



# Senate Health and Human Services Committee

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Interim Hearing

April 30, 2008

# Eldorado Update

Carey D. Cockerell  
Commissioner

## Senate Interim Charge #4

- Monitor the implementation of the Department of Family and Protective Services' improvement plan to reduce caseloads for Child Protective Services caseworkers, and to provide family-based safety services and ongoing substitute care services.
- Evaluate the efficiency of Child Protective Services "functional units," and determine if other organizational models would allow for a reduction in caseworkers' caseloads, without increasing other administrative costs.
- Develop recommendations aimed at lowering individual caseloads, making casework more efficient, and improving the retention of caseworkers.
- Assess the viability of caseworker reimbursement as a manner to lower caseworker turnover.

# Reform II Update

Carey D. Cockerell  
Commissioner

## Senate Bill 758

- Authored by Senator Jane Nelson and Representative Patrick Rose
- Passed by the 80th Texas Legislature
- Focused primarily on services to children and families
- Continues DFPS reform started with SB 6, 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature

## Implementation Plan

- SB 758 requires DFPS to prepare a detailed plan for:
  - The implementation of each element of SB 758 for which funding has been obtained; and
  - The continued implementation of all reform activities required by Chapter 268, Acts of the 79th Legislature, Regular Session, 2005 (SB 6), as modified by this Act.
- Plan submitted December 31, 2007.
- Progress Report due August 31, 2008.

# Child Protective Services (CPS) Improvement Plan

## Primary Goals

Goal 1: Keeping families together while ensuring child safety in the home

Goal 2: Reducing the length of time children remain in state care

Goal 3: Improving the quality and accountability of foster care

## **Goal 1: Keeping Families Together While Ensuring Child Safety in the Home**

Plans to achieve this goal include:

- Family Group Decision-Making during an investigation
- Reduce caseloads for Family-Based Safety Services caseworkers
- Implement Strengthening Families through Enhanced In-Home Support Program
- Provide additional Purchased Client Services designed to keep families together



## **Goal 2: Reducing the Length of Time Children Remain in State Care**

Plans to achieve this goal include:

- Provide Family Group Decision-Making for more families after removal
- Reduce caseloads for Substitute Care caseworkers
- Provide additional Purchased Client Services to reunite families more quickly
- Enhance support of kinship placements
- Enhance support of court services and preparation of records

## **Goal 3: Improving the Quality and Accountability of Foster Care**

Plans to achieve this goal include:

- Improve Child Care Licensing monitoring and investigations
- Expand substitute and adoptive placement quality and capacity
- Streamline criminal history background checks
- Expand use of mobile technology and enhancements to database systems and operations
- Expand implementation of the remediation plan to address disproportionality in foster care
- Implement a statewide pilot program for an Intense Psychiatric Services “Step-Down” Rate

## Other Key Elements of SB 758

- Case Management Pilot
- FBI checks and director requirements for daycares
- Adoption subsidies for children who might otherwise remain in foster care
- Working with OneStar, DARS and Casey Family Programs
- Monitoring performance of providers through data system
- Committee on Pediatric Centers of Excellence
- Caseworker Education Reimbursement Study and targeted recruitment of caseworkers

## Case Management Pilot

SB 758 requires DFPS to develop a pilot program for outsourcing case management services in up to 5% of CPS cases.

- No funding was allocated for this project.
- DFPS has developed a plan that will culminate in a proposal with a funding request for the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature. The plan includes:
  - Survey research to gather broad samples of ideas from stakeholders;
  - Meetings with stakeholders and stakeholder forum; and
  - Research of other successful models.

## FBI Checks for Daycare Centers

SB 758 requires daycare employees to have a cleared FBI fingerprint check.

- DFPS developed a phased-in approach to requiring FBI fingerprint checks in daycare centers.
- Coordination with Department of Public Safety and their vendor, IBT, has improved the efficiency of the process for providers.

## Partnering with OneStar

SB 758 requires DFPS to work with the OneStar Foundation to assist with foster home recruitment.

- DFPS and OneStar have met and developed a plan to conduct an assessment of recruitment efforts in Region 6.
- OneStar will also evaluate the effectiveness of the State Advisory Committee for the Promotion of Adoptions of Minority Children. The Advisory Committee was created by an Act of the 74th Legislature.

## Partnering with DARS

SB 758 requires DFPS to work with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to recruit families for children who have hearing impairments.

- DFPS, DARS and community stakeholders have met to develop family recruitment strategies for children with hearing impairments.
- A brochure has been developed and is being utilized for recruitment efforts.
- The workgroup plans to also discuss strategies for recruitment of families to care for blind or visually impaired children in foster care.

## New Resources

The agency will hire an additional 1,335 staff.

DFPS was allocated 985 new staff during FY 2008 and another 350 during FY 2009. This includes:

- 501 Conservatorship staff  
(including 372 caseworkers)
  - 348 Family Based Safety Services staff  
(including 212 caseworkers)
  - 84 Family Group Decision Making staff
  - 89 Kinship staff (including 69 workers)
  - 86 Residential Child Care Licensing staff (including 40 workers)
  - 34 Legal staff
  - 21 Contracting staff
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# Workforce Support and Retention

Terri Ware

Chief Operating Officer

## Turnover Statistics

### Turnover by Fiscal Year

FY 06 19.2%

FY 07 21.2%

FY 08 (2nd Qtr) 19.7%

### Highest Turnover Positions

(FY08 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr)

CPS Special Investigators 42.0%

CPS Investigators 35.4%

### Highest Turnover Regions

(FY08 2nd Qtr)

Region 4 27.1%

Region 7 23.7%

### Lowest Turnover Positions

(FY08 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr)

CCL Workers 17.1%

APS Workers 20.3%

### Lowest Turnover Regions

(FY08 2nd Qtr)

Region 10 15.2%

Region 2 16.2%

# Research on Retention

## Four Sources of Information

- State Auditor's Office on-line exit survey
- Survey of Organizational Excellence
- Regional focus groups
- Independent studies

## Top Reasons Why Staff Leave

- Working conditions/environment (e.g. safety, work related stress and or workload issues)
- Better pay/benefits
- Issues with employees they supervise or issues with their supervisor

Source: State Auditor's Office Exit Survey

## Workforce Support and Retention Initiative

Senate Bill 1, Rider 15 (79th Legislature) and House Bill 1, Rider 13 (80th Legislature) direct DFPS to develop a Human Resources management plan designed to improve employee morale and retention. The plan must focus on reducing employee turnover through better management. The effectiveness of the agency's plan shall be measured by whether there is a reduction in turnover rates.

DFPS will implement the following strategies in order to demonstrate a commitment to the recruitment, hiring and retention of employees:

- Promote employee communication and input
- Improve hiring practices
- Strengthen supervision
- Manage workloads
- Enhance work environment
- Value employees

## **CPS Functional Units and CPS Caseloads**

Joyce James

Assistant Commissioner

Child Protective Services

## CPS Functional Units

SB 6 required DFPS to create a comprehensive staffing and workload distribution plan for CPS in order to:

- reduce caseloads,
- enhance accountability,
- improve the quality of investigations,
- eliminate delays in services, and
- ensure the most efficient and effective use of CPS staff and resources.

To accomplish this it was necessary to reduce the workload of each caseworker by:

- lowering the number of cases assigned to each worker, and
- providing increased support for the work associated with the cases.

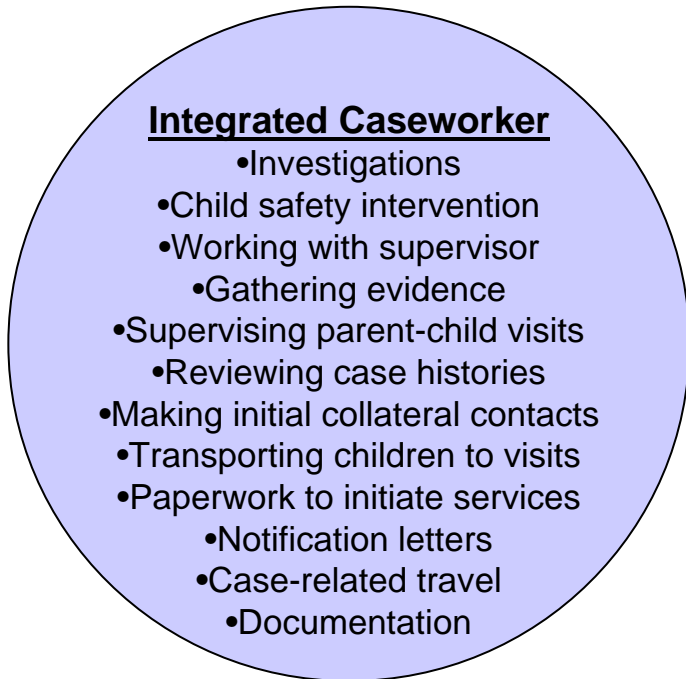
DFPS also hired other specialized staff to assist the caseworkers such as screeners, casework assistants, and clerical support staff.

CPS direct delivery staff was divided into “functional units.”

# Functional Unit Structure

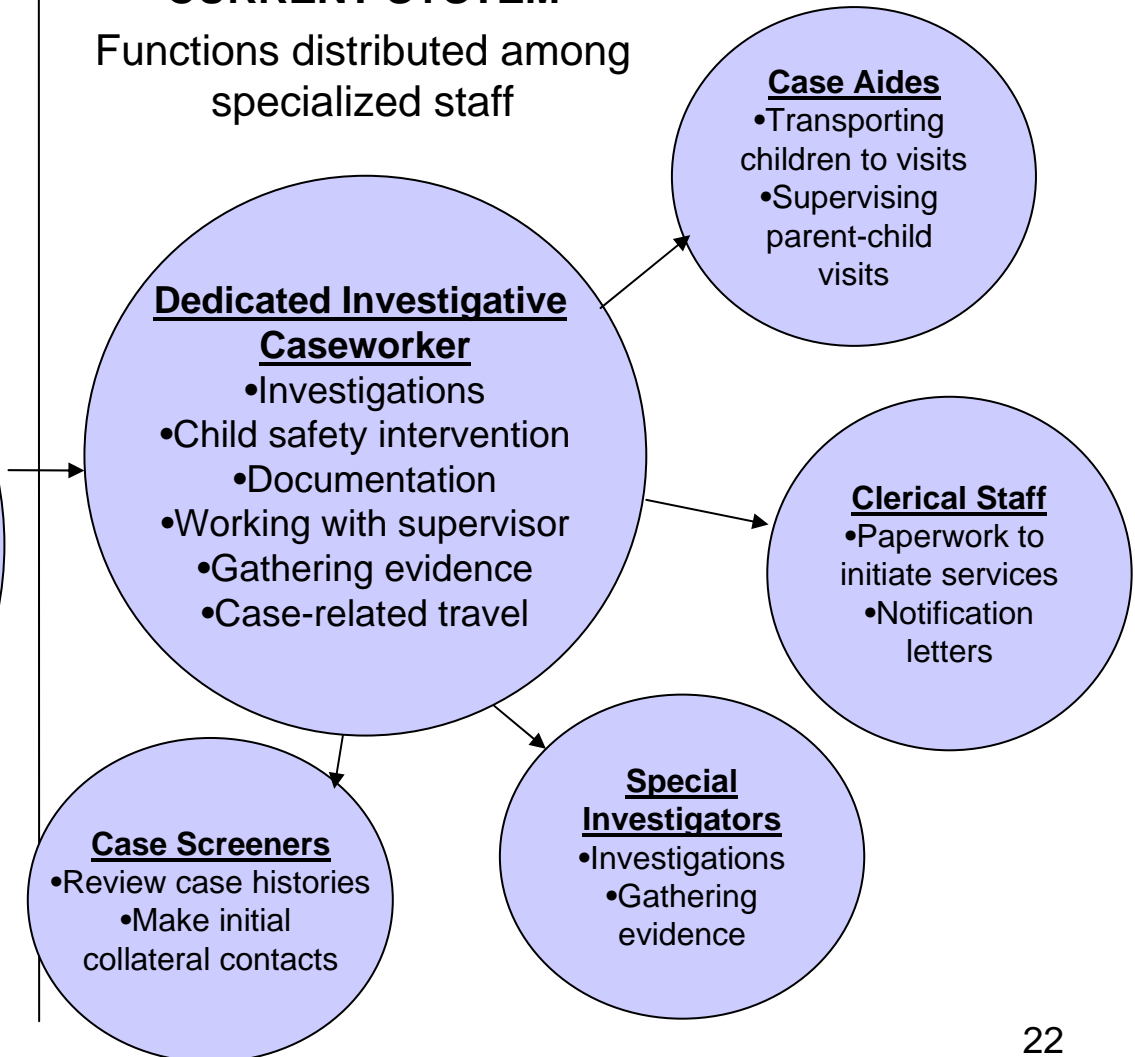
## OLD SYSTEM

All functions concentrated on a single caseworker



## CURRENT SYSTEM

Functions distributed among specialized staff



## CPS Functional Units

The Table below shows the staffing pattern of a Functional Unit for each of the three stages of service that use this organizational model – Investigations (INV), Conservatorship (CVS), and Family Based Safety Services (FBSS). It also includes the total number of Functional Units and the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in all Functional Units.

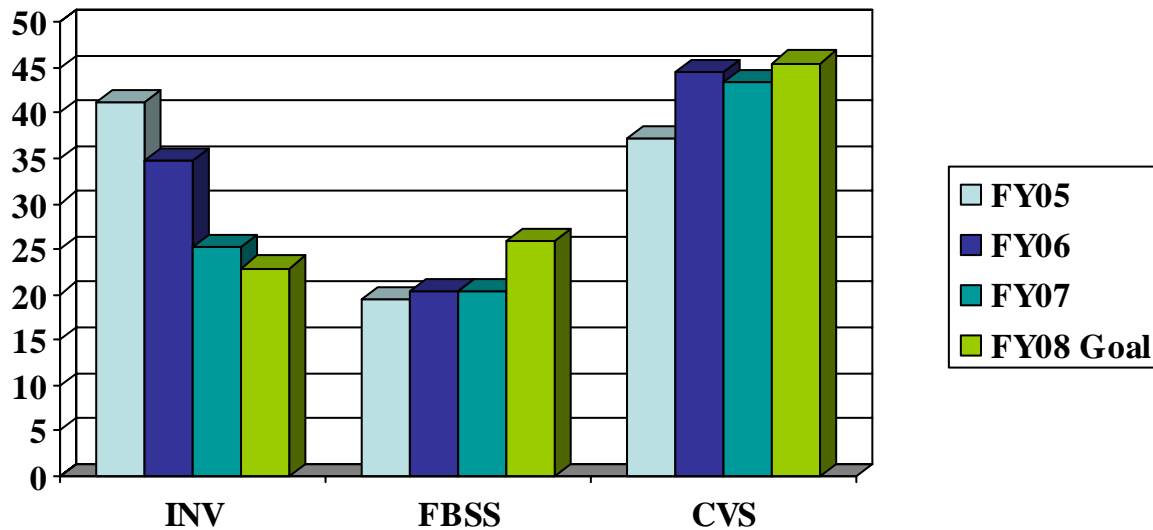
<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>INV</b>	<b>CVS</b>	<b>FBSS</b>
Supervisors	1	1	1
Workers	4-5	6	5
Administrative Support Staff	2	2	2
Total Number of Functional Units	430	260	149
Total FTEs in Functional Units	3,133	2,355	1,198



# CPS Caseloads

## Average Daily Caseloads

- Investigation caseloads have dropped from 41.1 in FY 05 to 25.3 in FY 07, slightly above the FY 08 goal (22.9).
- Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) caseloads have risen from 19.4 in FY 05 to 20.4 in FY 07, below the FY 08 goal (25.9).
- Conservatorship/Substitute Care (CVS) caseloads increased from 37.1 in FY 05 to 43.3 in FY 07, below the FY 08 goal (45.5).



## Senate Interim Charge #5

Monitor the implementation of the Department of Family and Protective Services' plan to stabilize the foster care system and increase permanency options for children. Study placement capacity to determine how Child Protective Services can better develop the necessary adoptions or foster homes to meet the needs of children and families by increasing foster care capacity, recruiting and retaining more foster and adoptive parents, increasing the use of relative care, and developing best practices for reducing foster care placement breakdowns. This includes studying innovative ways to promote adoption and kinship care in Texas and best practices for foster/adoptive parents to improve their ability to care for abused and neglected children.

Explore potential improvements and enhancements in the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program to increase successful transitioning from foster care to adult living.

Study current death review processes for children who die while in state care.

## Capacity

### **Moving Foster Care Forward**

A plan to meet the needs of children and families  
by improving the capacity of the Foster Care System

Carey D. Cockerell  
Commissioner

# Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

## Background

- CPS program investigates cases of abuse and neglect of children and, whenever necessary, removes children from their home and places them in substitute care to ensure their safety.
- Children will remain in DFPS' care until they can be safely returned to their home or family, adopted, or, in the case of older youth, adequately prepared to transition to adult independent living.
- CPS prioritizes placing children in the least restrictive, most home-like settings.
- Kinship caregivers are given first consideration whenever possible. Foster homes are considered prior to facility-type settings.



## Where are children in DFPS care?

Of the 27,468 children in DFPS substitute care on February 29, 2008...

17,444 children were in Foster Care

10,024 children were in other types of Substitute Care

11,935 children were placed in Child Placing Agency (CPA) Foster Homes

Foster homes are families who accept foster children into their homes. These foster homes are recruited, trained, verified and managed by private CPAs.

DFPS has contracts with just over 100 CPAs. The majority of CPA foster homes are verified to provide *therapeutic* foster care services.

836 children were placed in General Residential Operations - Child Care Only

These are typically cottage and campus type settings meeting basic child needs.

1,322 children were placed in Residential Treatment Centers

An RTC is a very structured setting for children with serious emotional disturbance or mental health issues.

609 children were placed in Emergency Shelters

These are intended for stays of less than 30 days.

2,317 children were placed in DFPS Foster Homes

These are families who accept foster children into their homes and are recruited, trained, verified and managed by DFPS. The majority provide *basic* foster care services.

425 children were placed in other types of foster care such as camps, maternity homes, hospitals, juvenile detention, ICF-MR, HCS homes, state schools & hospitals.

8,445 children were placed in Kinship Care

DFPS supports relative caregivers by assisting with initial costs of accepting a child and through ongoing case management.

456 children were in pending adoptions in CPA Adoptive Homes

322 children were in pending adoptions in DFPS Adoptive Homes

801 children were placed in Other Substitute Care which includes independent living programs, unauthorized absences and court ordered placements.

### Notes:

- a. This graphic represents children under the age of 18 in DFPS Substitute Care.
- b. There were also 564 youth over the age of 18 in foster care, but who had "aged-out" of the legal conservatorship of DFPS.
- c. There are a total of 29,665 children in DFPS legal responsibility. 2,197 are in the legal conservatorship of DFPS but *not* in substitute care; the majority of these children are in a reunification stage and are living with their families of origin.

# Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

## The Current Capacity Situation

- About 1 in 6 children are placed out of their home region, many more out of their home county.
- Sometimes children are placed out of region to be near relatives. Other times, to meet the child's treatment needs.
- Another challenge is finding adequate placement options for sibling groups.

# Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

## The Goal

**Strengthen the ability of the Texas Child Welfare System to meet the needs of children in foster care and their families.**

- Develop the right resources for children in their home communities, with siblings and in settings that meet their individual and therapeutic needs.
- Improve services for the families of children in foster care.
- Engage each program within the agency and other health and human services agencies to employ strategies that will build foster care capacity.

# Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

## The Objectives

- Plan and implement strategies for community-based capacity development
- Work toward internal coordination, program efficiencies, and communication practices that result in effective business and regulatory relationships with providers and stakeholders
- Promote best practices and innovations in purchased service delivery



## Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

### The Plan – Actions Taken

- Established a Building Capacity Workgroup in 2006.
- Added regional statistical information to the DFPS web site to help identify placement needs and capacity by each region.
- Created rules to allow implementation of the 4.3% increase in provider rates and the Intense Psychiatric Transition Services (IPTP) rate on September 1, 2007. DFPS successfully procured two IPTP contractors and has let an open enrollment procurement to obtain additional providers.
- DFPS leadership met with providers to address capacity needs.
- Working with communities around the state to recruit foster and adoptive parents, including the launch of the “Why Not Me?” campaign in May, to recruit adoptive homes.

# Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

## The Plan – Initiatives

- CPS Placement Process Improvement
- DFPS Foster/Adoptive Home Process Improvement
- Defining Case Management Roles for Future Outsourcing Efforts
- Streamlining CPS (YFT), PCS, and CCL
- Coordination and Support of Residential Childcare Services
- Improving the Effectiveness of Purchased Client Services Delivery

## Capacity Moving Foster Care Forward

### Conclusion

- Building Foster Care capacity will require internal and external shifts in a system of service delivery that needs to do better to meet the needs of children and families.
- Building Foster Care capacity will require the dedication of DFPS and its providers to examine long established practices and trends with an eye toward improvement.

## Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

Joyce James

Assistant Commissioner

Child Protective Services

## Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

- “Why Not Me?” Adoption Campaign
- Congregations Helping In Love & Dedication (CHILD)
- The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE)
- Adoption Family Network (AFN)
- Coordination with national adoption exchanges, Heart Galleries, radio stations, television stations
- Collaboration with agency partners
- Disproportionality Adoption Conference (July 2008)

## DFPS Foster/Adopt Process Improvement

CPS has developed a standard process that all CPS Foster/Adoptive Home Development (FAD) programs will use when verifying/approving foster and adoptive homes.

- Full implementation expected in September 2008
- Customer-service oriented
- One consistent message will be given to families throughout the process
- Formal tracking of inquiries and applicants
- Foster and adoptive homes will be verified/approved in 120 days
- Relative adoptive homes will be approved in 90 days
- IMPACT changes will improve management's ability to monitor FAD

## Senate Interim Charge #6

Examine Texas' current strategies for preventing child abuse. Specifically study the effectiveness of current programs and how these programs compare to other state efforts. Identify national research-based solutions, including best practices and programs addressing sexual abuse. Explore promising existing and emerging approaches to child abuse and neglect prevention, especially those with a strong evidence base. Identify additional funding sources for increased child abuse prevention activities by the state.

# Prevention and Early Intervention Services

Jeannie Coale  
Assistant Commissioner  
Purchased Client Services



## Prevention and Early Intervention

The Division of Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) manages community-based programs that prevent delinquency, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of Texas children, by contracting for services that:

- Protect children
- Strengthen families
- Promote positive youth development, and
- Reduce the likelihood of involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.

## PEI Overview

PEI Programs can be classified into three general categories of programs addressing:

- Child maltreatment
- Juvenile delinquency
- Both child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency

The next several slides provide information on programs in each of these categories.

We will also discuss:

- Interagency Coordinating Council
- PEI looking ahead

## Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency Services to At Risk Youth (STAR)

Services including family crisis intervention counseling, short-term emergency respite care, and individual and family counseling are available to all 254 Texas counties.

Youth up to age 17, and their family members, are eligible if they are experiencing conflict at home, truancy or delinquency, or have run away from home. An individualized service plan determines which services a family will receive.

FY 2007	
Total youth served	32,085
Total costs	\$20,044,683
Average cost per youth served	\$624.74

## Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

Hotline staff and volunteers work closely with social service agencies and juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

Their goal is to provide callers with 24-hour crisis intervention and telephone counseling; information and referral for callers in need of food, shelter and/or transportation home; conference calls to parents and shelters; and a confidential message relay service between runaways and parents.

Texas Youth Hotline number: 1-800-210-2278

Texas Runaway Hotline number: 1-888-580-HELP

FY 2007	
Total calls received	35,548
Total costs	\$177,280
Number of volunteer workers	68
Number of volunteer hours	4,011

## Child Maltreatment

# Texas Families: Together and Safe

Services are evidence-based and designed to alleviate stress and promote parental competencies and behaviors that increase the ability of families to become self-sufficient and successfully nurture their children. Eight contracts provide services in 30 counties.

Although any family with a child under the age of 18 years living in the household or expecting a child is eligible for services, families that are assessed as having multiple presenting issues and risk factors are the target population for this program.

FY 2007	
Total families served	2,741
Total costs	\$3,272,070
Average cost per family served	\$1,193.75

## Child Maltreatment Family Strengthening Program

This program provides evidence-based services to increase family protective factors and resiliency, while preventing child abuse and neglect. Programs must also foster strong community collaboration to provide a continuum of family services. Ten contracts provide services in 13 counties.

Families that include at least a primary caregiver and a child through age 17, and who have 2 or more identified risk factors may be served.

FY 2007	
Total families served	1,347
Total costs	\$2,294,745
Average cost per family served	\$1,703.60

## Child Maltreatment

# Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

This 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. Seven contracts provide services in 15 counties.

A variety of programs are funded, with varying eligibility requirements, some serving parents/caregivers only and some serving families.

FY 2007	
Total primary caregivers served	960
Total costs	\$697,849
Average cost per primary caregiver served	\$726.93

## Child Maltreatment Tertiary Child Abuse Prevention

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. One contract is being procured.

Eligible families are those with children ages 0-17 that (1) have been determined by CPS to have had a “substantiated” case of abuse where the case is being closed as risk factors are controlled; or (2) have exited CPS conservatorship or family-based safety services and have risk factors controlled. The program was effective for 9 months in FY 2007.

FY 2007	
Total primary families served	59
Total costs	\$79,650
Average cost per family served	\$1,350.00



## Juvenile Delinquency Community Youth Development (CYD)

Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. Approaches used to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth employment programs, career preparation, and alternative recreational activities. Services are available in 15 targeted ZIP codes within Texas, based on high incidence of juvenile crime.

Youth up to age 17 are served, in some cases with family members; prioritizing those 11-17 years old.

FY 2007	
Total youth served	12,319
Total costs	\$6,499,936
Average cost per youth served	\$527.64

## Juvenile Delinquency Youth Resiliency Program

This program provides evidence-based services to increase youth resiliency, while preventing juvenile delinquency. Programs must also foster strong community collaboration to provide a continuum of services for youth participants. Six contracts provide services in 12 counties.

Youth through age 17 who have two or more identified risk factors are eligible to receive services, in many cases through programs that also serve their families.

FY 2007	
Total youth served	3,338
Total costs	\$2,903,391
Average cost per youth served	\$869.80

## Interagency Coordinating Council

The Interagency Coordinating Council for Building Healthy Families facilitates communication and collaboration concerning policies for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect among eleven state agencies whose programs and services promote and foster healthy families.

The Council undertook an inventory of state-funded prevention programs, and developed a report of recommendations for improved coordination of efforts. This report which was issued in December 2006, contained recommendations for:

- Implementation of a state-guided evaluation effort to assess programs
- Continuation of the Council
- Continued legislative support of prevention and early intervention programs

## Interagency Coordinating Council – Next Steps

- A statewide long-range strategic plan is due to the Legislature by December 1, 2008. This plan shall address:
  - a strategy for the state and political subdivisions of the state to:
    - reduce their need for services addressing child maltreatment; and
    - transition to a system that promotes child abuse and neglect prevention services in order to use cost savings to increase prevention services funding in the future; and
  - details for child abuse and neglect public awareness efforts and outreach.
- DFPS has contracted with the University of Houston for an evaluation of child maltreatment programs. From this evaluation, the Council will submit an initial report to the Legislature, no later than December 1, 2008.
- A final report is due to the Legislature no later than December 1, 2009.

## PEI Looking Ahead

- Community Engagement Efforts include:
  - Annual Partners in Prevention training conference
  - Solicitation of topics for the annual parenting tips prevention calendar
  - Informational websites such as “It’s Up To You”
  - Coordination of efforts with CPS parent collaboration group
  - Provider meetings and conference calls
  - Support of local parent and stakeholder involvement
- New Programs include:
  - Statewide Youth Services network
  - Community Based Family Services

# Conclusion of DFPS Presentation