

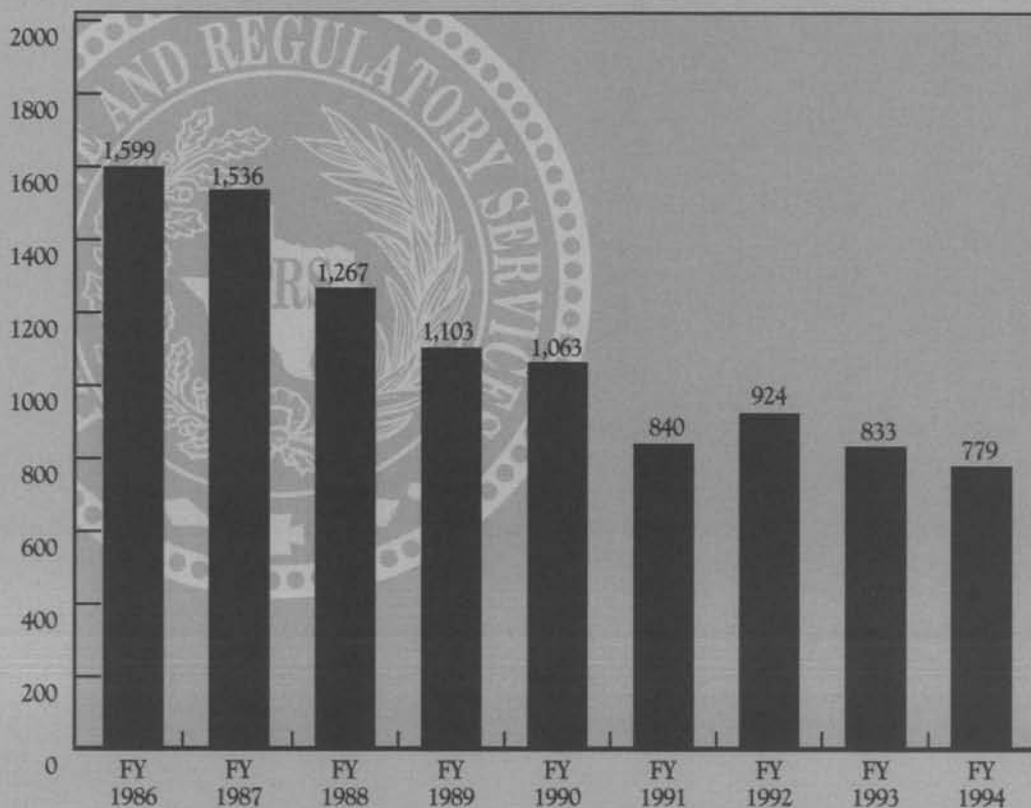
*Child-care Licensing*

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## Number of Licensing Abuse and Neglect Complaint Investigations

### Day Care and Residential Child Care



- ◆ Child-care providers, as a group, are at least as dedicated as CCL to protecting the health, safety, and well-being of children in care.
- ◆ CCL staff, at all levels, share and support the program's purpose and philosophy.
- ◆ Minimum standards for child-care facilities and other rules and regulations in the CCL program are most effectively developed and implemented when all interested parties have full opportunity for input, review, and discussion.
- ◆ Effective regulation is consistent, fair, objective, and equally applied.
- ◆ Regulated entities and individuals are entitled to due process throughout the regulatory process.
- ◆ Regulations and procedures must not take precedence over the best interests of children in care. Regulations and procedures must not interfere with the development of programs or program innovations consistent with the best interests of children in care.
- ◆ Child-care facilities and child-placing agencies are entitled to regulation by well-trained, competent, experienced, and professional staff.

#### **Minimum Standards Revised**

During fiscal year 1994, several years of work culminated in major changes to the Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers. About 12,000 people across the state participated in the

development of the new standards for day-care centers. They attended meetings, spoke at public hearings, and sent in written comments and suggestions. About 49 percent of these people represented day-care centers, owners, directors, and staff. About 33 percent of the participants in the process were parents of children in day care. The remaining 18 percent represented fire, health, and other interested professionals, as well as the general public. This represents participation from the total of 7,049 licensed day-care centers in the state, with a capacity of 578,186 children.

In residential child care, 175 licensed/certified child-placing agencies handle adoptions and oversee 6,551 agency foster family and foster group homes caring for 19,878 children. During fiscal year 1994, these agencies participated enthusiastically in orientation and train-

ing on the new standards that were adopted late in the previous fiscal year. At 12 locations across the state, a total of 442 persons attended the sessions; 6 percent were CCL staff, 19 percent had child-placing responsibilities in the department's Child Protective Services program, and 75 percent represented other licensed/certified child-placing agencies. In addition, more than 150 foster parents participated in orientation sessions provided by CCL staff.

### **Qualifications Examined**

In 1994, CCL at the department's state headquarters surveyed staff across the state to develop an overall picture of staff qualifications. Of the 408 people on staff at the end of the fiscal year, 14.4 percent had master's degrees or higher; 57.3 percent had bachelor's degrees, 6.3 percent associates degrees, and the remaining 22





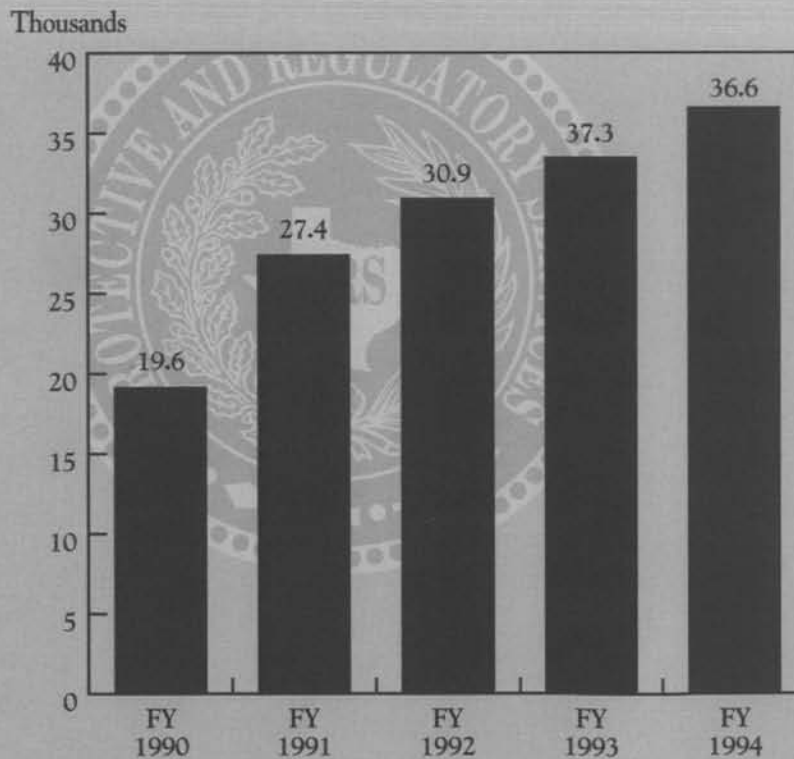
percent had high school diplomas. Of all staff, just more than 50 percent had experience in child-care facilities before joining the CCL Division. During fiscal year 1994, CCL staff averaged 63 hours of job-related training.

### **Increase in Service**

On a national, state, and local level, each year more young children are placed in day care. This results in an increase in both the number of day-care facilities regulated and in the size of the average day-care facility.

The rate of increase is lower for residential (24-hour) child care. Children served in foster home care and residential child care facilities have usually suffered some form of abuse or neglect, or have been diagnosed as having

## *Number of Child Care Inspections Performed Day Care and Residential Child Care*





some form of emotional illness or intellectual handicap so severe that they cannot be cared for in their own home. The range and severity of disturbance and disability of children in residential care have both increased drastically

over time. This has resulted in the development of a wider range of more specialized programs to meet the needs of children coming into care.

As a result of these trends, CCL is responsible for regulating more facilities and more complex programs without a corresponding increase in resources.

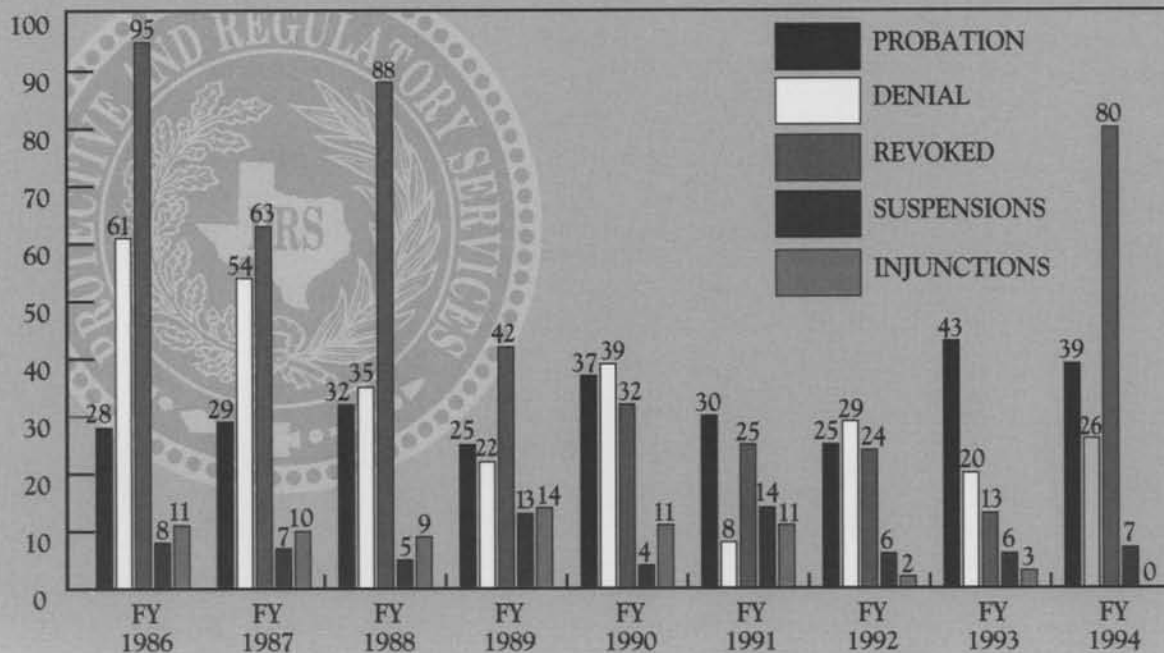
The CCL program works with stakeholders to identify and prioritize needs and develop ways to meet the needs within the scope of available resources. Given CCL resource restraints, this means that the program must focus on finding new, less staff-intensive ways to meet identified needs. CCL must locate resources outside of the program and the department to assist with meeting those needs.

Significant achievements during fiscal year 1994 included the following:

### **Partnership Efforts**

- ◆ It's important that children in day care be immunized against preventable diseases. Checking facility immunization records is a tedious and time-consuming task. Day-care licensing staff, working with health authorities and the "Shots Across Texas" immunization initiative, used regulatory authority in fiscal year 1994 to promote increased compliance with immunization requirements in those facilities identified by health authorities as being in substandard compliance with requirements.
- ◆ CCL staff throughout the state began establishing staff committees in fiscal year 1994 to locate community outreach opportunities and establish systems for maintaining and expanding such opportunities. CCL can vastly increase its impact and effectiveness by combining efforts with other community resources on specific projects where we have common goals and objectives. A specific example has CCL staff working with the local chambers of commerce and realtors who specialize in relocation to get

## Number of Adverse Actions Day Care and Residential Child Care



information to parents coming into the community about day-care resources and how to choose day care for their children.

- ◆ Tarrant County CCL has a community project in which staff work with child day-care providers to develop a "Director's Handbook." This is a vehicle for providers to share ideas, practical experience, and innovations with each other, which benefits all children in care. The "handbook" will be distributed to all licensed facilities in the Tarrant County area early in fiscal year 1995.
- ◆ Dallas CCL initiated a program of community meetings in fiscal year 1994. Held at several locations in the county, the meetings were designed to foster a spirit of "partnership" by engaging child-care providers, interested parents, licensing staff, and other members of the community in open communication and information sharing. Participants reported that the meetings provided a way for local communities and neighborhoods to foster quality child care at a grass roots level.

- ◆ In the San Antonio area, CCL developed a mentoring program to assist day-care centers with meeting minimum standards and support centers' efforts to upgrade quality of care. The program brings experienced directors as "mentors" to other day-care directors and supports training sessions. San Antonio CCL received an award this year from local Headstart Programs for these partnership efforts. CCL staff in Travis County initiated a similar mentoring project, working with the Austin Association for the Education of Young Children and the Connections Resource Center. This project serves day-care centers and registered family homes.
- ◆ Because parents, providers, and others in the community have many concerns and questions about child care, CCL has established a toll-free child care "hotline" number. In fiscal year 1994, "diorama" posters promoting the hotline were installed in nine major airports across Texas. The campaign also enlisted the help of 21 supermarket chains across the state in placing about

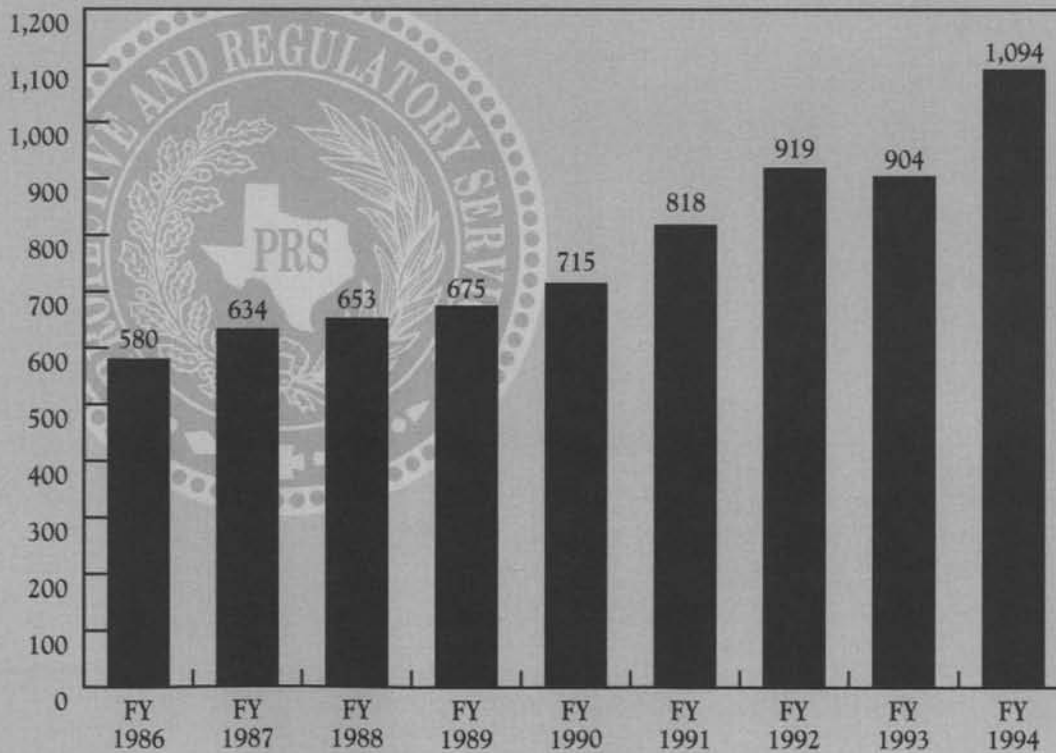
600 shopping cart posters about the hotline in their stores. This campaign encourages parents to become more involved with their children's care and to contact the CCL Hotline for information on child-care options and how to become better consumers of child-care services

- ◆ In addition to planned programs and initiatives throughout the state, CCL works with child-care providers, parents, and the community on an "as needed" basis. For example, in fiscal year 1994, a toxic gas leak occurred in an Austin day-care facility. Almost all of the facility staff and some of the children in care had to be taken to a local hospital for treatment. CCL staff went to the center and cared for the remaining children until other staff could arrive or until the children could be sent home with their parents.

### Customer Service Improvements

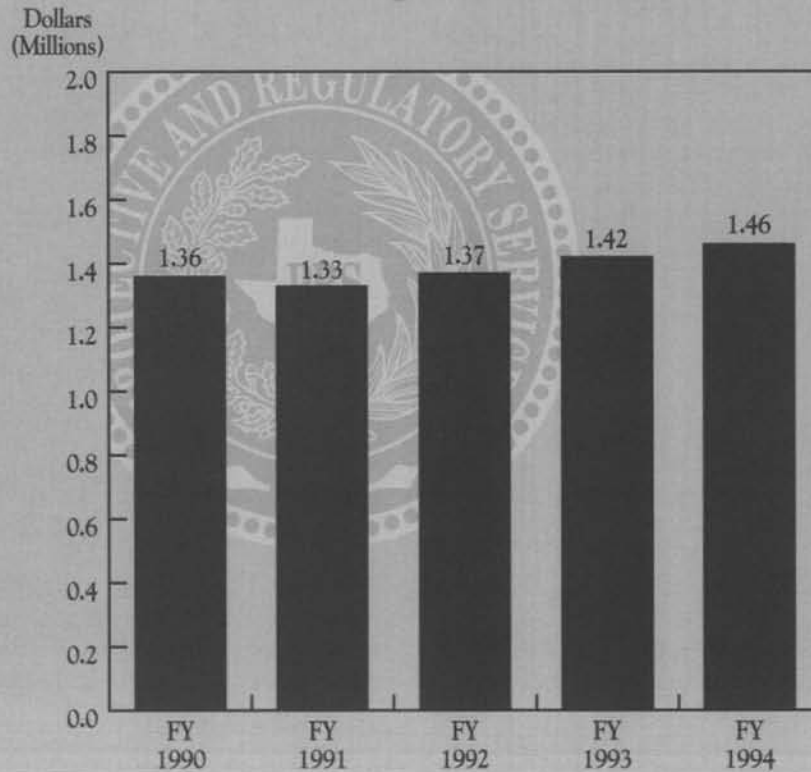
- ◆ Child-care providers need immediate feedback on the results of CCL staff inspections of a facility. This information has to be presented in a way that providers can effectively use with their board members, staff, and others to make changes and improvements. Using notebook computers, CCL staff in the Houston region, for example, produced immediate, professionally formatted and printed feedback for child-care providers in 95 percent of inspections in fiscal year 1994.
- ◆ Day-care licensing staff in Tarrant County are piloting the use of a pre-inspection checklist. This is designed to help child-care providers prepare for licensing inspections and make more effective use of inspection findings.

*Number of Administrators of Residential Child Care Facilities Licensed*





## Licensing Fees Collected



- ◆ National and international research supports CCL's basic position that training is one of the most critical factors in determining for the quality of child care. CCL worked on a regional level with both day-care and residential child-care facilities in fiscal year 1994 to develop and maintain training coalitions. CCL works with other agencies, such as the agricultural extension services, colleges, universities, and professional groups, such as the Association for the Education of Young Children, to provide training conferences and workshops at the regional level. CCL also helped develop and distribute training calendars to make child-care providers aware of local training opportunities. CCL maintained training resource centers for child-care providers at which ready access to materials such as videotape programs and books. In the Uvalde area, 125 rural child-care providers attended a child-care conference co-sponsored by CCL and the Texas Department of Human Services' (DHS') Child Care

Management System program. The conference provided training and also served as a way to recognize and support "grass-roots" efforts to improve care and obtain training by providers in this rural area.

- ◆ In a diverse state like Texas, training opportunities need to be available in languages other than English. In fiscal year 1994, CCL staff in McAllen and Laredo sponsored a six-hour training conference in Spanish for 300 registered family-home caregivers. CCL staff works with groups like the Texas Migrant Council to develop and deliver these kinds of training opportunities.

### Innovations

- ◆ It's important that child-care providers be kept informed of how well they are complying with minimum standards. For example, to prevent accidents and protect children in care, it's important that a facility's buildings and grounds be checked and inspected reg-



ularly—not just when the CCL representative is making an inspection. To facilitate this, the self-monitoring and reporting project in South Texas residential child-care facilities, expanded to include Houston in fiscal year 1994. The overall results of this pilot project will be formally evaluated early in fiscal year 1995. Depending on the effectiveness/efficiency rating, CCL plans to expand the project statewide for residential care and consider similar efforts in day care.

- ◆ In the El Paso area, a day-care licensing representative developed a GED (General Education Degree) preparation course for day-care providers who do not have a high school diploma or GED. Training was held weekly for six months, and about 90 percent of the participants have completed their GED requirements. Recognition and celebration events are scheduled for early fiscal year 1995.
- ◆ A major problem in child care is finding trained and qualified substitute child-care staff when regular staff are ill or absent for other reasons. Working with a grant from the Levi Strauss Company, CCL staff in El Paso are collaborating with El Paso Community College, child-care provider associations, and other agencies to establish a “pool” of trained and qualified staff for child-care providers to tap into when regular child-care staff are not available.

### **Automation - CCL's Computer Bulletin Board System**

In fiscal year 1994, use of CCL's computer bulletin board system (BBS) was expanded to include:

- ◆ a listing of training opportunities;
- ◆ job opening announcements;
- ◆ answers to questions from the general public about the CCL program;
- ◆ information about Child Protective Services' STAR program, which is designed to help locate services for youth-at-risk and runaways;
- ◆ information and pictures of missing children.