



Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

**Presentation to House Human
Services Committee**

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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 can't do this job alone

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

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 in the lives of tens of thousands of children and vulnerable adults.

Statewide Intake

Statewide Intake (SWI)

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 reports in FY 08

- Of those reports:
 - 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 were conducted.
 - During an investigation, a Family Team Meeting is conducted with family members to find 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 were 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

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. When the court grants CPS conservatorship/custody of a child, CPS places the child in a **foster home or a kinship placement**.

- 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 were held.
 - While a child is 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 members of his or her biological family;
- 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

Through contracts, PEI provides community-based services that prevent **juvenile delinquency** and **child maltreatment**.

PEI also:

- assists communities in identifying prevention and early intervention needs, and
 - supports programs designed to improve outcomes for children, youth and their families.
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- 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 care settings

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

In-home

- **In-home** settings include private homes, adult foster homes, and 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		
252 Reforms to Implement	→	252 Reforms Implemented
In-Home Caseloads 1 to 52	→	In-Home Caseloads 1 to 30
No Tablet PCs	→	Document “As You Go”
No Special Task Units	→	20 Special Task Units
No Statewide Partners Organization	→	Statewide Partners Organization Established 501c3, Elected Officers
Limited Case Readings	→	Over 33,000 Cases Read
3 Weeks Training	→	13 Weeks Training
No Community Satisfaction Survey	→	Annual Community Satisfaction Survey of Judicial, Law Enforcement, Community Boards, and Community Partners

Highlights of Reform Progress

2005		2008
Child Care Licensing		
4,590 Residential Child Care Inspections	→	10,055 Residential Child Care Inspections
38,671 Child (Day) Care Inspections	→	45,333 Child (Day) Care Inspections
18 Year-old Minimum Standards	→	Revised and Weighted Minimum Standards
No Foster Homes Inspected	→	3,009 Foster Homes Inspected
No Functional Units	→	Functional Units Organized to Improve Staff Response Time and Increase Specific Skill Sets
Insufficient Performance Management	→	Quality Assurance Reviews Instituted
One Training Curriculum for Caseworkers	→	Specialized Intensive Training for Investigators
No Tablet PCs	→	380 Tablet PCs, Digital Cameras and Portable Printers Deployed

Highlights of Reform Progress

2005		2008
Child Protective Services		
Investigative Caseloads 1 to 43	→	Investigative Caseloads 1 to 22
No Family Team Meetings in Investigative Stage	→	Over 8,000 Family Team Meetings
Number of Removals 17,428	→	Number of Removals 14,295
19,113 Children in Foster Care	→	17,186 Children in Foster Care
6-9 Month Wait For Foster Parent License	→	120 Day Process for Licensing Foster Parents; Only 90 Days for Relatives
6,423 Children In Kinship Care Placements in August 2005	→	8,490 Children in Kinship Care Placements in August 2008
No Program To Address Poverty-related Factors to Prevent Child Removal	→	1,414 of the 1,559 Children Served by the Strengthening Families Initiative Stayed Safely At Home
Disproportional Representation of Minority Families	→	Disproportionality Has Decreased in 4 of the 5 Largest Counties

Highlights of Reform Progress

2005		2008
Child Protective Services Continued		
3,173 Adoptions Consummated	→	4,517 Adoptions Consummated
No Circles of Support For Youth Aging Out of Foster Care	→	Over 2,000 Circles of Support Held
6 Transition Centers For Youth Aging Out of Foster Care	→	11 Transition Centers
6 Weeks Training	→	12 Weeks Training
No Tablet PCs	→	All Investigation and FBSS and ½ Of Conservatorship Caseworkers Have Tablet PCs

Key DFPS Issues

- Continuing the success of agency reform
 - Expanded work with families
 - Decreased caseworker workload
 - Increased adoptions
- Federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act
 - Helping families care for relative children

Key DFPS Issues

- Maintain the viability of the foster care system
- Strengthen services to youth transitioning from foster care
 - Improving outcomes for youth in foster care
- Reduce caseworker turnover