



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Annual Report 2008

Letter from the Commissioner

The past year was one of continued progress and improvement at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Our 2008 Annual Report provides an overview of our services and a summary of some of the tremendous accomplishments of our dedicated staff.

This report covers the 2008 fiscal year beginning Sept. 1, 2007, through Aug. 31, 2008. It also provides us with an opportunity to pause and remember just how far DFPS has come over the past three years. Every corner of the agency has been transformed, and we are doing more than ever to protect our most vulnerable and precious Texans – our children, our elderly, and those with disabilities. Here are just a few of the changes we have seen since 2005:

- Child Protective Services has added thousands of new workers and reduced investigative caseloads by almost 50 percent.
- We increased the number of adoptions by more than 40 percent.
- We reduced caseloads of Adult Protective Services caseworkers, provided them with the latest technology, and created special multi-disciplinary teams to handle complex cases.
- We more than doubled the number of residential child care inspections we perform annually.

These accomplishments were made possible by strong support from Governor Rick Perry, the Texas Legislature, the DFPS Council, and an army of supporters across the state in our courts, local law enforcement agencies, network of foster care providers, volunteer groups, and other community organizations.

As we look forward to another year of continued progress; I want to thank the many partners who help us protect those who can't protect themselves.

Anne Heiligenstein
DFPS Commissioner



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Executive Summary

MISSION

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

VISION

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS):

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

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 11,743 employees in 299 local offices. These offices are located in 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).

DFPS RENEWAL

In 2007, DFPS proposed a package of recommendations to build on the foundation of reforms from the 79th Legislative Session in 2005 and to assure continued progress. The 80th Legislature embraced those recommendations by passing the appropriations bill and Senate Bill 758. DFPS made significant progress in fiscal year (FY) 2008 toward putting these reforms and improvements into action.

The chief goals of the second phase of DFPS Renewal are to:

- Keep families together.
- Reduce the length of time children remain in state care.
- Improve the quality and accountability of foster care.

In FY 2008, DFPS accomplished these goals in three ways. First, CPS worked to keep families together by enhancing efforts to engage families before it became necessary to remove children from their homes.

Specifically:

- CPS lowered the caseloads of family based safety services caseworkers and enhanced family preservation services by adding additional staff.
- CPS expanded family group decision making. In some cases conferences were held to prevent a child's removal from the home and placement into foster care.
- CPS began an in-home support pilot program to offset the effects of poverty.

Second, to reduce the length of time children spend in state care CPS:

- Provided additional Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) services to families.
- Increased purchased services to help reunite families.



- Added additional conservatorship staff to enable CPS to visit foster children more often, increase child safety, and speed the path to permanency.
- Increased the number of kinship placements and kinship staff to support reaching permanency more quickly.
- Added legal staff to speed up adoptions and improve court services.

Third, to improve the quality and accountability of foster care:

- DFPS will put tablet PCs in the hands of all Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) investigators and monitoring representatives by the end of the FY 2008-2009 biennium.
- RCCL a sub-division of CCL, added new procedures and increased its staff.
- RCCL began conducting yearly “team” inspections of every child placing agency (CPA) and residential treatment center (RTC).
- RCCL began investigating some standards violations in CPA homes with children younger than age 6, rather than relying solely on investigations by private child placing agencies.
- RCCL hired investigation analysts and child safety experts to identify risks or additional steps needed to protect children.
- DFPS strengthened contract oversight through improved monitoring and enhanced technology.
- DFPS also improved the quality and timeliness of background checks by centralizing this function.

To accomplish these reforms and make other improvements, including lower caseloads, the Legislature gave DFPS many new resources.

Lawmakers carefully considered the important work done by thousands of caseworkers and delivered almost \$350 million for reform efforts since 2005, an unprecedented investment in children and other vulnerable Texans.

The appropriations bill from the 2007 Legislative session enabled the agency to hire an additional 1,335 staff by the end of the biennium. DFPS added most of these new staff during fiscal year 2008 and will hire the rest during fiscal year 2009. For both years this will include the following:

- 501 conservatorship staff (includes 372 CVS caseworkers)
- 348 Family Based Safety Services staff (includes 212 caseworkers)
- 84 Family Group Decision Making staff
- 69 Kinship workers
- 1 Day Care Coordinator
- 84 Residential Child Care Licensing staff (includes 40 workers)
- 31 Legal staff
- 20 contracting staff

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) HIGHLIGHTS

The Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM) program tripled the number of families it served in FY 2008. This program allows a child’s family and supporters to engage in a problem-solving process with CPS, which results in fewer placements in foster care and quicker reunification. During the first phase of DFPS Renewal, FGDM was only available to families after their children were removed from their homes and placed in state care. In FY 2008, FGDM became available to families during abuse and neglect investigations to help prevent the removal of children and allow them to remain safely at home.

CPS has removed children from families at less often despite a growing Texas population. In FY 2007, the average number of children removed per month was 1,327. For fiscal year 2008, the average was 1,191 per month.

CPS standardized and streamlined the policies and processes of the Foster/Adoptive Home Development program for verifying foster parents and approving

adoptive parents. The project will help those wishing to foster or adopt children to experience a more expedited, transparent, and customer friendly process.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS) HIGHLIGHTS

APS launched the As You Go Initiative to improve how APS manages its case documentation. As You Go focuses on more efficient and effective use of mobile technology and tools for supervisors.

APS was able to reduce its average in-home caseload from around 36.4 cases per worker in FY 2007 to about 30 cases per worker in FY 2008.

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services became an official non-profit organization in October 2007 and is composed of members from the local community APS boards. The focus of this statewide organization is improving the lives of adults who are abused, neglected or exploited by developing resources and providing assistance to local boards that support APS.

CHILD CARE LICENSING (CCL) HIGHLIGHTS

The Moving Foster Care Forward project, which is a joint venture of Child Protective Services and Child Care Licensing, was launched to improve placements for foster children, particularly those with special needs. With this project, Residential Child Care Licensing began to develop recommendations for streamlining practices and improving internal coordination in developing new residential child care providers.

As directed by Senate Bill 758, Child Care Licensing created an Investigation Division to oversee all licensing investigation policy and training and provide technical assistance to field staff conducting investigations where children are at the greatest risk. Additionally, CCL created a Performance Management Division to conduct quality assurance reviews of the performance of residential and child care providers as well as CCL staff compliance with all relevant laws, rules, and licensing policies.

CCL implemented a system for child care centers in which minimum standards were assigned weights, ranging from low to high, based on the risk each violation presents to children. Assigning weights to minimum standards takes into account the relative

importance of standard violations and facilitates a clear and common understanding among providers, consumers, and licensing staff. Weighted standards encourage everyone to put child safety first and assist CCL staff in making more effective and consistent decisions.

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION (PEI) HIGHLIGHTS

PEI implemented two new programs. The Relief Nursery program provides at-risk families with comprehensive support services in a few communities. The Statewide Youth Services Network provides community and evidence-based juvenile delinquency prevention programs focused on youth ages 10 through 17 in each DFPS region.

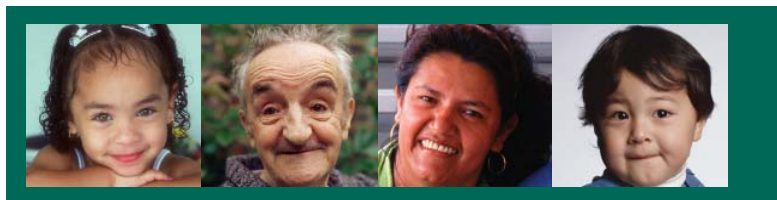
PEI collaborated with the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Building Healthy Families during FY 2008 to begin work on new charges outlined in House Bill 662 of the 80th Legislature. This included the development of a DFPS statewide, long-range strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services.

PEI began the procurement process for the Community Based Family Services (CBFS) program to help reduce and prevent child abuse and neglect. This program will serve families who have been investigated by CPS and the allegations were unsubstantiated. The program will provide community and evidence-based services to prevent child abuse and neglect.

DFPS VOLUNTEERS

Abuse, neglect, and exploitation are issues with no single or simple solution. Social services workers, no matter how dedicated and skilled, cannot address this issue without the assistance of the larger community. In FY 2008, over 1200 volunteers worked over 73,000 hours, side by side with DFPS employees.

As community members, trained volunteers deliver greatly needed prevention and intervention services to DFPS clients. As involved citizens, volunteers





promote policies and programs which build healthy families. As caring individuals, volunteers expand DFPS efforts to create a network of community resources which support and nurture DFPS clients. Each volunteer makes a unique contribution to those Texans least able to protect themselves.

OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

While the agency's goal is to have a positive effect on the lives of the people it serves, 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. During FY 2008, the Office of Consumer Affairs received 17,006 contacts from various sources including the public, clients, elected officials, other agencies, and DFPS staff. Of that number 4,185 were handled as case-specific complaints and 833 were inquiries from elected officials. The validation rate for complaints was 4.1 percent.

ELDORADO

Every year the Texas Abuse Hotline receives hundreds of thousands of reports of child abuse and neglect. DFPS staff work 24 hours a day, every day of the year, to ensure someone is available to answer the calls of concerned citizens and to properly assign cases to Child Protective Services (CPS) workers to protect children from harm.

On March 30, 2008, the hotline received a report alleging a child was being physically and sexually abused at the Yearning for Zion compound outside Eldorado, Texas. CPS contacted the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Schleicher County Sheriff's office, the court system, and local officials to assist in the investigation.

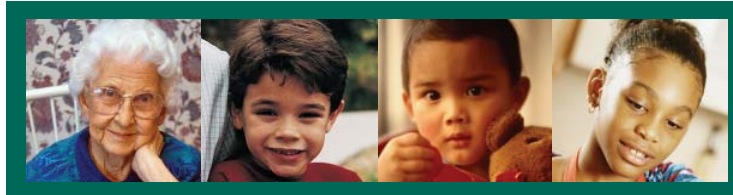
On the 3rd of April, Texas Rangers entered the compound and a small team of CPS investigators began to interview children and adult residents. The very first interviews at the ranch revealed several underage girls had been "spiritually united" with adult men. In the ensuing investigation, investigators found wedding photos and records indicating a pattern of underage marriages and births, and the case quickly grew into the largest CPS investigation in United States history.

On April 7, District Judge Barbara Walthers gave DFPS temporary legal custody of all of the more than 400 children from the compound after it was determined some had been sexually abused and the rest were at risk of abuse if returned to their parents at that time. A court hearing was set for April 17, 2008, to determine if the children should remain in DFPS conservatorship and Judge Walther ordered DFPS to keep all children removed from the YFZ Ranch in the San Angelo area until that hearing. The day after the April 17 hearing, Judge Walther ordered the children be removed from the YFZ Ranch and placed in the temporary custody of DFPS.

For almost a month, more than 700 DFPS staff from CPS, Adult Protective Services, Child Care Licensing, Purchased Client Services, and other areas of the department, worked around the clock to meet every need of the 463 children removed from the compound. With the highest levels of professionalism and dedication, staff from across the state converged on San Angelo to give their time, their hearts, and their souls to children who desperately needed them. By April 25, all the children had been moved from the San Angelo Coliseum and placed in foster care across Texas.

In the weeks and months that followed babies were born to girls in state care and further hearings were held. On May 22, the Third Court of Appeals ruled that the state had not met the burden of proof for an emergency removal. On May 29, the Texas Supreme Court declined to overturn that decision. By June 4, all of the children were successfully returned to a parent or guardian with the understanding that they would cooperate with CPS.

Ultimately, the CPS investigation found that 12 girls were victims of sexual abuse and neglect because they were married at ages ranging from 12 to 15. One in every four pubescent girls living at the ranch was in an underage marriage. The investigation also concluded that 262 other children were victims of neglect since their parents failed to remove them from situations where they were exposed to the sexual abuse of other children within their families or households.





Child Protective Services (CPS)

Responsibilities

- Conduct civil investigations of reports of 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

Senate Bill (SB) 758 of the 80th Texas Legislature is the continuation of DFPS reform, which focused primarily on CPS but also on Child Care Licensing (see Child Care Licensing section for additional information). The resources provided by the 80th Legislature, along with the increased accountability from SB 758, are yielding results that positively impact DFPS clients and demonstrate an extraordinary return on the investment made in the department's continued reform. Among the early indicators of success:

The Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM) program tripled the number of families it served in the last fiscal year. The program allows a child's family and those who support the family to engage in a problem-solving process with CPS, which results in reduced placements in foster care and quicker reunification. FGDM has been expanded to include families during abuse and neglect investigations to help prevent the removal of children. (See page 16)

Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS), which works to reduce risk in families and prevent removal, has been strengthened with additional staff. (See page 16) CPS implemented Strengthening Families through Enhanced In Home Support, a FBSS pilot project, by using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding to help offset certain poverty-related factors. Providing this assistance helped avoid removal of more than 1,300 children from 400 families and sped the process of reunification of children with their families.

Despite a growing population in Texas, CPS removed fewer children from their homes. The number of

removals declined from 15,920 in FY 2007 to 14,295 in FY 2008.

CPS created an Intensive Psychiatric Transition Program (IPTP) to serve children transitioning from psychiatric hospitals into less restrictive settings and to increase the stability of their placements.

To increase the role of families in solving abuse and neglect-related crises, staff and funding were added to strengthen the CPS kinship program. As a result, more children were diverted from foster care to kinship placements. (See page 17)

Timely, documented face-to-face contacts with children in DFPS conservatorship increased from 71.8% in FY 2007 to 86.3% in FY 2008.

Quarterly visits with children in their residence, which contribute to child safety, were completed timely in 90.7% of cases in the FY 2008, up from 85.2% in FY 2007.

The Moving Foster Care Forward project, an agency wide venture, was launched to improve placements for foster children, particularly those with special needs. CPS contracted with the University of Houston to complete a statewide assessment of foster care quality and capacity to aid in this effort. CPS also created centralized placement units in each region to track vacancies, review children's information, and determine least restrictive placement settings. CPS also restructured and expedited its foster home verification process in FY 2008. This process will enable applicants to become DFPS foster parents and be ready to care for children in as little as 120 days. Previously, regions operated under uniformed guidelines but had very distinct processes and procedures. Some CPS policies and procedures may have been difficult for families to understand, discouraging some applicants from becoming foster and adoptive parents through CPS. This project means those wishing to foster or adopt children will experience a faster, more transparent, and more customer friendly process in the future. (Note: While CPS recruits and verifies DFPS foster homes, they are regulated by the DFPS Child Care Licensing division. For more on the Moving Foster Care Forward project see Child Care Licensing section.)

Additional Accomplishments

- In FY 2008, Family Drug Courts existed in 10 of the 11 DFPS regions. Community stakeholders in the last region were in discussions to create a Family Drug Court there as well.
- Local parent collaboration groups have expanded and are operating in 10 of the 11 DFPS regions, and a statewide group exists. The last region began the process of developing a parent collaboration group. The groups have developed and distributed their statewide protocol.
- A Health and Human Services Commission review in 2004 found children in foster care were not always getting the best healthcare possible. In FY 2008, CPS and other DFPS divisions worked with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to launch STAR Health, a managed healthcare program for children in state care. STAR Health began serving more than 27,000 children and young adults on April 1, 2008.
- The Youth Leadership Council, composed of youth in foster care and former foster youth up to age 21 from each region, recently concluded a successful annual conference. These youth, along with CPS youth specialists, continue to bring the “youth voice” to DFPS management statewide.
- Transition Centers for youths leaving foster care expanded across the state. In FY 2008, three new centers opened in Beaumont, Belton (with satellite centers in Killeen and Temple), and El Paso. Other centers are located in Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Houston, Kerrville, and San Antonio. These centers provide a central clearinghouse for many community partners to serve the diverse needs of youth, ages 15½ to 25 years, both during and after they transition from foster care to adulthood.



REGIONAL VIGNETTES

REGION 1 (AMARILLO REGION)

In August 2007, the Region 1 training council developed the Pay It Forward mentoring program. By investing in the development of new staff from day one, Region 1 sought to increase staff retention, which lowers caseloads and leads to better outcomes for children and families. Pay It Forward mentor training began in the fall of 2007. In FY 2008, 107 tenured staff participated in the program. As a result, Region 1 experienced a 12% reduction in new caseworker turnover. Pay It Forward helped workers in Region 1 recognize that they have the power to change the environment in which they work.

REGION 2 (ABILENE REGION)

The Parent Collaboration Group, a partnership between CPS and biological parents, is well underway in Region 2. Three groups were formed and the fourth was in the planning stages as the fiscal year came to a close. Biological parents who worked diligently to regain custody of their own children after removals or completed services in a positive and proactive way volunteered to help and empower other parents receiving CPS services. EMPOWER is an acronym for Empowering and Motivating Parents to Overcome With Education and Resources. Monthly meetings, led by these certified volunteers, were held in Brownwood, Abilene, and Wichita Falls with another meeting planned for Eastland and surrounding counties.

REGION 3 (ARLINGTON REGION)

The Tarrant County Family Drug Court Project was a long-time dream of District Judge Jean Boyd that came true in November 2007. This collaborative effort works with mothers of drug-exposed infants and protects children from abuse and neglect through timely decisions, coordinated services, and strength-based, family centered treatment, and recovery support services. Family Group Decision Making partnered with this special project by bringing extended family and other support systems together early in the case to develop plans that will ensure the mother's success. Most of these plans focus heavily on relapse prevention and ongoing support following CPS involvement. The Tarrant County Family Drug Court had an amazing year with many success stories.

Dad Shares His CPS Story to Help Others



TRIMEL HOLLOWAY, A CPS CLIENT HELPED BY FAMILY BASED SAFETY SERVICES

In the fall of 2006, Trimel Holloway of San Antonio was working on his master's degree in business administration, while his wife served as sole breadwinner. The couple had a 4-year-old and two 1-month-old twins. One night while he was caring for the children and the twins finally fell asleep, something went wrong.

"I was so stressed out and so overwhelmed that I simply snapped," said Holloway. "The trigger wasn't unusual—my oldest just would not stop dancing despite my repeated warnings for him to simmer down. Finally, he brushed up against the crib and woke the twins. Before I realized what I was doing, a spanking turned into me striking my child out of anger. And I never meant to do that. I could have just walked away, but I didn't."

Fortunately, there were no serious injuries, but Holloway was temporarily separated from his family and heartbroken over his actions. "I cannot begin to describe what the pain of losing contact with my children was like. My visits with them had to be supervised. I knew I would never strike my children again but CPS didn't know it—and they refused to take any chances."

Since the safety of the children could be reasonably assured, Child Protective Services (CPS) provided Holloway with something called Family Based Safety Services to help stabilize his family and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Services provided through Family Based Safety Services may include family counseling, crisis intervention, mental health services, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, and child care.

"During the past 18 months, I have learned so much—thanks to my CPS workers," said Holloway. "I was not aware of the resources out there until I began my unexpected journey with them. I have gone through parenting classes and anger management and therapy, and I realize now that I needed all of those things. I had unresolved issues I was not even aware that I had."

Holloway, who has given inspirational presentations to others as a result of what happened, said with the guidance and support of CPS staff, his family is stronger now than ever. "I realize many people are one step away from where I was, and I urge them to reach out now and get the help and support that they need. Now, the fear that I had of my son fearing me is gone. Every day, I look forward to each and every story that he races home from school to share with me, and our bond is sealed."

REGION 5 (BEAUMONT REGION)

In February 2008, DFPS held its 11th annual two-day conference at Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches for foster and adoptive parents as well as child welfare professionals. The purpose of the conference is to provide educational information about child safety, well-being, and permanency of placement. Workshops included subjects such as drug-endangered children, faith and fostering, working with the educational system, and psychotropic medications. The event also featured a Heart Gallery and a Youth Leadership Conference that was also open to prospective adoptive or foster parents.

REGION 6 (HOUSTON REGION)

On April 14, 2008, CPS and Harris County Protective Services for Children and Adults commemorated April as Child Abuse Awareness Month. This event was a countywide collaboration involving state and county officials as well as the City of Houston Fire and Police Departments. Various community stakeholders, including judges and board members, attended the event to spotlight child abuse and to raise awareness of its devastating impact on our community. At the

end of the ceremony, participants observed 30 seconds of silence to honor the 30 children in the area who lost their lives in 2007 as a result of child abuse.

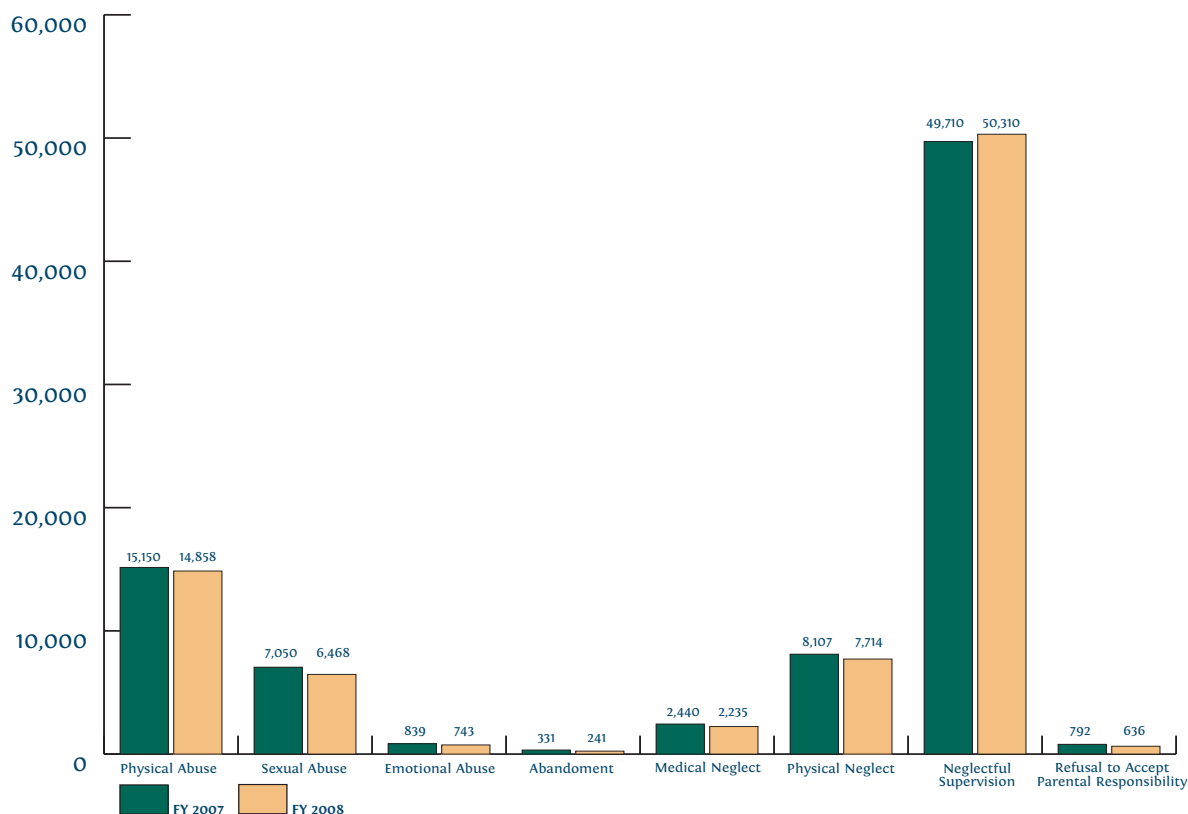
REGION 7 (AUSTIN REGION)

In January 2008, CPS participated in a conference at the Methodist Children's Home in Waco to discuss ways to improve Texas' child welfare system. The four-day event was attended by more than 200 people, which included judges, child advocates, CPS staff, officials with the Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates program, and representatives from faith-based organizations.

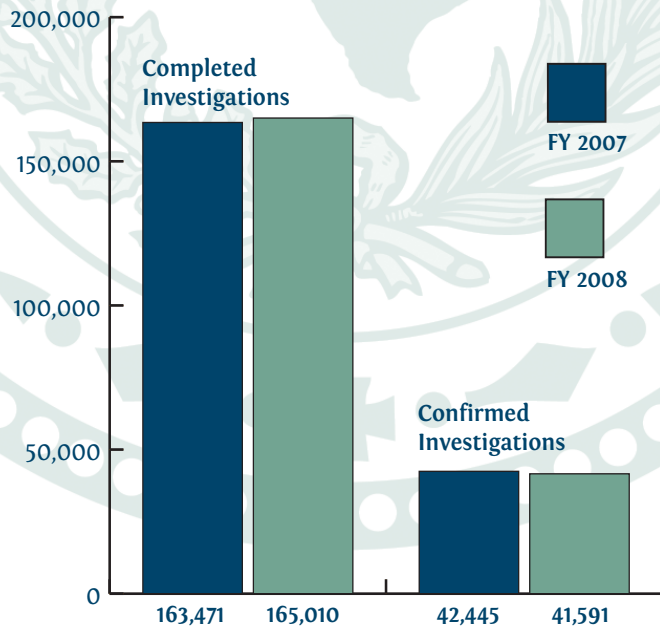
REGION 8 (SAN ANTONIO REGION)

FY 2008 was another good year for finding loving and permanent homes for children in foster care in San Antonio. In November 2007, 108 children were adopted to coincide with the recognition of National Adoption Month. Of those children, 12 were age 10 or older. The adoptions marked an all-time high for Bexar County's monthly adoption ceremonies, and the rate of adoptions at the time was among the highest in the country. The ceremony included the

CONFIRMED ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE/NEGLECT BY TYPE



COMPLETED INVESTIGATIONS



San Antonio Spurs Coyote and mariachi music. In February 2008, an additional 32 San Antonio children, ranging in age from 11 months to 11 years old, were adopted.

REGION 9 (MIDLAND REGION)

For the last 11 years, the Reagan Elementary Magnet School “All Stars” have supported the Odessa Rainbow Room. Sheila Denton is a first grade teacher at Reagan. In 1996, Odessa Community Partners opened their Rainbow Room across the street from Reagan Elementary Magnet School. First grade teacher Sheila Denton’s son and his fourth grade class painted rainbows to hang on the walls of the Rainbow Room. At the suggestion of a friend, Sheila started the annual donation drive at Reagan the next year. On the day of the drive, students walked across the street, and classroom by classroom delivered the items they donated to help children and families served by the Rainbow Room at the Odessa CPS office. That was 11 years ago and some of the first students to participate in this drive have already graduated from high school. In FY 2008, about 800 CPS children were served by the Odessa Rainbow Room.

REGION 10 (EL PASO REGION)

In May 2008, foster youth graduating high school enjoyed an extra celebration to mark their achievement. For the first time ever, CPS and the El Paso Child Welfare Board teamed up with Cappetto’s

Italian Restaurant, Price’s Creameries, the Sun Bowl Association, Miracle Kids, the Foster Parent Association, and Paradise Florist to give graduating students a much deserved night of fun and excitement. Special guests included Miss El Paso USA Lorena Tavera and Miss El Paso Teen USA April Aguilar.

REGION 11 (EDINBURG REGION)

In February 2008, the Junior League of Corpus Christi began its annual prom dress donation drive for girls in CPS care. The organization collected 400 prom dresses in 2008. Through its Cinderella Closet, the organization provides girls in foster care, as well as some girls from lower income families, with prom dresses, shoes, and accessories so they will be able to attend the big night. JR Viola Cleaners donated its dry cleaning services to prepare the dresses.

CPS Services

Intake

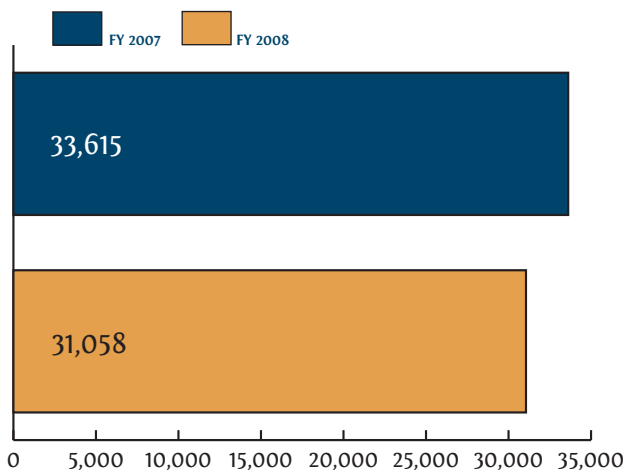
State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected to report the situation to the DFPS abuse hotline. DFPS administers a toll free, 24-hour statewide hotline (1-800-252-5400) for reporting suspected abuse or neglect of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities. People can also report online through a secure web site at www.txabusehotline.org. Anyone needing to report abuse or neglect can reach a professional English or Spanish speaking 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 249,850 reports of child abuse and neglect in 2008.

In FY 2008, the abuse hotline answered 517,573 phone calls in comparison to 511,546 phone calls in fiscal year 2007. In FY 2008, the hotline processed 131,264 online reports through www.txabusehotline.org, a 21.3 percent increase from FY 2007

Investigations

When an intake report is assigned for investigation, CPS workers interview verbal 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.

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE DURING FISCAL YEAR 2008



If criminal conduct is involved, law enforcement may investigate at the same time to determine if criminal charges will be filed. In 2008, CPS completed 165,010 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, medical assistance, mental health services, or programs offering financial assistance for utilities, rent, and child care.

CPS investigations caseloads have dropped steadily, allowing caseworkers to more thoroughly conduct each investigation, which reduces the risk to children. The average daily investigation caseload decreased from 25.3 in FY 2007 to 21.9 in FY 2008. In the long term, consistently lower caseloads may reduce staff turnover. In addition, the number of children removed from their homes has decreased from 15,920 in FY 2007 to 14,295 in FY 2008. It is critical to child safety that investigations be completed in a timely fashion. In addition, families are entitled to timely resolution of an investigation.

Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS)

When child safety can be reasonably assured, CPS provides in-home services to help stabilize the family and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Services provided through FBSS include family counseling, crisis intervention, mental health services, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, 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 for them to return. In 2008, an average of 14,408 families per month received Family Based Safety Services. During 2008, CPS implemented a substance abuse protocol for use by Family Based Safety Services staff working with families dealing with this issue.

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)

CPS protects children and acts on their behalf. At the same time, CPS knows all families have strengths. Families know their children best and want them to be safe. That's why CPS wants the family's input and has integrated a "family focus" into all areas of service. Parents and families can often help fix the problems that led to the abuse and neglect. They can get help that best meets their needs in their own community. First, CPS will tell families they can help make a plan. Then, CPS will set up a meeting. The family helps pick the time, place, and who attends. Families can invite anyone who is important in their children's lives. A Family Team Meeting happens most frequently while children live with their families. It is a quick way to deal with safety concerns. A Family Group Conference happens most frequently when children have been removed from their families for a short time. It is up to the family to decide if they want to have one. There were 7,326 Family Team Meetings held during FY 2008. There were 4,961 Family Group Conferences held during FY 2008.

Disproportionality

In 2004, CPS began statewide efforts to address the disproportionate representation of minorities in the child welfare system, also known as "disproportionality." Each region now has at least one dedicated staff member to help guide this work. Efforts to reduce this over representation have contributed to a decrease in children being removed, an increase in kinship care placements, and an increase in children being served in their own home. An evaluation of DFPS disproportionality efforts and their effect shows the disproportionate representation of minorities in the child welfare system has decreased in three of the five largest counties in Texas. By the end of 2008, more than 2,000 participants completed Undoing Racism training, which teaches staff how racism can only be "undone" if people understand where it comes from, how it functions, and why it is perpetuated.

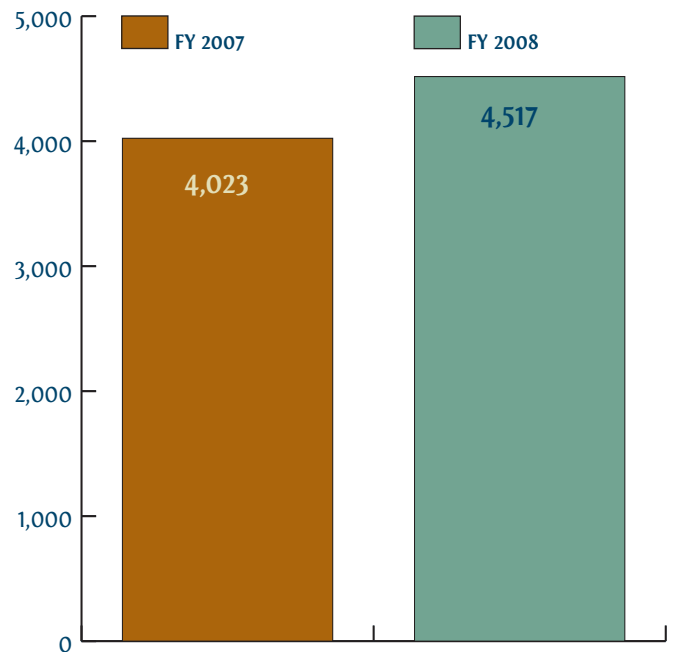
Kinship Care

When children have been abused or neglected, DFPS may remove them from their homes to ensure their immediate safety. The court system is required to consider a temporary placement with a relative and asks the parents to provide DFPS with contact information for relatives who may be able to at least temporarily care for the child. For generations, extended families have played significant roles in the rearing of children when parents are having a difficult time. Referred to as kinship care—or relative care—in CPS, these caregivers provide children the benefit of more stability when they cannot live with their birth parents. In FY 2008, CPS placed 16,576 children in 10,433 kinship care families. The percentage of children placed with kinship caregivers increased from 36.7% in FY 2007 to 36.9% in FY 2008.

Foster Care

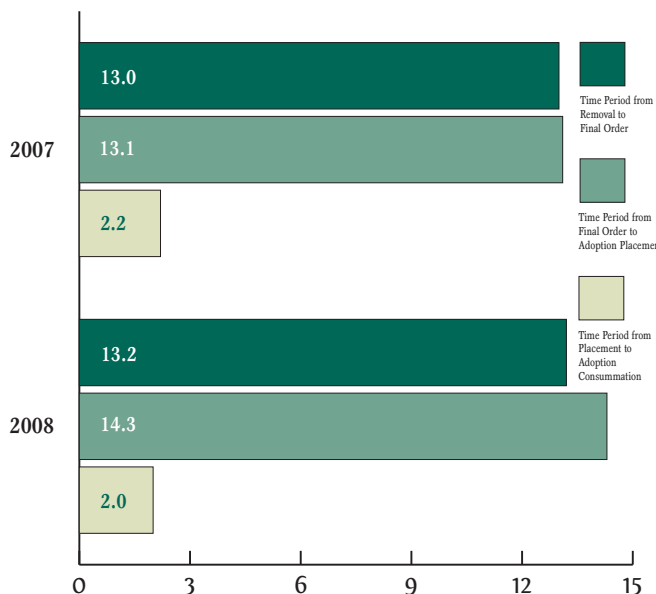
When it is not safe for children to live with their own families, CPS petitions the court to remove the children from their homes. They may be placed temporarily with relatives, a verified foster family, an emergency shelter, or other foster care facility. Verified foster families provide a safe, nurturing

COMPLETED ADOPTIONS



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. In FY 2008, the average number of children in foster care each month was 17,974, down from 19,593 the previous year.

MONTHS SPENT IN STATE CARE FOR CHILDREN WHOSE ADOPTIONS WERE CONSUMMATED



Adoption

When it is not possible for a child to return home, the court may terminate the parents' rights and make the child available for adoption. DFPS completed 4,517 adoptions in 2008. DFPS contracts with licensed private child-placing agencies to increase the number of adoptive homes available to adopt foster children. At the end of 2008, 6,375 children in the department's custody were awaiting adoption. Of the children awaiting adoption, 3,462 had not been placed with adults who planned to adopt them. In FY 2008, 4,517 adoptions were finalized, an increase of 12.3 percent compared to the 4,023 adoptions finalized the previous year.

Dual-Licensed Homes

In 2008, 41 percent of adoptions were by foster parents. National studies indicate greater opportunities for successful adoptions in these situations because the 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. 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 of recruitment efforts include:

- Foster Care Month activities in May across the state.
- Adoption Awareness Month activities in November: activities include mass adoption events created by working with juvenile courts, adoptive families, attorneys, and others to schedule clusters of hearings for finalizing adoptions in November.
- The “Why Not Me?” campaign, which uses advertising, news coverage, and community engagement, to encourage families to become adoptive parents and adopt older children.
- Faith-based collaborations such as the Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication (CHILD) and One Church, One Child programs (Dallas/Fort Worth, Beaumont, Tyler, and Houston).
- Heart Galleries: a national movement involving photo exhibits of children waiting for adoptive families. Professional photographers volunteer their time and skills to capture children’s personalities and help them find loving homes.

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) provides information on children awaiting adoption. Photos, profiles, videos, and inquiry forms are available at www.adoptchildren.org. TARE participates with other adoption organizations during national recruitment campaigns and promotes children on TARE

as well as in the AdoptUSKids national web site, and other web sites. At the end of FY 2008, 1,367 children were registered in TARE. In FY 2008, 555 children were adopted through TARE, 162 children were awaiting placement, 125 were removed due to numerous inquiries from approved adoptive families, and 169 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 approved for adoptions. Through AFN, families may list their preferences for 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 registered their adoption preferences so that DFPS staff can match them with waiting children.

The toll-free statewide inquiry line receives about 2,500 to 3,500 calls a month from prospective foster and adoptive families across the state. These calls are entered into 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 these experiences 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. These 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 2,432 children and families in 2008.

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 more 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 2008, 2,432 youths, ages 16 through 20, participated in the PAL program. In addition, 681 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 810 young adults, and case management services for 2,065 young adults, ages 18 through 21, who exited foster care.

Education and Training Vouchers

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, computers, day care, and transportation. This program supplements the state's Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program, as well as a tuition waiver program at state-funded universities, colleges, junior colleges, and vocational schools. The ETV program served 641 youth in fiscal year 2008.

In 1993, the Texas Legislature exempted former foster youth from paying tuition and most fees at state-funded colleges, community colleges, universities, and vocational schools. Due to new legislation, students who were adopted through DFPS are also exempted. In 1993-94, the program's first academic year, 73 students received waivers. The number of foster and adopted youth using the foster care college tuition fee waiver increased from 1,563 foster/109 adopted youth in academic year 2006 to 1,689 foster/197 adopted youth in academic year 2007.

Working with Partners

Foster Parents and Child Placing Agencies

Foster parents and child placing agencies are integral partners in helping DFPS support the thousands of children in the department's managing conservatorship who have been abused or neglected and have nowhere else to turn. DFPS supports the statewide Texas Foster Family Association by providing Title IV-B funds to help educate and retain foster parents verified in the public and private sectors.



DFPS also provides Title IV-B funds to the statewide Texas Council on Adoptable Children. In addition, DFPS funds local associations with Title IV-B funds. Training is a part of these local association support functions. All training is designed to help foster and adoptive parents better meet the needs of these children. In FY 2008, DFPS began its public/private partnership with child placing agencies to build foster care capacity and improve outcomes for foster children and youth. The department planned to formalize the partnership by holding a statewide forum facilitated by Casey Family Programs in FY 2009. The forum will bring together staff from DFPS, residential providers, and other public partners to introduce and discuss the formation of the partnership.

Child Welfare Boards

DFPS works with the Texas Council of Child Welfare Boards (TCCWB), a statewide network of more than 2,000 volunteers appointed by county commissioners' courts to work in cooperation with CPS staff. Annually, child welfare boards distribute \$20 to \$30 million in county contributions to meet children's needs that cannot be met with DFPS funds. DFPS works with TCCWB and others to develop resources, programs, and strategies to enhance services to vulnerable children and families. Leaders from the regional councils come together with DFPS staff in Austin three to four times yearly for educational programs and to share information and strategies that provide for the safety and well being of children. Financial support is provided by DFPS, private donations, grants, and fundraising activities.

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. These unique public/private partnerships between DFPS and local community partner groups throughout Texas support 141 Rainbow Rooms and 294 adopted caseworkers at 39 sites.

Texas Supreme Court

The state of Texas is the legal parent to some 30,000 children because of allegations of abuse or neglect. Courts play a critical role in determining their future because once lawsuits alleging abuse or neglect are filed, courts become the ultimate arbiter of what happens to these children. No child enters or leaves foster care without a court order. A judge decides where the child will live, with whom, and for how long. Every day, Texas courts decide whether a child goes home or to a relative, visits a sibling, or becomes legally free for adoption.

In November 2007, the Supreme Court of Texas created the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families as a high-level, multidisciplinary entity to coordinate and implement comprehensive efforts to improve child protection courts. The commission works toward ensuring better outcomes for children and families involved in the child-protection system. Commission membership includes judges, elected officials, attorneys, CPS, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Casey Family Programs, and other organizations.

Abuse and Neglect Fatalities

CPS has developed both internal and external mechanisms to review child fatalities due to abuse or 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 or neglect as the cause of death for 213 children in FY 2008.

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, foster care transition services in Texas, and "organizational effectiveness leadership" within DFPS.

DFPS partnered with Casey Family Programs and the Texas Workforce Commission to support transition centers in regions where none existed. There are currently 10 centers operating across the state. They are in Austin, Central Texas (Belton, Killeen, and Temple), Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Kerrville, and San Antonio.

DFPS partnered with Casey Family Programs and American Humane Association to develop a Family Group Decision Making curriculum and to train designated CPS staff to sustain the ability to train new Family Group Decision Making staff in the future. The collaboration also created Family Group Decision Making modules to provide more information and opportunity for smaller discussion and training for all CPS staff.

DFPS and Casey Family Programs also launched a leadership initiative in the fall of 2008 focused on building continuous quality improvement skills in CPS regional directors, program administrators, and program directors. The aim of this initiative is to increase staff skills in administrative, supervisory, clinical, and communication strategies to strengthen family focused practices in order to continuously improve our collective ability to serve Texas children and



families and realize Child Protective Services' vision of "Children First, Protected and Connected."

Child and Family Services Review

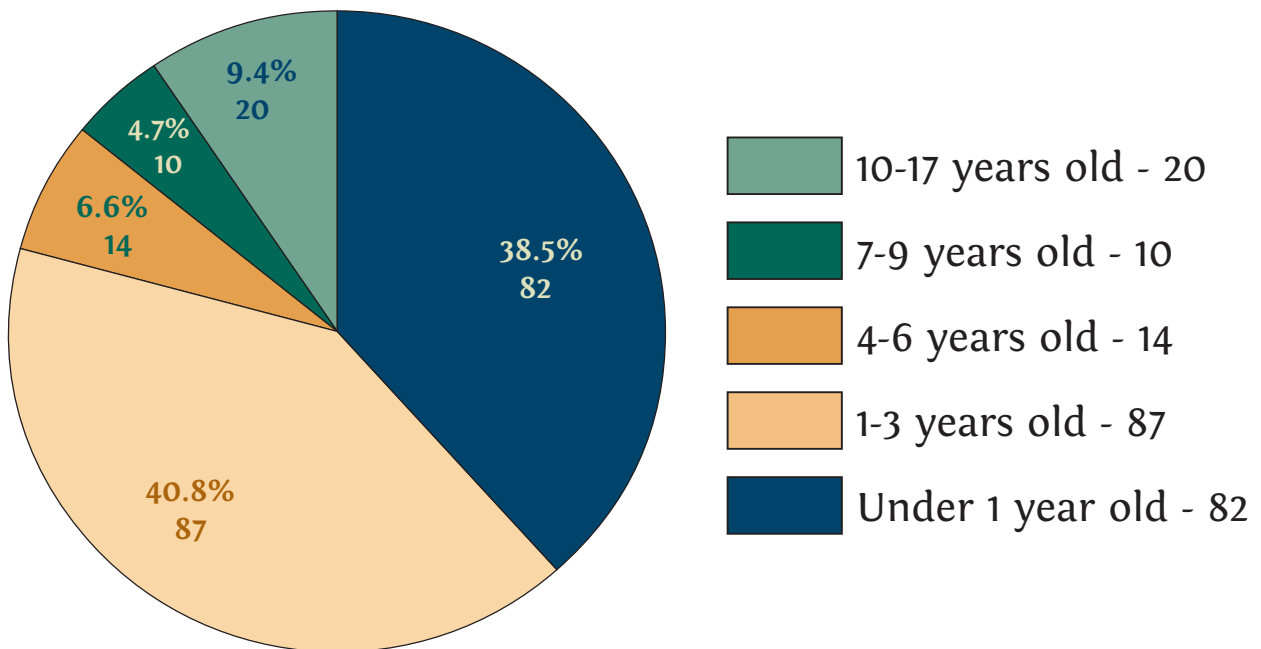
The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) is a federal initiative designed to measure and improve each state's entire child welfare system. Administered by The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the review monitors compliance with federal requirements for child protective, foster care, adoption, family preservation and family support, and independent living services. Each state must create a program improvement plan in response to the review. The CFSR process has a variety of components, including an analysis of state-wide data, the completion of a Statewide Assessment, an Onsite Review, and a Program Improvement Plan period.

Each CFSR evaluates seven outcomes involving child safety, permanency, and well-being. The first Texas



CFSR occurred in February 2002 and the second took place in March 2008. In 2008, DFPS began the process of responding to the latest review, which called for improvements to certain outcomes involving permanency and well being. The department is involving stakeholders with every aspect of the CFSR.

2008 Age of Fatality Victims Due to Abuse/Neglect





Adult Protective Services (APS)

Responsibilities

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

Accomplishments

Evaluation of APS Reform

In FY 2007, APS began evaluating the effects of the reform initiatives. The first phase of the evaluation focused on mobile technology and gained information about staff use of mobile technology, increased efficiencies, documentation quality, performance metrics, work processes, and outcomes for clients. Results of the APS staff survey indicated that they are using mobile technology and are most likely to use Tablet PCs in their homes, cars, or client's homes. Also, a majority of staff reported being able to do same day documentation for key case information.

Additional reform evaluation results are expected in early 2009. The reform evaluation examines the key principles behind reform including but not limited to:

- Reorganizing management structure.
- Linking policy and practice.
- Improving timelines of employee evaluations.
- Reducing recidivism.
- Developing an APS performance unit.
- Developing a community engagement plan.
- Increasing employee training capabilities.

Improving Outcomes for Clients

Enhancing Quality Assurance and Performance Management

In FY 2008, APS continued to improve how it uses performance management information to enhance worker performance. APS conducted quality assurance

training for new workers and managers, held development meetings in each region focusing on region specific performance, and offered training to all new supervisors and managers on the HHSC employee performance management system (AccessHR). Field management staff used performance management information and other data to assess the needs and build the skills of field staff.

All three performance measures improved.

Investigation quality increased from 91.38% in FY 2007 to 92.65% in FY 2008.

Client outcome quality improved from 88.79% for FY 2007 to 91.43% in FY 2008.

Process compliance quality increased from 84.86% to 85.57%. Each of these measures represents an average of 10 performance standards, which gauge specific program functions and are compiled to measure overall performance.

Improving Investigations and Delivery of Services

APS made significant progress toward revising the program's policy handbook for in-home investigations to reflect post-reform policy, as well as introducing important new policy initiatives. These new policy initiatives focused on the appropriate use of technology, effective caseload management, and improving the quality of documenting cases. Regional staff participated in the Case Management Efficiency Workgroup, which made recommendations for many of the new policy initiatives in 2008.



As You Go Initiative

The As You Go Initiative was created in response to recommendations of the Case Management Efficiency Workgroup that was formed and met during FY 2008. The focus of the initiative is to improve the management of APS documentation, including more efficient and effective use of mobile technology, and to provide tools for supervisors to support and encourage more efficient methods. Working with the DFPS' Professional Development Division, APS developed and implemented a training program to teach workers how to maximize the potential of Tablet PCs and more efficiently manage workloads with "As You Go" documentation.

Caseload Reduction

APS began implementing its Caseload Reduction Plan

in FY 2008 as required by APS Reform. This plan will reduce APS caseloads to within five cases of professional caseload standards by January 1, 2011. In FY 2008, APS reduced its average daily caseload from about 36.4 per worker to about 30 per worker. That reduction was accomplished by hiring an additional 179 in-home caseworkers in FY 2007, focusing efforts on reducing case duration, and ongoing efforts to improve the productivity of caseworkers through training on the best use of mobile technology.

Training

In FY 2008, APS continued to rely on a blended learning solution—a mix of web-based, classroom, and on-the-job training. Instructor Led Advanced Skills Development (ILASD) training was redesigned in fiscal year 2008 to build upon prior material with

APS, Police Work Together to Help Financially Exploited Client



John Oatman and his APS Caseworker, Cindy Chumley

John Oatman of Austin has experienced a lot in his 96 years on this earth. But in 2008, he came face-to-face with something he never imagined—some of the people he trusted the most stole money from him.

In April 2008, Oatman discovered that a home healthcare worker had used one of his credit cards to make dozens of purchases totaling \$1,300. He called the police and they contacted Adult Protective Services (APS). The two agencies worked together and when their investigation

was over they discovered that three home health workers had racked up more than \$40,000 on Oatman's accounts. One of the caregivers was accused of buying three cars in Oatman's name.

"I've never had any problems with the workers," says Oatman. "I've always been honest with people. And now I'm a victim and feel cheated."

In 2008, APS partnered with banks committed to educating their employees and customers about the financial exploitation of the elderly and people with disabilities. The department also developed a public awareness campaign to be launched in early Fiscal Year 2009 to include brochures and displays for bank employees and customers.

Cindy Chumley, the APS investigator who is working on Oatman's case, said some of her clients have no one they can count on. "That's when we step in. It's so sad because these are individuals who depend on others for their care, and in a lot of the cases they are like family."

Chumley said she and her counterpart at the Austin Police Department are diligent in investigating cases like this. "It takes special attention to work exploitation cases like this appropriately."

emphasis on enhancing skills in case reading standards, performance management, mental health, developmental disabilities, substance abuse, and suicide.

The APS training program led client-centered case-work practices during a one-week classroom training through the National Alliance on Mental Illness and partnership with the In Our Own Voices program. DFPS provided As You Go Documentation Training to all frontline staff. APS worked with the DFPS Center for Policy and Innovation and the DFPS Purchased Client Services division to develop the Emergency Client Purchase Skills Development training. This training will be delivered to frontline specialists and supervisors to enhance their skills in purchasing emergency goods and services for APS clients.

APS Improvements in Mental Health and Mental Retardation Investigations

Early in FY 2008, APS responded to an unprecedented number of requests for information regarding MH and MR investigations. In particular, APS worked with the Texas House Select Committee for Persons Eligible for Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (ICF-MR) Services. APS provided information on the role of APS in investigations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as well as other information and data.

An internal workgroup consisting of field staff, trainers, quality assurance specialists, and program specialists from the state headquarters conducted an internal self-assessment of the program. The workgroup recommended policy and practice changes. With the workgroup recommendations as a guide, APS also collaborated with and continues to work with the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to improve investigations.

Working Effectively with Community Partners

Public Awareness

In 2008, APS continued its year round public awareness campaign called “It’s Everyone’s Business”. The main goals of the campaign are to enhance awareness about the problems of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation, enlist the aid of all aspects of our communities, and increase awareness of APS programs.

It’s Everyone’s Business addresses important issues in protecting older adults and individuals with disabilities. Some of the main audiences are law enforcement, judiciary partners, and organizations that provide service to vulnerable adults. The campaign focused on adult abuse and neglect in May, which is Elder Abuse Awareness Month, but also other key issues throughout the rest of the year such as financial exploitation, fall and fire prevention, and summer heat protection. You can learn more about the APS campaign at www.everyonesbusiness.org.

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services

APS enjoys a unique relationship with volunteers in communities across Texas. There are currently 22 local boards or coalitions in Texas that support the efforts of APS in their local communities. Volunteers who serve on these boards devote thousands of hours a year providing support services to APS clients and staff.

Texas APS boards:

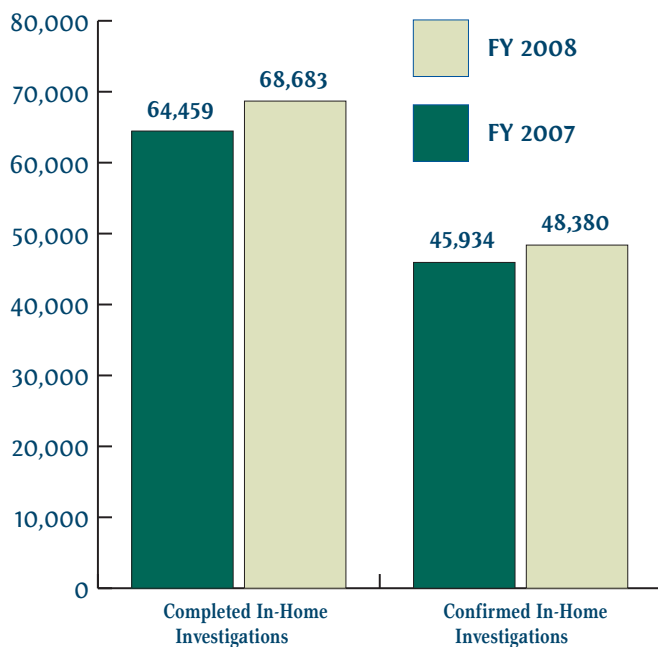
- Sponsor community events to raise funds to purchase items for APS clients such as fans in the summer and blankets in the winter.
- Assist APS staff with local conference planning to educate the public and other service providers about elder abuse issues.
- Provide their expertise as speakers for community events and training.
- Provide support in the way of recognition and appreciation events for regional staff.
- Stock and maintain emergency resource rooms in APS offices (much like the CPS Rainbow Rooms), providing easy access to basic necessities for APS workers to deliver to clients in need.

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services is the first statewide APS affiliated organization serving as a resource to APS and its clients. Texas Partners for



Adult Protective Services became an official non-profit organization in October 2007. Its focus is to help improve the lives of adults who are abused, neglected, or exploited in Texas by developing resources and providing assistance to local boards who support APS. Local boards with a current 501(c)(3) status may be affiliated with Texas Partners for APS. Texas Partners for APS is composed of one representative from each of the APS administrative regions who is a current or past officer of a local APS community board. Dr. Bruce Davis from Abilene was the President of Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services in FY 2008.

Completed In-Home Investigations



Additional Accomplishments

- APS staff held their 24th Annual APS Conference in San Antonio in November 2007. The conference attracted 538 registered individuals from 26 states and two countries. The APS Conference offers the opportunity for DFPS staff to network and learn with other individuals who serve, treat, or represent individuals who have been victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The annual conference is a major national training event that offers continued education credits to social workers and law enforcement.
- APS also continued to make improvements at state headquarters. New program specialist

positions were created out of existing positions to better align with and support field staff in the areas of workforce development, risk, and exploitation investigation. The policy development and quality assurance functions were combined under one director to ensure improved coordination and communication.

REGIONAL VIGNETTES

REGION 1 (AMARILLO REGION)

The first annual Region 1 Exploitation Conference was held January 15 -16, 2008. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for staff to garner information from a variety of resources. Representatives from the Texas Attorney General, Lubbock Police Department, Postal Inspector, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Social Security Administration, Lubbock District Attorney's Office, the Veterans Administration, and American State Bank presented valuable information to attendees. In addition, APS staff were able to network with local agencies and other resources that set up booths at the conference.

REGION 2 (ABILENE REGION)

Region 2 staff joined with the APS Partners Board in a wide range of activities. Board and staff often worked public awareness events together. APS caseworkers presented client stories at each board meeting, and board members attended and provided financial support for staff appreciation activities. They also shared a holiday luncheon and participated in many community events together throughout the year. The board assisted more than 40 clients in FY 2008 through grants and fundraising activities. Region 2 staff supported community resource coordination groups in several counties and participated in a variety of task forces and committees. Excellent outcomes for clients stand as a testament to the collaboration skills of all involved.

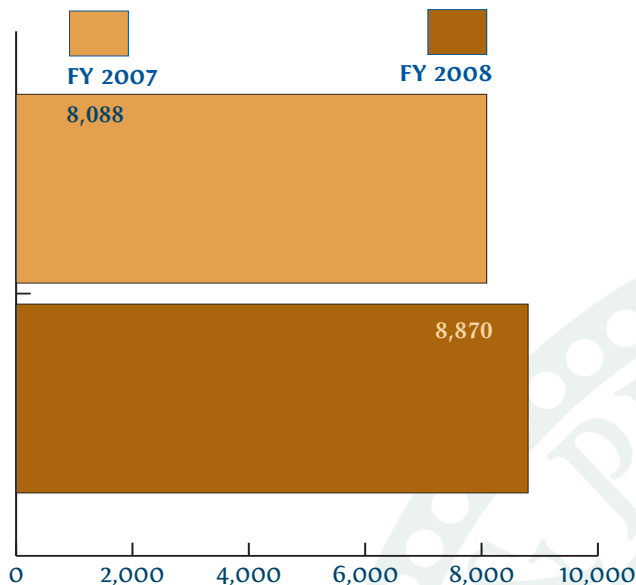
REGION 3 (ARLINGTON REGION)

In an effort to reach out to communities in Region 3, the Tarrant and Dallas County Adult Protective Services Community Boards joined together for the first time to present a regional conference designed to educate professionals and the public about undue influence and the role it can play in financial exploitation. This conference, Subtle Stealing; Elders Losing

Everything through Undue Influence, was held May 15-16. A secondary purpose of this conference was to inform the public about Silver Star Rooms and to garner financial support for them. Silver Star Rooms in Dallas and Fort Worth are supported by the respective APS Community Boards and are wholly operated by volunteers. Financial support was received in the form of sponsorships from the Tarrant County Area Agency on Aging, Dallas County Area on Aging, City of Dallas, the Tarrant Area Gerontological Society, TXU, Southwest Housing, American Physician Housecalls, Jackson Walker, LLP, Mediwell, Evercare, Hospice Plus, Fort Worth Continuity of Care, and the National Council of Jewish Women.



Completed Facility Investigations



REGION 4 (TYLER REGION)

In December, staff in APS Unit 75 volunteered three times a week at the Good Samaritan Food Pantry in Rusk by sorting canned goods and making “Christmas Boxes” for their recipients and then carrying the boxes to the recipient’s vehicle. APS staff also volunteered for a variety of other causes including Rusk Athletic Booster Club, Rusk Volunteer Fire Department, the Relay for Life campaign, Rusk Band Booster club, and the Rusk Rotary Club. Staff distributed APS literature to local businesses during specific campaigns and volunteered time to local churches, boy scouts, as well as to boys’ and girls’ baseball, softball, and basketball leagues. Unit 75

exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism. However, they just see it as helping others in need and doing the right thing.

REGION 5 (BEAUMONT REGION)

The Houston County Advisory Board has been very busy since its creation in June 2003. The group organizes various fundraisers, sponsors educational seminars, and assists APS caseworkers to meet the needs of clients residing in Houston County. One significant event the community at large looks forward to is the annual elder abuse fundraiser that has been held for the past five years. This organization holds a fundraiser dinner in the month of May to promote Elder Abuse Awareness Month and to raise money for the Houston County Silver Star room. Along with serving an exceptional meal, each year the dinners have a different theme and the events include top notch entertainment. As always, this year’s annual event was well supported by local businesses, county officials, and the community.

REGION 6 (HOUSTON REGION)

On May 16, 2008, APS staff participated in “Moving Toward the Future – Making Houston/Harris County Elder Friendly,” a policy discussion and elder expo at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Organized by the Houston Department of Health and Human Services, the conference provided the road map for Houston/Harris County to become an elder friendly and elder prepared community. This free event included seminars, educational sessions, an exposition geared toward the senior community, food, games, and giveaways.



REGION 7 (AUSTIN REGION)

The Animal Hoarding Task Force of Austin is a multi-disciplinary group whose main goal is to combine resources and resolve cases involving animal hoarding to the benefit of the animals, the hoarder, and others living in the household. Hoarding is the excessive collection of items along with an inability to throw things away, and sometimes it involves collecting large numbers of animals. Task force member agencies are: City of Austin, Adult Protective Services, Child Protective Services, Town Lake Animal Center, Austin Police Department, Travis County Attorney's Office, Austin Fire Department, and the Austin/Travis County Animal Control. During FY 2008, the task force met as needed—for example when the Austin Police Department was planning an animal seizure. Adult Protective Services serves not only as a member agency, but also on the notification team. This team designs a timeline of events to ensure a coordinated effort when animals are seized. All task force members meet to review prior animal seizure cases and the hoarder's current situation. Future plans for the task force are to promote community awareness and education of animal hoarding and possibly expand the task force to serve Central Texas.

REGION 8 (SAN ANTONIO REGION)

APS workers rely on the generosity of the community to support clients. Most offices have resource rooms that are set up as “store-like settings” where caseworkers have 24-hour access to basic necessities and emergency resources for vulnerable adults who have been abused or neglected. These necessities may be things like Ensure, adult diapers, toiletries, and gently used walkers and wheelchairs. In March 2008, APS

in San Antonio honored its resource room donors with a “Sweetheart Day” reception at the Chandler House. Group and corporate donors included Acadian On Call, Capital One Bank, Care Improvement Plus, Cell Teks, City of San Antonio Senior Services Division, Harris Stratex Networks, Home Instead, Not Forgotten Coalition, Odyssey Health Care, the Honorable Justin Rodriguez, District 7, Catholic Charities, Target, Team Hope, Sun Rise Home Health, and William Booth Garden Apartments.

REGION 9 (MIDLAND REGION)

APS provided leadership in the West Texas Conference on Aging - a collaborative effort by 12 regional agencies. The conference celebrated its 10th year with a sell-out crowd, media coverage, and outstanding sessions for area service providers. Professionals benefited from educational programs on ethics, pharmacology, communication, and geriatric mental health issues. Registrants also benefited from networking and information booths of area service providers. With a waiting list the last two years and excellent reviews, the conference collaboration began developing plans for next year.

REGION 10 (EL PASO REGION)

In June 2008, APS in Region 10 created a ride-along program that gave medical school students an opportunity to see and shadow APS caseworkers during home visits. APS community engagement staff worked with Dr. Paul R. Casner, a professor of internal medicine and expert in the field of geriatrics, to give his Texas Tech University students the opportunity to see firsthand the distressed living conditions of elderly APS clients. “It’s important for us to get the exposure because we mostly see elderly patients in hospitals,” said fourth year medical student Abby Babin, while visiting a 76-year old APS client with Parkinson’s disease. “We see up close how a medical condition affects activities of daily living.” APS expanded the medical student ride-along program to include William Beaumont Army Medical students. “A growing part of our population is retired military,” said Regional Director Patrick Turley.

REGION 11 (EDINBURG REGION)

On Saturday, May 17, 2008, APS staff in Corpus Christi participated in Operation Paintbrush, a community engagement project to paint the house of a 73-year old woman on a fixed income in Corpus

Christi. Participants traveled from as far as Edinburg to assist with this project, and even family members of three APS workers volunteered. Due to great volunteerism and team work, staff were able to caulk, scrape, and paint the home of the elderly woman in just six hours. Staff also collaborated with Home Depot, Wal-Mart, and the Corpus Christi ESPN radio station 1230 AM, which provided painting supplies, water, snacks, and even prizes for participants such as Corpus Christi Hooks (baseball) tickets.

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 works closely Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services on cases that require coordination and referral for guardianship services.

As the population of adults who are elderly or have a disability continues to grow, so does the need for protective services. Based on HHSC population projections for 2008, Texans who were elderly or who were adults with a disability made up about 25.1 percent of the state's population. In FY 2008, nearly 2.4 million Texans were age 65 and older, and 46.7 percent or 1.1 million of those had a disability. 12.8 percent of adults, ages 18 to 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 www.txabusehotline.org.

An investigation begins with initial contact by phone or in person within 24 hours of receiving a report. In FY 2008, APS completed 68,683 investigations, which resulted in 48,380 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. These services may include 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.

Mental Health/Mental Retardation Investigations

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

- State schools, state hospital, and state centers
- Community mental health/mental retardation centers
- Facility and community center contractors, including home and community-based waiver programs

Again, an investigation begins with initial contact by phone or in person within 24 hours of receiving a report. During FY 2008, APS completed 8,870 of these investigations.





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, neglect, and communicable disease.
- Establish and monitor operations and agencies for compliance with minimum standards of care.
- Investigate complaints in child-care operations and agencies.
- Inform parents and the public about child care, 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

Senate Bill (SB) 758 is the continuation of DFPS reform and is focused on CPS and Child Care Licensing. The resources provided by the 80th Legislature and the increased accountability required by SB 758 began yielding results in FY 2008. These results positively affected DFPS clients and showed an extraordinary return on the investment made in the department's continued reform. Early successes include the following.

The Moving Foster Care Forward project, a joint venture of Child Protective Services and Child Care Licensing, seeks to improve placements for foster children, particularly those with special needs. Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) began to develop recommendations for streamlining practices and improving internal coordination in developing new residential child care providers. In FY 2009, DFPS plans to test the use of regional licensing inquiry meetings as a way to educate residential contractors on the department's foster care capacity needs and explain how to become a residential contractor.

RCCL field staff were reorganized into functional units for monitoring and investigations in FY 2008 in order to improve staff response time and increase specific skill sets for those two functions.

The CCL Investigation Division was created to oversee all licensing investigation policy and training and to provide technical assistance to field staff conducting investigations where children are at the greatest risk. Additionally, the CCL Performance Management Division was created to conduct quality assurance reviews regarding the performance of residential and child-care providers as well as CCL staff compliance with all relevant laws, rules, and licensing policies.

Inspections of residential child-care operations increased from 8,839 in FY 2007 to 10,055 in FY 2008. The increased number of inspections was made possible by an increase in RCCL staff and better ensures the safety of children in residential facilities and child-placing agencies (CPAs).

Senate Bill 6 (the Reform bill passed by the 79th Texas Legislature) required the inspection of a random sample of agency foster homes to determine compliance with the licensing laws, rules and minimum standards. In FY 2008, RCCL completed 3,020 inspections of agency foster homes. That compares to 2,733 random inspections in FY 2007

Senate Bill 758 required CCL to assume the responsibility for investigations of serious incidents or higher-risk standards violations in child-placing agencies involving children younger than age 6. In FY 2008, CCL conducted 1,276 investigations involving serious incidents or higher-risk standards violations for children younger than age 6.

Senate Bill 758 also required annual internal enforcement team conferences for each CPA and annual team inspections for each CPA and each residential child care facility to strengthen oversight of residential child-care operations. In FY 2008, CCL conducted 782 annual team inspections and 341 annual internal enforcement team conferences.

The 80th Texas Legislature provided 84 additional Residential Child Care Licensing staff statewide. This increase enables staff to conduct required inspections and helps to reduce risk to children in residential operations.

CCL distributed more than 380 Tablet PCs, digital cameras, and portable printers to Licensing staff to

improve timeliness, accuracy of information, and staff accountability.

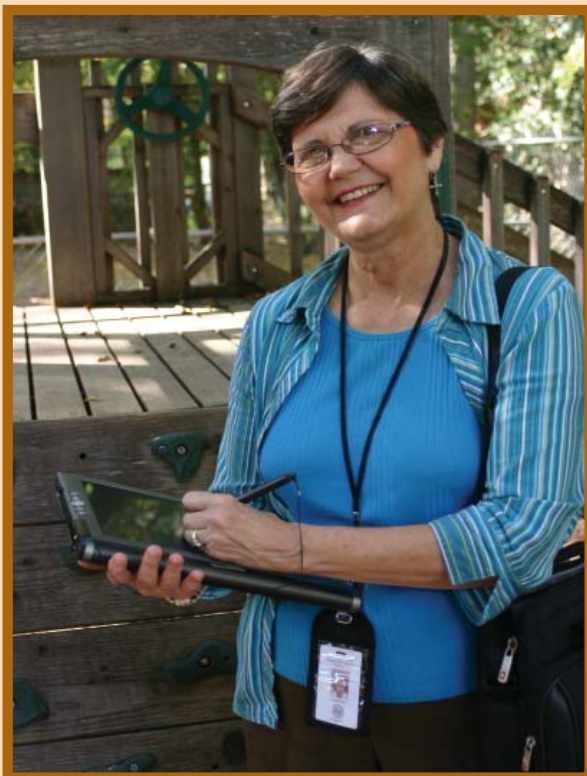
Senate Bill 758 required the creation of the Committee on Licensing Standards to make recommendations for policy and statutory changes relating to licensing standards and facility inspections. The committee was named by Governor Perry in November 2008.

Other Accomplishments

In response to the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, CCL made changes to its background check rules that took effect June 1, 2008. The rules require fingerprint-based criminal history checks for caregivers and other adults living in the homes of child-placing agencies and independent foster homes that accept children in

New Tablet PCs Help Licensing Staff Check off on Safety at Child-Care Facilities

In the spring of 2008, DFPS finished equipping Child Care Licensing (CCL) division field staff with tablet PCs. Linda Flens, a CCL representative who has worked for the department for 16½ years and mentors less experienced staff, is thrilled to be a tablet PC user. Checking day-care centers for meeting minimum safety standards used to involve a lengthy paper checklist. Now with tablet PCs, the process is automated and easier to navigate, not only for Flens but for the child-care directors she must visit and interview.



Before she had a tablet PC, Flens would carry a thick book of the state's minimum safety standards when inspecting a child-care facility, take notes on paper about any problems she encountered, and then go back to her office to enter the information in her computer. Now the standards and checklist are right on her tablet PC, which syncs with the DFPS computer network. By hooking up her tablet PC with a portable printer, Flens can now not only discuss a facility's deficiencies but print out a copy for the child-care director to review. Since everything is electronic, she can also easily send a report to a facility by e-mail.

The frequency of inspections depends on each day-care facility's history. A facility with a history of meeting standards is usually visited once a year. "Over the years, the standards have been raised, which is a good thing," says Flens. "If a facility has a history of complying with the standards we usually spread out checking on all the standards over two inspections."

In the future, software will be distributed to CCL tablet PC users that will prompt workers like Flens to visit particular facilities. They will also be able to schedule inspections using software similar to Microsoft Outlook, which has a calendar function that will synchronize information with the worker's Outlook schedule, which in turn can be viewed by their supervisor.

**CCL REPRESENTATIVE
LINDA FLENS**

state conservatorship. The 80th Texas Legislature passed a law that requires a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check for anyone that is currently required to have a background check in a child day-care center. This law became effective September 1, 2007.

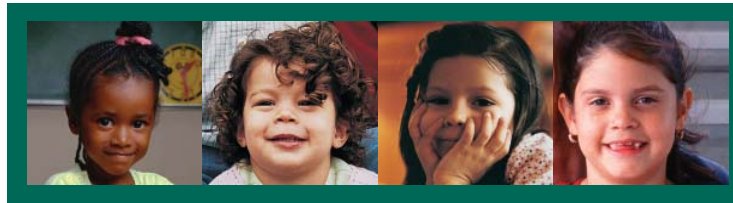
In the spring and summer of 2008, CCL sought input from the public on enhancements to the online child care search web site at www.txchildcaresearch.org. As a result, CCL added compliance history to each child-care provider's entry in order to show the public a broader scope of information. Previously, the site did not provide enough information to easily decipher which child-care operations were in compliance with standards and which were frequently cited for violations. CCL made these enhancements in November 2008.

Inspections of child day-care operations increased from 42,617 in FY 2007 to 45,333 in FY 2008. The increased presence of CCL staff at child-care operations reduces risk to children.

The regulation of child-care operations routinely presents two challenges for licensing staff and permit holders alike: consistent interpretation and enforcement of minimum standards. In an effort to address these challenges, CCL implemented an enforcement system in FY 2008 that assigns a weight to each standard, ranging from low to high, based on risk to children. Weighted standards help CCL staff make more effective and consistent decisions. Assigning weights to minimum standards takes into account the relative importance of each standard violation and facilitates a clear and common understanding among providers, consumers, and licensing staff of the risk that any given standard deficiency poses to children.

CCL continues to license child-care administrators and child-placement administrators. At the end of FY 2008, there were active licenses for 661 licensed child-care administrators and 259 licensed child-placement administrators.

In response to continued dangers facing Texas children, CCL sponsors two annual public awareness campaigns. 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. In 2007, 13 children died in unregulated care. That is in addition to 18 in 2006, 10 in 2005, and 8 in 2004. As Labor Day weekend approached in 2008, 72 Texas



children had already drowned, more than any year since DFPS began its unofficial count in 2005. In addition, six children died in hot cars. The "See and Save" campaign is to remind parents and caregivers to be vigilant when it comes to children and water safety and hot cars. Staff hold events for both campaigns across the state with child-care providers, law enforcement, emergency medical staff, and others.

REGIONAL VIGNETTES

NORTHWEST DISTRICT (REGIONS 1, 2, 9, AND 10)

The Northwest District spent the year focusing on training for the child-care community. Staff conducted 56 trainings for 1,156 participants focusing on topics addressing areas of high risk to children including supervision of children, understanding child to caregiver ratios, summer safety, and transportation. The trainings were held in a variety of locations including Amarillo, Plainview, Wichita Falls, Abilene, Brownwood, San Angelo, Midland, Odessa, and El Paso. Staff also assisted community providers in conducting 64 trainings to 8,808 child-care providers.

ARLINGTON DISTRICT (REGION 3)

CCL staff from across the region participated in a wide variety of community events. Staff participated in the Dallas Mayor's Back to School Fair in August 2008, which had an attendance estimated at more than 30,000 people. Staff volunteered for the African American Health Expo in Fort Worth, which reached about 2,000 people. Staff also volunteered for the United Way of Tarrant County's project to help facilities in areas needing assistance and participated in the Spotlight on Parents events. The Arlington District Advisory Committee developed goals to benefit child-care operations in the district. One of the first goals attained was to provide quality training to identified provider groups. As a result, Child Care Licensing provided training focusing on home child-care providers and child-care directors.



EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT (REGIONS 4, 5, AND 7)

CCL staff were exceptionally responsive to child-care operations affected by Hurricane Ike. CCL staff answered numerous questions and provided answers on temporary relocations, repairs, and continuing operation so that child-care operations could get back into business as soon as safely possible.

HOUSTON DISTRICT (REGION 6)

CCL had its second annual child-care conference at San Jacinto College - Central in Pasadena on June 7, 2008. Staff invited 256 participants with up to 5 attendees per child-care center. The conference provided an opportunity for CCL and its providers to work together to improve the quality of care for the children in day care. The training sessions were conducted by CCL staff, the Houston Department of Health and Human Services, the Texas Department of State Health Services, along with Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services.

SOUTH DISTRICT (REGIONS 8 AND 11)

The South Texas District hosted 139 trainings that were attended by 5,394 child-care staff. In conjunction with providing training to operations, Licensing staff educated both parents and the public about child-care regulations and the child-care search web site. Staff held 131 public and consumer education events, which were attended by 16,128 participants.

CCL Services

CCL 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 child-care operations, 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

CCL 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 also investigates any home 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 and 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, including the provider's children, can be in care at any time. 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. CCL will also inspect them if it receives a report related to child abuse or neglect or standards violations.

Licensed Operations

All licensed operations must follow published standards and are routinely monitored and inspected. To become a licensed operation, a prospective

STATE'S TOP 10 STANDARDS DEFICIENCIES FOR DAY-CARE OPERATIONS (FY08)

RANK	STANDARD RULE*	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	VIOLATIONS CITED	CATEGORY
1	746.3701	Safety - Areas Free From Hazards	2,202	Safety
2	746.1203(4)	Responsibilities of Caregivers- Supervision of Children	1,980	Caregiver
3	746.1201(1)	Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers -Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-control	1,627	Caregiver
4	746.3407	Maintenance of Building, Grounds and Equipment	1,620	Safety
5	745.625(a)(4)	Background checks submitted-every 24 months after first submitted	1,326	Recordkeeping
6	746.5101(a)	Annual Fire Inspection - Before Provisional Issued and Every 12 Months	1,318	Safety
7	747.3501	Safety - Areas Free From Hazards	1,231	Safety
8	746.1601	Child/ Caregiver Ratio - 13 or More Children	1,174	Caregiver
9	746.3701(1)	Safety - Electrical Outlets Covered	1013	Safety
10	746.605(6)	Required Admission Information - Emergency Contact	960	Recordkeeping

* Only includes deficiencies that were upheld or waived. Note: Does not include assessment deficiencies.

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 serve 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.

CATEGORY	VIOLATIONS CITED	PERCENTAGE
Safety	7,384	51%
Caregiver Responsibility	4,781	33%
Recordkeeping	2,286	16%
Total	14,451	100%

STATE'S TOP 10 STANDARDS DEFICIENCIES FOR RESIDENTIAL-CARE OPERATIONS (FY08)

RANK	STANDARD RULE*	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	VIOLATIONS CITED	CATEGORY
1	749.607(1)	Employee responsibilities – demonstrate competency, prudent judgment, self-control in presence of children and when performing assigned tasks	221	Caregiver
2	745.625(a)(4)	Background checks submitted – every 24 months after first submitted	128	Recordkeeping
3	748.3301(a)	Physical Site – buildings must be structurally sound, clean, and in good repair	112	Safety
4	748.507(1)	Employee general responsibilities – demonstrate competency, prudent judgment, self-control in presence of children & when performing assigned tasks	106	Caregiver
5	749.1953(b)(1)	Corporal Punishment – hitting or spanking a child is prohibited	98	Caregiver
6	748.685(a)(4)	Caregiver responsibility – providing level of supervision necessary to ensure each child's safety and well-being	93	Caregiver
7	745.615(a)	Required background checks – each person over 14 years or older, who will regularly or frequently be present while children are in care	83	Safety
8	748.3301(i)	Physical Site – equipment and furniture must be safe, clean and in good repair	81	Safety
9	749.2593(a)(3)	Supervision – caregiver is responsible for ensuring each child's safety and well being, including auditory and/or visual awareness of the child	71	Caregiver
10	749.3041(3)	Physical Environment – foster home must ensure that equipment and furniture are safe for children, kept clean, and in good repair	68	Safety

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 children who are mentally fragile. These institutions include general residential operations that may provide various treatment services, emergency care services, or therapeutic camps.
- Maternity homes provide care for four or more minor and/or adult women and their children during pregnancy and/or during the six-week postpartum period, within a period of 12 months.

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 responsible for managing its verified homes and ensuring they comply with all applicable laws and minimum standards.

Child-placing agencies licensed by DFPS vary in both the size and scope of their operations. Some are very small agencies that offer only private adoption services. Others are multi-office organizations that offer adoption 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 state's foster care system, including privately licensed CPAs and Child Protective Services (CPS) which is also 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. Private CPAs play a critical role in the care of CPS foster children.

Annual Report of Licensing Violations

Using standards, CCL strives to protect the basic health and safety of children in out-of-home care. The goal of the Child Care Licensing program is to appropriately and consistently enforce minimum standards

for all types of operations statewide. The consistent enforcement of minimum standards should result in increased 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. CCL analyzes trends in licensing standards 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 statewide trends on page 35 are derived from analysis of standard violations cited for operations during FY 2008. 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 7,384 of violations cited or 51 percent of the total, caregiver responsibility violations accounted for 33 percent of the total, and record keeping violations accounted for 16 percent of the total. Based on this data, the vast majority of violations cited involve safety and caregiver responsibility standards. (Regional trend data is available upon request.)

Residential Care Violation Trends

The trends on page 36 are derived from analysis of standard violations cited for residential-care operations during FY 2008. The most often cited violations were categorized into three distinct groups for the purpose of trend analysis: safety violations, record keeping, and caregiver responsibilities. Caregiver responsibility violations represented 589 of violations cited or 56 percent of the total, safety violations accounted for 32 percent of the total, and record keeping violations accounted for 12 percent of the total.

Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) is a statewide program that is not divided into regions. Therefore, a regional analysis of violation trend data was not performed for residential operations.

Addressing Violation Trends with Technical Assistance

It is important to note that these violations were cited in various types of inspections. Some were cited

CHILD-CARE FACILITIES IN TEXAS (FY 08)

NUMBER OF DAY-CARE OPERATIONS:

Licensed/Certified Facilities	10,874	30.1%
Listed Family Homes	8,257	22.9%
Registered Child Care Homes	6,895	19.1%

NUMBER OF 24-HOUR CARE OPERATIONS:

Residential Facilities	234	0.6%
Independent Foster Homes	10	0.03%
Maternity Homes	13	0.04%

NUMBER OF CHILD-PLACING AGENCIES AND AGENCY HOMES:

Child-Placing Agencies	331	0.9%
Private Agency Foster Homes	6,948	19.2%
CPS-Approved Foster Homes	1,844	5.1%
CPS-Approved Adoptive Homes	726	2.0%

TOTALS	36,132	100.0%
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during unannounced, routine monitoring inspections, some in response to a complaint concerning a specific incident, and others during targeted, follow-up inspections.

Emphasis has been placed on providing technical assistance to providers concerning these 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.

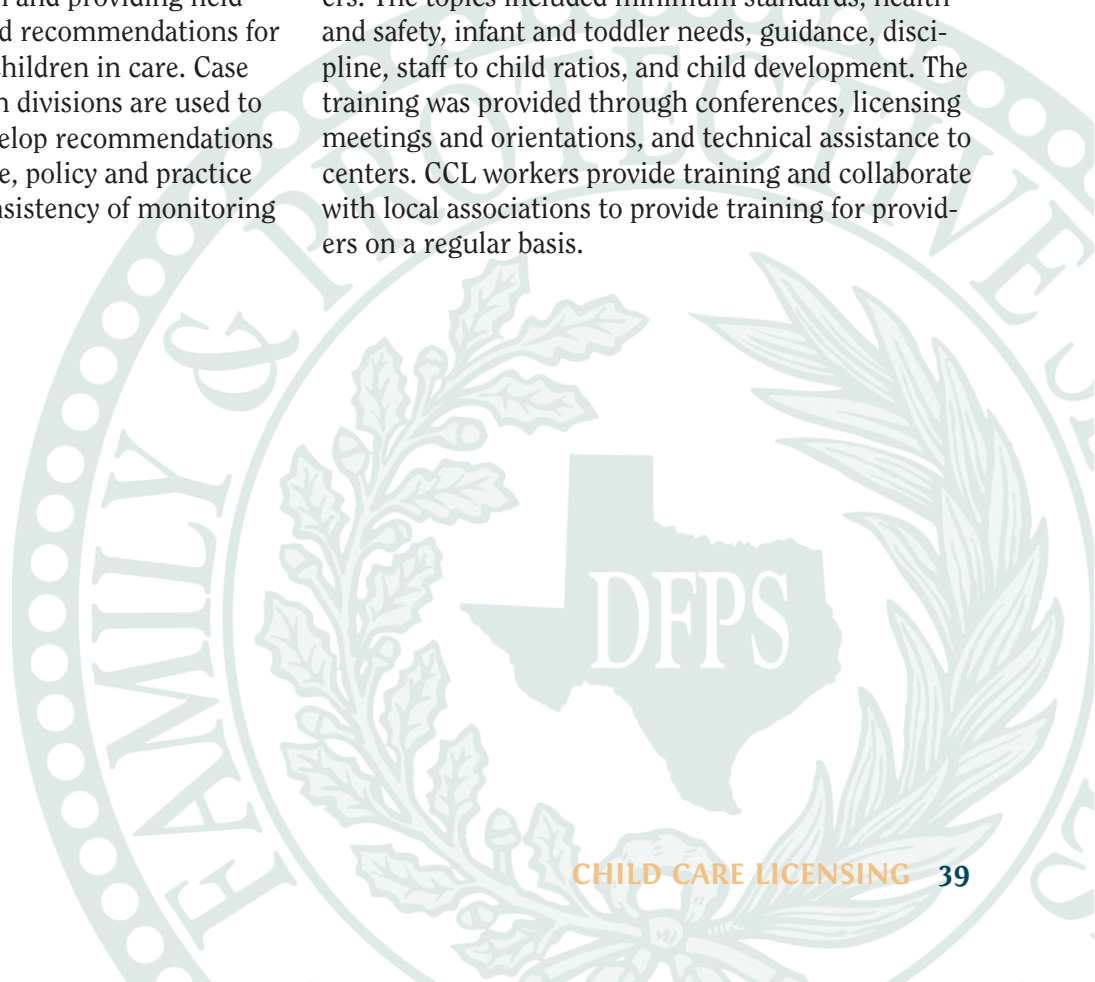
Quality Assurance

In FY 2008, the Licensing Division added two new divisions created by Senate Bill 758 to assess the quality of monitoring and investigations and ensure program compliance with laws, rules and agency policy. The CCL Investigation Division oversees all licensing investigation policy and training and provides consultation and technical assistance on investigations associated with a higher risk of harm to children. The CCL Performance Management Division performs quality assurance activities including early identification of compliance histories that present a higher risk of harm to children and providing field staff with objective analysis and recommendations for action to ensure the safety of children in care. Case reviews and analyses from both divisions are used to analyze trends in CCL and develop recommendations for training, program structure, policy and practice to improve the quality and consistency of monitoring and investigations.



Training

To continue to enhance the quality of child-care regulation, CCL district representatives, investigators, supervisors, directors, and clerical staff each received more than 30 hours of training and professional development on work-related issues. These include child development, 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 to 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.





Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)

Responsibilities

- Work with Texas communities to develop services to prevent child abuse and neglect, delinquency, running away, and truancy.
- Plan, develop, and administer a comprehensive, unified approach to delivering prevention services to avoid fragmentation and duplication.
- Make prevention and early intervention services more accountable by adopting outcome measures that demonstrate the effectiveness or public benefit of programs.

Accomplishments

New Programs Implemented

In FY 2008, DFPS contracted with two entities to replicate the Relief Nursery Program, which provides at-risk families with comprehensive support services in two communities. The department also awarded two contracts to implement the Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN), which provides community and evidence-based juvenile delinquency prevention programs focused on youth, ages 10 through 17, in each DFPS region.

PEI started the procurement process for the Community Based Family Services (CBFS) program to help reduce and prevent child abuse and neglect. These procurements will be finalized in FY 2009. This program will serve families who were investigated by CPS but whose allegations were unsubstantiated. The program will provide community and evidence-based services to prevent child abuse and neglect. Services include home visitation, case management, and additional social services to provide a safe and stable home environment.

Interagency Coordinating Council

PEI collaborated with the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Building Healthy Families during FY 2008 to begin work on new charges outlined in House Bill 662 of the 80th Legislature. This effort included the development of a DFPS statewide, long-

range strategic plan for child abuse and neglect prevention services and the first of two reports to address three of five bill elements. Those elements are:

- The potential for streamlined funding mechanisms for programs and services for the prevention and early intervention of child abuse and neglect.
- Methods for the ongoing identification of additional opportunities for comprehensive improvements to the delivery of services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect.
- The need for increased state funding for programs and services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect in order to ensure a sustained, long-term, cost-effective investment in families in this state.

Both reports were submitted to the Legislature in December 2008. The second report, due December 1, 2009, will address the remaining two bill elements. It will also build on the third item above using the results of a program evaluation being completed by the University of Houston Office of Community Projects in response to a budget rider associated with the bill. The evaluation considers:

- The effectiveness of state-funded child maltreatment prevention programs and services in achieving their intended outcomes, and the methods to transition them to increased reliance on evidence-based practices.
- The effectiveness and cost efficiency of state-funded programs and services for the prevention of and early intervention in child abuse and neglect.

PEI Services

PEI contracts with community-based agencies and organizations to provide services to prevent the abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas children. Services are voluntary and provided at no cost to participants. However, all services are not available in all



Texas communities. To find out if services are available in your community, look under Prevention and Early Intervention on the DFPS 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 with high juvenile crime rates. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth employment programs, career preparation, and alternative recreational activities. Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. CYD services are available in 15 targeted Texas ZIP codes. In FY 2008, 18,074 youth received services through the CYD program.

Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)

The STAR program contracts with community agencies to offer family crisis intervention counseling, short-term emergency respite care, and individual and family counseling. Youth up to age 17 and their families are eligible if they experience conflict at home, truancy or delinquency, or a youth who runs away from home. STAR services are available in all 254 Texas counties. Each STAR contractor also provides universal child abuse prevention services, ranging from local media campaigns to informational brochures and parenting classes. In FY 2008, 32,163 youth received services through the STAR program.

Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS)

TFTS funds evidence-based, community-based programs 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.

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.
- Increase collaboration among local programs, government agencies, and families.

In FY 2008, 3,136 families received services through the TFTS program.

Texas Runaway and Youth Hotlines

The toll-free Texas Runaway Hotline and the Texas Youth Hotline offer crisis intervention, telephone counseling, and referrals to troubled youth and families. Volunteers answer the phones and interact with callers facing a variety of problems including family conflict, delinquency, truancy, and abuse and neglect issues. The program increases public awareness through media efforts that may include television, radio, billboards and other printed materials. Hotline telephone counselors received 31,276 calls during FY 2008.

Texas Runaway Hotline:

www.texasrunaway.org or 1-800-580HELP.

Texas Youth Hotline:

www.texasyouth.org or 1-800-98YOUTH.

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. CBCAP funds a variety of contracts with community based organizations to provide child abuse and neglect prevention services. These include the Relief Nursery program, Community Partnerships for Strengthening Families, and Rural Family Support services, as well as various special initiatives and public awareness campaigns as noted in other sections of this report.

Tertiary Child Abuse Prevention

Community-based, volunteer-driven prevention, intervention, and aftercare services are provided for children who are or 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 to improve the quality and availability of aftercare services for abused children and enhance a statewide network of tertiary child abuse prevention programs. Services were procured again during FY 2008.

Family Strengthening

A variety of Family Strengthening services, available statewide, have been evaluated and proven to

effectively increase family protective factors. These services are designed to increase the resiliency of families and prevent child abuse and neglect. Programs must also foster strong community collaboration to provide a continuum of family services. In FY 2008, 1,337 clients received services through the Family Strengthening program.

Youth Resiliency

Youth Resiliency Programs provide services proven to increase protective factors for youth. A variety

Community-funded Programs Help Youths Across Texas



ROB THURLOW OF LIFEWORKS

Life as a teenager can be difficult at times. Fortunately, people like Rob Thurlow of LifeWorks are there to help. As program services coordinator for the LifeWorks' Youth and Adult Counseling program, Thurlow and his staff help youth and families deal with the stress of day to day living. They do that by helping clients improve their existing coping skills and ability to find effective solutions. Thurlow's program is funded by the Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) program, which is part of DFPS Prevention and Early Intervention services.

Thurlow recalled Michael (not his real name), a 14-year-old who received services from the

program in 2008. "Michael was highly stressed out when his parents called for help," said Thurlow. "They had been divorced for several years and were trying to decide whether to send him to live with his father. The father had remarried, had two new children, and a higher income than the mother. Michael knew his parents were thinking about the change, but they hadn't asked him what he wanted, and that caused him a lot of anxiety. Then, Michael's girlfriend broke up with him and it all just became too much for him. He started cutting himself and was eventually suspended from school for carrying a knife."

Thurlow said Michael and his parents came to LifeWorks for weekly counseling. "Michael said he wasn't suicidal and he agreed to a goal and an action plan to help him deal with all the stress in his life". Strengths and resources were identified to help him reach his goal. By the seventh session, Michael's parents agreed he would stay with his mother and transfer to a school he preferred. Everyone was pleased with the outcome. In the process, Michael learned the coping skills he needed, while his parents learned to solve problems in a way that met everyone's needs."

The STAR program, which is available in all 254 Texas counties, provides youth, up to age 17, and their families with services if they experience conflict at home, truancy or delinquency, or who a youth runs away from home. In FY 2008, 32,163 youth received services through the STAR program.

of services are available across the state designed to increase youth resiliency and prevent juvenile delinquency. These programs must foster strong community collaboration to provide a continuum of services for participating youth. In FY 2008, 1,620 clients received services through the Youth Resiliency program.

PEI Child Abuse Prevention Special Initiatives

In FY 2008, DFPS created the second annual prevention calendar for families across the state titled “Family Building Blocks: Positive Parenting from A-Z.” The calendar provided caregivers practical advice on positive discipline, effective consequences, use of time out, quality listening, and more. The calendar is consistent with prior assessments of the most effective strategies for prevention outreach. These assessments indicate the best approach is to directly target families with user-friendly outreach materials that provide concrete tools parents can use to strengthen their parenting skills. PEI distributed nearly 500,000 calendars to more than a thousand agencies, contractors and partners across Texas, including:

- More than 250 social-service providers.
- Licensed child-care facilities, child welfare boards and child advocacy centers.
- Elementary and secondary schools and Head Start programs.
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offices in many locations.
- Local churches and medical facilities.

In FY 2008, the calendar was sponsored in part by: AT&T, the Kayser Foundation, Texas Health Resources, McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP, Texas Gas Service, and Memorial Hermann. It was endorsed by the Texas Pediatric Society and the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.



Partners in Prevention Training Conference

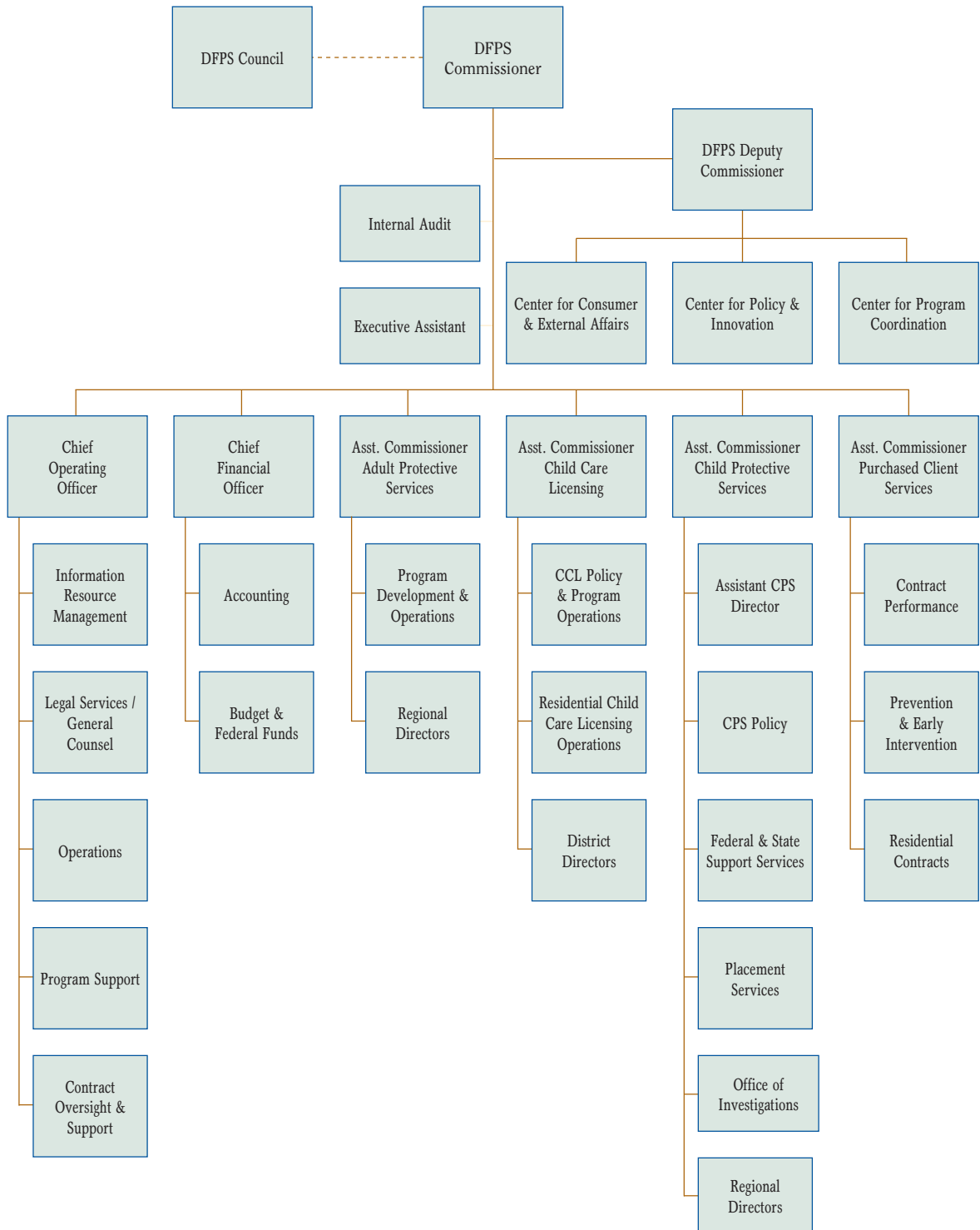
Each year, DFPS hosts the Annual Partners in Prevention Training Conference in Central Texas. The conference brings together social services professionals, parents, advocates, educators, law enforcement professionals, child care professionals, community leaders, and faith leaders interested in improving 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. Co-sponsors of the FY 2008 conference (held in Austin in November 2007) included the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Youth Commission, Texas Education Agency, Office of Attorney General, Texas Workforce Commission, and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) Southwest Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies. More than 300 people attended the Partners in Prevention Conference in November 2007.

Public Awareness Campaigns

During FY 2008, PEI and other DFPS staff continued to conduct public awareness campaigns targeting child safety, to assist with parent resiliency, and to increase awareness of specific child safety issues. Those efforts included Keep Me Safe and Sound, an effort to address factors associated with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and other unexplained infant death. The community-based campaign, focused particularly on safe sleeping, was developed during FY 2008 for use in FY 2009. PEI developed materials in collaboration with Texas Department of State Health Services, including a fact sheet titled “Safe Sleep for Babies”, which is available for download through the DFPS web site. The fact sheet will be distributed with other outreach materials by community partners in areas with a high incidence of infant mortality. PEI will train local churches, WIC offices, and other community partners to help groups educate parents as they distribute materials.

Information is available for download in English and Spanish. This and other DFPS public awareness campaigns may be found at www.dfps.state.tx.us or www.itsuptoyou.org.

DFPS Organizational Chart



Hotlines and Online Resources

Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or 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: 1-800-98YOUTH

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)

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.everyonesbusiness.org

Adult Abuse Prevention

www.txchildcaresearch.org

Search Texas Child Care

www.volunteerdfps.org

Become a DFPS Volunteer

www.seeandsave.org

Safety for children around water or in cars

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





Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

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