently violated minimum standards. In addition, the data will be shared with all management staff and field trainers to promote awareness of the need to provide targeted technical assistance to providers in an effort to improve compliance.

State's Top 10 Standards Deficiencies for Day Care Operations (FY06)

Standard	Description	Violations Cited	Category
746.3701	Safety - Areas Free From Hazards	1159	Safety
746.3407	Maintenance of Building, Grounds and Equipment	1135	Safety
746.1203(4)	Responsibilities of Caregivers- Supervision of Children	802	Caregiver
747.3501	Safety - Areas Free From Hazards	726	Safety
747.501	Written Operational Policies	696	Record Keeping
746.1201(1)	Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers - Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-control	682	Caregiver
746.605(11)	Required Admission Information - Physician Information	671	Record Keeping
746.3701(1)	Safety - Electrical Outlets Covered	660	Safety
746.5101(a)	Annual Fire Inspection - Before Provisional Issued and Every 12 Months	613	Safety
746.1601	Child/ Caregiver Ratio - 13 or More Children	599	Caregiver



Residential Care Violation Trends

The following trends (see chart page 42) are derived from analysis of standard violations cited for residential care operations during FY 2006. The most frequently cited violations have been categorized into four distinct groups for the purpose of trend analysis: safety violations, health, consumer protection and record keeping. Safety violations represented the majority of violations cited at 56 percent of the total, health related violations accounted for 21 percent, consumer protection violations accounted for 14 percent and record keeping accounted for the remaining 9 percent of the total.

Plan to Address Residential Care Trends through Technical Assistance

New minimum standards for residential operations were approved during FY 2006. The new standards were mailed to providers in October 2006 and training on the new minimum standards was offered to providers beginning in October and ending in December 2006.

From Jan. 1, 2007 until July 1, 2007, CCL will provide technical assistance with the enforcement of the new standards. CCL will map the violation trend data for 2006 to the new minimum standards and the data will be shared with all

State's Top 10 Standards Deficiencies for Residential Care Operations (FY06)

Standard	Description	Violations Cited	Category
745.4061(20)	Pre-Adoptive Home Screening-includes telephone numbers given to prospective adoptive parents for filing complaints about how screening was conducted	52	Consumer Protection
17202	Must keep Current Immunization Records and Tuberculosis Screening Records	42	Health
36302	Make and Document Supervisory Visits to Each Agency Home-at Least Quarterly	42	Safety
22007c	Personnel File- Tuberculosis Test Reports	37	Health
24303a	Infant/Child CPR, First Aid Training Required for Certification	37	Safety
24311	Annual Behavior Intervention Training Requirements-at least 4 clock hours annually	34	Safety
36201	Perform an Inspection Including Verification of Firearms and Precautions	34	Safety
745.4103	Health and Fire Inspections Current	32	Safety
745.4061(1)	Pre-Adoptive Home Screening-includes age of the prospective adoptive parents, who must be at least 18 years or older and documentation verifying age	32	Record Keeping
I62001	Environment-Buildings and Grounds	31	Safety



Child Care Licensing

management staff and field trainers. This will promote awareness of the need to provide targeted technical assistance to providers in an effort to improve compliance in the areas that were most frequently found in violation of minimum standards.

Beginning in July 2007, the standards will be enforced through citations and technical assistance will be provided to ensure compliance.

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 and percentage:

Registered Child Care Homes	7,488	23.0%
Listed Family Homes (LFH)	3,895	12.0%
CPS-Approved Foster Homes	2,761	8.5%
Private Agency Foster Homes	7,081	21.8%

Number of Child Care centers:

Licensed/Certified Facilities	10,695	32.9%
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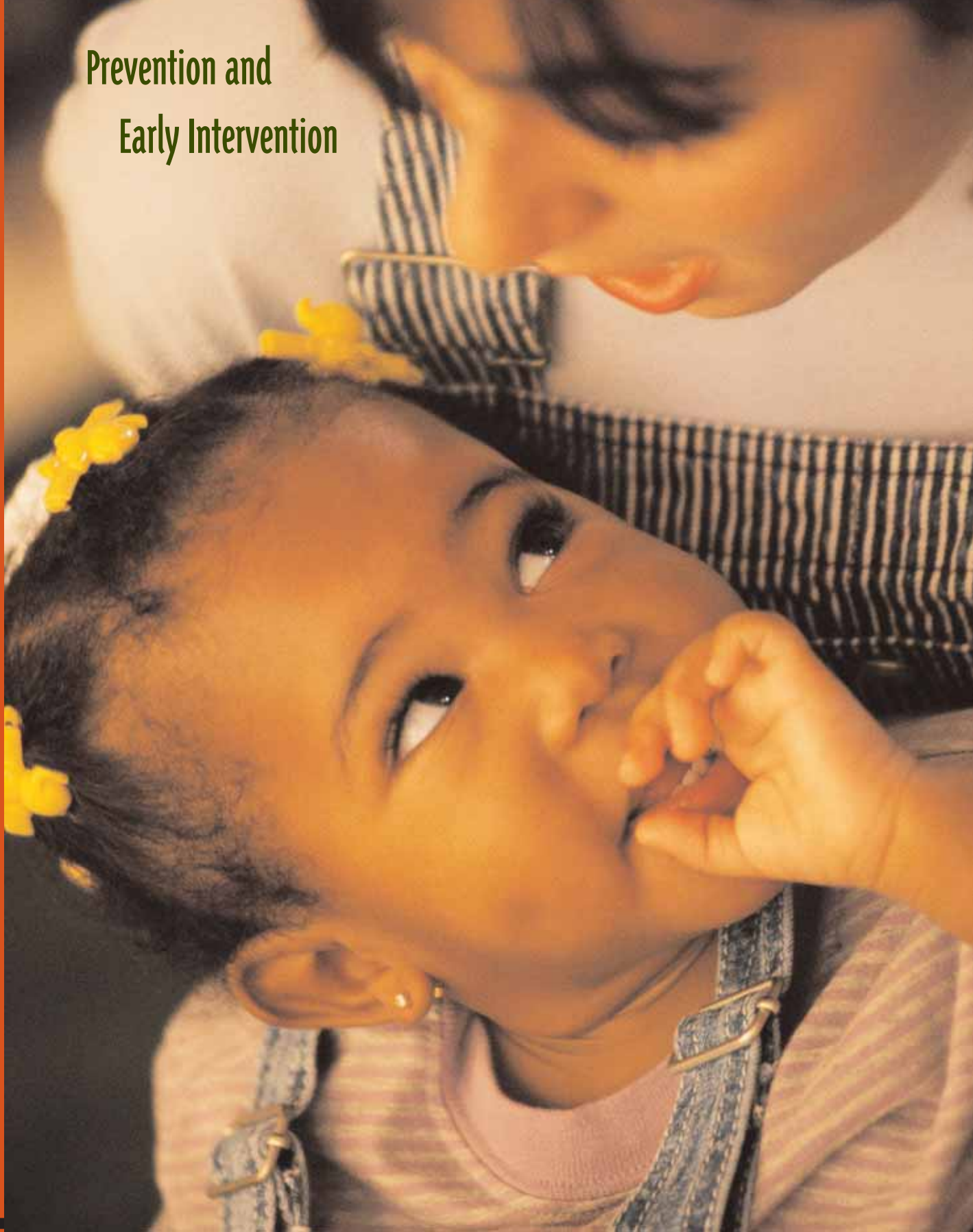
Number of 24-hour care:

Residential Facilities & Child Placing Agencies	570	1.8%
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Totals	32,490	100%
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Prevention and Early Intervention



44



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 addressing 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

New Programs Implemented

Prevention and Early Intervention implemented two new programs in FY 2006, the Family Strengthening Program and the Youth Resiliency Program. These programs are designed to build protective factors for families and youth that are directly associated with the prevention of child maltreatment or juvenile delinquency, respectively.

Move to Evidence-based Services

PEI is moving programs to evidence-based services consistent with the Texas Family Code, Section 265.004. Evidence-based programs are those defined as having evidence of effectiveness, meaning programs that are supported by research and have demonstrated their ability to produce measurable and preferably sustainable improvements in the lives of at-risk families and/or youth. Programs procured during FY 2006 to provide evidence based services include: Community Youth Development, Family Strengthening,

Youth Resiliency and Texas Families: Together and Safe. As PEI programs are re-procured they will be brought into this approach.

Statewide Inventory of Services

PEI worked with the Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families to complete a comprehensive statewide inventory of state-funded child maltreatment prevention services (direct- and indirect-impact).

Programs Restored

The Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) and Community Youth Development (CYD) programs were restored to FY 2003 levels, to support ongoing services.

PEI Services

PEI contracts with community-based agencies and organizations to provide services designed to prevent the abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas children. Services are voluntary and provided at no cost to participants. 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.

Community Youth Development (CYD)

The CYD program contracts with community based organizations to develop juvenile delinquency prevention programs in ZIP codes that have a high incidence of juvenile crime. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth employment programs, career preparation, and alternative recreation activities. Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. CYD services are available in 15 targeted Texas 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 2006, three projects were located in Bexar, Dallas, and Tarrant counties and contracts for them ended Feb. 28, 2006.

Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)

Through contracts with community agencies, STAR offers family crisis intervention counseling, short-term emergency respite 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. STAR services are available in all 254 Texas counties. Each STAR contractor provides universal child abuse prevention services, ranging from local media campaigns to informational brochures and parenting classes.

Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS)

TFTS funds community-based programs that are evidence-based and designed to alleviate stress and to promote parental competencies and adoption of behaviors that will 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 preventative services; and
- ◆ increase collaboration among local programs, government agencies, and families.

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

The toll-free Texas Runaway Hotline (<http://www.texasrunaway.org> or 1-800-580-HELP) and the Texas Youth Hotline (www.texasyouth.org or 1-800-98YOUTH) offer crisis intervention, telephone counseling, and referrals to troubled youth and families. A volunteer workforce of about 60 people answer the phones. Many callers face a variety of problems including family conflict, delinquency, truancy, and abuse and neglect issues. The program increases public awareness through television, radio, billboards and other media efforts. Hotline telephone counselors received 38,481 calls during fiscal year 2006.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

The CBCAP program seeks to increase community awareness of existing prevention services, strengthen community and parental involvement in child abuse prevention efforts, and encourage families to engage in services that are already available. Community Partnerships for Strengthening Families (part of CBCAP) involves parents, community members, community faith-based organizations and government agencies in a shared-leadership model that works to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. In addition, CBCAP funds support short-term respite services in two communities and the Infant Mortality Prevention Education program.

Tertiary/Secondary Child Abuse Prevention

Community-based, volunteer-driven prevention, intervention and aftercare services are provided for children who have been, or who are at risk of being, abused and/or neglected. The goals of the program include reducing child maltreatment and the number of families re-entering 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



Prevention and Early Intervention

abuse prevention programs. Services are available in select communities.

Family Strengthening

A variety of Family Strengthening Services are available statewide that have been evaluated and proven to effectively increase family protective factors (At-Risk Family Strengthening Services) or that have utilized best practices and sound research in program design (Innovative Family Strengthening Services). These services are designed to increase known protective factors and increase family resiliency, while preventing child abuse and neglect. Programs must also foster strong community collaboration to provide for a continuum of family services.

Youth Resiliency Prevention

These services have been evaluated and proven to effectively increase youth protective factors (At-Risk Youth Resiliency Services) or have utilized best practices and sound research in program design (Innovative Youth Resiliency Services). A variety of services are available, across the state, designed to increase known protective factors to increase youth resiliency while preventing juvenile delinquency. Programs must also foster strong community collaboration to provide for a continuum of services for youth participants.

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. The theme of the

Making Progress One Day at a Time



Like many youth, Daniel (right) has his share of issues with being a teenager. But thanks to help from Jason Goad (left), his counselor at Connections Individual and Family Services in New Braunfels, he is making progress one day at a time. Daniel and his family receive services at Connections thanks to funding from the DFPS Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) program.

“When Daniel and his family first came to Connections, he was experiencing a lot of social anxiety having to do with going to school,” said Goad. “Before he started high school, we went there ahead of time to make sure all his supports were in place. We got him in a special program where he attends classes half a day and completes his school work via computer. It gives him an opportunity for socialization, but in a much more comfortable environment which reduces his anxiety.”

Goad works not only with Daniel but his mother, father, and brother. “For a while, he was getting home schooled, which had its own set of problems, it seemed to enable his anxiety and increase stress within the family” said Goad. “I tried to get him to look at things optimistically, be more goal oriented. Now, he is getting along better with his family, and everyone is more positive and forward thinking. He is even thinking about joining a club at school.”

Through contracts with community agencies like Connections, 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. STAR services are available in all 254 Texas counties.



Prevention and Early Intervention

FY 2006 kit was “Children First: Safe and Secure.” The focus of the kit was to provide parenting information in a clear and concise format that will be useful and meaningful to parents. The goals are to reduce parental stress and increase parental resilience, nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and child development, and how to access appropriate resources in times of need. The FY 2006 version of the kit can be downloaded from the department's web site at www.dfps.state.tx.us or www.itsuptoyou.org, as can additional child abuse prevention information from previous kits.

Partners in Prevention Training Conference

Each year, DFPS hosts the Annual Partners in Prevention Training Conference in Central Texas. The conference brings together social services professionals, parents, advocates, educators, law enforcement professionals, childcare professionals, community leaders, and faith leaders who are interested in improving programs and sharing expertise. The conference is open to prevention and early intervention agencies that contract with DFPS, as well as all other prevention service providers and interested parties. Department collaborators for the FY 2006 conference, held in Austin November 16-17 2005, included: the Texas

Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Texas Youth Commission, Texas Education Agency, Office of Attorney General, Texas Workforce Commission, and Texas Juvenile Probation Commission.

Public Awareness Campaigns

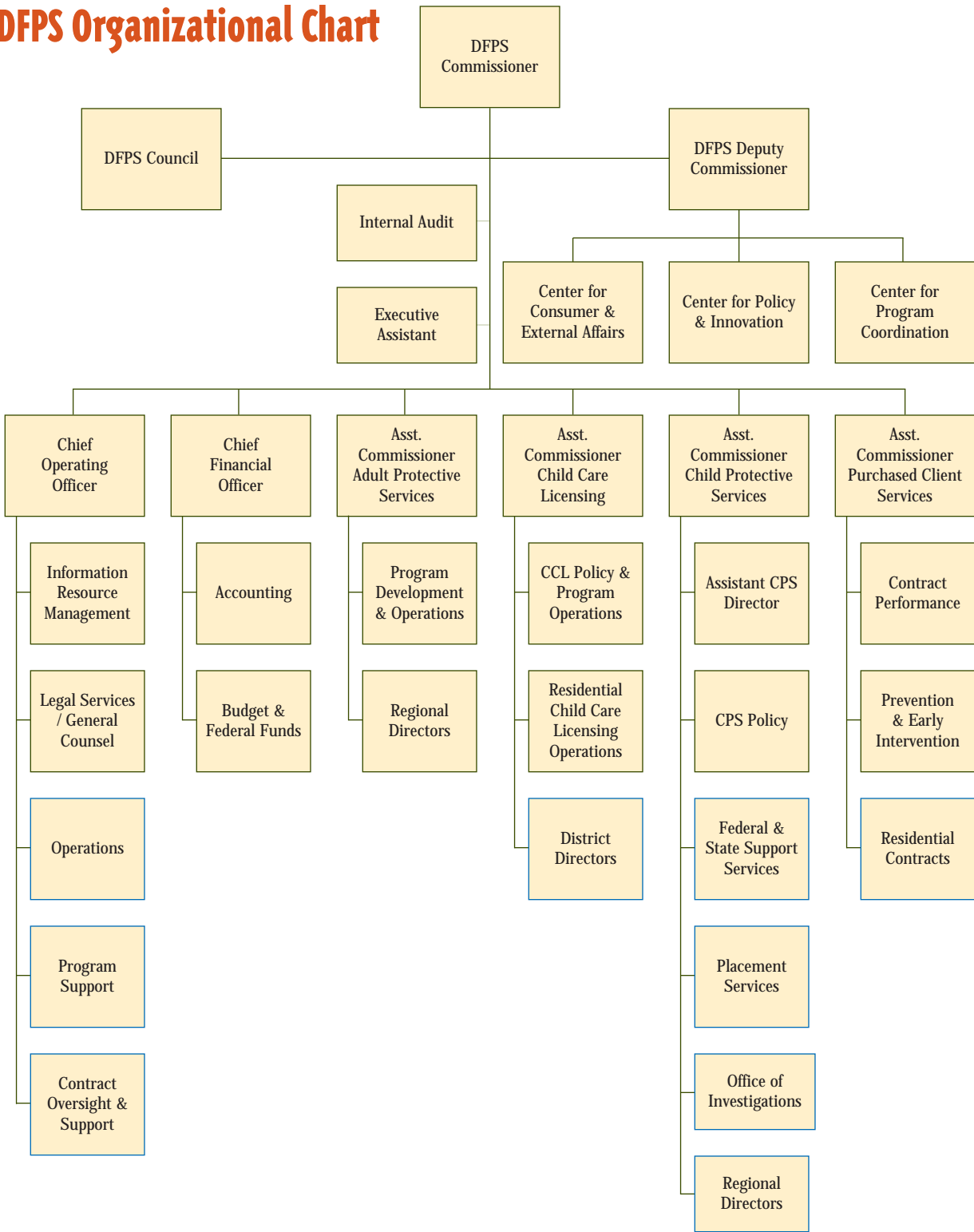
DFPS has produced several public awareness campaigns, targeting child safety, to assist with parent resiliency and increase public awareness of specific child safety issues. Campaigns developed include:

- ◆ “Look Before You Leave” (Prevent Child Injury and Death due to Heat);
- ◆ “See and Save” (Prevent Accidental Child Drowning); and
- ◆ “Don't Be In The Dark About Child Care” (Increasing Awareness of Unregulated Child Care).

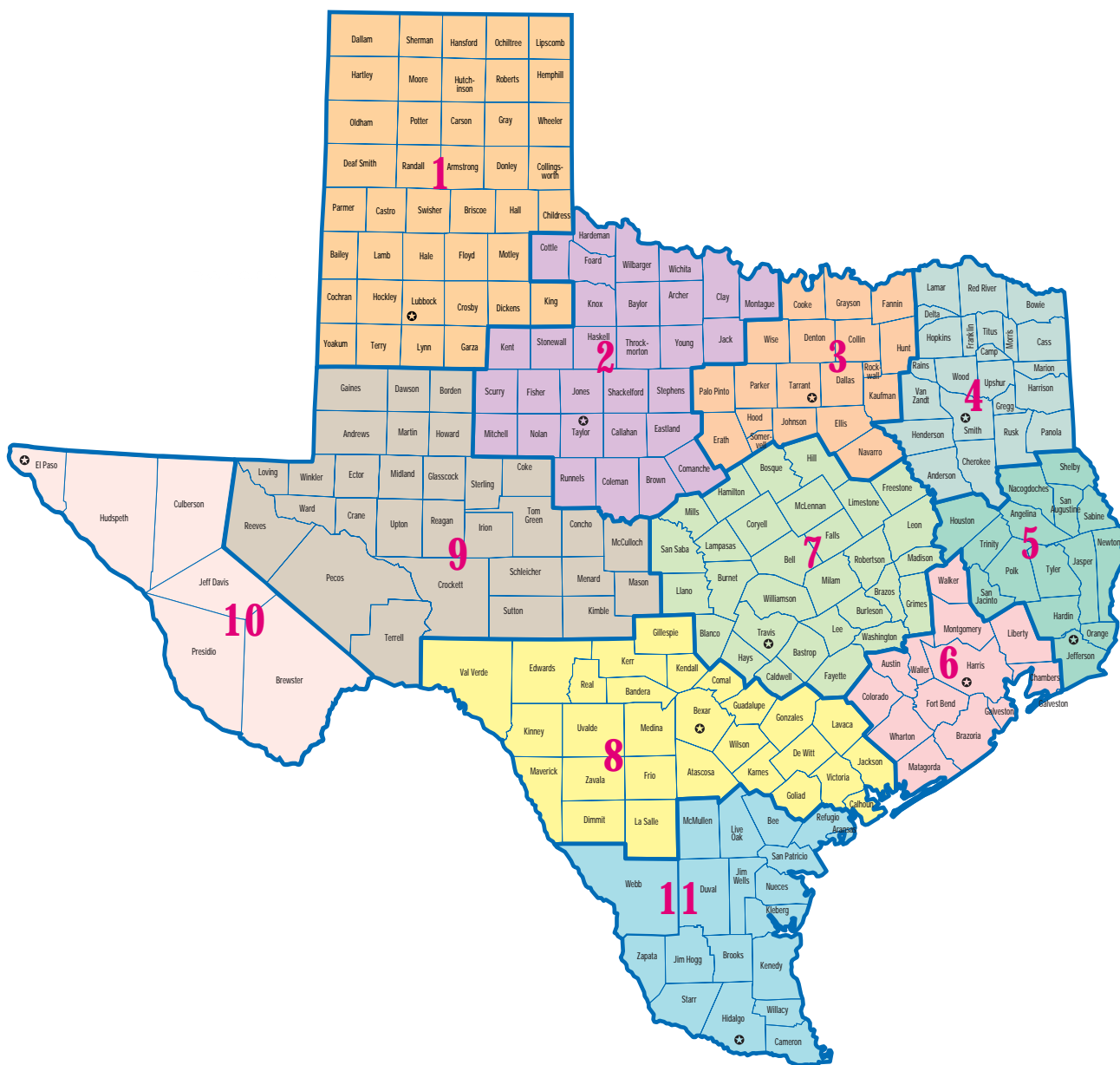
Each campaign is available in English and Spanish. All public awareness campaigns can be found at www.dfps.state.tx.us or www.itsuptoyou.org.



DFPS Organizational Chart



DFPS Regional Boundaries



Hotlines and Online Resources

- Texas Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400** or <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.itseveryonesbusiness.org	Adult Abuse Prevention
www.txchildcaresearch.org	Search Texas Child Care
www.volunteerdfps.org	Become a DFPS Volunteer
www.lookbeforeyouleave.org	Do Not Leave Your Child Unattended in a Car
www.seeandsave.org	Safety for Children Around Water
www.texasyouthconnection.org	Resources for Youth in Foster Care

Department Address

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
(512) 438-4800

Mailing:
P.O. Box 149030
Austin, TX 78714-9030

Physical:
701 W. 51st St.
Austin, TX 78751

