



House Committee on Human Services

Interim Hearing

April 3, 2008

Prevention and Early Intervention Services

Jeannie Coale
Assistant Commissioner
Purchased Client Services

Prevention and Early Intervention

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

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

PEI Overview

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

- Child Maltreatment
- Juvenile Delinquency
- Both Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency

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

We will also discuss:

- Contract Monitoring
- Child/Family Mentoring Programs
- Programs to Assist Mothers
- Interagency Coordinating Council
- PEI Looking Ahead

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

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

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

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

Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency Texas Youth and Runaway Hotlines

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

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

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

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

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

Child Maltreatment

Texas Families: Together and Safe

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

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

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

Child Maltreatment Family Strengthening Program

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

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

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

Child Maltreatment Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

This program seeks to increase community awareness of existing prevention services, strengthen community and parental involvement in child abuse prevention efforts, and encourage families to engage in services that are already available. Seven contracts provide services in 15 counties.

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

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

Child Maltreatment Tertiary Child Abuse Prevention

Prevention, intervention and aftercare services are provided for children who have been, or who are at risk of being, abused and/or neglected. The goals of the program include reducing child maltreatment and the number of families re-entering the Child Protective Services system. One contract is being procured.

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

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

Juvenile Delinquency Community Youth Development (CYD)

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

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

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

Juvenile Delinquency Youth Resiliency Program

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

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

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

Contract Monitoring

- Ongoing monitoring of contractor outcomes is done to assess progress towards meeting contract performance measures, and identify issues to address with contractors.
- Contract monitoring is based on an annual risk assessment process.
- Monitoring may be conducted through either on-site visits or desk review of documents and information.
- Monitoring can include programmatic review, fiscal review, or both.
- DFPS Contract Oversight and Support section provides technical assistance and quality assurance.

Child/Family Mentoring Programs

Certain PEI contractors provide child and family mentoring services, either as a primary client service or as a component of at least one of their services, through programs such as:

- Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Communities in Schools
- Avance LIFE Mentoring

Programs to Assist Mothers

Over 90% of the primary caregivers receiving PEI child maltreatment and neglect prevention services are female. Programs that serve first-time parents or parents with newborns include:

- Programs that provide long-term home visitation services to assist new mothers in decreasing stress about being a mother, to teach new mothers about child development, and to promote positive parenting, include: Healthy Families, Parents as Teachers and Nurse Family Partnership.
- Programs designed for mothers and fathers of children of all ages to gain knowledge and skills in positive parenting practices include: Nurturing Parenting, Active Parenting, and Common Sense Parenting.

Interagency Coordinating Council

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

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

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

Interagency Coordinating Council – Next Steps

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

PEI Looking Ahead

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

Transitional Living Services

Joyce James

Assistant Commissioner

Child Protective Services

Foster Grandparents (CPS)

The focus is on involving senior citizens in volunteer and civic activities. This is accomplished in several ways, including:

- Utilizing Senior Aides in CPS offices. Many regions have seniors working with them through Experience Works.
- Providing community resource and support groups for grandparents who are caring for children whose parents are involved with CPS.
- Working with Grandparents Raising Children and local Area Agency on Aging.
- Region 1 coordinates with the Senior Service America Program to provide a training site for adults age 55 or older who are at or below poverty level. Duties include assistance with timeliness and documentation of case records and assisting with educational portfolios and PAL projects.
- Partnering retired educators with Youth Specialists and teens aging out of care.

Overview of Transitional Living Services

- The Transitional Living Services Program includes the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program which provides services to help youth aging out of foster care prepare for adult life and assist with the initial transition to adult living.
- PAL services ensure that DFPS foster youth and those aging out of care receive the tools, resources, supports, and personal and community connections they need to become self-sufficient adult.
- Supportive services and benefits are provided to eligible youth ages 16 to 21, and in some cases up to age 23 for certain educational/vocational needs, to assist when they leave foster care.

Transitional Living Services

- **Preparation for Adult Living (PAL)**
 - Life Skills Training
 - Transitional Living Allowances
 - Aftercare Room and Board Assistance
 - Case Management
 - Support Services
 - Ansell-Casey Youth Life Skills Assessment
 - Local, state and national youth leadership activities

Transitional Living Services

- **Other Transitional Living Services**
 - Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program
 - Tuition and Fee Waivers
 - Transition Centers
 - Continuous Medicaid
 - Circles of Support
 - Extended Care and Return to Care
 - Texas Youth Connection
 - Texas Youth Hotline

PAL Population Served

Some PAL activities, such as age-appropriate life skills training or forums, may begin as soon as a youth turns 14 if funds are available.

- Family Code §264.121 requires DFPS to expand efforts to improve discharge planning and to increase availability of transitional family group decision-making to all youth age 16 or older who are in the department's permanent managing conservatorship. Due to the increasing numbers of youth 16 and older, and funding and resource constraints, services to youth age 16 and older are given priority over services to youth ages 14 and 15.
- In FY07, 7639 (91%) of 8356 youth aged 16 and older received services. This compares to prior years as follows:
 - 7279 (92.3%) of 7884 in FY06
 - 6474 (89.1%) of 7262 in FY05
 - 5341 (83.7%) of 6383 in FY04
 - 4921 (84.1%) of 5849 in FY03

Barriers to Serving All Eligible Youth

- The increased number of eligible youth aged 16 through 20 who may receive PAL services. This increase is almost 43% over the past five years.
- Geographic distance from training and event sites.
- Lack of available transportation.
- Youth opts out of participation.

Serving PAL Youth Ages 14 and 15

- In FY07, there were 5,216 youth ages 14 and 15 in substitute care at any time; 709 received PAL services.
- Services received by youth 14-15 years of age include:
 - a life skills assessment (Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment) to assess strengths and needs in life skills.
 - life skills training in core areas, including money management, job skills, and planning for the future.

Drivers Licenses

- Youth in and out of foster care can receive support for driver education and obtaining licenses as part of the PAL program.
- Youth in DFPS custody receive assistance from caseworkers, PAL staff, caregiver, and/or other caring adults in obtaining a state identification.
- Youth ages 18-23 participating in the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program can also apply ETV award to the costs of driver education, licenses and insurance.
- DFPS is looking at ways to increase the number of youth who obtain their driver license or Texas ID while they are in care.

Transitional Living Services

Trista Miller
Region 7 Youth Specialist
Child Protective Services

Conclusion