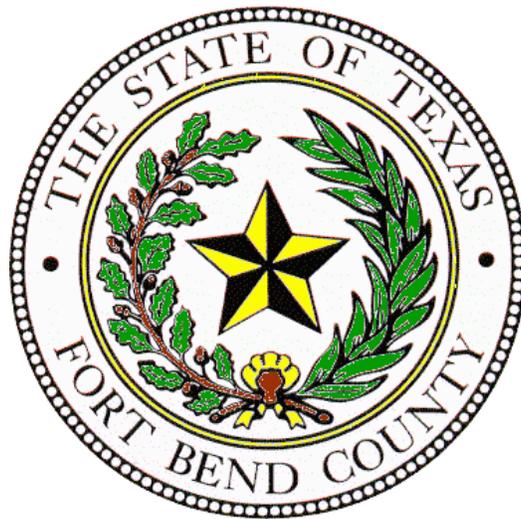


Fort Bend County Public Safety Community Plan 2015-2016



Fall 2015

Fort Bend County Criminal Justice Community Plan

What Is a Community Plan?

This plan is formally known as the Fort Bend County Public Safety Community Plan, the purpose of which is to identify gaps in services regarding public safety issues. The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office (CJD) requires that Public Safety Community Plans be developed and maintained by counties and regions throughout Texas.

The document that is represented here reflects the efforts of many in Fort Bend County that are concerned with assuring that any gaps in services are closed, thus making our communities safer places in which to live and work. It is with grateful acknowledgement that the names of those involved in the process of developing this Plan are listed in the section entitled Community Planning Team.

Though the final draft of this Plan was completed in December 2015, this is a work in progress. New criminal justice goals are identified, the Planning Group changes as a result of individual and agency circumstances, and requirements concerning the makeup of the Plan are subject to change from year to year. Thus, Fort Bend County is interested in keeping up with these changes, and including them in updates that will be posted from time to time.

If you are reading this Plan and have not been involved in its development, you are invited to join in this ongoing effort. Any questions you may have can be addressed to Jenetha Jones, Community Plan Coordinator for Fort Bend County, or to a Public Safety Program staff member of the COG. Contact information is provided at the end of this document.

The Fort Bend County Commissioners Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for development and implementation of the Fort Bend County Public Safety Community Plan. Additionally, the Commissioners Court supports grant applications from county departments as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in this Community Plan.

Areas Represented

Incorporated Communities:

Arcola	Beasley	Fresno	Fulshear
Houston	Katy	Kendleton	Meadows Place
Missouri City	Needville	Orchard	Pleak
Richmond	Rosenberg	Simonton	Stafford
Sugar Land	Thompsons	Weston Lakes	

Unincorporated Communities:

Longpoint	New Territory	Pecan Grove	Crabb
Fairchilds	Guy	Mission Bend	Fresno
Town West			

School Districts:

Fort Bend Independent School District	Stafford Municipal School District
Katy Independent School District	Needville Independent School District
Lamar Consolidated Independent School District	

Brief description and history of Fort Bend County:

Fort Bend County is a direct bordering county of Harris County, located on the southwest side of Houston. The county has a population of 685,345 (Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council 2014) and a land area of 875 square miles. Fort Bend County leads the Houston region, as well as much of the state and nation, in demographic excellence. A recent Rice University study declared Fort Bend County the most diverse County in the nation with the percentage breakdown representing 19 percent Asian, 24 percent Latino, 21 percent African-American and 36 percent Anglo. According to the U.S. Bureau of Census, Fort Bend County is the fastest growing county in Greater Houston with the 2018 population projection of 749,243.

Fort Bend County is a ‘pass through’ county during evacuation in neighboring counties including Galveston and Brazoria Counties. Interstate 69 traverses the center of the county from northeast to southwest, while U.S. 90A crosses from east to west. State highways (SH) 6 and 36 also provide important north-south routes. Neighboring counties include Austin, Brazoria, Harris, Waller and Wharton.

Law enforcement agencies include the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office, four (4) precinct Constables’ offices, ten (10) municipal police departments, Department of Public Safety investigators and troopers, and officers of the Texas Rangers, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Besides Houston, the municipalities with police departments are Arcola, Katy, Meadows Place, Missouri City, Needville, Richmond, Rosenberg, Stafford and Sugar Land.

There are six (7) District Courts, four (4) County Courts-At-Law, four (5) Associate District Courts, one (1) Associate County Court-at-Law, five (5) Justice of the Peace Courts, nineteen (19) Municipal Courts; and (3) Specialty Courts – Truancy, Drug and Special Sanctions. A single District Attorney’s Office serves the courts. In addition, the system includes an adult probation department, a juvenile probation department and juvenile detention facility, and a county jail.

History:

Fort Bend County holds a prominent place in Texas history. In the early 1820s, the Anglo-American colonization of Texas under grants from the Spanish government was initiated. The arrival of Stephen F. Austin’s original colony of 300 families at the bend of the Brazos River was delayed until 1922 by the death of Moses Austin and the independence of Mexico. Ninety miles inland from the coast the settlers built a two-room cabin that was known both as Fort Settlement and Fort Bend. Fifty-three of the land grants to the early settlers were in Fort Bend.

In 1837, the Congress of the Republic of Texas incorporated Richmond and eighteen other towns. Later in the same year, the County of Fort Bend was created from portions of Austin, Harris and Brazoria County. Notable citizens of the county included Jane Long, Mirabeau B. Lamar, and Samuel May Williams.

Richmond became a prosperous trade center for the surrounding agricultural region.

Cotton and sugar and other products were sent down the Brazos River to the Port of Galveston. The early sugar cane plantations and farms supplied the Imperial Sugar industrial complex and its company town evolved into the current City of Sugar Land. When the railroad from Galveston through Richmond was built in the 1850s, the county became a ready provider of agricultural products and raw materials to coastal markets and beyond. Much of the early prosperity based on the plantation system ended with the Civil War.

Additional railroads further opened the county to new settlers, many from central Europe. Small productive family farms formed the central focus of the economic and social life from the 1880s through World War II. Ranching and cotton production then began to replace the small farms. Missouri City, Stafford, and Rosenberg developed along the rail lines.

Discovery of oil and gas at Blueridge in the early 1920s, followed by discoveries at Orchard and Thompsons, and then later at Katy, signaled the beginning of Fort Bend's petroleum industry.

Beginning in the early 1970s with Houston's expansions, Fort Bend saw new growth in the form of increased residential development. The master-planned communities of Quail Valley, First Colony and Pecan Grove were followed by Greatwood, New Territory and Cinco Ranch. More recently, Sienna Plantation, River Park and Texana have joined the ranks.

In recent years, Fort Bend has experienced tremendous growth and increased diversity. Although these changes bring new challenges, the long standing partnerships among local government, businesses, organizations and volunteers within the community allow Fort Bend County to manage challenges and sustain quality of life. Fort Bend has a long and richly varied history and an exceedingly bright future as it continues to build on the foundations established by the original settlers of Texas and the persistence and dedication of its current citizens.

Community Planning Team

Community Plan Coordinator for Fort Bend County: Jenetha Jones, Grants Coordinator, County Judge.

In developing this Community Plan, members of the team were divided into focus groups for the purpose of narrowing the scope of research and data that are incorporated into the Plan. Some members may serve in multiple capacities/categories.

Juvenile Services:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Susan Bearden	Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation
Rhett Gray	Lamar Consolidated ISD
Mary Gready	Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation
Suzanne Heinrich	Stafford Municipal School District
Payal Patani	Fort Bend Regional Council
Nina Schaefer	Judge, Fort Bend County Truancy Court
Lucia Street	Fort Bend County ACHIEVE
J.C. Whitten	Texana Center

Victim Services (Adult/Child):

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Amanda Bolin	Fort Bend County District Attorney
Deysi Crespo	Katy Christian Ministries
Morgan Goatley	Kendleton Farms
Susan Gray	Fort Bend Co. Community Supervision/Corrections
Marjorie Hancock	Fort Bend County, County Attorney's Office
Terri Leach	Fort Bend County District Attorney
Tonya Lewis	Fort Bend Rainbow Room
Lindsey Moss	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Alison Parker	Fort Bend Women's Center
Amina Piprawala	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Kim Shrull	East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry
Alyson Tomasello	Child Advocates of Fort Bend County
Jarita Wharton	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Katie Wiseman	ESCAPE Family Resource Center

Law Enforcement:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Amanda Barta	City of Rosenberg, Councilmember
James Davis	Sugar Land Police Department
Jeremy Eder	Rosenberg Police Department
George Holub, Jr.	Fort Bend ISD Police Department
Robert E. Jinks	Katy ISD Police Department
Bonny Krahn	Stafford Police Department
Bruce Marshall	Fort Bend County District Attorney
Robin McGuire	Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Dwayne Williams	Missouri City Police Department
Wes Wittig	Fort Bend County District Attorney

Behavioral Health Services:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Sheena Abraham	Second Mile Mission Center
Connie Almeida, PhD	Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services
Matt Carter	Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Debbie de la Riva	Mental Health America, Fort Bend
Anna Gonzales	Fort Bend County Social Services Department
Vita Goodell	Fort Bend Women's Center
Mary Greman	
Laura Jenkins	Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse Inc.
Anthony Mayshack	Fort Bend County Community Supervision/Corrections
Stan Polk	Fort Bend County Community Supervision/Corrections
Daniel Quam	Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Leslie Ribeiro	
Scott Soland	Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Pat Sumner	NAMI Fort Bend

Other Issues

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Kelli Metzenthin	Literacy Council of Fort Bend
Paulette Shelton	Fort Bend County Public Transportation

Identification of Community Problems

General Public Safety Needs and Issues

Through a process of information sharing and statistical data collection, the governmental agencies, school districts, law enforcement agencies and non-profit agencies in Fort Bend County continue to highlight significant problems faced by children, youth and families.

Continued improvement in the communication and cooperation among various agencies must occur when addressing the contributing factors of crime, e.g., poverty, child abuse, truancy, and teen pregnancy. Also cited were insufficiencies in pro-active areas such as crisis management, conflict resolution, effective parenting, and literacy training.

Lack of access to public transportation in Fort Bend County, which has a land area of 875 square miles, is a major contributing factor in a multitude of problems faced by residents. Access to service providers and parent involvement in school activities is impeded when transportation is unavailable.

Affordable, habitable housing often proves to be inaccessible for many of our residents. Currently, there is a two-year waiting period for families needing housing assistance in this County. Families are often forced to live in sub-standard housing with faulty wiring, plumbing, and other unsafe conditions.

The continued rapid growth of Fort Bend County exacerbates all the problem areas. While the state of Texas grew at a rate of 1.8%, the U.S. Bureau of Census concluded that Fort Bend County grew at a rate of 6% in 2001 and 2002. That growth is predicted to continue - Woods and Poole Economics ranks Fort Bend as second in growth for all U.S. counties with more than 250,000 in population for the years 2003-2025. According to the U.S. Bureau of Census, Fort Bend County's population by 2018 is projected at 749,243. In other words, it took 160 years for Fort Bend to gain its first 350,000 residents, but will add more than 350,000 residents within the next 20 years.

STATS PER 2010 US CENSUS

	Texas	Fort Bend County
Total Population – 2010	25,145,561	585,375
Population % change from 2000	20.6%	65.1%
Child population % (under age 18)	27.3%	29.7%
Language other than English spoken in home	33.6%	36.0%
Persons below poverty	17.1%	7.5 %
Households	8,269,046	140,542
Average household size	2.81	3.57

2014 Population 685,345

In each of the areas on the following pages, problems are identified and data is included that supports both the existence and severity of gaps as they are found in Fort Bend County.

Below the description and data are a discussion of the problems, the manner in which the problems are being addressed, and strategically how responses to these community problems could be improved.

Juvenile Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Juvenile delinquency and children in need of supervision (status offenses), especially at-risk youth exhibiting negative behaviors.</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department</u> In 2014, there were a total of 2,411 referrals to the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department (JPD). Misdemeanor and status offenses (Children in Need of Supervision cases) comprised 2,071 of the total and 340 of the total were felony offenses.</p> <p>In 2014, the Juvenile Probation Department was responsible for supervising a total of 473 juveniles who were placed on formal probation. In addition, the Department supervised a total of 645 juveniles in 2014 that were placed on deferred prosecution.</p> <p><u>Fort Bend JPD Saved By The Bell Truancy Reduction Program</u> 445 students participated in the Saved By The Bell program. Success rate for 2014 was 85%, School suspensions decreased by 76%, and School discipline referrals decreased by 83%. In addition, 39% were 16 years old, 50% were females, 88% were in the program for the first time, and 54% were from single parent homes.</p> <p><u>Lamar Consolidated ISD –Truancy Project</u> During the 2014-2015 school year, 382 truancy related cases were heard in the Justice of the Peace Courts Place 1 and Place 2 for Lamar Consolidated ISD.</p>
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The lack of adequate and consistent supervision by the family and the community is a major contributing factor to delinquency and anti-social behavior among Fort Bend County’s youth. Poorly supervised children are exposed to danger and risk, and are more likely to engage in anti-social, high risk behavior. This includes chronic truant conduct, dropouts and runaways as well as children who lack after-school supervision and programs. These behaviors have been clearly identified as one of the early warning signs of students headed for potential delinquent activity, social isolation or educational failure due to suspension, expulsion or dropping out.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>Saved By The Bell “Saved By The Bell” is a program that began in 2008 funded with a Texas Criminal</p>	

Justice Division grant. The program started with four schools within Fort Bend Independent School District and all Katy Independent Schools under the jurisdiction of the JP Court, Precinct 3. The program expanded in late 2011 to include all junior high and high schools in Fort Bend County. The goal of this innovative program is to apply pro-active casework management strategies together with appropriate court involvement in order to address chronic truancy issues and ultimately reduce delinquency. Case Managers work on campus with school personnel and community resources in offering prevention and intervention services to youth through counseling, mentoring, presentations and referral to additional resources.

The Juvenile Probation Department has partnered with Fort Bend Regional Council for life and substance abuse services, Strides Youth Services for psycho-educational services, and Fort Bend Partnership for Youth for financial assistance to families in need.

Lamar Consolidated ISD – Truancy Project

This program was established in 1982 to combat poor attendance among school age children. This agreement between Lamar CISD and Fort Bend County has achieved continued success for Lamar CISD students due to early intervention and meaningful consequences. The court mandates for Parent Contributing to Non-Attendance and Failure to Attend School, consists of warnings, parenting classes and assigned case managers to various community service projects.

Fort Bend Courts Hearing Truant Conduct Cases

These Courts hear truancy conduct referrals for students who have failed to attend school or parents who have contributed to the non-attendance of their children. The collaboration between Fort Bend County government, Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department and Independent School Districts allows for a consistent and timely response to truancy issues.

These courts utilize various intervention methods and have several dispositional alternatives available to address truancy conduct. Parents may be ordered to participate in parenting classes. The courts may place the student on remedial orders and into the Saved By The Bell program. Case Managers in the Saved by the Bell program are assigned to school campuses to help students through prevention and intervention services. The Case Manager meets with assigned students each day; checks attendance, discipline records, and grades; speaks to school personnel; and of course, meets with parents.

The remedial period is typically six months and requires attendance, mentoring and may include individual or group counseling for the student. The Case Manager can recommend resources that will assist with other issues that hinder attendance. Case Managers are responsible for making referrals to drug and alcohol programs, parenting classes, family and/or individual therapy, school ARDs and community resources.

An important goal of the Saved by the Bell Program is to help students and parents learn and appreciate the school environment. Students are encouraged to develop their intellectual curiosity; experience success and build on those successes; learn how to deal

with mistakes and failures; and learn how to respect themselves and others. The goal is to encourage them to participate in and to contribute to their school, home and community as educated, self-sufficient students who will become educated, self-sufficient adults.

Truancy Diversion Program

Fort Bend ISD offers the Truancy Diversion Program (TDP) to students and parents who are experiencing truancy issues. The program is presented by the Office of Student Affairs in collaboration with the FBISD social workers from Student Support Services. The TDP is an information-based program offered for parents and students as a preventative measure to provide: 1) an alternative to a court referral, and 2) to educate parents or guardians and students who are experiencing truancy problems and the consequences associated with unexcused absences. In addition, the program identifies available and appropriate resources for families who are experiencing issues that may be contributing to a student's truancy. The TDP is offered to students and parents with truancy issues once during each school year.

Juvenile Justice Alternative Educational Program (JJAEP)

Lamar CISD provides a community-based juvenile justice alternative education program (JJAEP) in conjunction with Fort Bend County Commissioners Court, FBC Juvenile Board, Juvenile Probation Department and other school districts in Fort Bend County. Students in grades 4-12 who have committed serious offenses and who have been expelled as mandated by Texas Education Code shall be reassigned to the Fort Bend County Alternative School (FBCAS). Students who have violated the district's Student Code of Conduct may also be expelled to this program. FBCAS serves students from Katy ISD, Needville ISD and Lamar Consolidated ISD. Uniform dress is required. The setting is referenced as a Juvenile Justice AEP as defined by Texas Education Code and has been cooperatively developed as specified in an inter-local agreement. The length of assignment is determined by the judicial system and/or by Lamar CISD as specified by the memorandum of agreement with the Fort Bend County Juvenile Justice Authorities.

Crisis Intervention Program

The Crisis Intervention program at the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department receives referrals from parents, schools and law enforcement agencies requesting emergency intervention for juveniles and children experiencing mental health crisis. Included in this program are counseling, explanation of the laws regarding delinquent youth and possible consequences and information on referral sources for psychological and/or substance abuse counseling. In the 12 years since the program first began, 1,699 children and juveniles have been counseled. Only 154 or 9% of those were subsequently referred to the juvenile probation department.

The Parent Project

The Parent Project is a nationally acclaimed program that was created specifically for parents with difficult or seemingly out-of-control adolescents. Parents learn and practice specific prevention and intervention strategies for destructive behaviors – truancy conduct, alcohol and other drug use, gangs and other criminal behavior, running away, violence and suicide. Parents are court-ordered into the classes, which are presented for 3 hours a week for 10 weeks.

Since its beginning in 2008, The Parent Project has served over 600 families and maintained success rate of 80%. In 2014, a total of 87 families entered the program and 79 of those families successfully completed the program, which comes to just over 3,000 hours of parenting classes.

A few years ago, the George Foundation report identified more parent education programs as a primary need for the county. In response, the Juvenile Probation Department is currently seeking a grant to fund an additional Parent Project Educator solely for non-involved families. The Parent Project is a phenomenal program in which the parents enjoy as much as they learn. There is currently a waiting list for the program for parents/families that are in need of the extra support to help prevent their youth from entering the Juvenile Justice System.

Partners in Parenting Program

In late 2014, the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department was awarded a three-year grant by Houston Endowment for the Partners in Parenting Program at (3) Elementary and (2) Six Grade at-risk campuses in Lamar Consolidated ISD. The program utilizes the Parent Project/Loving Solutions Programs, in English and Spanish, to provide parenting assistance to parents who have received Parent Contributing to Non-attendance referrals. The program coordinator frequently meets and counsels with parents and visits youth at the targeted schools. The coordinator works with the family, parent facilitator, school officials, and community partners to assist with counseling, education, housing, transportation, and other resources to promote school attendance.

2015 Special Points of Interest:

- The success rate for the program is currently 100%
- Attendance increased by 82%
- Grades increased by 76%

Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department Mentoring Program

The Detention Center Mentoring program consists of adult volunteer mentors from the community who have been recruited, screened and trained to provide visitation to youth who are detained. The juveniles chosen to receive a mentor are usually those who: do not have anyone coming to visit them, are going to be there longer than average or just need special one-to-one visits. This program is designed for mentors to provide support, listen and encourage the juveniles while they are being detained in the detention center.

The Community One-to-One Mentoring program consists of adult volunteer mentors from the community who have been recruited, screened and trained to provide visitation to youth who are residing at home. The mentor will be carefully matched by gender with a juvenile currently involved with the juvenile probation department. The mentor will offer weekly support and encouragement by participating in activities such as: time at the park, playing sports, going to the movies, having dinner or going to the library. This program provides the juvenile an opportunity to spend quality time with a positive adult role model. The goal of the program is to build the youth's self-worth by developing healthy, thriving behaviors and to deter any further involvement with the justice system.

The Juvenile Probation Mentor in School program consists of a Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department Staff Mentor who provides visits during the school day on a weekly basis. The juvenile is either referred by a probation officer or is court ordered into the mentoring program. If a community mentor is not available or juvenile is not appropriate for that program, then the youth can be seen by the staff mentor during school hours. Personal attention is given by a positive adult male figure to listen, encourage, problem solve and redirect to avoid further interaction with the justice system.

General Equivalency Development Program (GED)

The Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department continues to serve the youth of Fort Bend County in a unique GED setting. The class is small in size and allows for the youth to receive more one on one instruction from a teacher. The majority of juveniles who are enrolled in this program have either dropped out of regular school or were considered at-risk of dropping out. In 2014, 16 juveniles were enrolled in the GED program. Since its inception, 78 juveniles have received their GED through the program with hundreds more having passed one or more of the four GED test sections.

Priority #2	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Limited availability of programs to provide adequate mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse treatment for youth.</p>	<p><u>Mental Health Services Assessment for Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department, Houston-Galveston Area Council (2014)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximate number of youth formally referred to the county’s Juvenile Probation Department on an annual basis: 1,351 (felony and misdemeanor referrals) • Referred juveniles with a need for psychological or psychiatric evaluations: 17% or 235 • Those being evaluated can be safely predicted to receive services: 57% of the 17% or 135 • Unmet needs in obtaining evaluations: 100 • Referred juveniles who have a need for counseling or therapy services on an annual basis: 22% or 296 • Those needing counseling can be safely predicted to receive services: 92% of the 22% or 273 • Unmet needs in obtaining counseling or therapy: 23 <p><u>Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department, Psychology Division Statistics (2014)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological assessments completed: 135 • Referrals receiving counseling services: 273 • Psychiatric evaluations and medication follow-up evaluations: 359

Problem Details

Mental Health Services

In the juvenile justice system, the number of youth diagnosed with mental illness is significantly greater than in the general population. It is estimated that up to 70% of the youth in the juvenile justice system have at least one mental health disorder and approximately 20% have a serious mental illness (Cocozza and Skowrya; 2000). The most recent Needs Assessment of Fort Bend County conducted by the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs in 2011, states that the lack of services for the mentally ill has resulted “in mental health becoming a law enforcement issue” (www.rgkcenter.org).

Additionally, Fort Bend County youth remain at risk of becoming involved with dangerous drugs. Lamar Consolidated ISD and Fort Bend ISD regularly conduct surveys in their large districts. A compilation of the latest survey data (2012) indicates that youth have an uncharacteristically low perception of risk associated with alcohol use when compared to their perception of risk regarding the dangers of tobacco. This is interesting because the 2012 statewide statistics report that alcohol continues to be the most widely used substance among secondary school students with 63% in 2008 reporting they had used alcohol at some point in their lives. Marijuana remained the most commonly used illegal drug among 7-12 graders. About 25% in 2012 reported having smoked marijuana in their lives. Past-month use of marijuana was reported by 10% of the responding youth. The 2012 prevalence rates were still higher than the lowest rates in 1992. About 6.8% of Texas teens reported lifetime use of cocaine/crack, and 2.2% reported past-month use.

This information is significant and it provides one example of the continued importance of increasing prevention resources for substance abuse and affiliated behavioral health issues. School and community-based substance abuse and violence prevention programs are effective measures to reduce the number of youth who become involved in both. Helping our young people understand, practice and eventually master strong coping abilities through asset based programs and practices reduces substance abuse and associated anti-social behaviors.

Mental health awareness education is important to young people as well. Knowledge of mental health disorders, their signs, symptoms and impact helps young people understand that mental health is important and that they can effectively address and manage their life situation. Awareness programs that promote an open dialogue and educate youth about where to seek help, and increased availability of youth programs for co-occurring mental health/substance abuse disorders will benefit this community.

Over the past decade, the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department (FBCJPD) has experienced a significant increase in the number of youth with mental health issues. This increase is a direct result of a decrease in treatment services for youth at the community level, a decrease in inpatient treatment services, and the closing of several residential treatment centers in the Houston Metropolitan Area. Unfortunately, this is often the start of a cycle with the criminal justice system leading into adulthood.

Potential Response to Problem

S.O.U.R.C.E.

Successful Outcomes Using Resiliency for Child Empowerment (S.O.U.R.C.E.) is an 1115 waiver funded program for youth with behavioral health disorders to improve functioning and divert from the criminal justice system.

Currently, one critical care coordinator is managing 20 individual cases and is providing case management services, psychoeducation and other interventions individually tailored to each youth and family's unique needs. Additional care coordinators would be required to work with the large number of individual youth and families in need. Continued expansion of wraparound supports for these families is also needed.

The first step to developing this program was the completion of a needs assessment in 2013 to evaluate the strengths and areas of improvement in the current system. Based on the results of the needs assessment, several recommendations were made to improve the system of care for youth with complex mental and behavioral health needs who are involved (or at-risk of involvement) in the juvenile justice system. The summary of the recommendations listed below, served as the basis for development of the juvenile diversion project, which was subsequently named: S.O.U.R.C.E.

Systemic organization:

- Develop mechanism for quality improvement
- Identify and remove barriers to care
- Develop system for assessment and service planning

Data tracking and management system:

- Enhance data systems to track clinical needs, service utilization, and outcomes

Standard protocols:

- Develop protocols for first responders specific for juveniles with behavioral health disorders
- Develop training protocols for responding to juveniles with behavioral health disorders and their families

Services for special populations:

- Identify and/or develop clinical services for youth with co-occurring disorders
- Identify and/or develop family support servicers
- Identify and/or develop clinical services for trauma victims
- Develop aftercare programs and ongoing family supports
- Develop wraparound supports that are culturally and clinically appropriate

Community outreach/involvement:

- Garner community supports an engagement of partners
- Expand provider network for crisis intervention, stabilization, and long term supports

Priority #3

Problem Identified

Data

Need to expand and diversify programs that identify development needs of youth

Project LEARN

In 2014-2015, 222 students between the ages of 0-19 years participated in LEARN. Since the participants in LEARN must be at-risk, one can assume without early intervention services of Project LEARN, 222 students would have been involved in the judicial system had they not received services from Project LEARN. Of those 222 students, the following successes were accomplished:

- 98% of program 1st and 2nd graders had a 95% attendance record in school
- 100% of program participants were promoted to the next grade level
- 100% of 0-3 year olds were screened for development delays
- 100% of 0-3 year olds with development delays were referred to resources
- 100% of the Parents enrolled in the program improved their Parenting Skills and provided a better environment for their child
- 95% of Kindergarten – 2nd graders met or achieved the district reading assessment level
- 100% of 4 year olds mastered 20 upper and lower case letters of the alphabet
- 100% of 4 year olds enrolled in program improved their expressive vocabulary and word retrieval for Standard American English
- 100% of the parents improved their Oral English Communication skills
- 100% of the parents improved their Written English Communication skills

Problem Identified

The early years of a child’s life present unique opportunities to lay the foundation for healthy development. Neighborhood characteristics and family income can be risk factors that impact young children’s social-emotional health and development. Young children from households of low-income neighborhoods are more likely to experience behavioral problems that negatively impact the development and success. Project LEARN serves only participants with a household income of equal to or less than federal poverty level.

Potential Response to Problem

Project LEARN

Project LEARN (Let's Eliminate At-Risk Needs) is a family literacy program offering Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for parents. Children receive homework assistance and tutoring, Pre-kindergarten/Kindergarten instruction or early childhood education. The components of Project LEARN are Adult Education, Early Childhood Education, Parent Education, Parents And Children Together (PACT) time, and Home Instruction. There is something for every family member.

Project LEARN provides early intervention services to youth before they enter the juvenile system. Project LEARN offers support to parents who have a limitation in participating in the children's education. The program works on the belief that increasing parental involvement in a child's education is good for the kids, for the school system, and for the parents.

Project LEARN gives parents the opportunity to increase their literacy levels, learn how to become involved in the children's education and become part of the network of parents. Additionally, children receive homework assistance, tutoring or early childhood education while their parent is learning in their own classroom.

Project LEARN is a preventive program designed to teach parents how to become partners in their child's education. Through this partnership, parents reduce the probability that their children become non-completers in the community. Studies indicate that children whose parents share their formal education tend to do better in school. Benefits identified include higher grades and test scores, long term academic achievement, and positive attitudes and behaviors.

LEARN offers parent education and support for families. It provides background information on child development and parenting issues to help families understand what activities can be done with their children at home to complement work done in school. LEARN views parents as their child's first teacher and by providing the resources and education, parents help their children succeed.

PACT time is a component of LEARN, which involves parents and their children completing a literacy-based activity in school under the supervision of district teachers. During PACT time, teachers help parents as needed and offer their support and encouragement. This component strengthens the parent's ability and confidence to teach their children at home. Each month, PACT time is completed with the family in their home environment by a Home Instructor. However, the families are strongly encouraged to complete PACT time with their children at home every day. This strengthens the role of the parent in their children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. During the PACT time the parents observe their children's learning, apply concepts they have learned and discuss with their children what they have learned together. A Project LEARN survey is completed by participants each year and reveals that 100% of participating parents in 2014-2015 were interacting more effectively with their children. They also took their children to the library on a regular basis and requested more parent-

teacher conferences. About 67% of the parents volunteered at their child’s school and 95% attended school events.

Children in LEARN tend to have better attendance records than children facing the same obstacles but not enrolled in LEARN. LEARN helps diagnose and treat what could become difficult learning problems down the road. Fifty-six children were screened for development delays in 2015. Of these 56 children aged 0-3 years, all delays were reported and a resource contacted for the child. Currently six of these screened children are receiving specialized education within the school district. According to research, about half of the development delays can be significantly reduced or eliminated by the time a child is old enough for pre-kindergarten if the delays are diagnosed before the child is age 3 years. If the delays were not noted at an early age, the child becomes frustrated in later years and possibly drops out of school.

Because eligible participants of LEARN are at or below federal poverty level, children 0-3 years are not attending pre-school due to the cost. LEARN services are free. Children 0-3 years participate in an early childhood program to prepare them for district pre-kindergarten. Regular attendance in the program and home instruction by the parent enables these children at the age of 4 years to begin school above the educational level of the children in their class facing the same obstacles.

The real story of LEARN, however, is the high school graduate. Most Project LEARN kids are extremely at-risk and may not have graduated with intervention. One can legitimately say that LEARN played a part in helping every one of those students receive their diploma.

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need to expand and diversify programs that identify development needs of youth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resource programs that include problem solving skills, anger management and a range of relevant services; • provide early intervention services before they enter the juvenile justice system; • intervention programs targeting education gaps; and 	<p><u>Resource programs serving juveniles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DePelchin Children’s Center STAR Program • Goodwill Industries of Houston Training • Alternative Learning Center (ALC) • Fort Bend Regional Council • My Reading Coach Literacy Program • Texana Center • Traffick911 • 1621 Place • Intensive Behavior Class • Dads as Mentors • Ridgmont Early Childhood Center (RMECC)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevention of and intervention for human trafficking victims 	
--	--

Potential Response to Problem

DePelchin Children’s Center Star Program

The STAR program is a state funded grant designed to serve at-risk youth and families. To qualify for services the family must live in Fort Bend County and have a youth, age 17 or under, that is experiencing runaway issues, truancy or family conflict. STAR provides:

- 1) Crisis Intervention Family Counseling – Short-term crisis intervention counseling offered at no cost at DePelchin offices or in the client’s home or school.
- 2) Skills-based Training – The STAR Program provides Responsible Decision Making Groups. The focus for these groups is Truancy Prevention, which includes problem solving skills, anger management and a range of other relevant topics.
- 3) Collaboration with Lamar Consolidated ISD – A therapist goes to Terry High School in Lamar CISD once a week to obtain referrals on students who could benefit from free individual and family counseling. This counseling service is provided on site by the therapist. Therapist deals with a variety of topics such as: improving school performance, decreasing family conflict, skill building, improving parenting skills, grief, and improving self-esteem.

Goodwill Industries of Houston Training Young People for Jobs Program

This program is provided in a seven county area including Fort Bend County. The program focuses on youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who are out-of-school (dropped out or chronically truant, pursuing a GED or completed high school). The program is targeting enrolling 15 youth from the Fort Bend County area. The program assists youth in re-engaging in high school, pursuing a GED or pursuing vocational training with a local junior college. An Education Counselor facilitates the Dare to Dream segment, where the youth are guided to dream about their future and develop concrete life goals. They are then assisted to work backwards to see what steps they need to take to reach those goals. Ultimately, with this educational and employment assistance, these young people are better prepared for job placements in high-skill, high-growth occupations.

Alternative Learning Center (ALC)

ALC is Lamar Consolidated ISD’s Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). LCISD provides a school-community guidance center to assist students with behavioral problems or those who engage in serious misconduct that interferes with their education. Students who engage in serious misconduct that mandates removal to a DAEP are reassigned to the ALC. Students in grades 6-12 assigned to the ALC can be assigned for 20 days, 45 days, or 90 days for discretionary and mandatory offenses. Students in grades K-5 can be assigned for three weeks to six weeks. ALC collaborates with local law enforcement agencies, the Fort Bend Truancy Project, the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department, Fort Bend Regional Council, Texana Mental Health Authority, and other agencies serving youth and parents to identify and correct factors that adversely

affect the education of students assigned. A structured academic and behavioral program is provided to teach appropriate social skills and self-discipline. Uniform dress is required. Parents are required to attend parent education and support sessions for each week of their child's ALC assignment.

Fort Bend Regional Council

Since 1976, Fort Bend Regional Council (FBRC) has impacted the lives of many Fort Bend County students. FBRC's prevention programs understand that resilient children who are able to withstand difficult circumstances, are the least likely to use addictive substances. Youth prevention counselors lead classroom based curriculum programs in 39 local schools. Counselors also conduct small group exercises, one-on-one sessions and leadership skill building during summer programs and on school campuses. As a result of Texas House Bill 2398, local school districts will expand the scope of students served in prevention programs to include students who are demonstrating unexcused absences. FBRC's curriculums based programs will serve as a preventative intervention to help school districts curb unexcused absences. Students learn life skills including communication, healthy ways to manage stress, peer interactions, handling adversity and positive decision making. These are the building blocks of a resilient child who is far better prepared to make good choices in all matters – especially about drugs, alcohol and other high risk activities.

My Reading Coach Literacy Program

The Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department began implementation of a literacy program for law-involved juveniles in 2005 after learning about "My Reading Coach" software, which was developed and is distributed by Mindplay Education Solutions (www.mindplay.com). Without individualized remedial assistance, a 16 or 17 year old in the 9th grade is already defeated with no real reason to try to do better and stay out of trouble. The need for this literacy program continues to be supported by statistics showing that over 80% of the 15, 16 and 17 year olds on juvenile probation in Fort Bend County are significantly behind in school.

During the 2014/2015 school year with 26 students involved statistics show:

- Baseline – 3%. This reflects the amount of the grade level specific curriculum the students are considered to have mastered based on their initial RAPS360 assessment scores.
- Gains – 23%. This is how much of the curriculum the students have completed since their initial assessment.
- Current Completion – 25%. This is the amount of the grade specific curriculum requirements the students have completed to date.
- The average computer time per student is 4.5 hours.

Texana Center

Texana Center is the Local Mental Health Authority and Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority for Fort Bend County. The Center is the main provider of services to individuals with behavioral healthcare issues and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities in the County. Texana serves as the "gatekeeper" to the state hospital system and to local psychiatric facilities, as well as for individuals and

families seeking services for those with intellectual disabilities. The Center provides a crisis intervention program that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and is the only provider in the County for crisis residential services for those who have Medicaid or are indigent. For fiscal year 2014, Texana's Behavioral Healthcare Services served 4,040 individuals, including 2,934 adults and 1,149 children. The Center employs over 500 staff in Fort Bend County.

Traffick911

Human Sex Trafficking is the second largest and fastest growing criminal activity in the world. Texas ranks second in the nation for the number of cases. It is estimated that a child is sold every two minutes and the average age of entry is 12-13 years old. Risk factors for domestic minor sex trafficking include runaways from home, involvement in child protective services, and in the juvenile justice system. Traffick911 takes its interactive TRAPS youth prevention program into the Fort Bend County Juvenile Detention Facility monthly for presentation to youth to help prevent and avoid the tricks, traps, and lures of human traffickers while building relationships and identifying victims. Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation is a partner with Traffick911 and its programs.

1621 Place

1621 Place is a high school program of choice offered to all Lamar Consolidated ISD high school students who qualify and wish to attend. Students apply, their credits and TAKS status are analyzed, and then they go through a testing process before placement. Students stay enrolled on their home high school campus and when they graduate, will have the opportunity to walk with their high school class. Diplomas are awarded by the home campus. 1621's design is that of a self-paced academic center that assists students to learn, grow and become successful members of the community. 1621 offers two tracks for a student to follow. The Diploma track is for juniors or seniors who have earned 12 or more credits and have passed at least 3 of the Exit Level STARR. Diploma students attend 1621 for a half day (4 hours) in the morning. The ReBounce track is for students in grades 9-12. ReBounce students attend the morning classes at their home campus and the afternoon class at 1621 Place. 1621 averages approximately 50-70 graduates each year for the past 10 years.

Intensive Behavior Class

Lamar Consolidated ISD's Intensive Behavior Class (IBC) is a special educational program for LCISD students in grades 6-12 who exhibit documented and detrimental behavior that may affect the quality of education provided to the individual or others in the regular classroom environment. IBC serves all 11 LCISD Secondary Campuses. This program seeks to collaborate and/or coordinate with campus mental health workers to stabilize a student's mental and behavioral conditions so the student may return to the home campus. The IBC unit will attempt to make contact with any known case workers, psychiatrists, or other mental health workers to further collaborate an exchange of information during the time a student receives services in the IBC classroom. Placement is available only after it is demonstrated that all options (specialized support/resource, staffing, PASS, IPC, etc.) on the home campus have been considered or have proven to be unsuccessful. Students who are returning to the district after a two or more week stay at a residential psychiatric facility may be considered for IBC if they are in grades 6-12

and an emotional or behavioral disability is established. School district personnel will work with the treatment facility to determine the least restrictive environment for the student.

Dads as Mentors

Dads as Mentors is a Fort Bend ISD initiative on all Title I campuses. The premise of this mentoring program is to have fathers as well as positive male role models working with their own children in the home. Fathers are asked to keep a log of extra activities that they engage with their children over one month’s time. Activities include spending extra time playing a board game with their child or turning off the television for one night and having a family meeting. The program encourages fathers to pay extra attention to their children in the home. During the evaluation of its first year, fathers found the program to be very helpful in engaging their children in more conversations about learning, school and life.

Ridgmont Early Childhood Center (RMECC)

The Ridgmont Early Childhood Center (RMECC) is a multi-service learning center where children and families can grow together as a community of learners. Located on the property of Ridgmont Elementary School, the Center opened in 2010 to provide early childhood development in an economically-disadvantaged neighborhood located south of Beltway 8 and west of State Highway 288. The Center is designed to address the multi-faceted needs of children and their parents, with a dynamic interconnected system of support.

- The RMECC is committed to forging strong learning pathways for young children, empowering families, building teacher expertise and sparking community pride.
- With support from business and community partners, the RMECC provides a variety of educational, social and health services to participating families.
- Early Head Start/Head Start (from birth to 5 years of age) FBISD pre-kindergarten, PPCD (Special Education program), Extended Day Program (before and after-school childcare) FBISD Family Literacy, adult English as a Second Language (ESL) adult GED classes, computer classes, parenting classes, health and dental services, social work and psychological services, teacher mentorship program.

Priority #5	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need to expand and diversify programs that identify development needs of youth	<u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> Provided 2 programs of <i>Building Confident Teens</i> to 31 participants in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 - August 31, 2015.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate crisis intervention programs and shelters for juveniles • Programs for runaway/homeless teens and at-risk teens 	<p>Provided 1 program of <i>Building Confident Teens</i> to 18 homeless/at-risk teens in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 - August 31, 2015.</p>
---	---

Problem Identified

Research has found that children exposed to violence, including violent crimes, are more likely to suffer from attachment problems, regressive behavior, anxiety, and depression, and to have aggression and conduct problems. Other health-related problems, as well as academic and cognitive problems, delinquency, and involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, are also associated with experiences of violence. Even community violence that children do not directly witness has been shown to affect negatively children’s attentional abilities and cognitive performance. One mechanism through which early, chronic exposure to violence affects children is by disrupting the developing brain. Specific brain structures are adversely affected by stress. Executive functions (such as planning, memory, focusing attention, impulse control, and using new information to make decisions) can become impaired. Moreover, children who have had chronic exposure to real or perceived threats may become conditioned to react with fear and anxiety to a broad range of circumstances. Their diminished capacity to differentiate between genuine threats and objectively safe or neutral situations can impair their ability to learn and interact with others, and may lead to serious anxiety disorders. Children exposed to violence are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of further violence. And, victims of dating violence are considerably more likely to engage in sexual activity and other risky behaviors (binge drinking, suicide attempts, and physical fights) than are non-victims.

Potential Response to Problem

ESCAPE Family Resource Center

ESCAPE has delivered our *Building Confident Teens* program at Parks Youth Ranch and continues to work in collaboration to implement pertinent programming to at-risk teens living on the ranch and throughout Fort Bend County.

Building Confident Teens is a 7-session, 14-hour family strengthening and juvenile delinquency prevention program designed especially for families raising pre-teens/teenagers. ESCAPE’s primary goal in offering *Building Confident Teens* is to increase the presence of protective factors in the lives of families raising adolescents. This is accomplished by teaching families skills shown to: a) decrease the level of stress experienced in families containing adolescents; b) improve parents’ involvement in and support of their children’s education; c) decrease the incidence of violent acts commits by and towards youth; d) decrease substance use among pre- teens/teenagers; and e) improve physical and mental health outcomes for youth.

Typically, parents and children are first given information and tools about forming supportive family relationships in separate classrooms with youth further divided into age-appropriate groups. Then families reunite to practice their new skills and to begin experiencing the changes possible in their lives. Master's-level educators lead all program deliveries.

For FY 2014, analysis of *Building Confident Teens* assessed using Pre/Post Knowledge Tests reveals that 73.68% of clients showed improvement in knowledge pertaining to family strengthening, child maltreatment prevention and other related concepts of relevance to families comprised of adolescents.

Victim Issues - Adult (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Limited accessibility and available emergency shelters and access to basic human needs</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend County Women’s Center</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2014, the Women’s Center served 265 domestic violence/sexual assault victims, women and children in its shelter. • In 2014, the Women’s Center Hotline received 25,709 calls; 671 callers were referred to other shelters due to lack of space at the Shelter. • In 2014, the Women’s Center serviced 33,948 meals at the Shelter and provided food boxes for 279 non-Shelter families including 1,035 individuals.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The Fort Bend Women’s Center Shelter is the only provider of emergency shelter services for survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse in Fort Bend County. The Center provides emergency shelter for up to 65 survivors at a time. Entrance into the Shelter is limited to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children.</p> <p>Referrals to alternative shelters are given to people who do not qualify for agency services or for whom there is insufficient space in the Shelter. However, resources are limited and most referrals must be made to sources outside Fort Bend County due to lack of emergency shelters available in the county.</p>	

Priority #2	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Continuing need for additional resources for prosecution and follow up investigation of protective orders and criminal cases involving family violence</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend County District Attorney’s – Intake Division</u></p> <p>From September 2014 to October 2015, the DA’s Office received approximately 1,600 domestic violence related cases from law enforcement for possible prosecution.</p>
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>As Fort Bend County's population continues to grow rapidly, there is a continued strain on the criminal justice system and specifically in the area of family violence. The Fort Bend County DA's Office continues to vigorously prosecute these cases but needs continued support from existing grants to make this possible.</p>	

Priority #3	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Victim/Witness services for adults within the criminal court system	<u>Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office</u> From September 2014 to August 2015, the Fort Bend County DA's Office Victim/Witness Division assisted 4,081 crime victims.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Fort Bend County continues to be one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Along with population growth, comes an increase in crime. That increase requires additional personnel to work the increasing caseload and provide victims with the assistance that is mandated as well as the additional services they need and deserve.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>The Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Division assists crime victims with court setting notification, case status, court accompaniment, Victim Impact Statements, Crime Victims Compensation, court procedure, referrals, follow-up and other services.</p> <p>The District Attorney's Office strives to assist victims with information, status, and support regarding their cases. Other important duties include addressing a victim's specific needs and making appropriate referrals for counseling and other resources. It is imperative that the crime victims of Fort Bend County have these services available on a consistent basis.</p>	

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Continued need for Crime Victim Liaison to address victim rights during the probationary period	<u>Fort Bend County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD)</u> From September 2014 to August 2015, the Fort Bend CSCD Victim Service Program assisted 619 crime victims.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>As Fort Bend County's population rapidly grows, there will be a continued need to assist crime victims through the adult probation department. Growth requires maintaining the personnel to provide the mandated service for victims.</p>	

Potential Response to Problem

Fort Bend County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) strives to notify victims when an offender is placed on probation and any significant changes throughout probation; providing information and referrals to the victims; collection and disbursement of restitution payments; follow-up and other services. It is important that services be continued for crime victims to address victim rights and financial reimbursement.

Priority #5

Problem Identified

Data

Lack of adequate affordable housing in Fort Bend County

Fort Bend County Women's Center
In 2014, the Women's Center provided 396 housing units.

Potential Response to Problem

Although domestic violence and sexual assault affects people of all ages, races, and socioeconomic status, the majority of Fort Bend Women's Center's clients have income levels below \$10,000 per year. Children raised in violent homes are more likely to grow up to be batterers or battered themselves. Lack of affordable housing and other factors, including broken leases due to fleeing, are major barriers to the success of survivors trying to start safe, self-sufficient lives for themselves and their children.

Rapid Rehousing and permanent housing through Tenant Based Rental Assistance is an essential component of a successful, self-sufficiency program for this population. Although Fort Bend Women's Center provides housing units, the need continues to grow.

Priority #6

Problem Identified

Data

Continuing need for supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children

Fort Bend County Women's Center
The Texas Department of Public Safety's Crime in Texas Report indicated that in 2014, 3,056 incidents of family violence and 153 rape offenses were reported to law enforcement in Fort Bend County.

In 2014 the Fort Bend Women's Center served 974 women, men and children who were victims of

	<p>domestic violence and 201 sexual assault victims.</p> <p><u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE provided 8 programs at Fort Bend Women’s Center to 145 women and children from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.</p> <p><u>Kendleton Farms</u> Data on incidents of sex trafficking in Fort Bend County is difficult to capture due to multiple and overriding charges. And, the Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force has called the provision of services “the most difficult challenge facing anti-trafficking efforts” in the state. Anecdotal evidence and data collected by local outreach organizations suggest hundreds of women around the county are in need of such services.</p>
--	--

Problem Details

The Fort Bend Women’s Center serves women, men, and children domestic violence and sexual assault victims. Providing safe haven and support services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault is essential to helping stop the cycle of violence. Services such as emergency shelter, crisis intervention, case management, counseling, legal advocacy, medical services (including hospital accompaniment advocates), job and housing placement and other supportive services are very important to the success of survivors trying to start self-sufficient lives for themselves and their children in an environment free from abuse.

According to the ESCAPE Family Resource Center, Family violence remains a tremendous problem in the Greater Houston area, affecting every neighborhood regardless of economic situation or racial/ethnic composition. Women represent the overwhelming majority of domestic violence victims. Every day, local law enforcement agencies document 75 incidents of domestic violence. Family violence is especially problematic in households where children are present. According to many experts, children who witness domestic violence face a multitude of mental health and developmental problems, such as increased aggression, various phobias, insomnia, poor self-esteem, poor academic performance and decreased problem-solving skills. Witnessing violence between one's parent's or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting behavior from one generation to the next. Of particular concern is a consistent finding in the research literature that the likelihood of abusing a partner doubles for men who witnessed violence in the home as a child.

Further, finding and providing appropriate services for victims of human trafficking was identified as a challenge throughout the state in the 2014 Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force Report. Texas has recognized this as a unique population of victims in need of specialized therapeutic services. Adult women coming out of

trafficking situations need not only secure shelter, but also trauma-informed mental health counseling and skilled social work, legal services, life skills training, education, child care, and job skills training.

Potential Response to Problem

During FY 2015, ESCAPE Family Resource Center provided six deliveries of *Building Confident Families* and two deliveries of *Empowered for Motherhood* at the Fort Bend County Women's Center. These deliveries served 145 individuals (71 women and 74 children). Each participant had access to 28 hours of family strengthening, safety and support services (e.g. 14 hours in *Building Confident Families* and 14 hours in *Empowered for Motherhood*).

- *Building Confident Families* is a 7-session, 14-hour family education course that assists adults and children in developing skills to live safely and happily together.
- *Empowered for Motherhood* is a 7-session, 14-hour self-improvement program prepares women for success in multiple aspects of their lives by teaching skills to build self-esteem, establish healthy relationships, avoid and navigate dangerous situations and resolve conflict.

The goals of the programs are to measurably reduce the incidence of family violence. The approach to achieving comprehensive change rests in teaching entire families techniques proven to prevent violence from occurring in the home. As vulnerable families become proficient in using the skills taught in ESCAPE's classes, several positive outcomes emerge. Adults are better equipped to perform their parental responsibilities. Children are able to thrive as they feel supported and encouraged in growing and learning. The entire family finds confidence in the ability to solve their problems and achieve their goals.

Kendleton Farms is a Fort Bend County-based therapeutic facility for adult victims of sex trafficking. In addition to its residential campus, Kendleton Farms also provides outpatient services to adult survivors of sex trafficking and the commercial sex industry, including emergency crisis care, case management, mental health services, mentorship, and job skills training. Its founding organization, Elijah Rising, has operated in Harris County since 2011 and has reached more than 1,000 victims of sex trafficking in that time.

Priority #7	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Adult Protective Services typically struggles with finding mental health services for clients, finding appropriate housing for clients, and</p>	<p><u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u></p> <p><u>Adult Protective Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Protective Services received 853 intakes, of those 644 were completed investigations and 378 of them had actual abuse, neglect or exploitation

<p>especially transportation issues</p>	<p>occurring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In FY 2014, Fort Bend County had 25,483 residents with a disability age of 18-64 and a population of 61,641 who were 65 or older.
<p><i>Problem Details</i></p>	
<p>As the population of adults who are 65 or over or have a disability continues to grow, so does the need for protective services.</p>	
<p><i>Potential Response to Problem</i></p>	
<p>Adult Protective Services (APS) is the State agency that investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults in the community who are 65 or older or who have disabilities, and provides for or arranges for protective services as needed. APS is a State agency located in every community in the state. There are 11 regions in the State of Texas and Fort Bend is one of 13 counties that make up Region 6. Fort Bend is the second largest county in region 6, behind Harris.</p> <p>APS has two program areas: In-Home Investigations and Facility Investigations. The In-Home program investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities who live at home or in unlicensed room-and-board homes. APS also investigates allegations of exploitation of adults living in nursing homes who may be financially exploited by someone outside the facility.</p> <p>APS begins an investigation by contacting a person who has reliable and current information about the alleged victim within 24 hours of receiving a report. APS can make initial contact in person or by phone. If the allegation is confirmed, APS may provide or arrange for emergency services to alleviate abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These services may include short-term shelter, food, medication, health services, financial assistance for rent and utility restoration, transportation and minor home repair.</p> <p>APS partners with other social service agencies to provide resources to vulnerable adults. APS also works closely with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) on cases that require guardianship services. APS investigators or Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) intake caseworkers may notify law enforcement at any point during an investigation if they suspect allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation rise to the level of a crime.</p> <p>The Facility Investigations is responsible for investigating abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people living in state-operated facilities and those receiving services in state-contracted community settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities. APS investigates allegations in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State supported living centers • State hospitals • Community centers 	

- Privately operated intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities
- Home and community-based waiver programs

APS starts an investigation after the DFPS Abuse Hotline receives an allegation. DFPS notifies the facility or provider agency within one hour and notifies law enforcement and the Health and Human Services Commission’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) within one hour if necessary. APS investigates, makes a finding for each allegation, and sends a report to the provider as well as law enforcement and OIG if necessary.

Priority #8	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Domestic violence and sexual assault prevention programs need to be in place in colleges and secondary schools in Fort Bend County</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend County Women’s Center</u> The Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA) reports that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53.7% of total victimizations occur between the ages of 1-24 • 70% of victimizations were perpetrated against females <p><u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE provided 2 workshops titled <i>The First Five!</i> to 18 students in Fort Bend area high schools from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.</p>
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>The Fort Bend Women’s Center has targeted youth through college aged individuals due to the magnitude of sexual violence in our community. The Center created an awareness curriculum titled “Creating Healthy Relationships” targeting middle school and high school.</p> <p>The Fort Bend Women’s Center has also worked with the Office of Attorney General and Texas Association Against Sexual Assault (TAASA) to expand Primary Prevention Programming to help prevent the root causes of sexual assault. The agency has added to the primary prevention curriculum (titled “Impact, Empower and Engage”) the EXPECT RESPECT Safe Teens Youth Leadership curriculum which is currently being presented to middle school and high school aged children, both in school, after school and summer camps. These programs are designed to engage individuals, both male and female, to become integral actors in the prevention of, not only sexual violence, but violence in general.</p> <p>Fort Bend Women’s Center assisted in the development of the University of Houston’s</p>	

(UH) “Coogs for Consent” program; our agency also worked with UH to revise policies and procedures regarding their campus response to sexual assault, harassment, and prevention to help ensure compliance with Title IX requirements. We also participated in an orientation video mandatory for UH students currently at the main campus (soon to be implemented throughout the UH System) addressing these issues. We have also presented a required orientation for select staff, faculty and dorm students at Wharton County Junior College regarding bystander intervention, consent, Title IX and Healthy Relationships. Prevention programs, such as these, should be expanded into all secondary schools in Fort Bend County.

ESCAPE Family Resource Center has partnered with Pregnancy Related Services in Fort Bend ISD to offer our parenting classes to pregnant students during school hours. The focus is teaching *The First Five!* curriculum, which focuses on the initial years of life most critical in a person’s physical, emotional and intellectual development to the vulnerable population of pregnant teens. The program is designed to be delivered in a 6-7 session workshop format to accommodate student’s schedules.

Priority #9	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need for parenting classes that provide hands on training to improve wellness, family reunification, and prevent child abuse</p>	<p><u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE provided 16 child abuse prevention programs to 314 participants in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.</p>
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>ESCAPE’s mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect before a child is hurt by providing intervention, education, and support programs to families in crisis. ESCAPE Family Resource Center has provided parenting education programs in six community sites throughout the Fort Bend County area. ESCAPE’s parent educational programs are curriculum-based with pre and post-testing evaluation tools to assess client outcomes. Families are given opportunities to work on communication, stress management, and problem solving skills throughout the parenting program in efforts to create a stable family environment.</p> <p>Currently, ESCAPE offers 11 curriculum-based child abuse prevention programs, 1 home visitation program for families at very high risk for experiencing child maltreatment, and several services for professionals and other individuals who work with children. These initiatives are facilitated in English and Spanish languages.</p>	

Priority #10

Problem Identified

Data

Lack of dedicated bed space and transitional housing for adult victims of sex trafficking

Kendleton Farms

Data on incidents of sex trafficking in Fort Bend County is difficult to capture due to multiple and overriding charges. Moreover, because sex trafficking necessarily involves prostitution, it is likely many prostitution charges involve trafficking victims. Anecdotal evidence and data collected by local outreach organizations suggest hundreds of women around the county are in need of such services.

Potential Response to Problem

The 2014 Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force Report recognized that a specialized therapeutic environment is required to rehabilitate sex trafficking victims. The report also identified a lack of available facilities for this population.

Adult women coming out of trafficking situations first need secure housing, which drives many of them to domestic violence shelters. However, a more specialized type of care better suits their needs and reduces the likelihood they will return to trafficking situations or the criminal justice system. One national advocacy group estimates there are 40 such facilities around the country.

Kendleton Farms is Fort Bend County's only dedicated residential facility for adult victims of sex trafficking. The campus can house up to 50 adult women and provides the specialized wraparound care this population requires before reentering society. Its founding nonprofit organization, Elijah Rising, has operated in Harris County since 2011 and has referred more than 30 sex trafficking victims to out-of-state aftercare facilities in that time.

Victim Issues - *Child* (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p><u>Child Abuse/Neglect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidence of child abuse/neglect in Fort Bend County • Violence against children • Lack of appropriate, specialized treatment services for abused and neglected children • Lack of appropriate, specialized treatment services for non-offending caregivers • Need for system and facility to meet acute and non-acute sexual assault exam needs for children • Lack of appropriate, specialized treatment services for alleged adult and juvenile offenders • Lack of mentoring program for child victims of abuse/neglect but not in foster care • Continued need for collaborative efforts to meet needs of abused/neglected children • Number of children serving as victims/witnesses in criminal court system and the associated trauma • Need for trained personnel to assist families with Crime Victim Compensation applications • Need for improved screening and 	<p><u>Child Advocates of Fort Bend (2014)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 986 alleged victims of abuse and neglect served • 691 forensic interviews of child victims • 2,330 free therapy sessions provided at The Children's Advocacy Center • 277 criminal court advocacy clients <p><u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u></p> <p><u>Fort Bend County Attorney's Office</u></p> <p><u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE provided 25 programs, delivered in both Spanish and English, to 799 individuals in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.</p> <p><u>The Rainbow Room (2014)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,569 CPS clients served • 2,837 CPS initial intakes • 2,404 CPS assigned cases • 3,048 CPS alleged victims of abuse/neglect

<p>identification of children with disabilities in early childhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for all of the above services to be available for Spanish speaking clients 	
--	--

Problem Details

According to the American Medical Association, the lasting effects of childhood sexual abuse are associated with a significantly higher lifetime prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety disorders including panic attacks, as well as drug and alcohol problems. Left untreated, abuse children can be subjected to a lifetime of battling the effects of their childhood trauma. Additionally, according to Nancy Kellogg, University of Texas Health Science Center of San Antonio/ Department of Pediatrics, 40% of abused children will be re-abused before their eighteenth birthday.

Fort Bend County is one of the largest growing populations in the state and the Hispanic population is also growing. Many residents of Fort Bend County speak Spanish as their primary language and they need to receive services that are in Spanish as well as being culturally sensitive. The Children's Advocacy Center provides all of its services in Spanish in order to meet the needs of the Spanish speaking/bilingual population.

Potential Response to Problem

Child Advocates of Fort Bend Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) works with children who are alleged victims of serious physical abuse, sexual abuse and are witnesses to violent crimes including homicide. The CAC works together with Children's Protective Services (CPS), law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office to collaboratively meet the needs of child abuse victims in the county. In 2014, the CAC served 986 alleged victims of abuse and neglect. All of these children were referred by CPS or law enforcement. Services provided include specialized forensic interviews of child victims, crisis intervention and case management services to non-offending family members and criminal court orientation and accompaniment.

The CAC also offers specialized trauma focused therapeutic services for child victims and their non-offending family members. The CAC provides individual, group and family therapy including caregivers groups for the non-offending caregivers. These services are available to all child victims served by the CAC but unfortunately some families cannot come to the CAC for treatment due to lack of transportation/gas money or inability to take time off from work. In these situations CPS and the CAC refer families to community providers but families can often struggle to pay for these services and often do not follow through with gaining treatment for their child victims.

Currently, there is no medical facility in Fort Bend County that provides specialized acute and non-acute sexual assault exams for child victims of sexual abuse. Currently, children in need of exams must travel to Harris County to be evaluated. The CAC works with the Harris Health System to coordinate exams for children.

Professionals in the child abuse system have seen an increase in the number of adolescent offenders. They are offending on known victims including siblings. The CAC can treat the child victims of adolescent offenders but do not treat the offenders themselves. There remains a need for a stringent reunification program for adolescent offenders and their familial victims.

The CAC has implemented a Mentoring Program for child victims who are no longer at risk for abuse in the home but need an extra support person in their lives to help them heal from their experiences. The volunteer mentors meet with the children at home, school or events to provide support and guidance to them. Families and children agree to the program and the volunteers are supervised by a social worker.

Because of the complexity of child abuse cases, all of the agencies who investigate and prosecute the cases must collaborate to work towards lessening the trauma to children going through the systems and also work toward strong cases when appropriate. The Children's Advocacy Centers helps to facilitate the coordination among Children's Protective Services, law enforcement, the District Attorney's Office and community providers to facilitate the communication and collaboration among the agencies. Forensic interviews conducted at the CAC help to begin this collaboration among the partner agencies. Working together helps to ensure that the focus of the professionals' remains child focused.

For cases where the alleged offender is being prosecuted, child witnesses and their non-offending family members need to remain engaged in the criminal justice process. The Children's Advocacy Center provides criminal court orientation, accompaniment and support to families as they go through this system. The support helps families understand the process so they remain engaged and child witnesses are stronger for the justice system.

Families whose children are victims of a crime need to be connected to the Crime Victim Compensation fund so they can be reimbursed for expensed incurred as a result of the crime. The CAC, law enforcement and District Attorney's Office all have victim advocates who assist families through this process, therefore reducing the burden to them. Abuse and neglect can lead to children who are delayed in their functioning. There needs to be an improvement in identification and screening of children with disabilities that are either abuse related or general disabilities.

ESCAPE Family Resource Center's primary goal is to measurably reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect in the Greater Houston area by addressing the root causes of this epidemic and working with families at-risk for experiencing child maltreatment.

Some identified effects of child maltreatment

- *Physical Health.* Victims of child abuse can experience physical injury ranging from minor cuts or bruises to severely broken bones, hemorrhage, or even death. Though surface wounds may heal, internal injuries may be long lasting and permanent.
- *Mental Health.* Maltreatment can negatively impact children's (and later an adult's) emotional stability and self-regulation, problem solving skills, and ability to cope with or adapt to new or stressful situations. Maltreated children tend to have high levels of depression, hopelessness and low self-esteem.
- *Behavior.* Abused and neglected children are at increased risk for smoking cigarettes, abusing alcohol or taking illicit drugs during their lives. They are at least 25% more likely to experience delinquency, pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use and mental health problems in adolescence. Being mistreated as a child increases the likelihood of juvenile arrest by 59%. Such children are 30% more likely to perpetrate a violent crime as adults.
- *Cognitive Functioning and Academic Performance.* Child abuse victims have been found to suffer from language deficits, reduced cognitive functioning and attention deficit disorder. They tend to do poorly in school, as evidenced by low grades, low standardized test scores, and frequent retention in the same grade. Behavioral issues commonly cause these children to be suspended or expelled from school.

Currently, ESCAPE offers 11 curriculum-based child abuse prevention programs, 1 home visitation program for families at very high risk for experiencing child maltreatment, and several services for professionals and other individuals who work with children. In addition to expanding its capacity to provide more locations, teachers and training, ESCAPE will be able to offer Distance-Learning programs via web-based opportunities to eliminate barriers for those for whom transportation is a concern.

The Rainbow Room provides emergency and transitional supplies for the unmet material needs of children and families involved with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The Rainbow Room is a resource room stocked with snacks, diapers, school supplies, clothes, toiletries, toys and other items frequently needed to meet the emergency needs of families in crisis. Our philosophy is that abused and neglected children do not deserve used items, so only new items are stocked. Getting new items can have a significant impact on the children in helping them feel cared for and fit in with their peers at school. The Rainbow Room is available to caseworkers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Prior to the establishment of the Fort Bend Rainbow Room, local caseworkers frequently used their own funds to meet these needs while waiting for permanent funding solutions. Many of these expenditures were not reimbursable nevertheless, most caseworkers could not refuse to feed or clothe hungry children that had just been rescued from abusive and/or neglectful homes.

Priority #2

Problem Identified

Data

Children in Foster Care:

- Lack of available licensed foster care homes and shelters
- Lack of funding to assist family/kinship placements for children in foster care
- Lack of parent/child visitation programs (training, facility, protocol, volunteers, etc.) to create emotional and physical bonding between parents and children
- Need for expanded programs to serve “at risk” teens transitioning to adult life
- Need for customized program to improve graduation rates, training in life skills, budgeting, employment
- Need for expanded program for “at risk” infants and toddlers (0-5 years) in foster care to improve wellness, family reunification, and adoption rates
- Need for customized program for “at risk” children ages 6-13 to improve health, education, and social well-being
- Need for parenting classes that provide hands on training to improve wellness, family reunification, and

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (2013)

- child population - 229,633
- child abuse/neglect investigations by CPS - 1,748
- child abuse/neglect cases confirmed - 1,593
- children removed for abuse/neglect - 93
- child abuse/neglect related fatalities (2012) - 3
- children in substitute care (foster care) - 326

Fort Bend County Attorney’s Office

Child Advocates of Fort Bend

ESCAPE Family Resource Center

ESCAPE provided 11 *Child Abuse Prevention 101* training workshops to 485 child care, non-profit and school professionals in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.

Rainbow Room

<p>prevention of child abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of prevention programs in schools to educate children and school personnel about symptoms, protocols, and services available in Fort Bend County for child abuse and neglect • Number of children needing adoptive homes • Lack of collaborative efforts to meet needs of abused/neglected children • Absence of available and affordable transportation for children in foster care system and child victims of abuse who live at home and their non-offending caregivers • Absence of available and affordable transportation for parents of abused children in which to assist parents in participating in community programs to assist in making changes to effectively reach family reunification • Absence of transitional housing and services for children aging out of foster care • Need for more foster homes in Fort Bend County • Need for customized programs to assist with credit recovery for children that do not maintain placement and 	
---	--

transfer to multiple schools while in foster care	
---	--

Problem Details

The problems of the child welfare systems are magnified when infants and toddlers are involved. Nationally, they comprise the largest cohort of young children in care, accounting for one in three admissions. Once they have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care, infants and toddlers are more likely than older children to be re-abused and neglected. Infants and toddlers are the most vulnerable to the effects of maltreatment. The effects of this maltreatment can have lifelong implications if not addressed properly. Research shows that young children who have experienced physical abuse have lower social competence, show less empathy for others, have difficulty recognizing others' emotions, and are more likely to have deficits in IQ scores, language ability and school performance than children who have not been maltreated. Infants and toddlers are disproportionately at risk for maltreatment.

Potential Response to Problem

Child Advocates of Fort Bend is a non-profit agency serving abused and neglected children in Fort Bend County. As part of the process when children are in foster care, they go to court where judges must weigh the evidence available to make important decisions that greatly impact their lives. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is a program under the umbrella of Child Advocates who are appointed to every child in protective custody in Fort Bend County. Generally volunteers carry only one case, have the opportunity to spend more time with the children than other parties involved in the case, and by representing the child's best interest in court, serve as an extra set of eyes and ears for the judge.

The CASA program has two specialized staff members who are dedicated to supervising volunteers who are involved in the Infant and Toddler Court Team Project. CASA has developed an infant and toddler team to train volunteers to work with this special population; however, there continues to be a need for specialized programs to provide more hands on training for the parents. The CASA program continues to seek funding to provide specialized services for children and parents to 1) educate parents about the importance of early relationships and development of their children; 2) ensure that the children receive appropriate developmental screenings; 3) increase visits with parents and their children while they are away from home; and 4) connect families to services in their community that will help them work through their court issues, and reunification/relative conservatorship or adoption.

Over the past 24 years in our work with abused children in Fort Bend County, it has become apparent that we need to provide children aged 6-13 with specialized services and targeted support. These children are at a critical age in establishing their values, character, educational performance, self-esteem, connections with their peers and with adult role models. In 2012, Child Advocates of Fort Bend piloted and implemented a

new, targeted program called *N.E.S.T. - Nurturing Education and Social Triumphs* that incorporates three areas of focus: education, social skills and health.

- *Educational Achievement* - setting solid academic foundations to put elementary and middle school children on the path to graduate from high school and pursue higher education with a college or technical school degree;
- *Social Skills* - building high self-esteem, making good choices, peer pressure, involvement in extracurricular and service activities; and
- *Health* - setting in place habits for healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, exercise and hygiene.

Two specialized staff members are dedicated to supervising volunteers who are involved in the N.E.S.T. project. Volunteers are specially trained to work with children ages 6-13. Throughout the year volunteers work directly with the children's teachers, counselors, and healthcare professionals to set up personalized educational, behavioral and medical plans. In 2016, Child Advocates of Fort Bend will continue to seek funds to enhance the program.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend launched the WINGS program in 2005 to better equip CASA volunteers to prepare foster youth, ages 14 and older, for the transition from the foster care system into independence. Two specialized staff members are dedicated to supervising volunteers and youth involved in the WINGS program. The WINGS team collaborates with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to enhance the transition planning process. This program is based upon the belief that there are three critical components to making that transition successful: education, connections with caring adults, and developing a realistic plan for the future. Achieving these fundamental steps improves the chances of these youth finding the path to a thriving and productive adulthood.

Participating youth are provided with the opportunity to attend WINGS Life Skills trainings where they learn how to interview for a job, manage a budget, rent an apartment, purchase and/or lease a car, open a checking account, and visit local businesses to learn about different fields of work. Expanding the learning environment beyond the classroom setting has definitely worked well and continues to prove that hands on learning and training are effective. These youth also participate in WINGS Campus Crawls to visit post-secondary education sites. The youth are able to experience college life by visiting the campuses and interacting with college students.

The implementation of the WINGS program and collaboration with community and state partners has improved the outcomes for youth transitioning out of the foster care system. Child Advocates will continue to seek funding to enhance the WINGS program and provide better and more intense services for the youth aging out of care.

ESCAPE Family Resource Center offers training services to personnel in schools, daycare centers and other organizations. This includes the following initiatives: Workshop Trainings for Professionals, Child Abuse Prevention 101, and Child Abuse Prevention 101 Online. ESCAPE is the only agency in the Houston area that has developed an online program to meet the requirement of the 83rd Texas State

Legislature mandate that individuals working with children receive training to recognize and report child abuse and neglect. In addition to these programs, ESCAPE provides child abuse prevention services to members of families at-risk for child maltreatment through a number of special initiatives.

In addition, the Rainbow Room provides emergency and transitional supplies for the unmet material needs of children and families involved with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The Rainbow Room also assists children aging out of the system or attending college with needed supplies.

Priority #3	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Lack of programs to prevent child victimization</p>	<p><u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u></p> <p><u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE Family Resource Center provided 2 workshops titled <i>The First Five!</i> to 18 students in Fort Bend County area high schools from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.</p>
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p><u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u> Public awareness can be part of an overall approach to preventing child abuse and neglect as well as elderly abuse. The DFPS seeks resources and information to educate the community, make an economic case for prevention, and create community support and partnerships to prevent child abuse and neglect as well as elderly abuse.</p> <p><u>Prevention focus:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting child and family well being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parenting classes - Mental Health Services - School ISD (Parent Night, DARE, etc.) • Public Awareness/Supportive Communities (agencies within the community) • Public Awareness (media, pamphlets, area churches, daycare, selective months to recognize abuse etc.) Examples: Car Safety, Pool Safety, Co-sleeping, Buckle-up, Weather Precautions, Home Safety (heaters, candles) etc. • Prevention Programs (Developing and Sustaining) • Evaluating (current/new) Prevention Programs <p>There is a continuing need for support resources for the Child Fatality Review Team in Fort Bend County as a preventative measure for child deaths through accidents and crime.</p>	

ESCAPE Family Resource Center

Scientific research proves that child abuse affects brain development and functioning, which impacts decision-making and behavior. Identified health problems include but are not limited to smoking, obesity, depression, suicide, alcoholism, illicit drug use, risky sexual behavior, heart disease and cancer. Experts in neuroscience indicate that chronic neglect and abuse represent a profound threat to a child's early years as the lack of critical care sets off a biological stress response that can damage key areas of the brain. Furthermore, one-third of abused children grow up to become abusers.

ESCAPE Family Resource has two unique programs designed to circumvent child maltreatment: *Parent Aide* and *The First Five!*

The *Parent Aide* program is an evidence-based year-long intervention for families identified as at extremely high risk for child maltreatment. These families are guided individually by ESCAPE staff or community volunteers as they incorporate newly acquired techniques to help them break the generational cycle of child abuse and neglect that often persists in their lives. Parents interested in participating in *Parent Aide* are self-referred and are urgently asking for ESCAPE's educators to intervene in their homes, as life circumstances have placed these families in highly stressful situations. Research and direct experience has shown that such stress increases the potential for child abuse and neglect. Furthermore, the typical parents served through *Parent Aide* are significantly lacking in personal and familial resources.

Families who participate in the *Parent Aide* program undergo a rigorous screening, needs assessment, and training prior to being selected. In addition, every family referred to the program by Child Protective Services endures a more extensive evaluation. Likewise, individuals interested in serving as *Parent Aide* mentors must complete a thorough screening, skills assessment, and training. This entire process requires an exhaustive amount of effort and compassion on the part of ESCAPE staff given that hundreds of hours of presentations are made to local churches and civic groups to generate a perpetual pool of potential volunteers and to prepare these individuals for service once they have been selected. The goal in all of these activities is to assure that participating families and community volunteers are afforded the best matches likely to produce the desired, long-term changes in the at-risk families.

Participating families complete a modified version of *Building Confident Families*, the core child abuse and neglect prevention program, including the following:

- Stress Reduction
- Family Safety Skills
- Behavior Management
- Communications
- Problem-solving
- Compassionate Listening
- Discipline vs. Punishment Principles

Prior to working with any family, each *Parent Aide* mentor receives training in the

Building Confident Families curriculum and enhanced child protection skills. Throughout the program, participating families receive on-going, direct support from these rigorously trained volunteers who meet with their assigned families for two or three hours per week, for a minimum of one year. Parent Aides support and encourage parents in order to help the parents build self-esteem, mobilize personal resources, learn positive parenting and reduce their sense of isolation. The goal is to build better parenting skills, and thereby, more successful families.

The First Five! curriculum is a seven-session, 14-hour program that teaches families with young children (ages 0 to 5 years old) the fundamentals of childrearing, development and safety, as well as skills to build nurturing bonds with their infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The innovative program is designed especially for expectant parents, new parents, and parents of young children. Scientific research indicates that the initial five years of life are critical in a person’s physical, emotional and intellectual development. During this stage of life rapid brain development occurs and emotional attachment to others commences.

The First Five! curriculum optimizes child development, increases family strengths and decreases the likelihood of child maltreatment in families containing young children and new or expectant parents by providing education and skill development activities in several key subject areas of child development. Over seven sessions, participants receive 14 hours of family skills training. The program integrates music/song in each session to stimulate parents in learning techniques to establish bonds with and nurture their children, and to understand the important roles they will have as parents throughout their children’s lives. Whenever family activities are possible, children join the parents in dancing and singing songs together. This helps to strengthen ties between parents and children. The program uses a variety of diverse media, such as DVDs and videos to demonstrate practical parenting skills (i.e., changing diapers, healthy food choices, dealing with tantrums, etc.).

Several quantitative and qualitative tools are used to evaluate effectiveness of *The First Five!* This includes the Adult/Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2), The Parenting Stress Index, Fourth Edition - Short Form (PSI-4-SF), Pre/Post Knowledge Tests and Client Surveys.

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Prevalence of child victims of Juvenile sex offenders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued need for a specialized prosecutor to handle cases involving 	<p><u>Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office</u></p> <p>Since January 2012, 244 juveniles have been referred to the Fort Bend County Juvenile Courts for sexual based offenses. This number, however, does not reflect multiple offenses or multiple victims, which is significantly higher in identifying the number of victims in need of appropriate counseling and treatment services.</p>

<p>Juvenile sex offenders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of appropriate reunification counseling and services for Juvenile offenders and related victims cohabitating in the same residence • Lack of Licensed Sex Offender Treatment Providers to provide appropriate counseling services for offenders 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department</u></p>
---	---

Problem Details

Juvenile crimes, and more specifically, juvenile sex crimes, tend to fall into the category of opportunistic offenses. Juveniles offend during time frames when they are unsupervised or not properly supervised. As a result, it is not uncommon for the victims of a juvenile’s sex offense to be a member of the victim’s family or household. Because the Juvenile Justice system has a strong orientation towards rehabilitation, more often than not, in conjunction with following the intervention of the Juvenile Court, the Juvenile offender may receive intensive sex offender treatment and rehabilitation while maintaining residence in the home where the victim also resides. In preparation for the juvenile offender’s reintegration into the home, the victim should have the opportunity to receive appropriate counseling and therapeutic services in preparation for the placement in order to minimize further emotional trauma by the victim. Because the victims and offenders tend to both be minors under the care of an appropriate parent or legal guardian, the entire family unit is affected by the juvenile offenders return into the residence.

There is a strong need for appropriate and specialized counseling and therapeutic services to address the unique issues and needs of these families so that the rehabilitation process can be successful for every victim member and victim support member of the family unit. The result is a continued and growing need for appropriate Licensed Sex Offender Treatment Providers (LSOTP) who specialize in working with Juvenile offenders. There remains a need to have professional relationships with LSOTP’s who have the additional level of education and training required to successfully treat juvenile sex offenders. The successful rehabilitation of these offenders results in preventing new victims and the re-victimization of existing victims.

There is a growing need for Licensed Sex Offender Treatment Providers (LSOTP) who specialize in working with Juvenile offenders. Often, Juvenile sex offenders have unique issues involving their potential rehabilitation that are very different from the rehabilitation approach taken with adult sex offenders. There is a continuing need to have LSOTP’s that have the additional level of education and training required to properly treat juvenile sex offenders. The successful rehabilitation of these offenders results in preventing new victims and the re-victimization of existing victims.

Potential Response to Problem

In 2013, the Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office added a felony-graded staff attorney to assist in handling referrals from law enforcement agencies alleging sex offenses committed by Juvenile perpetrators. By 2015, the number of referrals by juvenile offenders, along with the creation of County Court at Law #5 (also sitting as a Juvenile Court), necessitated the addition of another staff attorney to handle the intake and prosecution of juvenile offenders. Generally speaking, sex offenses are the types of cases that require more lengthy and sophisticated investigation. For prosecutors, this equates to dedicating more time to insure a proper review of the cases that will result in appropriate and thoughtful charging decisions. These cases also generally involve younger victims and always younger offenders (legally, as young as 10 years old). On average it takes four months to a year for each of these cases to process through the Juvenile Justice system from intake review through resolution. Additionally, supervision of these youth during the course of their respective sex offender treatment programs is rarely less than two years. By continuing to maintain prosecutors with specialized training specifically focused on juvenile law prosecution and sex offense prosecution, the result is a better facilitation of outreach services for the victims’ and the offenders’ rehabilitation through accountability and often times, as a last resort, prosecution.

Priority #5

Problem Identified

Data

Inadequate crisis intervention programs and/or shelters for juveniles

Programs for runaways/ “unwanted” teens and at-risk teens

Parks Youth Ranch

The Parks Youth Ranch is the only emergency shelter for at-risk youth or homeless youth in Fort Bend County. Since opening the doors in March 2011, Parks Youth Ranch has provided over 6,000 nights of shelter to over 300 homeless youth. Since January 2012, Parks Youth Ranch has served 25 homeless youth from Fort Bend County and 213 youth have been referred from CPS from Harris County and the Greater Houston area and 25 statewide referrals from CPS.

ESCAPE Family Resource Center

ESCAPE Family Resource Center provided 1 program of *Building Confident Teens* to 18 homeless/ at-risk teens in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.

Potential Response to Problem

The Fred and Mabel R. Parks Youth Ranch was established in response to a gap in

community services for the homeless and at-risk youth population. For the 2014-15 school year, 594 at-risk and homeless youth have registered with Lamar Consolidated and Fort Bend independent school districts. Being able to provide services to homeless youth locally allows them to continue their education in their home school which in turn provides a greater chance that they will complete their high school education. The availability of a youth shelter in Fort Bend County allows families living in or near Fort Bend to participate in family counseling and visit on a more frequent basis, which in turn makes family reunification more plausible. It also offers youth stability in familiar surroundings.

The Fred and Mabel R. Parks Youth Ranch houses three facilities: The George Counseling Center, The Fort Bend Junior Service League Recreation Center and Parks Emergency Shelter. Referrals come from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Juvenile Probation or voluntary, private placement from the community. Constituency served includes:

- Abused, homeless and troubled youth ages 7-17 in Fort Bend County and the Greater Houston area. CPS may refer youth from outside Region 6. Youth of both genders, of any ethnicity, from families of any income level are served.
- Youth involved in Class C misdemeanor cases or status offenses.
- Youth referred by law enforcement for a cooling off period when there is a threat of violence in the home.
- Other Fort Bend County youth who request available services

Youth referred to the shelter receive services for up to 90 days with the possibility of two additional 90-day extensions. Services offered enable the at-risk, unaccompanied, or homeless youth and their families to continue toward problem resolution. Services focus on creating a stable living environment, continuing education and connecting to community based collaborative social services.

ESCAPE Family Resource Center offers its *Building Confident Teens* program at Parks Youth Ranch and continues to work in collaboration to implement pertinent programming to at-risk teens living on the ranch and throughout Fort Bend County.

Priority #6	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Lack of transportation for child victims and families	<u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u> <u>Child Advocates of Fort Bend</u>
<i>Problem Details</i>	
When Child Protective Services is involved with a family due to findings of abuse and/or neglect in the home, the courts order parents to utilize community resources and	

complete services in the attempt to address and resolve the behaviors and concerns which were present when the child came into the care of the state. These service providers in the community are located across the county of Fort Bend. It is a frequent issue in CPS cases that the parents have limited, if any, transportation to complete these court-ordered services. There are minimal community resources that assist with helping families obtain transportation, and although the county has initiated a transportation service, there is a cost (although minimal) that our parents cannot afford or providers are not located in the transportation service areas.

It is imperative that transportation be accessible to the family and children of Fort Bend County as the services that are provided to parents trying to make changes in their parenting abilities or children who are victims of abuse and greatly benefit from therapeutic services are the key to making progress towards eradicating child abuse/neglect in Fort Bend County.

In addition to those children who are in the care of the state in the foster care systems, there is a largely separate group of children who are victims of sexual abuse and serious physical abuse. Many of these children continue to live at home with non-offending family members. These children bear the burden of the trauma of the abuse itself, coupled with remaining in an environment (home, neighborhood, school, etc.) that gave rise to the trauma in the first place. These children often need transportation to get to and from therapy services provided by the Children’s Advocacy Center. They are often in home environments where there is a lack of transportation and limited resources.

Priority #7	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Victim/Witness services for children in the criminal court system	<p><u>Child Advocates of Fort Bend</u></p> <p><u>Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office</u></p>
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>In 2007, the Children’s Advocacy Center began providing specialized criminal court advocacy services to children. Children who are victims of crime or witnesses to acts of violence require special assistance in order to understand and participate in the criminal justice system without being further traumatized. The criminal court system, with its often confusing language and procedures, was not designed with children in mind. Parents and guardians are also confused and overwhelmed by the intricacies of the legal system. But if perpetrators of crimes against children are to be held accountable, children must be prepared to testify in criminal proceedings. The Children’s Advocacy Center provides information on legal procedures, emotional support, referrals, court orientation and accompaniment to court.</p>	

In cooperation with the Children’s Advocacy Center, the Victim/Witness Division of the Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office also assists with parents, guardians, and family members of child victims. These adult witnesses often need support, referrals and court accompaniment as well.

Even in cases where there is no child victim, children are sometimes witnesses to other types of crime, such as murder or domestic violence. When a case goes to trial, those children are sometimes needed to testify in court. The Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office Victim/Witness Division provides support and court accompaniment to child witnesses. Special care is given to help the child witnesses understand their role and participate in the trial process. The Victim/Witness Division also provides information regarding legal procedures and court orientation.

Priority #8	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Continuing need for additional resources for investigation and prosecution of criminal cases involving physical and sexual abuse of children, including Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) and child deaths</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From January 2014 to December 2014, the District Attorney’s Office received 301 child abuse related cases from law enforcement for review and possible prosecution. • From January 2015 to August 2015, the District Attorney’s Office has already received 269 child abuse related cases from law enforcement for review and possible prosecution. • Projections for January-December 2015, assuming the average number of cases per month for the remaining four months of 2015 will be 18 to 33 cases, suggest the 2015 total cases will be between 345 and 403, and could be higher.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>A significant increase in computer related crimes against children being submitted for prosecution occurred from 2014 through August 2015. An additional increase is anticipated in 2016 for ICAC and all types of child abuse cases.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>In 2013, an Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Investigator position was implemented in a joint collaboration between the Houston Metro Area ICAC Taskforce and the Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office. In addition, the Fort Bend County DA’s Office continues to vigorously prosecute child injury and child sexual abuse cases but needs additional resources for prosecution. There is a substantial need for increased</p>	

training and personnel for investigative law enforcement agencies countywide to investigate child sexual abuse (including ICAC cases), and child injury and death cases. Significant personnel turnover in the investigative units responsible for investigating these types of cases exacerbates this need.

The time, demand, and specialized knowledge required to effectively investigate and prosecute sexual offenses committed against children is considerable. The cases are complex (and therefore very time-consuming) relative to investigation and prosecution of other types of crimes. Successful investigation (and therefore prosecution) requires specialized training and skill of investigators and gathering of information and consultation with medical professionals, children’s protective services investigators, victims and prior victims, parents, school personnel, various forensic experts, and others.

Skillful interrogation is critical to successful prosecution in sexual offenses committed against children and in child serious injury and death cases and requires training of investigators to obtain admissions in these types of cases. Internet crimes committed against children involve a high level of specialized and constantly changing technical knowledge. Continual training is critical for those involved in these types of investigations. In our technology driven world, many crimes involving identified “hands on” victims also entail a computer component to achieve thorough investigation and successful prosecution.

Priority #9	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Reasonable accommodations whether in the office or outside the office within the community for CPS caseworkers to be able to stay within Fort Bend County while waiting to obtain placement for children when they initially come into conservatorship</p>	<p><u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u></p> <p><u>The Rainbow Room</u></p>
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Since Region 6 has split, Harris County comprises Region 6A and the outlying counties are in 6B. The outlying counties are in need of a facility or community resource to accommodate staff who take children into custody to be able to remain at the office rather than driving into Harris County to utilize their Youth Service Center until placement is obtained. The data is new, however, since January 2014 we have had staff</p>	

drive in to Harris County over 12 times with Fort Bend Children until a placement was obtained.

Potential Response to Problem

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services staff has created an awareness of the issue with staff driving all the way to Harris County sometimes to stay overnight them driving back to Fort Bend, and continue this each night until a placement is obtained. We will look into our local boards - Child Welfare Board, Rainbow Room Board, and other community resources to see how we can collaborate together to come up with a solution to assist staff as well as keeping our children in Fort Bend County.

The Rainbow Room is available to caseworkers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for clients. The Rainbow Room can provide a duffle bag containing toiletries, clothing, a blanket, snacks, and a stuffed animal for children having to remain at the office until placement is obtained.

Priority #10	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Lack of funding and site for resource for drug testing facility	<u>Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</u> 80-90% of cases involved with TDFPS involve substance abuse usage
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The cases that come into the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) involves investigating child abuse and neglect. In many instances assigned caseworkers are going into the homes to find a parent incoherent, under the influence, or passed out. Currently there is no facility located in the Rosenberg area where the clients can be tested immediately to make the best decision possible for the safety and well-being of the child.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>DFPS will seek out resource opportunities or agencies that can conduct drug testing in the Rosenberg area that will be willing to contract to provide the drug testing site and possible treatment services for the clients instead of sending them to Katy or Harris County to be drug tested.</p>	

Priority #11	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Prevalence of unidentified, unserved child victims of sex trafficking within the criminal justice system	<u>Kendleton Farms</u> Because this population is unidentified, credible empirical data is difficult to find. The FBI has estimated the typical age of entry into prostitution at 12-14. If this is to be believed, it is likely many girls in detention are victims. Anecdotal evidence demonstrates this is a problem around the region and a significant driver of adult prostitution.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
Victims of domestic minor sex trafficking often are detained for crimes committed in the process of their captivity (drugs, truancy, theft, assault, etc.). They are often not aware the crime of sex trafficking of a child has been committed against them, so they rarely self-identify. As a result, they are underserved within the criminal justice system and by appropriate social services. This increases the likelihood they will return to their trafficking situation upon release and remain in and out of jail throughout their lives.	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
A proven curriculum called “Traps” helps educate these girls (and sometimes boys) in detention about their rights and about the networks of support available to them. With the support of law enforcement, this educational program is introduced into juvenile detention facilities to help identify victims, connect them to appropriate services, and reduce recidivism and the likelihood of return to their trafficking situations.	

Priority #12	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need to expand and diversify programs that identify development needs of youth	<u>ESCAPE Family Resource Center</u> ESCAPE provided 2 programs of <i>Building Confident Teens</i> to 31 participants in Fort Bend County from September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.
<i>Problem Details</i>	
Several factors known to stifle development are present when young people fail to realize their potential. Identified factors include, but are not limited to: a history of child maltreatment; high school dropout trends; and exposure to criminal activities. According to the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (The ACE Study), “... <i>stressful or traumatic childhood experiences ... are a common pathway to social, emotional and cognitive impairments that lead to increased risk of unhealthy</i>	

behaviors, risk of violence or re-victimization, disease, disability and premature mortality.”

Research has found that children in Houston who are held back a grade, fail core courses, do not perform satisfactorily on assessments, are pregnant or are a parent, have limited English proficiency, have ever been homeless, or have had any encounter with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services are at high risk for dropping out of school. When students drop out of school, the course of their lives may be totally reset. Dropouts typically earn less than their peers with more education, and they are more likely than high school graduates to end up in prison. Based on criteria established by the Texas Education Agency, 45.6% of children residing in the Greater Houston area have been identified as at-risk of quitting school.

Additionally, research has found that children exposed to violence, including violent crimes, are more likely to suffer from attachment problems, regressive behavior, anxiety, and depression, and to have aggression and conduct problems. Other health-related problems, as well as academic and cognitive problems, delinquency, and involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, are also associated with experiences of violence. Even community violence that children do not directly witness has been shown to affect negatively children’s attentional abilities and cognitive performance.

One mechanism through which early chronic exposure to violence affects children is by disrupting the developing brain. Specific brain structures are adversely affected by stress. Executive functions (such as planning, memory, focusing attention, impulse control, and using new information to make decisions) can become impaired. Moreover, children who have had chronic exposure to real or perceived threats may become conditioned to react with fear and anxiety to a broad range of circumstances. Their diminished capacity to differentiate between genuine threats and objectively safe or neutral situations can impair their ability to learn and interact with others, and may lead to serious anxiety disorders. Children exposed to violence are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of further violence.

Further, victims of dating violence are considerably more likely to engage in sexual activity and other risky behaviors (binge drinking, suicide attempts, physical fights) than are non-victims.

Potential Response to Problem

Building Confident Teens, offered by ESCAPE Resource Center, is a 7-session, 14-hour family strengthening and juvenile delinquency prevention program designed especially for families raising pre-teens/teenagers. The primary goal in offering the program is to increase the presence of protective factors in the lives of families raising adolescents. This is accomplished by teaching families skills shown to: a) decrease the level of stress experienced in families containing adolescents; b) improve parents’ involvement in and support of their children’s education; c) decrease the incidence of violent acts commits by and towards youth; d) decrease substance use among pre- teens/teenagers; and e)

improve physical and mental health outcomes for youth.

Typically, parents and children are first given information and tools about forming supportive family relationships in separate classrooms, with youth further divided into age-appropriate groups. Then families reunite to practice their new skills and to begin experiencing the changes possible in their lives.

Curriculum Outline

- *Session 1:* Stages of development; healthy relationships; protective factors; self-esteem; communication; negotiation; and starting over/forgiveness
- *Session 2:* Youth violence and injury prevention; mental health and suicide prevention; driving; work-related issues; and safety planning
- *Session 3:* Electronic aggression; cyber-bullying; sexting; and safety planning/preventing victimization
- *Session 4:* Positive and negative groups; gang identification, prevention and intervention; dealing with peer pressure; and safety planning
- *Session 5:* Preventing delinquency; parental responsibility and supervision; criminal justice laws (curfew, truancy, running away; theft, etc.); and the juvenile justice system
- *Session 6:* Drug, alcohol and tobacco use knowledge, prevention and intervention
- *Session 7:* Nutrition; eating disorders; exercise; sleep; and future planning/goal setting

For FY 2014, analysis of *Building Confident Teens* assessed using Pre/Post Knowledge Tests reveals that 73.68% of clients showed improvement in knowledge pertaining to family strengthening, child maltreatment prevention and other related concepts of relevance to families comprised of adolescents.

Law Enforcement Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need to expand law enforcement personnel and associated prosecutorial resources with the proportionate growth of Fort Bend County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council • 2010 U.S. Census Bureau • DOJ/BJA Data Analysis • Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC)
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Per the 2014 Crime in Texas publication distributed by the Department of Public Safety, the statewide ratio is 1.6 officers per 1,000 population. From 2000-2013 there has been a population growth of 65% throughout the County. Currently, Fort Bend County’s population is 685,345. The Texas State Data Center estimates that the population could reach 845,058 by the year 2020. All law enforcement agencies within the county have a common need for additional officers/personnel.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>In Fort Bend County, the majority of the police departments apply their own subjective formulas to this ratio to determine the law enforcement needs for their municipality. For instance, the majority of law enforcement agencies use a workload analysis that examines the time each officer spends on various law enforcement tasks and factors and a number of other variables, such as the number of calls for service. This analysis will determine the number of officers, investigators and support staff they need.</p>	

Priority #2	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>A need for equipment, updated equipment and technology in the areas of investigation, patrol, tactical, communication, radios, surveillance, identification, prosecution and evidence gathering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Greater Fort Bend Economic Development Council • 2010 U.S. Census Bureau

Problem Details

Fort Bend County continues to grow at approximately 28,000 residents per year. The present estimated population is 685,345. A proportionate amount of equipment, updated equipment, and technology is needed to assist law enforcement in the performance of their duties, e.g. body cameras, MDCs, mobile and portable radios, mobile and stationary videos, ATVs, bicycles, vehicles, surveillance cameras, evidence gathering technology, electronic data management, etc. In addition, communication equipment and technology is needed to help bridge the gap with language barriers and help improve communication between law enforcement, the community and victims.

Priority #3

Problem Identified

Data

Need for specialized and skills-based training and exercises for law enforcement and other public safety professionals in this region

Fort Bend County Public Safety Training Needs Assessment

Problem Details

Fort Bend County conducted a year-long public safety training needs assessment of Police, Fire, and EMS agencies. Collectively, these agencies employ over 1,200 full time law enforcement and over 300 additional public safety professionals. The most glaring deficiency noted by the committee involved a lack of joint multi-disciplinary training and exercises in general and specialized and skills-based training for law enforcement in particular. The single largest obstacle is funding.

Potential Response to Problem

According to the committee's findings, the most cost-effective solution to this problem is to conduct this type of training and exercises on a regional level. Many fast growing communities around the nation have solved similar problems by pooling resources on a regional level. The Houston-Galveston Area Council is in a unique position to provide both funding and leadership toward the problem area.

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need for an effective means for Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies to deal with mental health calls for service and mental health commitments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • 1115 Waiver Community Survey
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Trained response to persons with mental illness remains a significant issue. Specific policies and procedures being developed that aid in recognizing these type incidents at their onset indicate an increase in public confidence. Evidence of this is sustained by an increase in calls where trained officers are specifically requested.</p> <p>In 2014, the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office made 1,058 transports to mental health facilities. This alone exceeds the 2013 total of 1,007 transports for <u>all</u> police agencies within Fort Bend County. Additionally, the Sheriff’s Office Crisis Intervention Team, comprised of 10 deputies, made 3,049 total contacts, 1,897 unique individuals were identified as some sort of mental health call for service or follow-up service.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>By a consensus of agencies within Fort Bend, enhancement of the mental health program includes advanced training and coordinated protocols for response to persons in mental crisis. A Crisis Intervention Team at the Sheriff’s Office was established April 1, 2014 and is a crucial component, yet only part of the overall problem resolution. First responders from all agencies share the potential for being the initial contact with a mentally ill person; therefore, all officers will be trained and part of the response enhancement initiative.</p>	

Priority #5	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need for a regional Medical Examiner’s Office based on the region’s population and number of referrals requiring autopsy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • During FY 2014, there were 270 autopsies performed at a cost of \$512,668 to Fort Bend County. Currently, in FY 2015, there have been approximately 210 autopsies at a cost of \$366,604. (Fort Bend County Auditor’s Office)

<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The region, including Fort Bend County, does not have a medical examiner and contracts with outside sources in two other counties (Harris and Galveston). This consequently causes delays in investigations. As an example, final autopsy reports may take up to 60 days to receive. The law enforcement agency is forced to wait for results to be sent back to them from the outside source, which can severely hinder an on-going investigation.</p>	

Priority #6	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>A severe need for school resource officers with specialized training and equipment for youth delinquency prevention programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Rosenberg Police Department • Fort Bend Independent School District Police Department
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The six school districts in Fort Bend County are experiencing consistent growth in student population, increasing the need for police resources in youth delinquency. According to the Rosenberg Police Department, in the 2014-2015 school year at Lamar Consolidated Independent School District, there were 96 Assaults, 2 Gun cases, 139 Drug cases, 1 Gang incident, 67 Arrests, with a total of 172 cases actually filed.</p> <p>In 2014, Fort Bend ISD Police Department reported clearances involving persons less than 18 years of age. There were 3 rapes, 3 attempted rape, 2 assaults with a knife, 2 burglaries with forcible entry, 44 larcenies – theft (excluding motor vehicles), and 341 assaults. And, according to the Fort Bend Juvenile Probation Office, there were 2,411 referrals from January to December 2014. The total juveniles placed on probation (formal and deferred) beginning January 2014 to December 2014 were 678.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>The Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office has two units composed of school resource officers that provide award-winning programs to school-aged youth in Fort Bend County. During the 2014-2015 school year, the Truancy Abatement and Assistance Program Deputies made 351 presentations to 22,000 students in 94 area elementary, middle, junior high and high schools. The presentations include the highly requested –<i>Now That You’re 10</i>, –<i>Before It’s Too Late</i> and –<i>Legal Terms</i> programs. Likewise, the Kids and Cops Unit deputies teach the very popular <i>Stranger Danger Awareness</i></p>	

program to grades K-5. Fifth graders are also exposed to an 8 week curriculum that covers peer pressure, resistance techniques, consequences, stress, gang awareness and alternatives to drug abuse. The four-day *Kids and Cops Summer camp* promotes leadership skills, boosts self-esteem and advocates teamwork to students ages 10-12.

Priority #7	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for traffic safety enforcement and education as it pertains to DWI, Teen Driver Issues, Texting while Driving, Distracted Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office • Houston-Galveston Area Council
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Statistical data shows that when it comes to the realm of law enforcement, people are more likely to be injured or killed as a result of a motor vehicle crash than crime.</p> <p>Alcohol related crashes resulting in injuries in Fort Bend County for 2014 were 204, speed related crashes were 180, and young driver crashes were 1,418. Six of the 1,418 were fatalities and 188 were incapacitating injuries.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>Dedicated law enforcement personnel and training are necessary to make a concerted effort to effectively reduce and eliminate this threat. Increased DWI Task Force participation would help reduce the number of incidents, especially around the holiday periods. Additional personnel are needed to help educate the public, especially young drivers.</p>	

Priority #8

Problem Identified

Data

- **Need for a Crime Data/Information Sharing Initiative (Interoperability) linking all Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies**
- **Need for standardized electronic Records Management Systems (RMS) in all county law enforcement agencies**
- **Need for county-wide electronic filing capabilities between criminal justice system partners and the DA's office**

Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee

Problem Details

Currently the law enforcement agencies in Fort Bend County do not have the ability to share information. A survey was sent to eight selected law enforcement entities in Fort Bend County (Sheriff's Office, Stafford, Sugar Land, Missouri City, Katy, Richmond, Rosenberg and Needville) with five agencies responding. Their responses indicated that every participating agency supports interagency data information sharing and further believes information or data sharing can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all police agencies in prevention and detecting crime.

Potential Response to Problem

Having an integrated system would provide interagency telecommunications and information services, i.e., centralized indices of people, things and events of interest to more than one agency, through a central repository. It would enhance agencies' ability to communicate with each other to identify missing persons, known criminal offenders, and people/property involved in crime. The impetus of this initiative is to link the different records management systems to a central repository enabling local law enforcement to query people and property involved in crime, members of criminal gangs, stolen property, criminal suspects, criminal methods of operation, reported crime, reported arrests, and to share crime bulletins about major crimes.

Priority #9	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need to continue developing a network of intelligence and information-sharing relating to the detection and prevention of terrorism	Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee
<i>Problem Details</i>	
Funding for analysts positions and the needed technological hardware and software are critical to developing and sharing actionable intelligence for the detection and prevention of terrorism within the County.	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
This effort in concert with the Houston Regional Intelligence Service Center (HRISC) is accomplished through a coordinated network of Intelligence Analysts from the different law enforcement agencies within Fort Bend County. The creation of a Fort Bend Satellite Center that would serve as an extension of HRISC would allow for improved intelligence and information sharing for Fort Bend County and the jurisdictions within. This would also improve information sharing with our regional partners through HRISC. This cannot be accomplished without an increase in manpower, equipment, training and technology.	

Priority #10	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
A need for personnel, equipment and technology to keep up with the demand for investigations of internet and computer related crimes against children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Houston Metro Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) • Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office • According to the Child Protection System database in 2014, approximately 100 offenders were observed in the Fort Bend County area. • 57 arrests for online child sexual exploitation were made since October 2014.

Problem Details

There is a substantial need for increased training and personnel for investigative law enforcement agencies countywide to investigate Internet Crimes Against Children cases. In addition to specialized child abuse investigation training, successful investigation of Internet and computer related crimes against children requires complex training in an ever-changing technical field to maintain competence.

Internet and computer facilitated crimes committed against children involve a high level of specialized technical knowledge, and training is critical for those involved in these types of investigations. In a technology driven world, many crimes involving live victims also entail a computer component to thoroughly investigate.

Problem Details

The Child Protection System is an evolutionary step in the pursuit of innovation. "Operation Fair Play" is a solution allowing law enforcement to target those who traffic images of child sexual abuse. Operation Fair Play finds a minimum of 100 offenders observing multiple child pornographic sites every month. Child Protection System builds on top of the success of Operation Fair Play to bring open access to investigators around the world.

The Houston Metro Internet Crimes Against Children's Task Force (HMICAC) is comprised of an 8 county area of operation including Fort Bend County. With additional resources, law enforcement agencies within Fort Bend County could affiliate with the HMICAC Task Force.

Priority #11

Problem Identified

Data

Continuing need for additional resources for investigation and prosecution of criminal cases involving physical and sexual abuse of children and child deaths

- From January 2015 to August 2015, the District Attorney's Office received 283 child abuse related cases from law enforcement for review and possible prosecution. (Consultation occurred regarding many other cases not submitted for prosecution.)
- Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee

Problem Details

The Fort Bend County DA's Office continues to vigorously prosecute child injury and child sexual abuse cases but needs additional resources for prosecution. There is a substantial need for increased training and personnel for law enforcement agencies

countywide to investigate child sexual abuse and exploitation, and child injury and death cases. As Fort Bend County’s population continues to grow rapidly, there will be a continued strain on the system.

Potential Response to Problem

The time and demand to effectively investigate sexual offenses committed against children is considerable. The cases are complex (and therefore very time-consuming) relative to investigation and prosecution of other types of crimes. In the majority of cases, numerous offenses are committed against the child victim over a period of time. Successful investigation (and therefore prosecution) requires specialized training and skill of investigators and gathering of information and consultation with medical professionals, children’s protective services investigators, victims and prior victims, parents, school personnel and others.

Skillful interrogation is critical to successful prosecution in sexual offenses committed against children and in child serious injury and death cases and requires training of investigators to obtain admissions in these types of cases.

Priority #12	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Continued need for law enforcement personnel to register sex offenders, monitor them for compliance and work cases as investigators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Department of Public Safety Database • Fort Bend County District Attorney’s Office • As of September 2015, the Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office shows there are 296 registered sex offenders currently residing within the unincorporated areas of Fort Bend County. • 245 offenders are registered within the surrounding municipalities, i.e. Needville, Missouri City, Stafford, Arcola, Richmond, Rosenberg, Fulshear, Meadows Place and Sugar Land
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Because of the State’s laws regarding documenting sex offenders and maintaining a database, there is a requirement to continually review the data and update the information. Fort Bend County currently has a growing population of sex offenders and there is a need for the County to have additional personnel to monitor and register these offenders.</p>	

Priority #13	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for personnel to investigate and prosecute financial fraud crimes to include Identity Theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Federal Trade Commission • Consumer Sentinel Network Data Book 2014
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>According to the Federal Trade Commission, identity theft has been the top consumer complaint for 15 straight years. In 2014, Texas was ranked 10th in per capita complaints for identity theft and 7th for fraud and related complaints.</p> <p>In a ranking of the largest metropolitan areas (population of 100,000 or more), Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land ranked 37th for identity theft with 112.1 complaints per 100,000 population.</p>	

Priority #14	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for personnel to document gangs and their members, as well as investigate gang-related crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Texas Department of Public Safety database
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>According to the Texas Department of Public Safety database reports, there are 206 gangs documented with over 2,000 members within Fort Bend County. Many of these documented members are responsible for numerous crimes in the area. Several gangs have been identified that are actively recruiting in many of the schools.</p> <p>Because of the State’s laws regarding documenting gang members and maintaining an intelligence data base, there is a requirement to continually review the data and update the members’ last involvement with the law enforcement or purge that data entirely. Fort Bend County currently has a large population of gang members and there is a need for the County to have a fully functioning gang unit.</p>	

Priority #15	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for investigators assigned to specifically investigate family violence cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • 2014 Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Statistics Report
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>According to the 2014 Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Statistics Report, there were a total of 3,056 family violence cases reported in Fort Bend County. This does not include data from the Houston Police Department, part of which extends into Fort Bend County.</p> <p>Currently, some agencies have no investigators specifically assigned to investigate family violence cases. In the past four years, family violence offenses have increased by more than 276 cases in Fort Bend County. If more investigators were assigned to investigate these cases, violent offenders would be removed from society, preventing more victims from falling prey to them.</p>	

Priority #16	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for investigators assigned to specifically investigate the violent crimes against women cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Greater Fort Bend County Economic Development Council • Forbes Magazine (9/26/2013)
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>In 2014, Fort Bend County's population was approximately 685,345. In 2013, the female population accounted for over 50% of the county population. Fort Bend County is currently listed as fifth in the nation and third in the state of Texas among the fastest growing counties.</p> <p>Currently, many agencies have no investigators that are specifically assigned to investigate violent crimes against women. Dedicated investigators to violent crimes against women would target a victim group comprising more than 50% of the county population.</p>	

Priority #17	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for an automated system for handling Emergency Protective Orders, Temporary Ex Parte Orders and Formal Protective Orders and sufficient staff to process and maintain all the orders	Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>At this time, all Emergency Protective Orders (temporary orders for 30 to 90 days) are generated on paper in the Fort Bend County Jail upon the arrest of the alleged abuser. The District Attorney's Office requests the formal Protective Order (2 years) from a Judge, who signs the Order, which is then served by a Constable or the District Attorney Investigations Division.</p> <p>Temporary Ex Parte Orders fill in the gaps between the Emergency Protective Order and the short period of time before a formal Protective Order can be filed. As of January 1, 2008, Temporary Ex Parte violations are grounds for arrest. This means additional paper to process.</p>	

Priority #18	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need for personnel to investigate and prosecute Human Trafficking crimes	Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Human Trafficking is among the forefront of criminal law legislation as the problem was recently recognized to be of mass proportion. As a contiguous county to Harris County, and directly between them and the border, the potential of stash houses, travel routes, and "pass-through" offenses are high in Fort Bend County.</p> <p>Dedicated law enforcement personnel, training, and equipment are necessary to make a concerted effort to effectively reduce and eliminate this threat.</p>	

Priority #19	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>A need for Crime Victim Liaisons and Coordinators in criminal justice areas to handle all aspects of the victims' rights from the time of the incident throughout the entire criminal justice process</p>	<p>Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee</p>
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>In all areas of criminal and juvenile justice, the role of a trained victim liaison is invaluable in informing the victim and family of the various proceedings. In addition, these crime victim liaisons can be responsible for ensuring that crime victims receive financial restitution as ordered by the courts.</p> <p>The number of Crime Victim Liaison positions need to increase proportionately with the increasing referrals and caseloads.</p>	

Priority #20	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>In cases of domestic violence, sexual abuse, robbery and homicide there is an insufficient victim protection system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee • Fort Bend County Community Corrections and Supervision Department
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>There is a heightened awareness regarding the lack of protection for victims of violent crime, in particular women who have separated from their abusive partner and have filed a charge of domestic violence against them. This is prior to adjudication that would place the perpetrator on any kind of monitoring system.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>When the perpetrator is subject to bond conditions or placed on probation, the Community Corrections and Supervision Department issues ankle monitors but these</p>	

systems of electronic monitoring are focused on the perpetrators rather than on the victims.

Priority #21

Problem Identified

Data

Need for a fully accredited regional crime lab, forensic lab (including DNA) based on growth of the regional population and felony crimes against persons

- Regional Public Safety Academy Study
- Sugar Land Police Department

Problem Details

The Department of Public Safety’s Crime Lab is severely overloaded. As a result, DPS has limited submissions based on types of crimes. In addition, Texas Law (CCP Article 38.43) now mandates DNA testing of all biological evidence collected in a Capital Offense. With the growing population of the region comes a proportionate increase in criminal activities that requires specialized investigative techniques. At the present time, all lab work is sent to outside agencies. The law enforcement agency is forced to wait on results to be sent back to them from the outside source, which can severely hinder an on-going investigation.

Most law enforcement agencies within Fort Bend County submit DNA evidence to the Texas DPS Crime Laboratory. The turn-around time for this analysis is approximately 9-30 months. The turn-around times for these requests varies greatly depending on current caseload. For example, in FY 2013 the Sugar Land Police Department submitted 1115 items to DPS for analysis, averaging almost 93 items per month. This total represents a 34% increase over the last two years.

Texas Law (CCP Chapter 38) and the industry standard for crime laboratories requires crime laboratories to obtain accreditation in all analytical disciplines applied through the American Society of Crime Laboratory of Directors (ASCLD/LAB) for International Accreditation.

Priority #22

Problem Identified

Data

Need for a 24-hour District Attorney intake system based on the growth of the county population and after hours / week-end referrals to the District Attorney's Office

Fort Bend County Law Enforcement Community Plan Committee

Problem Details

The Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office currently has a prosecutor available on call after business hours available to law enforcement agencies to answer intake/charging questions and assist officers in drafting search and arrest warrant affidavits. Once an offender is booked into the county jail, the arresting officer must draft an affidavit which contains sufficient facts to justify the suspect's arrest to a magistrate. This affidavit is read, and occasionally supplemented by that prosecutor. However, the ultimate decision to accept or reject the case is made several days later, after reasonable time is given to the officer to fully document his offense report. This can ultimately lead to the possibility of a person being incarcerated, only to later have the District Attorney's Office reject the charges.

Potential Response to Problem

A potential response is the example of the Harris County system, which provides several Assistant District Attorneys who are physically present 24/7. Officers are required to provide the Assistant District Attorneys with sufficient information over the phone prior to booking the suspects in city jail, which will substantiate the charge. Further, these departments must complete their offense reports prior to transferring the suspects to county jail. This is usually required within forty-eight hours. This ultimately accelerates the intake process as it relates to the work of the police agency and the District Attorney's Office.

Behavioral Health Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Need for access to services for persons with mental illness and co-occurring disorders to prevent incarceration and to support recovery and reintegration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office • Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services • Emergency Management Services (EMS) • Texana Center (Mental Health Authority of Fort Bend County) • Fort Bend County Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD) • Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse • Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Crisis and Response Intervention Team: Mapping and Gap Analysis (September 2013) • National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) • Mental Health America of Fort Bend • Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Crisis: Action Plan (September 2013) • Fort Bend County Recovery & Reintegration Program Update (September 2015)
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Fort Bend County EMS responded to 1,610 mental health crisis calls in 2013; this represented nearly a 200% percent increase in 8 years (650 calls in 2005). Further analyses of these data, indicated that in many cases multiple entities respond to mental health emergency crisis, which often result in transportation to an emergency room or the Fort Bend County jail. Many of these situations involve non-violent offenses that could be redirected to less restrictive clinically appropriate services if available. These trends were also noted in the Needs Assessment of Fort Bend County, conducted by the Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs (Summer 2011), stating that the lack of services have resulted in “mental health becoming a law enforcement issue.”</p> <p>Texana Center is the Local Mental Health Authority and Local Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Authority for Fort Bend County. The Center is the main provider of services to individuals with behavioral healthcare issues and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities in the County. Texana serves as the “gatekeeper” to the state hospital system and to local psychiatric facilities, as well as for individuals and families seeking services for those with intellectual disabilities. The Center provides a crisis intervention program that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and is the only provider in the County for crisis residential services for those who have Medicaid or are indigent. For fiscal year 2014, Texana’s Behavioral Healthcare Services served 4,040 individuals, including 2,934 adults and 1,149 children. The Center employs over 500 staff in Fort Bend County.</p>	

Although progress has been made, mostly attributed to 1115 Waiver funded projects, Fort Bend County continues to lack adequate stabilization, intervention and recovery services for persons with mental illness and substance abuse disorders. Fort Bend County residents continue to have limited access to substance abuse treatment.

The Fort Bend County jail like many other jails identifies and treats inmates with mental illness. As of April 2013, between 27% and 30% of the jail population have identified mental health needs and are receiving medication. In addition, approximately 30% of the inmates with mental illness have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder. Between September 2013 and April 2014, 491 inmates were identified as having a mental illness and receiving mental health services. The majority of these are repeat offenders, which supports several outcome studies indicating that without adequate supports and treatment the likelihood of recidivism is high.

There is also a rapidly emerging need for trauma informed specialty behavioral health services for veterans and female offenders. Many of these offenders are victims of domestic violence, victimization, or war related trauma. These populations require specialized trauma related services. Unfortunately, the families of persons with untreated mental illnesses are often the victims of the offense leading to the individual's criminal justice involvement, necessitating community intervention to support families as well as victims. There is an increasing number of young women with histories of abuse entering the criminal justice system. Many of them are at risk of victimization and sexual exploitation if left without appropriate services.

Availability of timely resources and options - Transition from jail and reintegration into the community is marked by various complexities and challenges; therefore, it is critical to provide a continuum of support for these individuals. Although the available resources and options have expanded in Fort Bend County, there are still specific areas for improvement. Upon release, clients do not have immediate access to benefits, including Medicaid, food stamps, and social security benefits. Clients also have limited to no housing options upon release from incarceration or are at risk of losing present housing. Many clients also lack transportation to necessary appointments, which are crucial to maintain in the community (e.g., probation appointments, medical appointments). Furthermore, there is often a long waitlist to access psychiatric care upon release from incarceration, thus delaying timely care and support. This includes outpatient treatment as well as ongoing medication management. These situations leave the clients vulnerable and susceptible to reoffending.

Inadequate array of services - The service array for individuals with complex mental and behavioral health needs, particularly those at high risk for recidivism, has increased and expanded; however, the current availability of services still does not match the demands and needs of the target population in the county. In particular, the 1115 Waiver Recovery & Reintegration program has identified gaps in the following service areas: Inpatient substance abuse treatment (clients are still being referred to extended counties for treatment, provided they qualify and have openings), Group homes or transitional housing options (available options are too costly for clients, fully booked, and/or have criteria that disqualify clients for residency, including their offense), and

specialized support for clients who experienced prostitution victimization (many clinicians are trained in PTSD and trauma-based therapy, but there is a lack of available therapists to address this specific issue in the county)

Potential Response to Problem

In October 2010, Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services was established to work alongside the courts, criminal justice departments (adult and juvenile), emergency medical services, and health and human services to improve the coordination of systems for persons with mental illness and addictions that come into contact with Fort Bend County courts.

As a result of increased community collaboration and communication among departments, Fort Bend County has made significant strides towards the development of a criminal justice/mental health system that is more integrated, provides specialized legal representation, support systems, case coordination and specialized interventions. Components of this system include specialty mental health courts, specialized dockets, processes for the early identification of mental illness when individuals are incarcerated, multidisciplinary team meetings in the jail, increased collaboration and communication among Texana, the Sheriff's Office, probation, medical and clinical staff, specialized public defender and Behavioral Health Services. By working together and enhancing jail based mental health services, specialized legal representation, specialized supervision, psychological services, and case management services, Fort Bend County has seen a significant reduction in the length of incarceration for persons with mental illness.

In 2013, Fort Bend County received approval for an 1115 Waiver delivery system reform incentive payment (DSRIP) project to develop a crisis system to better identify people with behavioral health needs, respond to those needs and link persons with their most appropriate level of care. The goal of this project is to keep individuals healthy and safe, develop processes and interventions to manage challenging behaviors, and avoid unnecessary use of the emergency room, hospitalization or incarceration. First responders have become the default interveners for behavioral health crises in the county with limited options for these patients. Unfortunately, many persons with mental illness end up in the emergency room for several hours waiting for an evaluation or transported to the county jail. The Fort Bend County behavioral health crisis response and Intervention project enhances the safety net, provide necessary intervention and diversion services and as a result serves as the main gatekeeper to EMS transports, admissions to the emergency room, and incarcerations. The Fort Bend County project includes: (1) enhancement of 911 dispatch system to identify and respond to behavioral health crisis, (2) development of a specialized crisis intervention team (CIT) within Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, and (3) implementation of cross systems training and linkages to appropriate services and supports. An 1115 Waiver project was also submitted and approved to develop and evaluate a diversionary program for youth with mental illness and other complex behavioral health needs as well as evidence based interventions (including wraparound supports) for these youth. An additional 1115 Waiver project was approved to develop a "recovery and reintegration" program for

persons with mental illness at risk of recidivism. The Recovery & Reintegration project has served 26 individuals during the first 9 months of the program as well as developed services and systems to support reintegration into the community. The program monitors outcomes while in the program and provides post discharge follow-up. Early results indicate improvement in functioning and reduction in recidivism (as compared to population in the jail without the intervention). The expansion of this program offers great promise for supporting reintegration into the community. The program works closely with the Mental Health Public Defenders Office, the Mental Health unit from the District Attorney’s office, probation department, Fort Bend County Social Services and providers in the community.

A core component of this system is the implementation of a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), formed out of the Fort Bend County Sherriff’s Office that not only responds to mental health crises received through the 911 system but interfaces and supports all other police departments in the county. The CIT works closely with Texana, the local mental health authority, public and private hospitals, EMS, and the Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services to coordinate and access care and provide follow-up as needed to prevent future crisis.

Fort Bend County has made significant strides in the development of a system that responds to crisis and directs person to the right care. However, in order to prevent the recycling of persons in the criminal justice system, we need to develop an adequate array of clinical services and supports to meet the ongoing needs of this population. This system needs to include not only access to appropriate mental health and substance abuse treatment (medication, therapies, assertive community treatment, and hospitalization) but wraparound supports, housing and employment opportunities, which are critical to recovery and to ultimately breaking the cycle of recidivism.

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) has been in operation since April 1, 2014. Between April 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015, the Behavioral Health Crisis Response and Intervention Team has been collecting data on each incident involving a CIT officer and a consumer in need of crisis intervention services. In DY4, (1) 200 individuals were diverted from admission/readmission to the Fort Bend County jail in DY4; and (2) 1,943 individuals received crisis intervention and/or follow-up services by the specialized county CIT. In addition, CIT made 3,059 contacts for services in DY4. These data exceed DY4 metrics.

Priority #2	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Fort Bend County lacks a collaborative “housing first” model that provides integrated social services for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend County Behavioral Health • Fort Bend County Sheriff’s Office • Fort Bend County Community Supervision and Corrections Department • Fort Bend County Mental Health/Public Defender

<p>county residents with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. This would provide a safe place for individuals, families, the reentry population and veterans to receive comprehensive case management services including: permanent supportive housing, behavioral health services, substance abuse treatment, healthcare services, brief financial and social services assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend NAMI • Texana Center • Fort Bend County Social Services • AccessHealth
---	---

Problem Details

It is through Fort Bend County’s enduring collaborations and networking that the lack of resources to adequately address the behavioral needs of the criminal justice and veteran reentry populations has been determined. These populations require considerable reentry assistance including housing and the county lacks a coordinated, co-located resource to stabilize them, to help prevent criminal justice recidivism and address specific health and wellness concerns.

Fort Bend County lacks the capacity to address both the housing and the behavioral needs of the criminal justice/veterans populations as they return to their community. Major gaps include: (1) transitional and long term housing, (2) mental health services (medication management), (3) substance abuse treatment and (4) wraparound supports. Housing and case management are essential to community reintegration.

Fort Bend County’s current housing process is far too slow because resources are unreliable and seriously limited. In the last year Fort Bend County Social Services assisted 190 individuals with emergency shelter, 18 were assisted with transitional supportive housing and 341 clients were assisted with rent.

The Fort Bend County Homeless Coalition conducted a survey to determine causal factors; available services and deficits; immediate needs and how these services may have prevented homelessness. Survey results indicate:

- Thirty seven percent of the clients reported job loss/eviction as the reason for homelessness while 15% reported domestic violence, 7% reported medical expenses and 6% of the clients reported divorce/separation as their causal factor.

- Five percent of respondents identified behavioral health or criminal justice reasons for homelessness while 21% shared other reasons, many of which spoke to the lack of resources for housing in the county.

Further survey analysis revealed that of the respondents 56% of the clients identified varied wrap around services to prevent homelessness were lacking including, but not limited to, a homeless shelter, legal aid, food and rent assistance, veteran specific services, vocational training and placement.

This clearly demonstrates the lack of community supports that may prevent or allow an individual to overcome their homeless status. A confounding factor is that many of the county residents are supervised by the Fort Bend County's criminal justice system. Many probationers or parolees experience substance use, mental health, and co-occurring disorders. Substance abuse disorders are prevalent among our criminal justice population. Approximately as high as 60% of the persons in the criminal justice system have a co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder.

Funding is needed to provide transition medications and services for persons released from jail for up to 90 days following discharge. Funding is also needed to implement evidence based practices such as "peer mentoring" to assist with reintegration and ongoing recovery. "Housing first" programs and other evidence based housing programs should also be developed to meet the critical needs of persons with behavioral health needs released from jail. Special focus on these disorders must be enhanced to prevent and curtail them because these problems are primary causes for individuals to become involved in, and remain in the criminal justice system. The 1115 Waiver funded Recovery & Reintegration program, within Behavioral Health Services, has provided support in many of these areas as well as evidence based interventions but the need exceeds current program capacity.

Because Fort Bend County does not have a residential chemical dependency treatment facility, those who require inpatient care or hospitalization cannot access it and funding constraints restrict the length of stay possible in outpatient environments. Fort Bend County offers only two funded outpatient, brief-stay treatment providers to address a serious and growing chemical abuse problem.

The need for substance use disorder treatment in Fort Bend County increases as the county grows. Fort Bend Regional Council is Fort Bend County's largest state funded outpatient Substance Use Disorder Treatment facility. In the last fiscal year (09/01/2014-08/31/2015) the facility completed 638 distinct admissions, of these 33% were admitted for problems related to alcohol use; 39% for problems related to marijuana use; 9% for cocaine; 4% for Opiate use; 6% for a combination of drug/alcohol use; 3% for amphetamine use; and the remaining 6% for other substances. Clients assessed by this provider must be appropriate for outpatient treatment, requiring substance use severity that can be effectively addressed in a non-medical environment and a relatively stable home environment to even marginally support treatment efforts. Clients who do not have adequate housing, require medical detoxification or a residential care structure are referred to Harris County providers.

In total, the lack of housing, mental health services, supports, healthcare and transportation are additional risk factors associated with criminal justice involvement and recidivism.

Potential Response to Problem

Fort Bend County has implemented multiple measures including in custody screening, Mental Health/Public Defender representation, Mental Health Felony and Misdemeanor Courts, Behavioral Health Services Recovery & Reintegration program, and ongoing service coordination with local substance abuse and mental health providers and advocacy groups (NAMI and MHA) as well as enhanced jail based mental health services. The public defender's office, CSCD and Texana provide continuity of care for many people being released from jail and as a result assist in the coordination of services. Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provides court ordered evaluations, mental health consultations, assistance with wraparound supports and coordination, follow-up, clinical oversight, and training on evidence based practices. BHS also provides the Recovery & Reintegration program, funded through the 1115 Waiver. This is relatively new program (started in January of 2014) but served 26 clients with complex needs and at risk for recidivism. Although we have seen an increase in collaboration and services, housing continues to be a major need.

Fort Bend County Social Services has spearheaded the Fort Bend County Homeless Coalition. This entity's goal is to assemble county organizations that provide homeless services, identify service gaps and strategies to best meet client needs with limited or collaborative funding. Service providers include Fort Bend Family Promise, Salvation Army, Second Mile Mission, St. Laurence Catholic Church, Sugar Grove Church of Christ, Project Lift, AccessHealth, United Way of Greater Houston (Fort Bend), Fort Bend EMS, Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office and Fort Bend County Behavioral Health.

Fort Bend County has recently been awarded several 1115 Waiver projects to address this need: Behavioral Crisis Response and Intervention Project (which includes a CIT), Juvenile Jail Diversion Project, a Recovery & Reintegration program for persons at risk of recidivism, and an integrated behavioral/physical health project. The latter includes Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment project that houses a Behavioral Health Counselor in the local federally qualified health care facility, AccessHealth, to more efficiently address potential negative health outcomes related to substance use. These projects represent, Fort Bend County's progress toward achieving an evidence based continuum of care for targeted groups (persons with severe mental illness and/or mental illness and physical health conditions/veterans) identified as high risk for recidivism due to homeless/lack of stable housing, substance use disorders, lack of access to services, complex trauma, lack of family supports and/or lack of integrated care to address complex needs. The target population is the Medicaid and uninsured population.

Another successful intervention is Fort Bend County's continued utilization of specialty

courts; these programs create a multi-disciplinary team to supervise the client (probation officer and judge) while addressing and treating the substance abuse/mental health disorder. Two examples are, the Fort Bend County Drug Court (2002), the county's first specialty court and the current Mental Health Initiative (2009). The Fort Bend County Drug Court Program has served over 664 individuals in the "Closing Addictions Revolving Door" (C.A.R.D.) program. In FY 2015, a total of 106 individuals were served in the specialty felony drug court and 66 in the misdemeanor drug court. In addition, the CSCD's Mental Health Initiative Caseloads served at total of 1,030 from 2012 to the present. In 2015, 241 individuals were served.

In 2015, a veteran's court was developed. These specialty court programs unite the community in a strong collaborative to support participants in achieving independence from criminal justice involvement. The Veteran Court is now fully functioning and has served 5 clients in FY 2015. The expansion of this court will continue to serve the needs of veterans and support their reintegration into the community.

Fort Bend County CSCD ensures the flow of information between the courts, jail, and treatment providers. This function has improved treatment coordination and case processing. CSCD has also contracted with a private residential facility to provide housing for mentally ill offenders discharged from jail. This program works closely with CSCD staff to provide appropriate supervision and treatment. This has been essential to discharge planning and successful community reintegration. Expansion of these programs to include a residential option and increased coordination of care would more effectively serve a greater number of people and would maximize the existing community systems. Specialty court models are evidence based solutions that provide sound behavioral health components within a criminal justice model. The Drug Court model is proven over 20 years of practice and is gaining frequency in replication. Its success has encouraged the implementation of other specialty courts such as those in Fort Bend County; this is an effective model and any funding provided to support its continuation, expansion or enhancement certainly benefits the community.

Unfortunately, many of the individuals helped by these efforts return to situations that cannot support their progress and they revert to destructive behaviors. The best potential response to this problem is a local "housing first" program that integrates primary and behavioral health care (substance use and mental illness, PTSD, etc.) with a full array of wraparound supports to offer the strongest chance of permanent success.

Priority #3	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Ongoing training and coordination of criminal justice mental health processes, caseload and special populations (e.g.,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Bend District Attorney's Office • Fort Bend Office Mental Health/Public Defender Department • Fort Bend Behavioral Health Services • Fort Bend County (CSCD)

veterans, victims of domestic violence, sexual exploitation/trafficking, developmental disabilities, children in child welfare system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judicial Administration (District Courts)
---	--

Problem Details

Persons with mental illness present many challenges to the criminal justice system and often remain incarcerated for longer periods of time for less violent offenses than persons without mental illness. This national trend has influenced the development of specialized mental health dockets and courts, specialized defense attorneys and specialized prosecutors who work together as a team to expedite the processing of cases to provide adequate representation and coordinate case management.

In Fort Bend County, the 268th Judicial District and County Court at Law #1 handle the mental health caseload. Currently, the county has a Mental Health Public Defender’s Office with 3 attorneys, 1 administrative assistant, 3 caseworkers and 1 social worker. The Social Services staff refers individuals for a variety of community based services and provides case management services. Each defendant with mental illness receives quality representation as well as help finding treatment options and other available social services in their community. The Public Defender’s office handles the majority of the mental health cases, but other attorneys are also assigned to these types of cases. In addition to the Mental Health Public Defender’s office, there is also a wheel of defense attorneys who receive appointments to mentally ill defendants; and mentally ill defendants can hire their own attorney. In 2015, Fort Bend County Commissioners Court approved additional staff for this office given the increased demand and outcomes achieved.

There is also a special Mental Health division in the District Attorney’s office that focuses on mental health cases and the mental health courts Behavioral Health Services works alongside these departments to provide court ordered evaluations (competency, psychological, risk assessments) to expedite the processing of cases and direct persons to the right care. Behavioral Health Services also provides additional interventions and assessments such as substance abuse assessments if requested by the court or probation. However, the county continues to be challenged with the complexity of cases returning from the state hospitals competency restoration programs and the need for expedited processing of those cases. In addition, many cases required coordination between criminal and civil processes as well as extensive coordination with CSCD, defense attorneys, service providers, and defendants/families. We are also recognizing that many individuals have intellectual developmental disabilities that interfere with their competency to stand trial as well as understanding or probation, etc. Behavioral Health Services estimates that approximately 20% of the individuals’ referred for competency evaluations have a co-occurring intellectual developmental disability. This appears to be evident in both adult and children population (the percentage in youth juvenile

population may be higher). Data is being collected to further identify this issue and address as needed.

During the past year, Behavioral Health has added one licensed psychologist which has significantly enhanced the department's capacity to provide court ordered evaluations in a timely manner and reduce the number of days defendants are waiting for evaluations. This also allows the courts and the various criminal justice entities to access specialized psychological services and consultation.

We also have emerging needs with special populations involved in the criminal justice system such as persons with IDD, veterans and victims of crime (including sex crimes) and youth in the foster care and criminal justice systems. Many of the persons we are working with have complex needs, multiple incarcerations and hospitalization, difficulty accessing services and/or are resistant to intervention. It should be noted that the complexity of mental health cases increases the burden on several aspects of the criminal justice including the "judicial system." Judges, court coordinators and bailiffs are all impacted by increased workloads and the challenges of these cases.

Potential Response to Problem

The potential response is to continue to work collaboratively to develop standardized processes and orders for mental health courts, competency evaluations, and other mental health court related processes. Continue activities to provide training to attorneys and other law enforcement entities on behavioral health issues (mental health and substance abuse) and intellectual developmental disabilities. Fort Bend County BHS provides a critical role in the coordination of services, the training, as well as the provision of mental health services to the courts including competency to stand trial evaluations. The addition of a licensed psychologist has enhanced the timeliness of evaluations as well as the ability to respond to court ordered requests. The referrals have increased drastically and after six months, the capacity has already been exceeded. Data is being collected as well as continuous quality improvement processes being developed to guide future expansion of services and programs. Support and training for judiciary and court staff is also needed.

To address the increasing concern of human trafficking, Fort Bend County representatives from Fort Bend County Judge's Office, Precinct 3 Commissioner Andy Meyer's Office, County Attorney's Office, District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, Juvenile Probation Department, Community Supervision and Corrections Department, and Behavioral Health Services work collaboratively to increase awareness and resources. This group has worked throughout the year to bring increased awareness to the community on this important issue and to discuss how we can work together to address this growing problem. Training has been provided to juvenile probation staff, adult probation, child advocates, law enforcement, legal professionals, community members, educators and providers.

Continued collaboration among the criminal justice system is essential to ensure that efficient and effective processes are developed and support is provided to components of

the system (Judges, court personnel, law enforcement, CSCD, DA, attorneys, etc.).

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Limited access to Behavioral Health Services for children at risk of involvement or involved in the juvenile justice system including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of inpatient psychiatric beds • Lack of crisis stabilization services • Limited access to behavioral health services (substance abuse and mental health) • Increased need for trauma focused interventions • Limited access to family supports • Limited access to continuity of care • Lack of wraparound supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Health and Human Services, et al (1999) Otto et al, 1992, Edens & Otto, 1997. • Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department • Fort Bend County Community Supervision and Corrections Department • Fort Bend County Health & Human Services • Fort Bend County Women’s Center • “A Needs Assessment of Fort Bend County,” LBJ School of Public Affairs at University of Texas and The George Foundation (2006 and 2011) • “Community profile – Fort Bend County Homeless and Marginally Housed,” Office of Community Projects, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Houston • Datas treatment outcomes study, 1997 • FBISD “Pride Survey” 2009 • FBISD 2011 police data (gang involvement) • LCISD Safe and Drug Free Schools Survey, 2007 • Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Juvenile Diversion Project: Needs Assessment Report (September 2013)
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>The Fort Bend County juvenile justice system continues to be a main provider of mental health services to children. In the juvenile justice system the number of youth diagnosed with mental illness is significantly greater than that in the general population. It is estimated that up to 70% of the youth in the juvenile justice system have at least one mental health disorder and approximately 20% have a serious mental illness.¹ There is agreement among both mental health and correction systems that many of these youth would be better served in community based programs with clinically appropriate interventions and supports.²</p>	

¹ 1. Joseph J. Coccozza and Kathleen R. Skowrya, “Youth with Mental Health Disorders: Issues and Emerging Responses,” *Juvenile Justice*, 7 (April 2000): 6; available at www.ncmhjj.com/pdfs/publications/Youth_with_Mental_Health_Disorders.pdf.

² National Health Policy Forum: Mental Health and Juvenile Justice: Moving Toward More effective Systems of Care ; available at http://www.nhpf.org/library/issue-briefs/IB805_JuvJustice_07-22-05.pdf

In Fort Bend County, the lack of comprehensive and coordinated services for youth with serious mental illness has resulted in the juvenile probation department (including the detention facility) becoming the assessment, stabilization and even treatment center for many of these youth. The most recent Needs Assessment of Fort Bend County states that the lack of services for the mentally ill has resulted in “mental health becoming a law enforcement issue.”³ The same study also indicated the scarcity of mental health services especially for the poor as a priority need for the county. Mental health services for youth, especially those with no insurance or on Medicaid, and with complex behavioral health needs is a significant need in Fort Bend County.

Over the past decade, Fort Bend County Probation Department has experienced a significant increase in the number of youth with mental health issues. Although the total number of juvenile cases has slightly decreased over the last several years, it is estimated that the number of cases involving mental health disorders, has nearly doubled. A study completed by the Fort Bend Juvenile Probation Department (FBJPD) found that 18% to 22% of the youth in juvenile detention (between 2005 and 2009) were on psychotropic medication. The most recent data obtained from FBJPD indicated that 40% to 45% of the youth in detention are on psychotropic medications. The juvenile justice system, much like the adult criminal system, has become the default system for providing mental health services to youth. Unfortunately, this is often the start of a cycle with the criminal justice system leading into adulthood.

As part of the 1115 Waiver Behavioral Health Juvenile Diversion project, a needs assessment was conducted to identify the needs of youth with complex behavioral health needs and to develop community-based interventions that are effective at diverting youth from incarceration as well as improving functional outcomes. For purposes of this needs assessment, information was gathered using a multi-method, multi-informant data collection process, which began with a review of previous mapping, needs assessment, and community plan reports to examine the current capacity and utilization patterns of behavioral health services for youth in the juvenile justice system in the county. The results of the needs assessment indicated that:

- Approximately 70% of juvenile justice-involved youth have a mental illness. Mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and disruptive behavior disorders are among the most common mental illnesses.
- Co-occurring disorders are common. Recidivism rates among juveniles are alarmingly high, particularly among youth with mental illness.
- Fort Bend County is faced with similar trends and challenges compared to state and national trends.
- There are currently very limited options for crisis intervention services for juveniles with mental illness in Fort Bend County.

The majority of youth have multiple diagnoses (mental health, substance abuse, learning

³ http://www.rgkcenter.org/sites/default/files/file/research/FB%20Report_for_posting.pdf

Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Juvenile Diversion Project: Needs Assessment Report (September 2013)

disabilities, and developmental disabilities) and multiple stressors. The interventions that are most needed to address youth’s needs include: individual and family counseling services, trauma-focused interventions, and prevention and early intervention services.

Potential Response to Problem

We know that many children involved in the juvenile justice system are at high risk for adult criminal behavior. We also know that successful interventions and prevention can make a difference. Many of the processes and services developed for adults can also benefit the youth in Fort Bend County. For example, additional training of law enforcement on how to respond to mental illness, development of crisis interventions teams, crisis stabilization services, intensive treatment services, wraparound services and aftercare are necessary services for both adults and children.

Fort Bend County has also developed a “behavioral health juvenile diversionary” project as part of the 1115 Waiver initiative. The program will divert youth with complex behavioral health needs such as serious mental illness or a combination of mental illness and intellectual developmental disabilities, substance abuse and physical health issues from initial or further involvement with the juvenile system and to support them in their communities. Services are individualized and community based and include assessment, multi-disciplinary treatment planning, crisis stabilization services, family supports, respite, specialized therapies (trauma focused interventions, cognitive behavioral interventions), medication management, case management and wraparound supports. In addition, expand mental health intervention teams that work with high risk students and crisis situations (in the schools, communities). Teams should have the capacity to respond to crisis as well as support the recovery process.

Fort Bend County is also the site of the *Infant Toddler Court Initiative* for abused/maltreated infants and toddlers. This specialty court focuses on early interventions for abuse and neglected birth to 3-year olds and their families. This court initiative recognizes the importance of early intervention, healing trauma and repairing the relationship between a child and their parent and improving the odds for the youngest and most vulnerable victims. Ultimately, this specialty court focuses on breaking the cycle of abuse and the cradle to prison pipeline.

Priority #5	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Increased demand for mental health services including screening and assessment, mental health nursing services, treatment planning,</p>	<p><u>Fort Bend Women’s Center</u> Fort Bend Women’s Center has provided neurotherapy to clients with TBI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 total participants have completed some or all of the neurofeedback program (16 in housing, 16 in non-resident, 5 in shelter).

<p>continuity of care, substance abuse services and psychiatric services for domestic violence victims and persons on probation and in jail that have suffered Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average percent changes in scores of assessments, measured before and after neurofeedback training (reductions indicate a lowering of negative symptoms): WHODAS 2.0 -28% DSM-5 Cross Cutting -47% DSM-5 Measure for Depression -68% DSM-5 Measure for Generalized Anxiety -64% DSM-5 Measure for PTSD -55% DSM-5 Measure of Substance Use -100% (only 1 participant reported using illicit substances before Neurofeedback)
---	--

Potential Response to Problem

The Fort Bend County Women’s Center is seeking increased mental health screening and treatment in regards to Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) as it affects victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Women who are abused often suffer injury to their head, neck, and face, which results in TBI. The high potential for women who are abused to have mild to severe TBI is a growing concern, since the effects can cause irreversible psychological and physical harm. Women who are abused are more likely to have repeated injuries to the head. As injuries accumulate, likelihood of recovery dramatically decreases. In addition, sustaining another head trauma prior to the complete healing of the initial injury may be fatal.

The Women’s Center uses the HELPS TBI screening instrument as a tool to determine eligibility for a Neurofeedback program with a Board Certified trained clinician in Neurofeedback. The Center is also training two counselors to be board certified. After determination of eligibility, we assess using a multitude of instruments that include the World Health Organization Disability Assessment Schedule 2.0 (WHODAS 2.0), the DSM-5 Cross Cutting Symptom Measure, DSM-5 Severity Measure for Depression, DSM-5 Severity Measure for Generalized Anxiety Disorder, DSM-5 Severity Measure for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and the DSM-5 Measure of Current Illicit Substance Use.

A woman with TBI who enters the criminal justice system may face additional challenges. She may appear to be disorganized, aggressive, temperamental, or confused. If her behaviors are misunderstood or misdiagnosed as indicating a mental health disability, which often happens, she may have difficulty obtaining custody or being credited as a victim or reliable witness. An increase in awareness of TBI among advocates and program staff will result in increased sensitivity, screening, referrals, accommodations and ultimately, better outcomes for women who are abused.

Domestic violence advocates and program staff should consistently screen women entering shelters and programs for TBI-related symptoms.

Literacy Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
<p>Teaching adults how to read and provide basic literacy skills to function in society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Council of Fort Bend • National Assessment of Adult Literacy, 2003 • Texas Learns, 2005 • National Institute for Literacy
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Literacy is defined as the ability to read, write, compute and use technology at a level that enables an individual to reach his or her full potential as a parent, employee and community member. Functional illiteracy is a term used to describe reading and writing skills that are inadequate "to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level." Functional illiteracy is contrasted with illiteracy in the strict sense, meaning the inability to read or write simple sentences in any language. Adult low literacy can be connected to almost every socio-economic issue that exists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Literacy is an over-reaching issue that affects each of the categories detailed in the Fort Bend County Community Plan; juvenile services, victim services, law enforcement and health/behavioral health.</i> 	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>The mission of the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County is to improve family, community, and professional lives through adult education. The organization serves between 1,500 and 2,000 students per year and has been serving the Fort Bend community for 26 years. The Literacy Council of Fort Bend County is the only literacy provider in Fort Bend County accredited by ProLiteracy, the recognized accreditation provider.</p> <p>Adults need strong literacy skills to raise children to have strong literacy skills. Learning to read begins long before a child enters school. It begins when parents read to their children, buy their children books and encourage their children to read. The research is clear: parents who are poor readers don't read as often to their children as do parents who are strong readers; children who are not read to enter school less prepared for learning to read than do other children.</p> <p><u>By teaching adults, we reach the child:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults need strong literacy skills to be good employees. • Adults need strong literacy skills to be active in their communities. <p>Further, political campaigns often stress the need for "informed voters." However, an individual cannot be well informed if he or she cannot access written campaign literature, read newspapers or understand television coverage of the issues and</p>	

candidates.

- One in three adults in the U.S. cannot read this sentence.
- Texas has 6.5 million residents who speak a language other than English at home, almost double the national percentage, composing 38.6% of the Texas population.
- English is never spoken in 31 million homes in the U.S.
- Some families have fewer than 4 books of any kind in their home.
- As the education level of adults improves, so does their children’s success in school. Helping low-literate adults improve their basic skills has a direct and measurable impact on both the education and quality of life of their children.

Priority #2

Problem Identified

Data

Teach adults how to read, write and speak English serves varied demographics in Fort Bend County

- Literacy Council of Fort Bend 2014-2015
- U.S. Census 2014 update
- 2010 U.S. Census

Problem Details

Literacy Awareness:

- A language other than English is spoken in 37.9% of Fort Bend County homes. This compares with 34.7% in Texas.
- In 2009, Fort Bend County was reported with a 24% rate of individuals lacking basic literacy skills. This compares to Texas at 19% and neighboring Harris County at 21%. It also compares to surrounding counties, which report the following rates: Wharton - 20%; Waller - 20%; Brazoria - 13%; Galveston - 13% and Montgomery - 11%.
 - *This means that approximately 1 in 4 residents of Fort Bend County lack basic literacy skills. In 1998, the rate was 1 in 5. This is a trend that continues to worsen.*

Potential Response to Problem

Fort Bend County is a county with 875 area miles. The Literacy Council of Fort Bend County has expanded to include an Outreach Program with approximately 21 partner sites which are strategically located in all major population areas in Fort Bend County: Sugar Land (main campus), Richmond, Rosenberg, Missouri City, Katy (Cinco Ranch), Fulshear, Stafford, Arcola and Needville. This is an effort to reach as many students seeking our services as possible *where they live*. Outreach partner sites help decrease over crowding at the Sugar Land campus, decreases the cost of transportation for students and tutors and ultimately serves to increase class attendance for students.

The Literacy Council of Fort Bend County has approximately 200 active volunteer tutors who provide 3-6 hours of tutoring each week to adult literacy students at all locations. Tutors attend and complete a 12-hour tutor training in order to provide their volunteer service. Since 1987, volunteer tutors have returned nearly \$18 million dollars of volunteer time to the Fort Bend County community.

Literacy Council of Fort Bend County demographics indicate:

- Our adult students are predominately women (78% vs. 22% male).
- Current total program ethnicity is: 42% Latino/Hispanic; 39% Asian American; 9% African American; 10% White.
- There is a waiting list for basic literacy, (ESL) English as a Second Language and GED classes at the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County.

To provide services countywide, additional resources are needed, including continued tutor training, additional student materials and teaching equipment, which is costly. With volunteers already in place, financial support provided to the Literacy Council ensures that the return on investment to Fort Bend County is significant.

When adults learn to speak, read and write English, the impact on themselves, their families and the community is long-lasting. Families are impacted as job prospects improve and students gain self-confidence. Schools are impacted as communication improves between parents and teachers.

Priority #3	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Illiteracy and crime are closely related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Institute for Literacy • Wikipedia • United Way of Texas
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p><u>Law Enforcement:</u> Adults need strong literacy skills to avoid crime. There is a clear correlation between adult illiteracy and crime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare. • Over 70% of inmates in America’s prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level. • Dropouts costs Texas \$9.6 billion per year. 	

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Adults need strong literacy skills to be healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Health Strategies • National Network of libraries and medicine • PubMed.gov
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Health literacy includes the ability to understand instructions on prescription drug bottles, appointment slips, medical education brochures, doctor's directions and consent forms. It also involves the ability to negotiate complex health care systems. Individuals with low health literacy are unable to read a prescription bottle to administer medicine to their child or family member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with low functional health literacy are less likely to understand written and oral information given by physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and insurers. • When self-reported health status is taken into account, patients with low health literacy skills had fewer doctor visits but used substantially more hospital resources. • Poor literacy is associated with poor health status. <p>Health literacy is not simply the ability to read. In today's patient-centered healthcare environment, it requires complex reading, listening, analytical, and decision-making skills, and the ability to apply these skills to health situations. In a growing elderly population, health literacy becomes increasingly more important.</p>	

Priority #5	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Need to further education; provide GED classes and transitions to post-secondary education to better prepare adult students for workforce skills and further their education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2010 US Census Bureau • Literacy Council of Fort Bend 2014-2015 • 2007 Needs Assessment of Fort Bend County • The David H. Murdock Institute, 2007 • Accelerate Texas, 2012
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>In many areas of Fort Bend County, the percentage of the population age 25 and older without a high school diploma is as high as over 20%. There are over 5 million adults in Texas without a high school diploma. And, Texas has slipped from 45th to last among states ranked by percent for citizens age 25 and older who have a high school diploma or GED.</p>	

Potential Response to Problem

The Literacy Council began its GED program in 2005. In just eight years, there has been a significant increase in registrations for this program. To meet the increasing demand, GED classes at the Literacy Council of Fort Bend County expanded from 3 in 2008-2009 to 6 today. Each GED class has individual instruction provided by a class instructor. These instructors earn a stipend per class due to the nature of the curriculum, the structure of the program and the common goal of the students.

Workers must be able to read safety regulations and warnings so they and their co-workers can stay safe on the job. Working in a team means that employees must also be able to communicate clearly with one another.

- Literacy enhances the skills of the workforce which result in a positive influence on work behavior. By enhancing skills, one can earn more which brings economic prosperity at both micro (individual) and macro (rise in real GDP) levels.

Literacy and economic development have endless companionship. Some of the benefits of literacy on economic development include the following:

- Literacy develops a sense of responsibility among the common man, by which one can become a good citizen.
- Literacy helps to enhance the communication skills among the people. Developed communication skills help an individual contact more employers in order to get better job opportunities. Developed communication skills also help to maintain pleasant relationships between the employer and employees, which reduces the conflicts among them and in this way, the productivity of the firm.
- Along with the development of professional and communication skills, literacy and education develop social skills by which an individual learns to move in the society.
- By enhancing the skills among the workers, the organization can get maximum productivity.

Literacy and economic prosperity are directly proportional and have a great influence on each other. As people are literate, they will work much better to satisfy their own needs; simultaneously, the economy will grow and develop. As the workforce is educated and skilled, an economy will prosper. Literacy does not automatically generate socio-economic development, but because literacy can enable individuals to have a wider range of choices in terms of education and skills-development, literacy can lead to greater knowledge and skills and can therefore permit individuals to enter into higher-paid forms of employment.

Literacy is the pillar on which the major part of an economy stands. If the pillar is strong enough to hold the economy, problems can be reduced and the economy will stand. If literacy is weak, the economy may be pushed downward or fall.

For continued economic development it is important to strengthen the pillar of literacy. It requires strategic planning and financial resources to facilitate literacy programs. The financial resources required for the development of literacy programs may not be

considered an expense; in fact, it is an investment which gives fruitful results in the future. By breaking the cycle of illiteracy, individuals can have a positive impact on themselves, their families, their community and the workforce.

In essence, literacy is the foundation on which all other personal learning, growing and development takes place. By realizing a sense of urgency for providing basic skills to those in need in a quickly expanding diverse population, Fort Bend County will continue to be a premier place to live, work and raise a family. Currently, there is currently a waiting list of GED students awaiting class availability.

Other Areas Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

Priority #1	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Limited public transportation within Fort Bend County	Fort Bend County Public Transportation Department
<i>Problem Details</i>	
<p>Even with the public transportation services available in Fort Bend County and the addition of the point deviation route services listed below, there are still gaps in the types of transportation services needed. Currently the Fort Bend County, County Wide Demand Response service is denying approximately 160 trips per day because the buses are booked. Fort Bend County residents wishing to access services outside of Fort Bend County have difficulty finding affordable reliable service into adjoining counties. Often providers within those counties will not provide services for a non-resident and/or the provider does not offer services during the hours or days in which the service is being requested.</p> <p>Even local Fort Bend County services are often beyond the immediate access to children and families. These services include parenting classes, therapy, sexual assault exams, and drug and alcohol assessments and other court ordered requirements that are held in the evenings and on weekends, when Fort Bend County’s public transportation service is not operating.</p> <p>Lack of transportation is a continued hindrance for individuals seeking community services. This includes seniors, medical patients, Fort Bend County Women’s Center clients and other low-income individuals.</p>	
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>Fort Bend County officially formed a Public Transportation Department in June 2005 to provide residents with safe and efficient public transportation services while maintaining service quality and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>Demand Response Fort Bend County currently offers county-wide shared ride bus services to the citizens of Fort Bend County. The Transportation service provides trips that begin and end within Fort Bend County.</p> <p>Rides must be scheduled in advance. Rides can be scheduled up to thirty days in advance or within 1 business day in advance of the needed trip. Reservations are accepted between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding County holidays). Rides are scheduled for first drop-off by 8:00.a.m. and last pick up at 5:00 p.m. Services are offered Monday through Friday excluding County</p>	

holidays. Trip fares are \$1.00 per person each way. This is a curb-to-curb service; however, persons with disabilities can request door-to-door service.

Commuter Service

Fort Bend County also offers commuter services known as Fort Bend Express. Services are offered from three (3) park and ride locations along the I-69 Corridor. Routes serving the Texas Medical Center, Greenway Plaza and Galleria areas of Houston can be accessed from these park and ride lots. No advance reservations are needed to access these services. Schedules are available on the County website. Services are not offered on weekends or holidays. Discounted ticket books are also offered.

Richmond/Rosenberg Point Deviation Route Service

Fort Bend County also offers a 3 point deviation routes operating within the cities of Richmond and Rosenberg. No advance reservations are needed for individuals accessing the routes from designated pick up/drop off locations. Individuals living within ¾ of a mile of the routes who cannot access the designated stops due to a disability can request that the bus deviate from the route for their pick up. Route deviations must be scheduled in advance. Schedules are available on the County website. Services are not offered on weekends or holidays. Discounted ticket books are also offered.

Priority #2	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Lack of available and affordable medical care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Census Bureau’s 2002 Current Population Survey, as reported by “Families USA in November 2003 • TexCare Partnership • Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) • AccessHealth
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>The TexCare Partnership handles the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) providing health coverage to low-income children in Texas. However, as of 2001, approximately 973,000 low-income Texas children remained uninsured according to the U.S. Census Bureau.</p> <p>The Census Bureau released data in October 2004 that reported that Texas has the highest rate of uninsured residents in the nation at 25.1%. As far as Fort Bend County is concerned, 22% of children (under age 18) have no insurance coverage and 23.4% of Fort Bend County adults (over 19 years of age) have no health insurance.</p> <p>Fort Bend County does not have a traditional public health care delivery system or a public transportation system in most of the county that can assist individuals without</p>	

transportation to get to medical visits. Fort Bend County Health & Human Services does not provide primary health care services.

AccessHealth provides primary health care services for the poor and near poor (family income below 200% of poverty) of Fort Bend County. They are the only provider of sliding fee scale health care services for people of all life cycles in the service area.

Priority #3	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Limited affordable and available child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WorkSource – Gulf Coast Workforce Board • William S. Smith Sr. Tri-County Child Development Council, Inc.
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>Neighborhood Centers, Inc. has contracted with The WorkSource to provide childcare services. In a 13-county region including Fort Bend County, more than 20,500 children receive subsidized childcare each day. However, there are 8,500+ children on the waiting list.</p> <p>The William S. Smith Sr. Tri-County Child Development Council, Inc. Head Start Programs serve the child development needs of pre-school children (birth to 5 years) and their low-income families. They have 12 centers in Fort Bend County: 4 locations in the Richmond/Rosenberg area; and, 8 locations on the east side of the county. They currently serve a total of 834 children at these sites, with a waiting list of up to 600.</p>	

Priority #4	
<i>Problem Identified</i>	<i>Data</i>
Limited bilingual services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Census – 2000 • Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce • Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department
<i>Potential Response to Problem</i>	
<p>According to the U.S. Census Bureau, profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000 in Fort Bend County, Texas, 30.7% of the population speaks languages other than English in the home.</p> <p>Today, Fort Bend County has the ethnic diversity predicted for the U.S. in 2050. In 2005, the population was 11.2% Asian/Pacific Islander, 19.8% Black, 21.1% Hispanic, 46.2%</p>	

Anglo, and 1.7% Other. Fort Bend County is one of the first minority/majority counties in the United States, where no one ethnic group is more than 50% of the population.

An example of limited bilingual services is the Psychology Department at the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department. One of the two staff psychologists is bilingual; however 80% of this professional's time is spent in crisis intervention and evaluation. Therefore, this individual can only have a caseload of 3-5 families. Additionally, there are very few bilingual therapists associated with the law enforcement agencies throughout Fort Bend County.

With a growing number of Asian residents comes the growing need for services to be provided in the Asian dialects. The ever-increasing Hispanic population also creates a greater demand for services to be provided in Spanish.

From court interpreters to law enforcement interpreters who work directly in the field to counselors, every field is finding an increase in demand for bilingual services.

Resources Available

Included below are resources identified by the Fort Bend County Community Planning Team that are available to provide services that could potentially help in closing criminal justice gaps:

Juvenile Justice:

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Agency Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
County Courts at Law Courts (4 courts)	Governmental	Administers justice for major criminal cases, major civil action, juvenile dispositions and detention, probate and mental health cases.
Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office	Governmental	Represents the people of the State of Texas in all felony and misdemeanor criminal cases, represents the State in juvenile matters, asset forfeiture cases, Department of Human Services matters, and Victim Assistance Coordinator.
Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department	Governmental	Handles juveniles between the ages of 10 and 17 referred by law enforcement agencies, schools and parents for delinquent conduct and conduct indicating a need for supervision. The department's mission is to rehabilitate delinquent children.
Fort Bend Partnership for Youth, Inc.	Nonprofit	Mission is to reduce youth involvement with the juvenile justice system through the support of mentoring and educational programs. Supports a variety of programs for youth and families involved with the juvenile probation department.
Youth for Christ	Faith based	Provides spiritual counseling and religious services for youth in the juvenile detention center.
Galveston-Houston Diocese Special Youth Services	Faith based	Provides spiritual counseling and religious services to youth involved with the juvenile probation department, e.g., detained youth
Parks Youth Ranch	Non-profit	Providing shelter, counseling and life changing services to at-risk and homeless youth in Fort Bend County.
Fort Bend County Truancy Court	Governmental	Established to process the filings of persons who have failed to attend school, or who are a parent who is contributing to the non-attendance of a student which is required by law.

Law Enforcement:

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Agency Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Community Supervision and Corrections Department	Governmental	Arm of the County Courts of Law and District Courts of Fort Bend County. Supervises felony and misdemeanor adult offenders in the community and provides tools for rehabilitation.
Fort Bend Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement	To protect the lives, property and rights of all people in Fort Bend County.
Justice of the Peace Courts (5 in Fort Bend County)	Governmental	Must act in a neutral capacity to serve all citizens, law enforcement agencies, merchants, school districts and various other county and state regulatory agencies that file either civil or criminal actions. As coroner, the JP must accurately and with efficiency and consideration to all parties, determine cause of death and decide what outside agencies to employ to assist in this responsibility.
Law enforcement: cities, county and schools	Law enforcement	To protect the lives, property and rights of all people in the various jurisdictions and students in the school district.

Victim Services:

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Agency Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Child Advocates of Fort Bend 1) Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) 2) Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)	Nonprofit	1) CASA: To provide a voice to speak on behalf of abused and neglected children who are involved in the legal system through trained court appointed volunteers. 2) CAC: To lessen the emotional trauma to child victims by coordinating the investigation, assessment, prosecution and treatment of sexual and serious physical abuse.
Fort Bend County Women's Center	Nonprofit	Provides temporary housing and other wrap-around services to women (and their children, if any) who have been victimized. Crisis intervention counseling. Rape crisis program.
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services	Governmental	Child protective services; child abuse prevention; assessment of suspected abuse/neglect; services to families involved in abuse/neglect cases.

Parks Youth Ranch	Nonprofit	Providing shelter, counseling and life changing services to at-risk and homeless youth in Fort Bend County.
-------------------	-----------	---

Health / Medical / Substance Abuse:

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Agency Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG) for Children & Youth	Governmental, school districts, and nonprofits	This group is comprised of representatives of various community agencies such as Texana MHMRA, the school districts, the juvenile probation department and some nonprofits. They staff specific cases in order to come up with resources and a plan for the child including residential placement.
Fort Bend County Health & Human Services	Governmental	Clinical Health Services: Immunizations; Screening (blood pressure, glucose, HIV); Disease treatment (Tuberculosis, sexually-transmitted diseases) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Social Services Veteran’s Services Animal Control Environmental Health Public Health Preparedness
AccessHealth	Nonprofit	Screening for citizen eligibility. Prenatal care, delivery services, family planning, pediatrics, WIC, adult care, psychotherapy and social services.
Fort Bend Regional Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse	Nonprofit	Education, assessment, counseling, youth & adult services, certified offender programs (DWI, MIP, Drug Offender and Tobacco)
Mental Health Association of Fort Bend County	Nonprofit	Education; information; community resource directory; annual screenings for alcohol abuse, anxiety, depression, eating disorders.
Planned Parenthood of Fort Bend, Inc.	Nonprofit	Outpatient medical care; counseling, referral and community programs on reproductive health and sexuality.
Pregnancy Resource Center of Fort Bend County	Nonprofit	Crisis pregnancy center; free pregnancy tests with information regarding fetal development and alternatives to abortion; information and referrals.
Texana Center	Governmental	To ensure the provision of a comprehensive array of quality, cost effective services focused on consumer choice and satisfaction for people with mental retardation, development delays

and mental illness.

Prevention / Intervention:

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Agency Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
American Red Cross	Nonprofit	Assist people with recovery from disaster, assist servicemen and their families, transportation services to medical and social service appointments.
Boy Scouts	Nonprofit	Scouting programs for boys 6 or 7 years to 21 years of age.
Boys & Girls Club of Fort Bend County	Nonprofit	Recreational facilities and programs for high-risk boys and girls in the East End of Fort Bend County.
East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, Inc.	Nonprofit	Full service food pantry and rent, mortgage, utilities assistance. (By appointment only.)
ESCAPE Family Resource Center	Nonprofit	Parenting programs for families.
Family Outreach East Fort Bend	Nonprofit	Volunteers trained to prevent child abuse; parenting classes.
Family Service Center	Nonprofit	Preventive, supportive and therapeutic services for individuals, families and communities.
Fort Bend Dispute Resolution Center		Mediation training, peer mediation in schools, and mediation services for family, business, church, neighbors.
Fort Bend Family YMCA	Nonprofit	Serving East Fort Bend County
Fort Bend Independent School District	School District	In addition to regular academics for kindergarten through 12 th grade, they have literacy services for adults and Extended Day programs at elementary schools.
Girl Scouts	Nonprofit	Scouting programs for girls ages 5 to 17.
Gulf Coast Careers		Job listings, job market information, career counseling, job search resources, skills training, and employer services.
Lamar Consolidated Independent School District	School District	Provides education for grades kindergarten through 12.

Interagency Cooperation

The following is a description of how the various resources listed in the previous pages could cooperatively work together to accomplish the goal of closing identified gaps in services:

By using the Community Plan structure, a series of meetings could be held throughout the year following the submission of the Plan. The topic and invitation list of each of these meetings would be very specific, focusing on one of the priority issues and those agencies that have linkage to that issue. Discussion could be developed on how the participating agencies could work together to try to eliminate some of the identified gaps in service.

Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Fort Bend County Community Planning Team works in conjunction with other planning groups in the county to ensure a regular exchange of ideas. Individuals active in the planning process generally serve on many of these committees and share mutual concerns.

The Fort Bend County Community Planning Team strives to meet periodically to review the Plan and make necessary additions and deletions. At least one formal meeting of the entire group is held each fall, but agency and community representatives typically submit suggestions and changes via telephone and e-mail throughout the year to the Community Planning Coordinator.

Drafts and annual updates of the Community Plan are circulated by e-mail with requests for comments, changes, etc. Wherever possible e-mail is used to reduce the need for meetings, printing, postage, etc.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Group to improve outcomes for Fort Bend County families struggling with problems described in the Plan's focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Fort Bend County agencies and organizations to address problems with local funds as well as grant funds from multiple state and federal sources. To the extent that these funds are available, the Community Planning Team will continue to encourage agencies to provide programming that addresses the outlined focus areas.

Contact Information

Fort Bend County Community Planning Coordinator

Jenetha Jones, Grants Coordinator
401 Jackson Street, Richmond, Texas 77469
Telephone: (281) 341-8608 / Fax (281) 341-8609
Email: jenetha.jones@fortbendcountytexas.gov

Fort Bend County Community Planning Liaison from Houston-Galveston Area Council

Jim Mahood
Telephone: (832) 681-2511 / Fax: (713) 993-2412
Email: james.mahood@h-gac.com

This Plan is available on-line at the following URL address:

<http://www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/index.aspx?page=1005>