



Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

**Presentation to Senate Health
and Human Services Committee**

February 10, 2009

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Commissioner**

Mission

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

Partners in Protecting Vulnerable Texans

We do not do the job alone

- The courts
- District and county attorneys
- Law enforcement
- County child welfare boards
- Providers of 24-hour care
- Schools
- Foster care and adoption parents
- Physicians and other health care experts
- Dedicated volunteers
- Clients and their extended families

Landmark Reforms

Strengthening services to adults, children and families

- In 2003 and 2004 several high-profile abuse and neglect cases ended in tragedy, prompting scrutiny of the state's Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services programs.
- The state's overwrought protective services system had reached a breaking point and expectations were unrealistic considering the resources and systems in place to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- In response, Governor Rick Perry directed the Health and Human Services Commission to investigate and propose reforms to the CPS and APS programs of DFPS.
- The 79th Legislature acted swiftly, enacting SB 6, the omnibus DFPS reform bill, authored by Senator Jane Nelson and Representative Suzanna Hupp.
- SB 6 instructed DFPS to improve the services it provides to children, families, the elderly and adults with disabilities.
- The 80th Legislature continued reform with the passage of SB 758, authored by Senator Jane Nelson and Representative Patrick Rose.
- SB 758 focused primarily on services to children and families with emphasis on the foster care system.
- Though challenges remain, implementation of both Reform bills and allocation of unprecedented resources has made real a difference.

Statewide Intake

Statewide Intake

The front door for reporting abuse, neglect and exploitation

Statewide Intake is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to **receive reports** of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Centralized in Austin, SWI received a total of 678,330 calls in FY 08

- Of those calls:
 - 76.3% were received by phone
 - 19.4% were received by Internet

Note: others received by fax, mail, walk-in or other methods.

- In 2008, DFPS has redesigned its Abuse and Neglect reporting website (<https://www.txabusehotline.org/>) to make it easier to use.

Child Protective Services

Investigations

Assessing risk and ensuring child safety

CPS investigates reports of abuse and neglect of children to determine if a child or children in the home are being abused or neglected.

- CPS completed 165,010 investigations in FY 08.
- CPS confirmed 70,589 victims of child abuse/neglect in FY 08.
- In FY 08, more than 8,000 Family Team Meetings conducted.
 - During an investigation, a Family Team Meeting is conducted with family members to develop solutions to keep the child safe and avoid the child's removal from the family and placement into foster care.

Family Based Safety Services

Keeping children safe in their own homes

CPS provides services to **preserve families** while keeping children safe. These services may include counseling, day care, homemaker services, evaluation and treatment, and parental skills training.

- In FY 08, 74,365 children were served in open cases.
- In FY 08, the average number of families receiving family preservation services per month was 12,759.
- In FY 08, 1,559 children served by the Strengthening Families Initiative.
 - The Strengthening Families Initiative uses TANF funding to offset certain poverty-related factors to help children remain neglect-free in their home.

Foster and Kinship Care

When parents cannot keep their child safe

When the court grants CPS conservatorship/custody of a child, CPS places the child in a **foster home or a kinship placement**. CPS must explore every reasonable alternative for keeping the child safe from abuse and neglect before removing a child from his home. If remaining in their parents care is not possible for safety reasons, removal may be necessary.

- As of August 31, 2008, 27,232 children were in DFPS substitute care.
 - 17,186 in paid Foster Care
 - 8,490 in Kinship Care
 - 807 in adoptive homes

Note: Remaining children were in other placements (independent living, etc.)

- Expanding Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) has led to greater family involvement in the care of children in CPS. In FY 08, 4,961 FGDM Conferences held.
 - While a child in in foster care, FGDM involves CPS working with the family to address the health and safety issues that resulted in the child's removal from his home. The goal is to safely reunite the child with his family as quickly as possible.

Adoption

Finding children safe and permanent homes

When a court terminates parental rights, a child may become legally free for **adoption**. CPS works to quickly find a safe, loving and permanent home for the child.

- In FY 08, 4,517 children were in consummated adoptions.
- In FY 08, 24,930 children were provided an adoption subsidy.
- To be eligible for adoption subsidy, a child must meet any of the following criteria:
 - Be over age 2 and a minority
 - Be over age 6 and Anglo,
 - Be part of a sibling group, or
 - Be diagnosed with a physical or mental disabling condition.

Transitional Living

Helping foster care youth successfully transition to adulthood

Transitional services for youth include:

- Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) programs;
- Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program;
- Formal transition planning;
- Identifying caring adults and support services for youth in care prior to discharge;
- Circles of Support to help connect youth with responsible biological family members;
- Transition centers and networks of transition services;
- Extended Care for youth up to the age of 22 to complete high school or up to age 21 to complete vocational training;
- Return to Care for youth after they have aged out and decide they want to return to care; and
- Continuous Medicaid for youth 18 to 21 years of age with an automatically renewing application.

Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)

Preventing child abuse, neglect and juvenile delinquency

PEI manages, through contracts, community-based programs that prevent **juvenile delinquency** and **child maltreatment**.

PEI also:

- assists communities in identifying prevention and early intervention needs, and
 - supports the development of, and modifications to, new and existing programs designed to improve outcomes for children, youth and their families.
- In FY 08, PEI child abuse/neglect programs served 4,979 families.
 - In FY 08, PEI juvenile delinquency programs served 53,387 youth.

Child Care Licensing

Child Care Licensing (CCL)

Keeping children safe in out-of-home care

CCL **regulates all child-care operations** (day care and residential care) and child-placing agencies to reduce the risk of injury, abuse, and health-related risks.

- CCL investigates all reports, which allege abuse or neglect and/or violation of minimum standards in child care operations subject to regulation.
- CCL conducts inspections to determine if centers or operations meet minimum standards and licensing laws.

Day Care Operations

- In FY 08, there were 26,026 day care operations/homes.
- In FY 08, CCL conducted 17,051 day care investigations.
- In FY 08, CCL conducted 45,333 day care inspections.

Child Care Licensing (CCL)

24-Hour/Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL)

- RCCL regulates:
 - Foster Family Homes
 - Foster Group Homes
 - Child Care Institutions
 - Child Placing Agencies
 - Maternity homes
- In FY 08, there were 10,106 24-hour care facilities.
- In FY 08, RCCL conducted 5,859 investigations.
- In FY 08, RCCL conducted 10,055 inspections.

Adult Protective Services

Adult Protective Services (APS)

Protecting vulnerable adults in their own homes and in mental health and mental retardation settings

Adult Protective Services **investigates** abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or disabled adults in two settings.

In-home

- **In-home** settings include private homes, adult foster homes, unlicensed board and care homes serving people age 65 or older or people with disabilities age 18-65.
 - APS completed 68,683 investigations in in-home settings in FY 08.
- When appropriate, APS provides or arranges for services, including respite care, guardianship, transportation, counseling, and emergency assistance with food, shelter, medical care, and referral to other programs.

Adult Protective Services (APS)

MH & MR Settings

APS investigates abuse, neglect, and exploitation of clients receiving services in **state operated and/or contracted settings** that serve adults and children with mental illness or mental retardation.

- Facility investigations are conducted in the following settings:
 - State schools;
 - State hospitals;
 - State centers;
 - Community mental health/mental retardation centers; and
 - Facility and community center contractors, including home and community-based (HCS) and Texas Home Living Waiver programs.

- APS completed 8,870 MH & MR related investigations in FY 08.

Highlights of Reform Progress

2005 2008

Adult Protective Services

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-home caseloads 1 to 52• Limited case readings• 3 weeks training• 252 reforms needed• No tablet PCs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-home caseloads 1 to 30• Over 33,000 cases read• 13 weeks training• 252 reforms implemented• All workers have tablet PCs and document “As You Go” |
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Child Care Licensing

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4,590 residential child care inspections• No foster homes inspected• No tablet PCs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11,768 residential child care inspections• 3,009 foster homes inspected• All workers have tablet PCs |
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Highlights of Reform Progress

2005 2008

Child Protective Services

- Investigative caseloads 1 to 43
 - No Family Team Meetings in investigative stage
 - 18,774 children in foster care
 - 6,240 children in Kinship Care
 - No program to prevent removing children due to poverty-related factors
 - 6 weeks of training
 - No initiative to address disproportionality in foster care
 - No tablet PCs
- Investigative caseloads 1 to 22
 - Over 8,000 Family Team Meetings
 - 16,687 children in foster care
 - 8,490 children in Kinship Care
 - 1,414 children were not removed and stayed safely at home due to Strengthening Families program
 - 12 weeks of training
 - Disproportionality has decreased in 4 of the 5 largest counties
 - All investigative, FBSS, and half of Substitute care workers have tablet PCs