



---

SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS PERMANENT JUDICIAL  
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

---

**Texas Court Improvement Program (CIP)  
FY 2009 Assessment of the Basic,  
Data Collection and Analysis,  
and Training Grants**

**December 30, 2009**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION..... 3**

**ADMINISTRATION ..... 4**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process ..... 4**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance..... 6**

**IMPACT SUMMARY ..... 8**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION ..... 10**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS..... 11**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day ..... 11**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day ..... 12**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day ..... 12**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day..... 13**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation ..... 13**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation ..... 15**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership ..... 16**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project..... 16**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court..... 18**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website..... 19**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development..... 20**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study..... 21**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS ..... 22**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK)..... 22**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training ..... 25**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS..... 25**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training..... 26**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship ..... 28**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships ..... 29**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ..... 31**  
**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS..... 32**  
**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 ..... 33**  
**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 ..... 42**  
**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009..... 44**  
**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE  
TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS..... 47**  
**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE  
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS  
STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 ..... 51**  
**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE ..... 53**  
**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS ..... 54**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... 1**

**INTRODUCTION 3..... 1**

**ADMINISTRATION 4 ..... 1**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process 4 ..... 1**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance 6..... 1**

**IMPACT SUMMARY 8 ..... 1**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION 10 ..... 1**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS 11 ..... 1**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day 11 ..... 1**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day 12 ..... 1**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day 12 ..... 1**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day 13..... 1**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation 13 ..... 1**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation 15 ..... 1**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership 16 ..... 1**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project 16..... 1**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court 18..... 1**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website 19..... 1**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development 20..... 1**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study 21..... 1**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS 22 ..... 1**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK) 22..... 1**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training 25 ..... 1**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS 25 ..... 1**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training 26..... 1**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship 28 ..... 1**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships 29 ..... 1**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 31..... 2**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS 32..... 2**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 33..... 2**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 42..... 2**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009 44 2**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS 47. 2**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 51 2**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE 53 ..... 2**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS 54..... 2**

**INTRODUCTION..... 5**

**ADMINISTRATION ..... 6**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process ..... 6**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance..... 9**

**IMPACT SUMMARY ..... 10**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION ..... 12**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS ..... 13**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day ..... 14**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day ..... 14**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day ..... 15**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day..... 15**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation ..... 15**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation ..... 17**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership ..... 18**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project..... 18**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court..... 20**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website..... 21**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development..... 22**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study..... 23**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS ..... 24**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK)..... 24**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training ..... 27**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS..... 27**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training..... 28**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship ..... 30**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships ..... 31**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ..... 33**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS..... 34**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 ..... 35**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 ..... 44**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009..... 46**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE  
TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS..... 49**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE  
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS  
STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 ..... 53**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE ..... 55**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS ..... 56**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... 1**

**INTRODUCTION 3..... 1**

**ADMINISTRATION 4 ..... 1**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process 4 ..... 1**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance 6..... 1**

**IMPACT SUMMARY 8 ..... 1**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION 10 ..... 1**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS 11 ..... 1**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day 11 ..... 1**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day 12 ..... 1**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day 12 ..... 1**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day 13..... 1**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation 13 ..... 1**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation 15 ..... 1**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership 16..... 1**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project 16..... 1**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court 18..... 1**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website 19..... 1**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development 20..... 1**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study 21..... 1**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS 22 ..... 1**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK) 22..... 1**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training 25 ..... 1**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS 25..... 1**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training 26..... 1**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship 28 ..... 1**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships 29 ..... 1**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 31..... 2**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS 32 ..... 2**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 33..... 2**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 42..... 2**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009 44 2**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS 47. 2**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 51 2**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE 53 ..... 2**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS 54..... 2**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS 1..... 3**

**INTRODUCTION 3 1..... 3**

**ADMINISTRATION 4 1 ..... 3**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process 4 1 ..... 3**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance 6 1..... 3**

**IMPACT SUMMARY 8 1 ..... 3**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION 10 1 ..... 3**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS 11 1 ..... 3**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day 11 1 ..... 3**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day 12 1 ..... 3**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day 12 1 ..... 3**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day 13 1..... 3**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation 13 1 ..... 3**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation 15 1 ..... 3**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership 16 1..... 3**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project 16 1..... 3**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court 18 1..... 3**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website 19 1..... 3**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development 20 1..... 3**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study 21 1..... 3**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS 22 1 ..... 3**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK) 22 1..... 3**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training 25 1 ..... 3**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS 25 1 ..... 3**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training 26 1..... 3**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship 28 1 ..... 3**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships 29 1 ..... 3**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 31 2..... 4**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS 32 2 ..... 4**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 33 2..... 4**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 42 2..... 4**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009 44 2 ..... 4**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS 47 2 ..... 4**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 51 2 ..... 4**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE 53 2 ..... 4**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS 54 2..... 4**

**INTRODUCTION 5..... 4**

**ADMINISTRATION 6 ..... 4**

**1.1 Grant Application and Review Process 6 ..... 4**

**2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance 9..... 4**

**IMPACT SUMMARY 10 ..... 4**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION 12 ..... 4**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS 13 ..... 4**

**3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day 14 ..... 4**

**4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day 14 ..... 4**

**5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day 15 ..... 4**

**6.1 Denton County Adoption Day 15..... 4**

**7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation 15 ..... 4**

**8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation 17 ..... 4**

**9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership 18..... 4**

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project 18..... 4**

11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court 20..... 4

12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website 21..... 4

13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development 22..... 4

14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study 23..... 4

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS 24 ..... 4**

15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK) 24..... 4

16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training 27 ..... 4

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS 27 ..... 4**

17.1 NACC Attorney Training 28..... 4

18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship 30 ..... 4

19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships 31 ..... 5

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 33..... 5**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS 34 ..... 5**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 35..... 5**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 44..... 5**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009 46 5**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS 49. 5**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 53 5**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE 55 ..... 5**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS 56..... 5**

**INTRODUCTION..... 9**

**ADMINISTRATION ..... 10**

1.1 Grant Application and Review Process ..... 11

2.1 Staff Site Visits and Conference Attendance..... 13

**IMPACT SUMMARY ..... 14**

**ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION ..... 16**

**BASIC GRANT PROJECTS ..... 17**

3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day ..... 18

4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day ..... 18

5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day ..... 19

6.1 Denton County Adoption Day..... 19

7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation ..... 20

8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation ..... 22

9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership ..... 23

**10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project..... 23**

**11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court..... 25**

**12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website..... 26**

**13.1 Texas CASA – Expansion and Development..... 27**

**14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study..... 28**

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS ..... 29**

**15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK)..... 29**

**16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training ..... 32**

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS..... 32**

**17.1 NACC Attorney Training..... 33**

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship ..... 35**

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships ..... 36**

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS ..... 38**

**APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS..... 39**

**APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009 ..... 40**

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009 ..... 49**

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009..... 51**

**APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS..... 54**

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009 ..... 58**

**APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE ..... 60**

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS ..... 61**

**INTRODUCTION{TC "INTRODUCTION" \F C \L 1}**

Texas has made significant changes to its federal Court Improvement Program in the past 24 months, primarily by establishing the Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families. The 2007 Supreme Court Order establishing the Commission documents and reflects the careful, two-year deliberative process undertaken to create it. The order not only identifies critical unmet needs in the Texas child welfare system, it also prescribes specific methods to meet those needs by overcoming barriers to safety, permanency, and child and family well-being.

In its order, the Supreme Court created a multidisciplinary body composed of interdependent groups. The 20-member Commission proper heads the other components – a general advisory group called the Collaborative Council, and a set of issue-specific working committees that include ad-hoc and standing committees. Each committee oversees smaller workgroups. Committee members are largely drawn from, but not limited to, the Commission and Collaborative Council.

The formal Commission is composed of an executive-level group of judges, officials from the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) and Child Protective Services (CPS), non-profit foundation and state bar leaders, private attorneys, and legislators and other elected officials. In 2010, the Supreme Court will appoint an elected prosecutor and an attorney who represents parents to the Commission.

The Commission links to the larger stakeholder community through the almost 40-member Collaborative Council, whose members include former foster youth, foster families, attorneys, CASAs, and parent advocates. Representatives from institutions of juvenile justice, mental health and education are also included, as well as representatives from the private provider community, children's advocacy centers and many other child-protection and child and family advocacy groups.

Additionally, Judge John J. Specia, (ret.), former chair of the Task Force on Foster Care and former board member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), stays heavily involved with the Commission as the Jurist in Residence to the Texas Office of Court Administration (OCA). Other members of the former task force have continued their service on the Commission or its committees.

The Commission facilitates a weekly conference call to connect the judicial branch to the executive branch. This meeting provides an opportunity for any interested stakeholder to effectively and efficiently stay tuned in to judicial and executive branch activities, with legislative staff often joining by conference call. Finally, the Commission's carefully developed procedures and process have been simplified into procedural guidelines.

The Commission's inclusive, collaborative structure and broad, high-level membership has injected new energy into, and enhanced the visibility of, the state's court improvement efforts. In a manner consistent with federal guidelines, the Commission manages CIP funds and implements CIP goals through staff-directed projects, contracts for service, and grant awards. Another important role the Commission has taken on in the past 12 months is to expand on its ability to facilitate collaboration among high-level child protection stakeholders throughout the state. The Commission continues to seek to leverage all available resources to improve Texas courts that handle child abuse and neglect cases, including calling on private foundations to invest in projects aimed at satisfying one or more Commission strategies.

#### **{TC "ADMINISTRATION" \F C \L 1}ADMINISTRATION**

The Commission administers CIP funds with support from the Supreme Court of Texas, which provides infrastructure such as office space and utilities and services such as personnel, information technology, purchasing, budgeting, general accounting, janitorial and security.

#### **Admininstration of Grant Funds**

The Court received \$1,911,032.00 on September 16, 2008, \$1,729,516 on December 5, 2008, and a supplemental award of \$184,647.00 on June 5, 2009. This, combined with unspent FY 2007 funds, was obligated and spent to administer the programs detailed in the following report.

The Commission granted 16 CIP awards to subgrantees totaling more than \$2.5 million in FY2009. The Commission also devoted at least \$269,418.00 to staff-directed projects and \$180,000.00 in contracts aimed at fulfilling its CIP strategies.

### 1.1 {tc "New Grant Application and Review Process" \f C \l 2}Grant Application and Review Process

All FY2009 grant recipients applied for grants in a timely manner per grant application instructions posted on the Commission's website at [www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us](http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us).

As in the prior year, a two-step process was employed to ensure consistency both with the Commission's strategic plan adopted in June 2008 and the strategic plan submitted to ACF in August 2008. Generally, if an applicant's short program description met one or more of the five Commission strategies, the applicant was advised to proceed with a full application. In addition, the grant administrator often met in person or on the phone with applicants or others involved with the project to clarify the application and guide the project.

The review process began with an initial review by the grant administrator, who would then make a formal recommendation to one of three standing Commission committees – Basic Projects, Technology, or Training. The committees reviewed each recommendation (and if requested, the full application) and determined whether to further recommend action by the Commission, and the Commission approved or denied committee recommendations at its quarterly meetings. See Commission and Committee members in Appendix A, and Collaborative Council members in Appendix B.

A list of all CIP funded projects with a brief description is shown below.

<b>FY2009 Grant Funded Projects</b>			
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Grant</b>
Brazos Valley	National Adoption Day Activities.	\$800	Basic
Austin Bar Association	National Adoption Day Activities	\$1,600	Basic
Bowie County	National Adoption Day Activities	\$800	Basic
Denton County	National Adoption Day Activities	\$1,600	Basic
Travis County Office of Child Representative	Public Defender model of representing children in CPS cases	\$300,000	Basic
Travis County Office of Parental Representation	Public Defender model of representing parents in CPS cases	\$300,000	Basic
ChildSafe and the Family Drug Court: Partnership to Promote Healing (Bexar County)	Assessment and coordination of child trauma services for drug court	\$55,781	Basic

FY 2009 Texas CIP Grants Assessment

Texas Foster Youth Justice Project	Foster youth hotline and legal representation.	\$80,000	Basic
Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court	Case management services for drug courts that includes a research component.	\$100,000	Basic
Texas Lawyers for Children Website	Web-based legal resource for attorneys	\$250,000	Basic
Texas CASA – Expansion and Development	Statewide training and expansion	\$220,502	Basic
University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution	Mediation Study	\$8088	Basic
Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK)	Data management, software, and court services development and coordination	\$566,277	Data / Basic/ Training
OCA CPC Judicial Support & Training	Judicial support and training	\$24,958	Data/ Training
National Association of Counsel for Children	National Conference to be held in Texas in October 2010	\$100,000	Training
Texas Center for the Judiciary	Judicial training, and national conference sponsorship	\$490,456	Training
<b>Total Grants</b>		\$2,500,862	

<b>FY2009 Staff-directed Projects</b>			
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Grant</b>
Attorney Scholarships	ABA Parent Training	\$26,850	Training
Legal Representation Study	Statewide survey / study of legal representation in Texas	\$207,568	Data
Round Table Series	Collaborative discussion of relevant child abuse and neglect issues	\$5,000	Basic/Training
CPS Bench Book	Judicial resource	\$30,000	Basic
Appleseed / PMC Project	Kids in long-term care		Basic
TYC/CPS Project	Dually Managed Youth		Basic
CFSR / PIP Participation	PIP development		Basic
Task Force on Disproportionality	Judicial practices to address And prevent disproportionate Representation of African American Youth in care		Basic

Child Welfare Law Certification	Certification Exam scheduled for Spring 2010		Training
Education of Commission issues and activities	Development of communications regarding Commission issues and activities, through Video, newsletters, articles, and Jurist In Residence communiques		Basic/ Data/ Training
<b>Total Projects</b>		\$269,418.00	

<b>FY2009 Contracts</b>			
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Grant</b>
National Association of Counsel for Children	Attorney ad litem training 9 in FY 2009, 8 in FY 2010	\$180,000	Training
<b>Total Contracts</b>		\$180,000	

### Program Development

The Commission staff engages in several levels of program administration and development through overseeing grant funded projects, managing staff directed projects, staffing committee and commission meetings, and travel to attend and present at various conferences.

### 2.1 Staff {tc "Site Visits and Program Monitoring" \f C \l 2}Site Visits and Conference Attendance

#### Executive Director

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
October 2008	Austin, TX Washington D.C.	OCA Child Protection Court Judicial Training Annual CIP Conference
November 2008	New Braunfels, TX Dallas, TX	Training Committee Meeting Collin County Children's First Meeting
March 2009	Washington, D.C. San Antonio	Summit Planning Meeting Training Committee Meeting
April 2009	Washington, D.C.	Center for Juvenile Justice Reform – Transitioning Youth
May 2009	Midland, TX Dallas, TX	NACC AAL Training Beyond the Bench
June 2009	Dallas, TX	CPS Judicial Conference
July 2009	Chicago, IL Austin, TX Austin, TX Houston, TX	NCJFCJ Annual Conference Associate Judges Conference Collaborative Council Retreat NACC AAL Training
August 2009	Washington, D.C. Dallas, TX	CIP Annual Conference Meeting of Regional Presiding Judges / Annual Statewide Judicial Conference

September 2009	Galveston, TX Bastrop, TX	Beyond the Bench Strategic Planning Meeting
----------------	------------------------------	--

**Assistant Director**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
October 2008	Austin, TX Washington, DC	OCA Child Protection Court Judicial Training Annual CIP Meeting
November 2008	New Braunfels, TX	Training Committee Meeting
January 2009	Seattle, Washington	King County regarding dually managed youth
March 2009	San Antonio, TX	Training Committee Meeting
May 2009	Dallas, TX	Beyond the Bench Conference
May 2009	Washington, DC	Two ABA Conferences
June 2009	Dallas, TX	CPS Judges Conference
July 2009	Austin, TX	Collaborative Council Retreat
August 2009	Washington, DC Brooklyn, NY	CIP Meeting NACC Annual Conference
September 2009	Galveston, TX Bastrop, TX	Beyond the Bench Strategic Planning Meeting

**Grant Administrator**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
December 2008	Williamsburg, VA	Court Measurement Conference
January 2009	Houston, TX	Videoconferencing Demonstration
June 2009	Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas reservation	Courtroom observation; stakeholder meetings
July 2009	Chicago, IL Portland, OR	Court Measurement Conference NCJFCJ Mini-Conference on Performance Measurement
September 2009	Washington, DC Bastrop, TX	Court Technology Conference Strategic Planning Meeting

**IMPACT SUMMARY**

The Commission's strategies are:

1. Promote judicial leadership to improve the administration of justice in child protection cases.
2. Identify and promote best practices to improve outcomes affecting safety, permanency, and well-being in child protection cases.
3. Improve awareness about the need to strengthen courts for children, youth, and families in child protection cases.

4. Improve the quality of legal representation in child protection cases.
5. Promote accountability for improvements in courts that administer justice in child protection cases.

To help achieve these strategies, subgrantees were required to develop and include in their grant application a set of evaluation measures that would best track project accomplishments. Data collected from subgrantees thus far indicates that CIP funds have impacted a large number of people through direct services or program involvement.

<b>FY2009 Summary of Numbers Served</b>	
<b>Total number of people or families who received direct services, benefited from services, training, collaboration or assistance through a project funded with CIP funds (a 60% increase over FY2008)</b>	<b>4,213</b>
Number of judges served through at least one project	620
Number of attorneys served through at least one project	1,713
Number of guardian <i>ad litem</i> (CASA) served through at least one project	586
Number of collaborative agencies participating with subgrantees	167
Number of county, court personnel or other served	876
Number of parents and children served through at least one project	418
Number of training events held	52
Number that attended training events	2,208
Number of hours provided that met statutory or licensure standards for judges, attorneys, or GALs*	8068
*GAL – Guardian ad litem in this context is CASA volunteers	

In addition to overseeing grant-related administrative and fiscal duties, Commission staff spent substantial time and effort on many other court improvement efforts and projects, such as:

- Published two annual reports for the year ending 12/31/08.
- Published a periodic newsletter called *Better Courts for Kids* (Appendix C).
- Developed and distributed a Jurist in Residence Letter, which is a periodic communiqué that focuses on a specific issue or problem judges deal with in handling CPS cases. For example, healthcare for foster youth through STAR Health (Appendix D). The letters are sent from Judge John Specia, OCA’s Jurist in Residence to the Commission.
- Published an article for the *Texas Bar Journal* entitled "Protecting Texas’ Future" that highlighted the work of the Commission (Appendix E).
- Published an article for the 2009 Future Trends in State Courts entitled "Commissions Collaborating for Children" (Appendix F).
- Created an informational video to highlight the Commission's existence, promote ways to strengthen courts that hear child abuse and neglect cases, and encourage support for the mission to improve outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being for foster youth.
- Assisted with planning of and hosted the Third National Judicial Leadership Summit for the Protection of Children.

- As part of the two-day Leadership Summit, developed five goals consistent with Commission strategies that are scheduled to be completed within 24 – 36 months (Appendix G).
- Participated in a very active Statewide Task Force on Disproportionality that meets several times per year.
- Initiated development of a Bench Book for child protection judges that is on schedule to launch in August 2010.
- Launched a Legal Representation Study to assess and look for ways to improve how various state courts appoint and compensate attorneys and how much training is required of them. (Appendix H).
- Initiated and completed nine attorney trainings with eight more to be completed in FY2010.
- Coordinated development of and wrote a substantial portion of a comprehensive Attorney Manual for attendees of NACC attorney trainings. This manual has been made available on the Commission’s website and a final printed version was distributed in December 2009.
- Continued a partnership with Texas Appleseed to focus on barriers to permanency experienced by children who are in the permanent managing conservatorship of DFPS. Recommendations will be developed and a report issued in the Spring of 2010.
- Contributed to developing the state's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) – especially court-related strategies – to address CFSR findings. (Commission Executive Director, Tina Amberboy, is a formal member of the PIP planning team).
- Helped launch and fund a project by Advocacy, Inc., aimed at providing legal representation to foster youth who are disabled and also incarcerated – either within the Texas Youth Commission system, or a State Supported Learning Center (formerly State Schools).
- Held two Round Table discussions focused on the impact of the *Gates v TDPRS* on child welfare agency policy and on the use of mediation in CPS cases.
- Provided approximately \$27,000 in attorney training scholarships.
- Provided 1,000 extra copies of The Foster Youth Justice Project’s *Guide to Those Aging out of Foster Care in Texas*, which Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid has distributed at 12 “Know Your Rights” presentations to foster youth. .
- Issued a grant to the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) to bring its annual Child Welfare Law Conference to Texas in October 2010.
- Provided judicial training to 371 judicial officers or court personnel through the Texas Center for the Judiciary's various training conferences and national conferences.
- Funded the development and supported the launch of a new Case Management System (CPCMS) that incorporates several of the *Building a Better Court* performance measures that were published in early 2009. This case management system was rolled out to the state's 17 specialty Child Protection Courts in September 2009.
- Funded and participated in OCA-sponsored Annual Child Protection Court Update held in October 2008, which trained 15 Child Protection Court judges and their court staff.
- Supported the National Association of Counsel for Children’s application to the Texas Board of Legal Specialization to bring a Child Welfare Law Certification exam and certification process to Texas.

### **ONGOING, MEANINGFUL COLLABORATION**

The Commission's creation and activities have increased the visibility of child protection issues at state and local levels and its collaborative structure has encouraged greater stakeholder

participation in court improvement initiatives. The Commission engages in and promotes a culture of collaboration in Texas between the judiciary and DFPS through routine and scheduled interaction and through joint projects. Commission staff is active in many collaborative projects and, in addition to staffing and overseeing many of the aforementioned projects, also engaged in the following activities between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2009:

- Sponsored and participated in weekly collaborative conference calls with child welfare stakeholders, including DFPS executive leaders. Commission staff organized and held 25 weekly collaborative conference calls that lasted approximately one hour each and included at least five collaborative partners on each call, for a total of at least 125 collaborative hours. Collaborative partners who attended the vast majority of these calls included the CPS assistant Commissioner and other high-level CPS staff, the OCA director and his staff, Commission and Supreme Court staff, and representatives from Texas CASA and the Texas Center for the Judiciary. Occasionally, other invitees, such as judges and legislative staff, attended the meetings depending on the issues addressed. The weekly collaborative meetings often served as a springboard for ideas that became staff directed projects. During the calls, each partner provided a brief synopsis of their organization's current efforts and concerns and described how they thought other collaborative partners might assist or be affected. The meetings served to inform partners of the many ongoing initiatives in Texas to improve the child protection system.
- Sponsored, funded, facilitated, or participated in an additional 25 Commission meetings, committee or workgroup meetings or conference calls with at least 136 individual stakeholders for a total of 855 collaborative hours. (See Appendix I).
- Commission staff participated in several collaborative calls and meetings as part of its partnership with Texas Appleseed, which has conducted a comprehensive study about barriers to permanency for youth who are in the Permanent Managing Conservatorship of the State. Fulbright and Jaworski, a prominent Texas law firm, has donated over 500 pro bono hours to this project.
- More than 177 child welfare stakeholders participated in a Commission-sponsored conference call, meeting, local event or grant-related project in FY 2009.
- Commission-funded and Commission-sponsored activities generated more than \$1.3 million worth of matching (mainly in-kind) support in FY 2009 alone.

### **BASIC GRANT PROJECTS**

The strategic plan included in Texas' 2009 Basic CIP grant application included broad, statewide efforts to improve safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families in the child welfare system. The Commission's strategic plan encompasses these efforts and goes beyond them to further its mission of developing and implementing policy initiatives to strengthen courts for children, youth and families, thereby improving the safety, permanency, and well-being of all involved.

The Commission's Basic Projects Committee oversees the basic grant funds and helps

implement the Commission’s strategic plan goals related to them. Members of the Basic Projects Committee include representatives of the judiciary, DFPS, Texas CASA and Commission staff. With the Basic grant funds, the Commission worked to improve the state child welfare system through:

- Funding expenses associated with Commission meetings and member travel.
- Supporting the activities of the executive director and other Commission staff, including strategic and program development, implementing the CIP grant program, conducting site visits, attending judicial and child welfare conferences, and both coordinating and attending stakeholder meetings.
- Disseminating information to the judiciary and stakeholders through the Commission’s website, newsletter, meeting minutes, Jurist in Residence communiqués, and personal contacts.
- Ensuring that statewide collaboration on all CIP grant activities is conducted in a meaningful and ongoing manner.
- Advocating for projects that improve court performance and practices throughout the state.

**Summaries of Basic Grant Projects**

<b>3.1 Brazos Valley National Adoption Day</b>
<b>Amount of Award</b> \$800.00
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Voices for Children, Inc., CASA of Brazos Valley
<b>Corresponding Item in Strategic Plan</b>
National Adoption Day <sup>1</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a free training session to local attorneys about the adoption process.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to recruit volunteer advocates.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to increase community involvement by asking local families to sponsor adoptive families by paying adoption fees.</li> <li>• Created a celebratory community event to increase community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six children were adopted.</li> <li>• Six attorneys completed training.</li> <li>• Media coverage increased community awareness.</li> <li>• A state senator and state legislator made presentations.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>
Voices for Children, Inc., CASA of Brazos Valley, Texas CPS, local newspaper and television.

<b>4.1 Austin Bar Association Adoption Day</b>
<b>Amount of Award</b> \$1600.00
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Austin Bar Association

<sup>1</sup> Texas Court Improvement Program (CIP), 2008 Grant Applications & Strategic Plans, Basic Grant Application, June 30, 2008, pg 8, item 4.5

<b>Corresponding Item in Strategic Plan</b>
National Adoption Day <sup>2</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a free training session to local attorneys about the adoption process.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to recruit volunteer advocates.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to increase community involvement by asking local families to sponsor adoptive families by paying adoption fees.</li> <li>• Created a celebratory community event to increase community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thirty-three children were adopted.</li> <li>• Media coverage increased community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>
Austin Bar Association, CASA of Travis County, Austin Region 7 Child Protective Services, Adoption Coalition of Texas, Travis County Juvenile Probation.

<b>5.1 Bowie County Adoption Day</b>
<b>Amount of Award</b> \$800.00
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Bowie County
<b>Corresponding Item in Strategic Plan</b>
National Adoption Day <sup>3</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a free training session to local attorneys about the adoption process.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to recruit volunteer advocates.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to increase community involvement by asking local families to sponsor adoptive families by paying adoption fees.</li> <li>• Created a celebratory community event to increase community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three children were adopted.</li> <li>• Media coverage increased community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>
Bowie County, Texas CPS, local newspaper and television, local CASA.

<b>6.1 Denton County Adoption Day</b>
<b>Amount of Award:</b> \$1600.00
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Denton County
<b>Corresponding Item in Strategic Plan</b>
National Adoption Day <sup>4</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a free training session to local attorneys about the adoption process.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid pg 8, item 4.5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, pg 8, item 4.5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pg 8, item 4.5.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided opportunity to recruit volunteer advocates.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to increase community involvement by asking local families to sponsor adoptive families by paying adoption fees.</li> <li>• Created a celebratory community event to increase community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twenty-three children were adopted.</li> <li>• Media coverage increased community awareness.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>
Denton County CASA, Texas CPS, local newspaper, radio and television.

<b>7.1 Travis County Office of Child Representation</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$300,000.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Travis County
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Office of Child Representation <sup>5</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
Travis County OCR provides early, consistent legal representation to children by attorneys who have subject area expertise, institutional knowledge, and experience with the CPS dockets of Travis County.
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As of 9/30/09 had served 89 clients in 49 cases.</li> <li>• Won a 2009 <i>Austin Chronicle</i> Best of Austin Award for Best New Family-Friendly Government Office. Media coverage educated a wider audience about OCR's services. audience .</li> <li>• Strong community involvement by OCR staff helps them navigate services for clients more quickly while identifying systemic gaps. OCR staff engages in the community by collaborating with partner agencies, by serving on committees, participating in child welfare events, and training other professionals.</li> <li>• Created a forms bank that includes forms for office management and case management. Examples include a checklist of topics to cover when working with teenage clients and with caretakers of preverbal children. Developing standardized forms and systems for routine office operations contribute to greater efficiency in providing services to clients.</li> <li>• Hosted two open house events the summer of 2009 where community partners were invited to have information booths. This strengthened inter-agency communications and working relationships. Media coverage also helped educate the community.</li> <li>• OCR staff attorneys devoted 111.5 hours to CLE and each staff attorney completed at least 8 hours of specialized CLE hours applicable to abuse and neglect cases</li> <li>• Developed the OCR Distinguished Speaker Series where experts meet with staff to discuss emerging trends, interesting cases, and their perspectives on child welfare cases.</li> <li>• Created an on-call system for attorneys to ensure clients' needs are met in a timely, consistent manner.</li> <li>• Established an internship program with the University of Texas School of Social work that</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pg. 11, item 5.11

will begin in early 2010.

**Collaboration**

Attorney General (Child Support Division), Austin Bar Association (Adoption Day, outreach) Austin Recovery (site visit), Center for Child Protection (site visit), Children's Commission Collaborative Council, DFPS (State Office, Investigations, Child Welfare Board, Conservatorship, Family Group Conferences, Adoptions), Model Court, Collaborative Council Model Court, Cincinnati Model Court Site Visit, SafePlace, Travis County Database Committee Travis County Family Search and Engagement Committee, Travis County Mental Health Public Defender's Office, Travis County Juvenile Probation/Gardner Betts (site visit), Travis County Placement Docket Work Group (monthly), Travis County District Judges (quarterly meetings with Judge Darlene Byrne), University of Texas School of Law Children's Rights Clinic, University of Texas School of Law Domestic Violence Clinic, University of Texas School of Social Work

<b>8.1 Travis County Office of Parental Representation</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$300,000.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Travis County
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Office of Parental Representation <sup>6</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
Travis County OPR provides early, competent legal representation and social worker services to primary parents who have had or who are at risk of having their children removed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services due to allegations of abuse or neglect.
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully staffed and operational with 3.5 months of start date of managing attorney</li> <li>• As of 9/30/09 has 106 open cases with 108 clients</li> <li>• Accepted almost 100% of all cases appointed</li> <li>• Successful at closing 12 abuse/neglect cases resulting in reunification / preservation of 12 families</li> <li>• All attorneys employed by OPR exceeded 45 hours of CLE making each eligible for the College of the State Bar</li> <li>• All attorneys employed will sit for the 2010 Child Welfare Law Certification Exam to be administered by the National Association of Counsel for Children</li> <li>• Uses skilled social work management to reduce Disproportionality in the foster care system</li> <li>• Advocated for more tailored and specific service plans for clients thereby reducing removals.</li> <li>• Engaged in training collaborative partners about racial and cultural diversity as taught in the “Knowing Who You Are” series</li> <li>• Implemented monthly groups for parent clients based on identifying needs of the client and accessing resources to meet those needs. The groups include a Child Welfare Orientation, Knowing the Rules; a Father Support Group; and a Family Resource Group that addresses issues such as housing, adult education and budgeting.</li> <li>• Implemented a policy that offers social work follow up services for up to 9 months for all cases that are closed to help ensure that a reunification continues to be safe and protective and that the parents have access to resources needed to provide a safe and protective home.</li> <li>• Collaboration with Travis County Sheriff’s Office to train jail staff and to help implement a parental visitation program for children in foster care whose parents are incarcerated.</li> <li>• Collaboration with the Travis County Domestic Relations Office to cross train and develop ways and resources to increase visitation for parent clients whose children have been removed. This has resulted in increasing the frequency and duration of visits, occurring in natural settings with parenting coaches, and a decrease in the number of visitations requiring supervision.</li> <li>• Attorneys who work for the OPR have been asked to help train other attorneys around the state, CASA volunteers and GALs, law students, and other bar groups, as well as foster parents, special education and juvenile justice issues and disability.</li> <li>• Employees have been invited to speak at a Diversity Conference, an African American</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pg. 10, item 5.10

Family Support Conference, and the University of Texas School of Social Work.
<b>Collaboration</b>
OPR indicates collaboration with at least 170 partners – not listed in this report.

<b>9.1 ChildSafe / Family Drug Court Partnership</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$55,781.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Alamo Children’s Advocacy Center, d.b.a. ChildSafe, is a nonprofit children's advocacy center in Bexar County.
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Family Drug Treatment Court Initiatives <sup>7</sup>
<b>Project Description and Activities</b>
<p>This ChildSafe project provides a continuum of services to families in the Bexar County Family Drug Court (FDC) who are identified as having a sexual abuse issue. ChildSafe offers services to the child who makes the outcry of sexual abuse, their siblings, and non-offending family members. Activities for the year included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessed 232 families.</li> <li>• Provided direct services to 36 children and 24 parents (a 68% increase over 2007-08).</li> <li>• Participated in weekly staffing with FDC staff and attending weekly court hearings for qualifying families involved in FDC.</li> <li>• Provided testimony to the court as needed regarding services provided by ChildSafe.</li> <li>• Participated in FDC events and commencement ceremonies.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cases were handled by a ChildSafe Case Coordinator who provided clinical guidance regarding mental health needs.</li> <li>• Exceeded goal of assessing 150 families through FDC.</li> <li>• Forty-three of the families had new referrals to CPS related to substance abuse while participating in the program, but not a new sexual abuse allegation.</li> <li>• Other data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 20% of the cases graduated (3 cases)</li> <li>○ 33% are still active (5)</li> <li>○ 33% were dismissed for noncompliance (5)</li> <li>○ 13% left voluntarily (2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Of note: Parental sexual abuse history where a parent also had a history of sexual abuse increased from 62% in year one to 92% in year two.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>
Family Violence Prevention Services, Family Service Association, Alpha Home, The Patrician Movement, ChildSafe, CPS, Bexar County Family Drug Court, Judges Saldana and Sakai, Midcoast Family Services

<b>10.1 Foster Youth Justice Project</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$80,000.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid pg. 8, item 4.4.

<p>Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA) is one of three legal aid service corporations in Texas. It serves most of South Central and Far West Texas.</p>
<p><b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b></p>
<p>Legal Hotline for Foster Youth<sup>8</sup></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p>
<p>Provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal resources via the Internet.</li> <li>• Direct legal representation.</li> <li>• Training to legal aid staff attorneys.</li> <li>• Pro Se legal resources.</li> <li>• Attorney resources such as training and written resources (see Accomplishments, below).</li> <li>• Outreach by traveling and making presentations.</li> <li>• A statewide telephone hotline for foster youth and alumni.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accomplishments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared and printed brochures and posters for the project.</li> <li>• Maintained resources on the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project (TFYJP) website at: <a href="http://www.texasfosteryouth.org">www.texasfosteryouth.org</a>.</li> <li>• Created a judicial checklist for youth aging out of foster care and mailed it to more than 130 contacts.</li> <li>• Provided Pro Se resources – distributed over 3,500 copies of <i>A Guide to Those Aging Out of Foster Care in Texas</i> to current and former youth, case managers, CASA staff and volunteers, GALs, AALs, judges, and court staff.</li> <li>• Published the booklet <i>Sealing Juvenile Court Records in Texas</i> and posted it on the Project’s web page.</li> <li>• Developed materials specifically for the Internet about the right of foster youth to attend court hearings called <i>Attending Court Hearings: Rights of Foster Youth to Attend Court Hearings Legal Memorandum</i> and <i>Directing Attorneys Ad Litem to Advocate to Attend Court Hearings</i>.</li> <li>• Conducted 12 “Know Your Rights” presentations around the state and at the State Bar Annual Poverty Law Conference.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of direct services include helping youth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who have aged out of care without a copy of their birth certificate obtain an official birth certificate.</li> <li>• Whose birth certificate has a name other than his/her legal name.</li> <li>• Obtain proper identification (requiring the unsealing of adoption records).</li> <li>• Access their CPS case record.</li> <li>• Establish their right to attend court hearings.</li> <li>• Replace their AAL when appropriate.</li> <li>• Seal juvenile criminal records.</li> <li>• Establish or maintain sibling contact.</li> <li>• Acquire education benefits.</li> <li>• With other legal problems such as landlord/tenant, public benefits eligibility, consumer</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pg. 9, item 4.8.

problems and family law.
<b>Collaboration</b>
Texas CASA, Advocacy Inc., Texas Appleaseed, Center for Public Policy Priorities, Lifeworks, TRAC, HAY Center, Baptist Child and Family Services, Texas Foster Youth, Inc., Texas Legal Services Center, Texas Youth Commission Ombudsman, Austin ISD Project HELP, Texas Homeless Network, Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, Travis County Women's Bar Association, Department of Family and Protective Services.

<b>11.1 Tarrant County Challenge Family Drug Court</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$100,000.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Tarrant County Challenge is a nonprofit agency that works to reduce substance abuse in Tarrant County. It partners with Tarrant County courts to serve people involved with CPS cases who have substance abuse problems.
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Family Drug Treatment Court Initiatives <sup>9</sup>
<b>Program Description and Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employs a full-time intensive case manager.</li> <li>• Served 14 families, including 22 children.</li> <li>• Initiates families to the program and ensures that treatment begins immediately.</li> <li>• Monitors parents' progress.</li> <li>• Works with parents to monitor recovery support meeting attendance, medication management, and drug screening compliance.</li> <li>• Provides parents with referrals to other community resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased the number of judicial reviews that parents have with the FDC judge.</li> <li>• Judge began participating in FDC Team Meetings.</li> <li>• Provided parents with incentives / rewards to reinforce NA/AA attendance, to participate in treatment, obtain a job, and manage stress.</li> <li>• Expanded the collaborative network, in particular with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), which sends a representative to the FDC team meeting monthly.</li> <li>• Developed a relationship with a local dentist who agreed to provide free dental care to parents.</li> <li>• Seventy-nine percent of participants are in compliance with court orders.</li> <li>• Seven parents graduated, and nine children were placed with their parents.</li> <li>• FDC served 22 new children, of which nine have been returned, three have been placed with family members, and three are in foster care.</li> <li>• One child of a parent who was unsuccessfully discharged is in foster care.</li> <li>• Five children of parents unsuccessfully discharged have been placed with relatives.</li> <li>• FDC provided additional visitation (two visits for two hours per week once a parent reaches Phase 2 of the program).</li> <li>• All children in the program underwent evaluation by ECI with a follow up evaluation every</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pg. 9, item 4.8.

three months to monitor progress.
<b>Collaboration</b>
323rd District Court, Department of Family and Protective Services, Tarrant County Challenge Lena Pope Home, Recovery Resource Council, CASA of Tarrant County, MHMR – Addiction Services, MHMR – Mental Health, MHMR – ECI, MHMR – Evaluation, VOA Light, VOA Riverside, Nexus Recovery Center, North Texas Addictions Counseling and Education, Salvation Army, Union Gospel Mission, The Next Step, The Women’s Center, Texas Wesleyan School of Law, Bearden Investigative Agency, Community Enrichment Center – Adopt-a-Family Program, Ladder Alliance, Positive Influences, Red Oak Books, Community Learning Center.

<b>12.1 Texas Lawyers for Children (TLC) Website</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$250,000.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
Texas Loves Children, Inc. is a nonprofit agency in Dallas that has developed an online legal resource for attorneys and judges and conducts legal training.
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Free or low-cost online legal resource <sup>10</sup>
<b>Program Description and Activities</b>
<p>The TLC website project seeks to raise the standard of practice by equipping judges and attorneys with the information they need to make better recommendations and decisions in child protection cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided Texas judges and attorneys a comprehensive, topically organized, word-searchable, online resource and communication center focusing on legal, medical, and psychological information pertinent to child abuse and neglect cases.</li> <li>• Continued ongoing updates and expansion of the online child abuse library with new materials and resources.</li> <li>• Updated and expanded communication and collaboration tools, including separate email networks – one for judges, one for attorneys, and one for a specialized group of ad litem attorneys appointed to represent children in a large, complex, child abuse case, one for Family Drug Treatment Court judges, and one for the State Bar Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect and each of its five subcommittees.</li> <li>• Provided critical new information on changes in state and federal legal developments and breaking news in Texas, with analysis on how they would impact children’s cases.</li> <li>• Created secure discussion boards and document vaults.</li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained the tools and materials and made available 24/7 with a 99.9% rate of availability.</li> <li>• Increased communications on private networks.</li> <li>• Updated tools and materials to keep research current.</li> <li>• Added 1,184 new materials.</li> <li>• Coordinated with Texas Young Lawyers Association and the State Bar of Texas Child Abuse and Neglect Committee to expand pro bono network recruiting opportunities.</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pg. 9, item 4.9.

- Increased total monthly hits by over 27%.
- Increased new users by 15%.
- Deployed and operated new private, secure communication tools.

**Collaboration**

Child Protection “Cluster” Courts, Texas Association of Child Protection Judges (TACPJ), Department of Family and Protective Services, Office of General Counsel, Office of Court Administration, Texas District and County Attorneys Association (TDCAA), State Bar of Texas, Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect, Tarrant County District Attorney’s Office, Harris County Attorney’s Office, National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse, National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect (now Child Welfare Information Gateway), Fort Worth – Tarrant County Young Lawyers Association, Texas Young Lawyers Association, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Center for Public Policy Priorities, the National Child Protection Training Center, and the ABA Center on Children and the Law.

**13.1 Texas CASA - Expansion and Development**

**Amount of Award: \$220,502.00**

**Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent**

Texas CASA, Inc., advocates for abused and neglected children in the court system through the development, growth and support of local CASA programs. With Texas CASA’s support, local CASA programs recruit, train, and supervise volunteers to serve as court-appointed guardian ad litem or special advocates in child protection services cases.

**Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan**

Texas CASA, Inc.<sup>11</sup>

**Activities**

**CASA Program Expansion**

- Provided expansion-related assistance to local programs.

**Conducted Statewide Trainings**

- Volunteer Recruitment Training and Assistance – Regional Word of Mouth Trainings (128 trained).
- Training of Facilitators (25 trained).
- Basic Advocacy Skills Training (26 trained).
- Advanced Advocacy Specialist Training (204 trained).
- Program Staff Training Retreat (111 trained).
- Training of New Executive Directors (37 trained).
- Board of Directors Training (37 trained).
- Strengthening CASA’s Service to Transitioning Youth (replicating programs in Austin and Beaumont to engage and train volunteers, and engage stakeholders to affect better outcomes for transitioning youth).

**Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers**

- Launched a statewide volunteer recruitment campaign based upon professional consultant recommendation.
- Produced volunteer recruitment and public awareness materials and tools.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pg.7, item 4.2.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed more than 1,000 life-sized cut-outs of children representing the children in the foster care system.</li> <li>• Used billboards to recruit volunteers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accomplishments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded the CASA program to Williamson County.</li> <li>• CASA of Walker County expanded to serve San Jacinto County.</li> <li>• CASA Network now serves 203 of the state's 254 counties.</li> <li>• Conducted a judicial survey in which 82% of the judges surveyed said that the CASA volunteers help “a lot” by providing additional information regarding a child’s placement and 97% of judges agreed that CASA’s knowledge of the case is beneficial to their decision-making process.</li> <li>• In FY 2009, there were 5,646 active volunteers (cumulative through the year), which represents an increase from FY2008 of 397 volunteers. Of the 5,646 active volunteers, 1,939 were new volunteers. This means that 3,707 of these volunteers were retained from the previous year, representing an increase over the number retained in the prior year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <p>CASA indicates 16 collaborative contacts – not listed in this report.</p>

<p><b>14.1 University of Texas Center for Dispute Resolution – Mediation Study</b></p>
<p><b>Amount of Award: \$8,088.00</b></p>
<p><b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b></p> <p>University of Texas</p>
<p><b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b></p> <p>Ongoing Strategies <sup>12</sup></p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathered empirical data from Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</li> <li>• Conducted five face to face interviews</li> <li>• Prepared quantitative data</li> <li>• Merged CPPDR and DFPS Data sets</li> <li>• Cleaned and prepared data</li> <li>• Created over sixty variables such as child’s age at time of removal and at time of permanency; siblings variable; removed from rural or urban county; final placement outcome; and re-entry to care after permanency initially established</li> <li>• Traveled for interviews, created transcripts of each, purchased supplies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accomplishments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented findings of qualitative analysis such as referrals to mediation, preferred characteristics of mediators, types of cases suited for mediation, types not suited for mediation, advantages of mediation, effectiveness of mediation, role of Family Group Conferencing, permanency, effectiveness of mediation in expediting permanency, tracking permanency outcomes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration</b> – Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, UT Center for Public</p>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, pg 13, item 5.21

Policy Dispute Resolution, and UT School of Social Work

**TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROJECTS**

The Commission's Technology Committee is responsible for vetting technology projects that meet CIP and Commission goals and making recommendations to the Commission. The Commission charged the Technology Committee with implementing the Commission's strategic plan goals that relate to data collection and analysis. Members of the Technology Committee include representatives of the judiciary, DFPS, Texas CASA, attorneys and Commission staff. With the Technology grant funds, the Commission has worked to improve the state child welfare system through:

- Funding expenses associated with Commission meetings, member travel, and meeting-related expenses.
- Supporting the activities of the executive director and other Commission staff, including strategy and program development, implementing the CIP grant program, conducting site visits, representing Texas courts, attending judicial and child welfare conferences, and attending coordinating stakeholder meetings.
- Disseminating information to the judiciary and stakeholders through the Commission's website, newsletter, meeting minutes, Jurist in Residence communiqués, and personal contacts.
- Ensuring statewide collaboration on all CIP grants is conducted in a meaningful and ongoing manner.
- Advocating for projects that improve court performance and practices throughout the state.

**Summaries of Technology Grant Projects:**

<b>15.1 Texas Data Enabled Courts for Kids (TexDECK)</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$566,277.00</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
The Texas Office of Court Administration (OCA) is the administrative arm of the state's court system and provides technical and administrative services to certain trial and appellate courts.
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
Detail of Data Grant Projects for FY2007 <sup>13</sup>
<b>Program Description and Activities</b>
<p><b>Functional Requirements Study (FRS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed a functional requirements reference model to address the unique needs of child protection courts, and published a document for local jurisdictions and software vendors to develop and support court case management systems to easily follow the judicial practices promoted by the functional requirements document.</li> </ul> <p><b>Specialty Docket Case Management System (SDCMS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SDCMS was the case management system used by the 17 child protection courts supported by the OCA. In FY2009, OCA ramped down the support and maintenance activities devoted to SDCMS and shifted its efforts to focus on the migration of case data from SDCMS to the</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, pg 7, item 4.3.

new system, CPCMS, launched in September 2009 and described below.

**Child Protection Case Management System (CPCMS)**

CPCMS is the state-of-the-art, specialty-court case management system that is the successor to SDCMS. CPCMS solves the problems that were inherent to SDCMS and provides much more of the useful information needed by judges handling child protection cases. Further, CPCMS provides reports regarding many of the outcome measures that ensure effective handling of cases.

**Judicial Web Page (JWP) Query System**

JWP was re-platformed in FY 2008 and operational responsibility for the JWP, including ongoing support, was transferred from DFPS to OCA. JWP was marketed to judges and court coordinators in FY2009, and a user survey was conducted in February 2009.

**Data Interchange Standards**

OCA, through the TexDECK project, is working with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and a workgroup of state and national members to develop national data interchange standards. The focus of this effort is the data that could be exchanged directly (computer-to-computer) between the courts and the child protection agency.

**Accomplishments**

**Functional Requirements**

Tarrant County submitted a proposal to develop and implement a Child and Protective Services (CPS) court case management system to be initially piloted by the 323<sup>rd</sup> Family District Court in Tarrant County and based on the functional requirements reference model. The proposal included the development of a merged docketing system between the child protection court cases and juvenile delinquency cases that are heard in the same family courts in Tarrant County.

Review and evaluation of the county's proposal found its project to have sufficient justification, IT resources committed to participate, and executive sponsorship and in-kind match to support a recommendation to the Commission for Children, Youth and Families to approve the award of \$350,000 in CIP grant funds which will be distributed in FY2010.

This project will be the first implementation of the functional requirements reference model outside of the child protection specialty court system administered by OCA.

**Specialty Docket Case Management System (SDCMS)**

The maintenance team successfully supported the SDCMS during FY2009.

- All user issues, requests and functionality requirements were addressed and resolved to their satisfaction.

The TexDECK project team, in collaboration with the advisory group and the SDCMS maintenance team, succeeded in their activities to prepare for the migration of case data from the SDCMS system to the new CPCMS system.

- Collaborated with the CPCMS project team to ensure alignment between CPCMS and changes implemented in SDCMS.

- Reviewed, analyzed and cleaned-up SDCMS data in preparation for migration to the new CPCMS system.
- Conducted iterative development and testing of SDCMS to CPCMS data migration scripts.
- Documented data migration deployment instructions.
- Mapped data fields between SDCMS and CPCMS accounted for all data fields, including a handful of data fields that were abandoned and not migrated to CPCMS.
- Successfully migrated the SDCMS database to the new CPCMS system on September 19, 2009.

This collaborative effort was rewarded with a successful go-live / launch of the CPCMS system on September 21, 2009.

**Judicial Web Page (JWP)**

After reviewing the analysis results from the JWP user survey that was conducted mid-year, OCA determined it would be advantageous to provide access to the JWP system through the new Automated Registry (AR) web portal. The Automated Registry (AR) system is a secure browser-based system which allows authorized individuals to submit certain background queries out a person appearing before the court. Queries are submitted to multiple state agency databases and all results are returned to the AR system in real-time. The user is able to view the results in a consolidated format. Additionally, this web portal provides an additional layer of access security to the JWP system.

**Data Interchange Standards**

Chicago Meeting: During August 2009, representatives from OCA and the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) participated in a 1 ½ day workshop to increase the awareness of the need to share data between courts and child welfare agencies and to provide technical (reference) tools to facilitate developing their own protocol while using national standards. The workshop was facilitated by the NCSC and the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology.

Austin Meeting: During September 2009, OCA hosted the Court/Child Welfare NET Task Force meeting to focus on creating the information exchange packet documentation (IEPD) for “administrative” data exchanges (e.g., appointment of counsel). The meeting was facilitated by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

Completed work on two of the eight information exchange packet documents (IEPDs) in FY2009:

- Service Plan – Completed
- Court Report – Completed.

**Collaboration**

Child Protection Court Of Central Texas, 323rd District Court (Tarrant County), Sabine Valley Child Protection Court, 126th Judicial District Court (Travis County), 311th District Court (Harris County), 330th Family Court District (Dallas County), South Plains Cluster Court, Child Protection Court Of The Hill Country, Supreme Court Of Texas, Judicial Commission For Children, Youth And Families, Texas Department Of Family And Protective Services.

<b>16.1 OCA CPC Judicial Support &amp; Training</b>
<b>Amount of Award: \$24,958</b>
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>
The Office of Court Administration (OCA) is the fiscal agent for this project, which funds some administrative costs of Texas Child Protection Courts (formerly known as Cluster Courts).
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>
<b>OCA – Child Protection Court Support</b> <sup>14</sup>
<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided wireless data cards to all judges and court staff to maintain the case management system that provides updated docket information.</li> <li>• Purchased court reporting equipment for three court reporters to replace obsolete equipment to ensure that court records are accurately recorded.</li> <li>• Replaced nine obsolete, failing multifunction printers to ensure continued efficiency for court staff. Cost of each printer was less than \$1,000 and included three years of onsite support.</li> <li>• Funded fifteen judges to attend several training sessions designed to improve court practices. The conference information is listed in the “Training Related Grant Activities” section below.</li> <li>• Hosted a successful two day Child Protection Conference that focused on relevant topics or the Child Protection Judges and staff.</li> <li>• Training Grant Related Activities:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Court Improvement Program Annual Meeting (1 attended)</li> <li>• Annual Child Protection Conferences (28)</li> <li>• Fundamental Issues of Caseflow Management Conference (8)</li> <li>• Grandparent and Kinship Care Seminar (1)</li> <li>• Rural Association for Court Administration Conferences (1)</li> <li>• Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Institute of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2)</li> <li>• Advanced Family Law Conference (2)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Accomplishments</b>
Contributed to the operation of the 17 child protection courts and to providing effective judicial services for child protection courts in rural Texas by providing essential communication tools. Facilitated continued improvement of staff skills and judicial processes by providing training.
<b>Collaboration</b>
Staff of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families, 129 Texas counties, Child Protection Court Advisory Council, Office of Court Administration, 17 Child Protection Courts.

**TRAINING GRANT PROJECTS**

The Commission's Training Committee is responsible for vetting judicial, attorney and multidisciplinary training projects that meet CIP and Commission goals and making recommendations to the Commission. The Commission has charged the Training Committee

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, pg. 8, item 4.3.

with implementing the Commission’s strategic plan goals that relate to training judges, attorneys and other stakeholders around the state through:

- Funding expenses associated with Commission meetings, member travel, and meeting-related expenses.
- Supporting the activities of the executive director and other Commission staff, including strategic and program development, implementing the CIP grant program, conducting site visits, representing Texas courts, attending judicial and child welfare conferences, and attending and coordinating stakeholder meetings.
- Disseminating information to the judiciary and stakeholders through the Commission’s website, newsletter, meeting minutes, Jurist in Residence communiqués, and personal contacts.
- Ensuring statewide collaboration on all CIP grants is conducted in a meaningful and ongoing manner.
- Advocating for projects that improve court performance and practices throughout the state.

**Summaries of Training Grant Projects:**

<b>17.1 NACC Attorney Training</b>			
<b>Amount of Award: \$180,000.00</b>			
<b>Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent</b>			
None – Staff Directed			
<b>Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan</b>			
Proposed List of CIP Training Grant Projects <sup>15</sup>			
<b>Activities</b>			
In September 2008, the Commission signed an \$180,000 contract with the National Association of Children (NACC) to develop and conduct between 14 and 17 statewide training conferences for attorneys who represent children, parents, or the child welfare agency in child protection cases.			
Total number of training events:			
<b>Name of Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number in Attendance</b>
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner’s Guide	5/13/2009	Midland, TX	41
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner’s Guide	5/15/2009	Amarillo, TX	35
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner’s Guide	6/5/2009	El Paso, TX	26
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner’s Guide	6/18/2009	Austin, TX	59

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, pg. 8, item 5.7.

The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner's Guide	6/19/2009	San Antonio, TX	76
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner's Guide	7/9/2009	Beaumont, TX	25
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner's Guide	7/10/2009	Houston, TX	121
The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner's Guide	9/18/2009	Texarkana, TX	29
Red Book Training	9/23/2009	Austin, TX	42
<b>Total for all Events</b>			454

**Accomplishments**

Completed nine trainings in FY2009, coordinated with courts in eight sites regarding training needs, produced an interim attorney manual (a final manual will be delivered in December 2009), and promoted Commission activities. Collaborated with over 50 partners and stakeholders. There were at least 502 people involved with the trainings, including 494 attendees. A total of 3,622 CLE hours were earned by the attendees.

**Collaboration**

Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families; National Association of Counsel for Children; Children's Law Center of Los Angeles; The State Bar of Texas; Texas Lawyers for Children; Texas CASA; Texas Office of Court Administration; The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services; The Travis County Office of Parent Representation; The Texas Children's Justice Act; The Texas District and County Attorneys Association; Children's Rights Clinic, The University of Texas School of Law; W.W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law; Austin Bar Association, Court Appointed Family Advocates Section; Children's Justice Center of El Paso; Center for Public Policy Priorities; Harris County Attorney's Office; Bexar County District Attorney's Office; Tarrant County District Attorney's Office; The Honorable Dean Rucker, Midland County; The Honorable Patricia Macias, El Paso County; Judge Oscar Gabaldon, El Paso County; The Honorable Darlene Byrne, Travis County; Judge Charles Montemayor, Bexar County; Judge Richard Garcia, Bexar County; The Honorable John Specia, Bexar County; The Honorable Larry Thorne, Jefferson County; The Honorable Bonnie Hellums, Harris County; The Honorable Donald Dowd, Cass County; The Honorable Robin Sage, Gregg County; The Honorable Gary Coley, McLennan County; Judge Ellen Smith, Tarrant County; The Honorable Cheryl Shannon, Dallas County; The Honorable Terry Shamsie, Nueces County; Judge Cathy Morris, Child Protection Court of South Texas; Judge Jo Ann Ottis, East Texas Cluster Court; Judge Ricardo Flores, Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande Valley West; Judge Karin Bonicoro, Child Protection Court of Central Texas; Judge Paul Gallego, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Administrative Judicial Regions Cluster Court; Judge William Martin, Northeast Texas Foster Care Docket; Judge Kevin Hart, South Plains Cluster Court; Judge David Dunn, Southeast Texas Cluster Court; Judge Eric Andell, Brazos River Valley Cluster Court and Three Rivers Cluster Court; Judge Sam Bournias, Brazos River Valley Cluster Court; Judge Charles Van Orden, Centex Child Protection Court; Judge Sylvia Chavez, Child Protection Court of the Permian Basin; Judge Philip Vanderpool, Northern Panhandle Child Protection Court; Judge Robert Hofmann, Child Protection Court of the Hill Country; Judge Virginia Schnarr, Sabine Valley

Child Protection Court; Judge Mary Craft, Three Rivers Cluster Court; Judge Alyce Bondurant, North Texas Child Protection Court; Judge James Belton, Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande Valley East .

**18.1 Texas Center for the Judiciary: Judicial Training, and National Conference Sponsorship**

**Amount of Award: \$490,456.00**

**Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent**

Texas Center for the Judiciary is a nonprofit corporation established in 1973 by the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas to provide continuing judicial education programs for the state’s judiciary and supportive personnel.

**Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan**

Proposed List of CIP Training Grant Projects<sup>16</sup>

**Activities**

The Texas Center for the Judiciary conducted four programs (Beyond the Bench, CPS Judicial Conference, Associate Judges’ Conference, and Social Workers and CPS Training Conference) and coordinated scholarships for two national training programs (National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the National Conference of Juvenile Justice Judges).

**Accomplishments**

Program evaluations, participant evaluations and comments reflect a high level of satisfaction, enhanced awareness, greater cross-disciplinary communication, and the receipt of tools enhancing judges’ ability to make more informed decisions leading to better safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families. The programs also increased access to cost-effective, specialized education for the judiciary and other stakeholders that satisfied continuing education requirements, increased attendees’ awareness of pertinent issues, increased the use of best practices, and increased communication networks between judges and between judges and other stakeholders.

Total number of training events:

<b>Name of Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b># of Attendees</b>	<b>CLE Hours</b>	<b>Total Training Hours</b>
National Conference of Juvenile Justice Judges	3/11-14/2009	Orlando, FL	34	14	476
Beyond the Bench – Dallas	5/3-5/2009	Dallas, TX	70	10	700
CPS Judges Conference	6/3-5/2009	Dallas, TX	44	12	528
Social Workers (at Associate Judges Conference)	7/6/2009	Austin, TX	10	3	30

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, pg. 7, item 4.2-4.6.

Associate Judges Conference	7/6-8/2009	Austin, TX	79	12.5	987.5
National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges	7/12-15/2009	Chicago, IL	61	14	854
Beyond the Bench – Galveston	9/13-15/2009	Galveston, TX	70	10.5	735
<b>Total for all Events</b>			368	76	4310.5
Combined average favorable rating on post-event evaluations. (1-5 scale)			4.49		

**Collaboration**

Center for Public Policy Priorities, Supreme Court Commission for Children, Youth and Families, Texas CASA, Nestor Consultants, Inc., TRAC, CASEY Family Programs, TDFPS, House Committee on Human Services, UT Southwestern Medical Center, East Texas Workforce Centers, Safe Haven of Tarrant County, CASA of Collin County, Plano Police Department, Keller & Stark, Lancaster ISD, Dallas Co. District Attorney's Office, Plumlee & Associates, P.C., Bright Elementary, Kaufman County Children's Center, Texas Scottish Rite Hospital, Dallas CASA, Grand Prairie ISD, Collin County DA's Office, East Tx Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse, Collin Co. Children's Advocacy Center, Bradley & Hill, Grand Prairie Police Department, Dallas CASA, Safe Haven of Tarrant County, Dallas County DA's Office, Brief Therapy Institute, East Texas Child Advocates, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. DOJ, Gregg County Criminal DA's Office, Longview ISD, Smith County, Ct Administrator, 321st District Court, Methodist Children's Home, Dallas County, Court Coordinator, 383rd District Ct Court Coordinator, 398th District Ct, Asst. Co. Atty, El Paso County, Ct Administrator, 414th District Ct, Case/Court Mgr, 388th District Ct, Juvenile Counselor, 102nd District Ct Court Administrator, County Ct at Law #1, Court Administrator, 16th District Ct CASA of Ellis County, El Paso Area Foster Youth, Court Coordinator, 66th District Court.

**19.1 Attorney Training Scholarships**

**Amount of Award: \$26,850.00**

**Subgrantee/Fiscal Agent**

None – Staff Directed

**Corresponding Item in 2008 Strategic Plan**

Proposed List of CIP Training Grant Projects<sup>17</sup>

**Activities**

Scholarships to ABA Parents' Attorney Conference provided to Texas attorneys who represent parents in CPS cases.

**Accomplishments**

Improved quality of representation for parents in CPS cases.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, pg. 8, item 5.7.

Name of Event	Date(s)	Location	Number in Attendance
American Bar Association Parents' Attorney Conference	May 12-14, 2009	Washington, D.C.	23
<b>Collaboration</b>			
<p>Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families                      American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, Texas Lawyers for Children, The Honorable John McMaster, Williamson County, Judge Karin Bonicoro, Child Protection Court of Central Texas, The Honorable Darlene Byrne, Travis County, Judge Oscar Gabaldon, El Paso County, The Honorable Mark Silverstone, Williamson County, The Honorable Cheryl Lee Shannon, Dallas County, The Honorable Matthew Reue, Washington County, Judge JoAnn Ottis, East Texas Cluster Court, Judge Ricardo Flores, Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande Valley-West, Judge Sam Bournias, Brazos County Cluster Court, The Honorable Bonnie Hellums, Harris County, The Honorable Jeff M. Addison, Bowie County, The Honorable J.D. Langley, Brazos County, The Honorable Pam Foster Fletcher, Houston County, Judge Sylvia Chavez, Child Protection Court of the Permian Basin, Judge William King, Travis County, The Honorable Guilford Jones, Llano County, Judge Cathy Morris, Child Protection Court of South Texas,</p>			

**APPENDIX A: COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Supreme Court of Texas  
Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families**

**BASIC**

*(Standing)*

Hon. Robin Sage, Chair  
Joe Gagen  
Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums  
Colleen McCall  
Hon. Mickey Pennington  
Carolyne Rodriguez  
Hon. Elma Salinas Ender  
Hon. Peter Sakai  
Hon. Cheryl Lee Shannon  
Hon. Olen Underwood  
Hon. Doug Warne  
Staff: Tina Amberboy  
Tiffany Roper

**TECHNOLOGY**

*(Standing)*

Judge Karin Bonicoro, Chair  
Catherine Babbitt  
Judge Oscar Gabaldon  
Jason Hassay  
Hon. Gilford Jones  
Elizabeth Kromrei  
Robert Nolen  
Carl Reynolds  
Linda Uecker  
G. Allan Van Fleet  
Staff: Tina Amberboy

**COMMISSION**

Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair  
Hon. Darlene Byrne, Vice Chair  
Hon. Karin Bonicoro  
Audrey Deckinga  
Hon. Camile G. DuBose  
Bruce Esterline  
Harper Estes  
Joe Gagen  
Stewart W. Gagnon  
Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums  
Joyce M. James  
Hon. Patricia A. Macias  
Carolyne Rodriguez  
Hon. Dean Rucker  
Fairy Davenport Rutland  
Hon. Robin Sage  
Hon. Cheryl Lee Shannon  
Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles  
G. Allan Van Fleet  
Hon. Jeff Wentworth

**EXECUTIVE**

Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair  
Hon. Darlene Byrne, Vice Chair  
Hon. Karin Bonicoro  
Audrey Deckinga  
Hon. Camile G. DuBose  
Hon. Dean Rucker  
Hon. Robin Sage

**TRAINING**

*(Standing)*

Hon. Camile G. DuBose, Chair  
Mari Kay Bickett  
Cathy Cockerham  
Barbara Elias-Perciful  
Alice Emerson  
Debra Emerson  
Judge Richard Garcia  
Tracy Harting  
Joyce M. James  
Hon. Lamar McCorkle  
Shaneka Odum  
Pam Parker  
Fairy Davenport Rutland  
Judge Ellen Smith  
Staff: Tiffany Roper

**LEGISLATIVE**

*(Ad Hoc)*

Hon. Dean Rucker, Chair  
Stewart W. Gagnon  
Sandra Hachem  
Hon. F. Scott McCown, ret.  
Andrea Sparks  
Hon. John Specia, ret.  
Gerry Williams  
Staff: Tina Amberboy  
Tiffany Roper

**Staff**

Tina Amberboy, Executive Director, Children's Commission  
Tiffany Roper, Assistant Director, Children's Commission  
Teri Moran, Support Services Officer, Children's Commission  
Carl Reynolds, Administrative Director, Office of Court Administration  
Sylvia Griego, Executive Assistant, Justice Harriet O'Neill

12/30/2009

## APPENDIX B: COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

### COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS November 13, 2009

<b>Emy Lou Baldrige</b> <i>Co-Founder</i> Greater Texas Community Partners	<b>Benigno J. Fernandez, MD</b> <i>President</i> Texas Society of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	<b>Hon. F. Scott McCown, ret.</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Center for Public Policy Priorities
<b>Conni Barker</b> <i>Director/Government Affairs</i> DePelchin Children's Center	<b>Mike Foster</b> <i>Immediate Past President</i> Texas Association of Child Placing Agencies	<b>Trista Miller</b> <i>Student, former CPS Youth Specialist</i> Former Foster Youth
<b>Roy Block</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Foster Family Association	<b>Paul E. Furrh, Jr.</b> <i>Chief Executive Officer</i> Lone Star Legal Aid	<b>Judy Powell</b> <i>Communications Director</i> Parent Guidance Center
<b>Susan Boone</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Council of Child Welfare Boards	<b>Eileen Garcia-Matthews</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texans Care For Children	<b>Chadwick Sapenter</b> <i>Entrepreneur</i> Former Foster Youth
<b>Irene Clements</b> <i>Vice President for Advocacy, Children and Family Services</i> Lutheran Social Services	<b>David Halpern</b> <i>Director</i> Seedling's Promise Mentor Program	<b>Johana Scot</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Parent Guidance Center
<b>William B. Connolly</b> <i>Attorney at Law</i> William B. Connolly & Associates	<b>Leslie Hill</b> <i>Managing Attorney</i> Travis County Office of Child Representation	<b>Janet Sharris</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Office of Developmental Disabilities
<b>Penny Cook</b> <i>Co-Founder</i> The Faith Connection	<b>Alicia Key</b> <i>Deputy Attorney General for Child Support</i> Office of the Attorney General	<b>Vicki Spriggs</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Juvenile Probation Commission
<b>Cathy Crabtree</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas	<b>Richard LaVallo</b> <i>Senior Attorney</i> Advocacy, Inc.	<b>Gene Terry</b> <i>Operations Director</i> Texas Association of Counties
<b>Susan Hopkins Craven</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Association of Infant Mental Health	<b>Stephanie Ledesma</b> <i>Managing Attorney</i> Travis County Office of Parental Representation	<b>Gloria Terry</b> <i>Coalition President</i> Texas Council on Family Violence
<b>De Shaun Ealoms</b> <i>Parent Program Specialist</i> TX Dept. of Family & Protective Svcs.	<b>Donald Lee</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Conference on Urban Counties	<b>Kenneth Thompson</b> <i>Fatherhood Specialist</i> TX Dept. of Family & Protective Svcs.
<b>Barbara Elias-Perciful</b> <i>President</i> Texas Lawyers for Children	<b>Tracy Levins</b> <i>Director</i> Admn. Svcs/Community Relations Texas Youth Commission	<b>Gina VanOsselaer</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Austin Children's Shelter
<b>Debra D. Emerson</b> <i>CPS Dir. of Policy and Program</i> TX Dept. of Family & Protective Svcs.	<b>Rebecca Lightsey</b> <i>Executive Director</i> Texas Appleseed	<b>Arabia Vargas</b> <i>Chair</i> Bexar County Child Welfare Board
<b>Tomas Esparza, Jr.</b> <i>Attorney at Law</i> The Law Office of Tomas Esparza, Jr.	<b>Madeline McClure</b> <i>Executive Director</i> TexProtects	<b>Henrietta Wright</b> <i>Vice President, Board of Directors</i> Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas

APPENDIX C: BETTER COURTS FOR KIDS NEWSLETTERS, 2009

		
<h2>Better Courts for Kids and families</h2>		
<p>Newsletter of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families</p>		<p>Volume 1, Number 3 April 2009</p>
	<p><b>Harriet O'Neill</b> Justice, Supreme Court of Texas, and Chair, Children's Commission</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="553 701 1084 766"> <h3>Children's Commission Kicks Off Statewide Legal Training</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="1295 709 1357 772">  </div> </div> <p><i>Attorney training for CPS cases coming to a city near you</i> As part of its mission to improve courts that hear Child Protective Services (CPS) cases, the Children's Commission this year is bringing attorney training on child abuse and neglect to 14 Texas cities at almost no cost to participants.</p>
<div style="display: flex;"> <div data-bbox="248 898 540 1297" style="width: 30%;"> <p><b>Inside This Issue</b></p> <p><a href="#">Children's Commission launches statewide attorney training</a></p> <p><a href="#">Texas addresses racial disparity in CPS system</a></p> <p><a href="#">Capitol rally demonstrates need for more CASA volunteers</a></p> <p><a href="#">Travis County becomes model court and starts two new public defenders offices for CPS cases</a></p> <p><a href="#">Justice O'Neill receives awards for service to Texas children</a></p> </div> <div data-bbox="553 898 1357 1031" style="width: 70%;"> <p>Child welfare law has become more and more complex in the last decade, making it extra challenging to ensure adequate legal representation for parties in Texas CPS cases. Texas counties struggle with this responsibility. Most counties use an appointment list according to local custom or rule, and attorneys are paid from the county budget at a rate established by the county. Pay rates are not uniform or tied to any standard.</p> </div> </div>		
<div style="display: flex;"> <div data-bbox="248 1052 540 1472" style="width: 30%;"> <p><b>Children's Commission Staff</b></p> <p>Tina Amberboy, Executive Director Newsletter Executive Editor</p> <p>Tiffany Roper, Assistant Director</p> <p>Bryan Wilson, Grant Administrator</p> <p>Jacque Barclay, Financial Analyst</p> <p>Teri Moran Support Services Officer Newsletter Editor</p> <p>To unsubscribe, send an email with the word unsubscribe in the subject line to <a href="mailto:children@courts.state.tx.us">children@courts.state.tx.us</a></p> </div> <div data-bbox="553 1052 1357 1472" style="width: 70%;"> <p>The Texas Family Code requires three hours of training for attorneys who represent children in CPS cases, but none for parents' attorneys. Although the code specifies duties and responsibilities a child's attorney ad litem must carry out, it stipulates no corresponding duties or responsibilities applicable to an attorney who represents parents. Many counties offer training and some even require CLE in an amount over the three hours required by statute, but the practices vary widely from county to county.</p> <p>To help counties tackle the education issue, the Children's Commission contracted with the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) to deliver 14, one-day training sessions. The courses cover state and federal statutory material, case law, and best practices for attorneys ad litem, respondent parents' counsel and other practitioners. NACC staff will meet with area judges and attorneys in focus groups before each session to discuss local training needs and other issues. The training is funded by the federal Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><i>"The Commission is dedicated to improving the quality of legal representation for children and parents in the child protection system." — Commission Executive Director Tina Amberboy</i></p> </div> <p>"We're excited to be able to provide this training to attorneys who practice in this very complex field of law," Children's Commission Executive Director Tina Amberboy said. "The Commission is dedicated to improving the quality of legal representation for children and parents in the child protection system." The training brings a multidisciplinary overview of an abuse and neglect case from its inception through final orders and appeal.</p> <p>Each course costs \$18. Registration is online only and will open about two months before each session. Participants will receive a complimentary 6-month NACC membership when they register. NACC has requested 8.5 hours of CLE. For more information or to register go the NACC website <a href="#">here</a>.</p> </div> </div>		

**Children's Commission**

Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair  
 Hon. Darlene Byrne, Vice Chair  
 Audrey Deckinga  
 Hon. Camile G. DuBose  
 Bruce Esterline  
 Harper Estes  
 Stewart W. Gagnon  
 Albert Hawkins  
 Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums  
 Joyce M. James  
 Hon. Patricia A. Macias  
 Carolyne Rodriguez  
 Hon. Dean Rucker  
 Fairy Davenport Rutland  
 Hon. Cheryl Lee Shannon  
 Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez  
 Tourelles  
 G. Allan Van Fleet  
 Hon. Jeff Wentworth

**Children's Commission Collaborative Council**

Emy Lou Baldrige  
 Conni Barker  
 Carolyn Bivens  
 Roy Block  
 Salvador Cavazos  
 William B. Connolly  
 Penny Cook  
 Cathy Crabtree  
 Susan Hopkins Craven  
 De Shaun Ealoms  
 Barbara Elias-Perciful  
 Debra D. Emerson  
 Tomas Esparza, Jr.  
 Benigno J. Fernandez, M.D.  
 Paul E. Furrh, Jr.  
 Mike Foster  
 Joe Gagen  
 Eileen Garcia-Matthews  
 David Halpern  
 Alicia Key  
 Richard LaVallo  
 Donald Lee  
 Tracy Levins  
 Rebecca Lightsey  
 Madeline McClure  
 Hon. F. Scott McCown  
 Trista Miller  
 Judy Powell  
 Johana Scott  
 Bryan Sperry  
 Vicki Spriggs  
 Gene Terry  
 Gloria Terry  
 Gina VanOsselaer  
 Arabia Vargas  
 Henrietta Wright

**The Abuse and Neglect Case: A Practitioner's Guide**

Confirmed Dates		Tentative Dates	
5/13	Midland	9/16	Tyler
5/15	Amarillo	9/18	Texarkana
6/5	El Paso	10/20	Waco
6/18	Austin	10/22	Ft. Worth
6/19	San Antonio	11/6	Dallas
7/9	Beaumont	12/2	Harlingen
7/10	Houston	12/4	Corpus Christi

The Children's Commission will undertake a study later this year of legal representation in Texas to look at various county appointment models, local training requirements, appointment timeliness and duration, and compensation. The goal is to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of various models to determine the feasibility of implementing one on a statewide or countywide basis.

**Texas Faces Problem of Racial Disparity in CPS Head On**

*State addresses overrepresentation of African-American children in foster care*

Texas is at the forefront of efforts to transform a disparity in its child protection system that is found nationwide – the overrepresentation of African-American children in the child welfare system. Through a collaborative effort called the Texas State Strategy, DFPS has worked with Casey Family Programs since 2004 to address what child welfare professionals call disproportionality – a racial imbalance indicated by statistical analysis. Certain Children's Commission members and staff are actively involved in the effort.

Nationally, some 60 percent of children in foster care are non-white, even though decades of research has shown that non-white parents are no more likely to abuse or neglect their children than white parents (see one Casey study [here](#)).

*"We must be committed to working differently with families to change outcomes and help families be more successful," — DFPS Deputy Commissioner Joyce James*

In Texas, a higher percentage of African-American children are removed from their homes, a lower percentage are successfully reunited with their families, and a higher percentage age out of foster care without an adoptive family or other permanent placement.

Disproportionality in various state systems, such as juvenile justice and child welfare, has been on the national and state radar for years. In Texas, efforts to address the issue gained traction when the 79th Legislature mandated an analysis – which controlled for other factors such as family structure and poverty – to determine whether Texas had a problem, and if so, to create a remediation plan.

The first of several state reports (see the January 2006 report [here](#)) confirmed Texas did have a disparity problem "... even when taking into account other nationally recognized relevant factors such as age and sex of the victim, family income, allegation type, and marital status," the report stated.

DFPS responded seven months later with an official action plan (see the plan [here](#)) of strategies that include:

- Providing cultural competency training to all staff who serve youth and families directly.
  - Broadening recruitment efforts of foster and adoptive parents to target the needs of children in the system.
- Collaborating more extensively with community partners.

The Children's Commission is working to integrate disproportionality training into judicial education curriculum for 2009. Children's Commission member Joyce James, DFPS deputy commissioner, has for many years led the state's disproportionality efforts. She and another Children's Commission member, Carolyne Rodriguez, director of state strategy for Casey Family Programs in Texas, help guide the Statewide Task Force on Disproportionality, of which Children's Commission Executive Director Tina Amberboy is a member.

"It is dependent upon our willingness as leaders to recognize that this work begins with us as individuals," Ms. James said. "We must be committed to working differently with families to change outcomes and help families be more successful."

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) is also a part of the national effort. Its Permanency Planning Division has created a model called Courts Catalyzing Change: Achieving Equity and Fairness in Foster Care Initiative (CCC), which is funded by Casey Family Programs and supported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The program brings together judicial officers and other systems' experts to set a national agenda for court-based training, research, and reform initiatives to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in dependency court systems.

Find more information about disproportionality on these pages: [NCJFCJ Permanency Planning Division](#), [Texas Department Family and Protective Services](#), [Casey Family Programs](#)

### Foster Kids Need More Court Advocates

#### Capitol rally displays need for more CASA volunteers

Fewer than half of the average of 1,000 children who enter foster care every month in Texas have a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer to help them find a safe and permanent home. On April 14, the day Governor Rick Perry declared Texas CASA day to honor its 5,259 volunteers, supporters displayed on the south side of the Capitol life-sized cardboard cutouts representing foster children.



Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill speaking on the Capitol steps in Austin calling for greater community response to assist foster children in Texas. *BACKROW (Left to right): Judge Dean Rucker, Midland; State Representative John Otto, Dayton; Senator Jane Nelson, Flower Mound; Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill, State Representative Patrick Rose, Dripping Springs; and State Representative Mark Strama, Austin.*

"The images are cardboard, but the message is real – pay attention to abuse and neglect, listen to us and stand up for us," said Joe Gagen, the executive director for Texas CASA.

Supreme Court Justice and Children' Commission Chair Harriet O'Neill emceed the rally and said the 140 cutouts represent the number of children who, every week in Texas, must go through the traumatic experience of separation from their families without the help of a CASA.

"Every day in court, judges hold the lives of children in their hands – we rely on court appointed special advocates to help us make better informed decisions," Justice O'Neill said. "It is not surprising that 97 percent of Texas' judges recently surveyed say the personal knowledge the volunteers have of each case helps them make a decision."

In an overburdened court system, a CASA volunteer is typically the one constant in a foster child's life. In his proclamation, Governor Perry said, "Only by becoming informed, and ideally, involved in working toward a solution can we finally ensure that all children in Texas are safe."

"Which of these children would you choose to go it alone?" Justice O'Neill said. She called for Texans to get involved, and noted that anyone interested in contributing even small amounts of time could go to a website called [www.raisemem.org](http://www.raisemem.org) that can help connect people with opportunities to serve in their communities.

### ***Travis County Hits a Double***

#### ***County starts two new CPS public defenders offices and receives model court designation***

At about the same time last fall that Travis County was close to getting authorization and funding to set up the state's first two public defenders offices created to handle CPS cases exclusively in one county, it also received a Model Court designation from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ).

Courts selected to join NCJFCJ's model court cadre agree to act as laboratories for court improvement efforts and to commit to achieving specific outcomes while following some basic NCJFC-proscribed protocols. Travis County joins some 37 other U.S. courts that have received the designation since the project's inception in 1992.

Becoming a model court involves joining a program where court officials are accountable for collecting data to track court performance, creating inter-disciplinary teams headed by a lead judge to monitor performance and improvement efforts, and meeting with other model courts for training and collaboration. Model courts strive to implement standards such as conducting longer hearings and trying as far as possible to institutionalize a one-judge, one-family court.

---

*"We're always trying to increase the quality and delivery of representation, and this is a step in that direction," – Commission Vice Chair Judge Darlene Byrne, 126th District Court*

---

In addition to embarking on the model court program last year, Travis County has also begun setting up two new public defenders offices – one to represent children in CPS cases, and one to represent parents. Each office will have four attorneys and four support staff. These eight attorneys will replace some 45 private attorneys who are drawn and appointed from a list of qualified attorneys who have completed at least the minimum amount of training Travis County requires. The Children's Commission has underwritten part of the start-up costs with federal CIP grant funds.

Children's Commission Vice Chair Judge Darlene Byrne, of Austin's 126th District Court, is the lead judge of the model court program and helped create the new public defenders offices. Judge Byrne believes both projects will help improve outcomes for families involved in CPS. "We're always trying to increase the quality and delivery of representation, and this is a step in that direction," Judge Byrne said. "Consistent, high-quality legal representation with a consolidated legal focus will bring better legal representation for these children and parents."

### ***Justice O'Neill Receives National Award***

#### ***Children's Commission chair honored for work on child abuse and neglect issues***

Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill recently received a national award citing her contributions to combating child abuse and neglect in Texas. The 2009 Commissioner's Award was presented April 2 to Justice O'Neill during the 17th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Atlanta. The award is presented by the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, a division of the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"This award is high achievement for a judge who works full time at two endeavors, her judicial role and her leadership for children caught in a court system for no reason of their own," Chief Justice Wallace B. Jefferson said. "Justice O'Neill is what justice is about."

Justice O'Neill is the chair of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families, which she organized for the Court in 2007 to help courts better serve children in foster care and move them more quickly into permanent homes.

Also this April, Justice O'Neill was recognized as Volunteer of the Year by CASA of Southeast Texas at its April 15 dinner in Beaumont called Justice is Served honoring local CASA volunteers.



To unsubscribe, send an email with the word unsubscribe in the subject line to [children@courts.state.tx.us](mailto:children@courts.state.tx.us)




## Better Courts for Kids and Families

Newsletter of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children,  
Youth and Families

Volume 2, Number 1  
Summer 2009



"Courts are gatekeepers for families in crisis," – Justice Harriet O'Neill, Children's Commission Chair

### Inside This Issue

*Texas approves board certification in child welfare law*  
1

*Managed care for foster children marks first year*  
2

*State agencies to share data with courts online*  
3

*Texas to host 3rd National Judicial Summit on the Protection of Children*  
4

*Statewide attorney training in CPS cases continues*  
4

*Conference for CPS Judges highlights changes*  
5

**Children's Commission Staff**

Tina Amberboy  
*Executive Director*

Tiffany Roper  
*Assistant Director*

Bryan Wilson  
*Grant Administrator*

Jacque Barclay  
*Financial Analyst*

Teri Moran  
*Support Services Officer  
Newsletter Editor*

### Tap That Milestone, Texas

*Texas approves board certification in child welfare law*

Texas joined 13 other states this May when the Texas Board of Legal Specialization approved the application of the National Association of Council for Children (NACC) to offer child welfare law certification to Texas attorneys. The Children's Commission was instrumental in getting the certification approved.

Child Welfare Attorney Specialization is a program of the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC). NACC certifies qualified attorneys as Child Welfare Law Specialists (CWLS) through a comprehensive competency process.

The specialty, first offered in 2006, is a significant development for the legal profession and for attorneys who represent parties in child abuse and neglect cases, according to Senior District Judge John Specia, Jurist in Residence for the Office of Court Administration. "It will allow lawyers who have developed specialized expertise to be recognized in an area that has largely gone unrecognized," Judge Specia said.

"Before, there was no official way to prove you had special knowledge in this area," Judge Specia said. "Certification raises the stature of attorneys who represent children and families in CPS cases."

The certification process requires attorneys to satisfy the following:

- Substantial involvement in the practice of child welfare law for the three years immediately preceding the application
- Satisfactory continuing legal education credit in child welfare law
- Acquisition of satisfactory peer reviews (at least one judicial review) of competence in the field
- Satisfactory writing sample
- Passage of the NACC national child welfare law exam

**Red Book Training**  
NACC will offer the certification exam by Spring 2010. The Children's Commission is sponsoring three one-day trainings in 2009 for attorneys to prepare for certification. These NACC "Red Book" trainings are scheduled in Austin (September 23), Houston (October 28), and Dallas (November 7). For more information see NACC's website at [www.naccchildlaw.org](http://www.naccchildlaw.org).

*"Certification raises the stature of attorneys who represent children and families in CPS cases," – John Specia, Senior District Judge, Office of Court Administration Jurist in Residence*

1

44

<p><b><i>Children's Commission</i></b>  <i>Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair</i>                  Hon. Darlene Byrne, Vice Chair                  Audrey Deckinga                  Hon. Camile G. DuBose                  Bruce Esterline                  Harper Estes                  Stewart W. Gagnon                  Albert Hawkins                  Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums                  Joyce M. James                  Hon. Patricia A. Macias                  Carolyne Rodriguez                  Hon. Dean Rucker                  Fairy Davenport Rutland                  Hon. Cheryl Lee Shannon                  Hon. Yvonne Gonzalez Toureilles                  G. Allan Van Fleet                  Hon. Jeff Wentworth</p> <p><b><i>Collaborative Council</i></b>                  Emy Lou Baldrige                  Conni Barker                  Roy Block                  Susan Boone                  Salvador Cavazos                  William B. Connally                  Penny Cook                  Cathy Crabtree                  Susan Hopkins Craven                  De Shaun Ealoms                  Barbara Elias-Perciful                  Debra D. Emerson                  Tomas Esparza, Jr.                  Benigno J. Fernandez, M.D.                  Mike Foster                  Paul E. Furrh, Jr.                  Joe Gagen                  Eileen Garcia-Matthews                  David Halpern                  Alicia Key                  Richard LaVallo                  Donald Lee                  Tracy Levins                  Rebecca Lightsey                  Madeline McClure                  Hon. F. Scott McCown                  Trista Miller                  Judy Powell                  Johana Scot                  Bryan Sperry                  Vicki Spriggs                  Gene Terry                  Gloria Terry                  Gina VanOsselaer                  Arabia Varqas                  Henrietta Wright</p>	<p><b>STAR Health – How's it Working?</b>  <i>Managed care for foster children marks first year</i>                  Effectively monitoring a foster child's medical needs and history has long been a challenge in Texas's historically fragmented Medicaid health care delivery system, and it's just one of many serious problems that have contributed to less-than-satisfactory outcomes for children who are removed from their families for abuse or neglect.</p> <p>In an effort to improve health care for foster kids, in April 2008, about 28,000 children under state conservatorship were switched from regular Medicaid to STAR Health, a new managed care program designed specifically for them.</p> <p>By providing every child with a primary physician to coordinate care and a web-based Health Passport that travels with the child, STAR Health provides a medical home for foster children, who are enrolled immediately upon entering DFPS conservatorship. The plan covers medical, dental, vision and behavioral health needs of children in foster, kinship and other forms of DFPS care, as well as young adults who have aged out of the system and who still qualify for Medicaid.</p> <p>STAR Health has struggled in some areas of the state, especially rural areas, to provide access to nearby dental and behavioral care (within 75 miles), partly because not every local healthcare provider who had previously accepted Medicaid chose to sign up with STAR Health. However, the problem of having enough providers who accept Medicaid is not new or unique to STAR Health. "Ensuring adequate access to medical and behavioral health providers in the STAR Health HMO network is key to improving health outcomes for foster children," said Stacey Pogue, Policy Analyst at the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP). "Provider network adequacy is an ongoing challenge, in STAR Health and Medicaid in general."</p> <p>On the upside, many stakeholders point to how much easier it is now to get treatment for most kids, in part because STAR Health provides service coordinators who lift much of the logistical burden that accessing care under traditional Medicaid typically entailed.</p> <p>For judges who hear CPS cases must review each child's medical care at each hearing held under Texas Family Code Chapter 263, STAR Health has created a bench card that has helpful information such as how to request a psychotropic medication review. Judges can request a review for a child by calling (866) 218-8263. The information will be returned to the requesting judge or the CPS caseworker within a short timeframe. The bench card also lists important information such as which children and youth are excluded from the STAR Health system and how to mandate a particular level of care or medical service by court order, among other things.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the bench card at:  <a href="http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/board/STARHealthbenchbook.pdf">www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/board/STARHealthbenchbook.pdf</a></li> <li>• View frequently asked questions for judges at:  <a href="http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/board/JudicialFAQFinal.pdf">www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/board/JudicialFAQFinal.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p>"For caseworkers, navigating the Medicaid health care system has always been difficult – much like getting a hunting license," said Holly Munin, chief executive officer of the Texas Foster Care Program at STAR Health's parent company, Superior HealthPlan Network, which is operated by Centene Corp. "We run that interference for them with around-the-clock service. The feedback we get from caseworkers and others is that they're very grateful for that level of support."</p>
--	---

CPS Assistant Commissioner Audrey Deckinga agrees. "STAR Health is able to assist a medical consentor/caregiver to solve complex medical problems that seemed insurmountable before STAR Health began," Ms. Deckinga said. "Foster parents are able to call the hotline numbers and obtain assistance when needed. They no longer have to wait for a worker to call them back, or wait for the worker to approve a service. Also, staff indicate that it is helpful to have a resource person who understands the "lingo" of the health professional, and can decipher a child's record or the notes the doctor or other professional provides."

While it takes longer than one year to gather enough data to measure success in all areas, Ms. Deckinga points to one that has long been a concern – the over-prescribing of psychotropic drugs. "We've significantly reduced the number of children in foster care who are taking psychotropic medications," Ms. Deckinga said. "That's an area we've been working on for several years, but STAR Health has allowed us to automate part of that process, increase our oversight and achieve even greater reductions in the use of these drugs."

"We're very proud of that accomplishment," Ms. Munin said. "And we fully expect to improve on other similar outcomes in the future," such as poly-pharmaceutical usage. Find more information about STAR Health on these web pages:

DFPS: [www.dfps.state.tx.us/About/Renewal/CPS/Medical.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About/Renewal/CPS/Medical.asp)  
 Superior Health Plan Network: [www.fostercaretx.com/nortal/public/fc](http://www.fostercaretx.com/nortal/public/fc)  
 Center for Public Policy Priorities: [www.cppp.org](http://www.cppp.org)

*"We've significantly reduced the number of children in foster care who are taking psychotropic medications,"*  
 – Audrey Deckinga, CPS Assistant Commissioner

### State Agencies Open Up Their Databases to Judicial System

*Automated Registry gives some courts instant access to select background information*

This October, the Office of Court Administration (OCA) will release a new system that gives certain courts immediate online access to helpful background information on case participants – information housed in several state-agency databases. Called the Automated Registry (AR), the new system consolidates data and replaces what in some cases required a written request to the agency and several days' turnaround time.

While judges on CPS cases are forbidden by DPS to access criminal history data, they will gain new or faster access to case information from Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) databases and court of continuing jurisdiction information from Department of State Health Services (DSHS) databases.

Like its predecessor the Judicial Web Page, the AR will provide up-to-date information on kids in care for judges handling their cases, according to Carl Reynolds, OCA's Administrative Director. "It will help judges keep current on their own caseloads, keep tabs on DFPS, and monitor all the kids in care in their county," Mr. Reynolds said.

Access to the state agency data is through a secure, Internet-based software application. The data flows one-way only, from the state agency to the court. The AR system does not retain any of the response data after it has been viewed. The AR user enters identifying information for the individual appearing before the court and selects the reason the person is appearing before the court. Based on each state agency's business rules and restrictions for the data access, the AR system will determine which state agency systems to query depending on the type of court event.

#### Which Courts Get Access to What Data?

While working on a family case, a judge may access data from:

- Texas Department of State Health Services databases for court of continuing jurisdiction information.

While working on a child protection case, a judge may access data from:

- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services databases for child protection case information.
- Texas Department of State Health Services databases for court of continuing jurisdiction information.

While working on a criminal case, a judge may access data from:

- Texas Department of Public Safety databases for information related to state and national criminal history, state and national warrants, concealed handgun licenses, citizenship status, state and national driver's history, vehicle registration, sex offender alerts, probation violators, protection order status, and threat to law enforcement alerts.
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice databases for current and historical information on probation, parole, and incarceration for an individual.
- Texas Department of State Health Services databases for State mental health care history for an individual.

OCA began the AR project in 2007 after the 80th Legislature gave it \$3 million to create and maintain a way for various agencies to share data with courts. For questions about the project or to sign up to use the system, contact AR Project Manager Thomas Sullivan, at [Thomas.Sullivan@courts.state.tx.us](mailto:Thomas.Sullivan@courts.state.tx.us).

For more information go to the AR web page at: [www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/registry/reghome.asp](http://www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/registry/reghome.asp). *This article was adapted from one written by Thomas Sullivan.*

### Summoning the Will to Change

#### *Texas to host Summit III – 3rd National Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children*

The judicial and agency officials in all 50 states who largely hold in their hands the immediate futures of some half-million children in foster care seldom get a chance to come together to work on system improvements. But thanks to a few nonprofit groups, they'll get another rare opportunity this October 15 – 17, in Austin at the 3rd National Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children, also called Summit III.

Sponsored by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and hosted this year by the Children's Commission, Summit III will build on the success of the 2005 and 2007 Summits in Minnesota and New York to sustain the commitment of state leaders to view the child protection system through the eyes of a child. State leaders also plan to update the action plans created at the first two Summits and exchange successful or promising approaches for:

- Championing improvements in the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of decisions in cases affecting the well-being of children
- Broadening collaboration
- Sharing data
- Measuring performance and success
- Enhancing interstate cooperation and communication
- Addressing children's needs in rural as well as urban jurisdictions
- Providing competent legal representation to children and parents

---

*"For me, the first Summit in Minneapolis was my "Aha" moment, when it all came together for me," – Justice Harriet O'Neill, Children's Commission Chair"*

---

Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill, Chair of the Children's Commission, credits the first Summit for opening her eyes to the complex and multiple problems that must be solved for children to find safe and permanent homes. "For me, the first Summit in Minneapolis was my "Aha" moment, when it all came together for me," Justice O'Neill said. "That's when it hit me like a bolt of lightning – the impact child-protection courts have and the critical role CPS judges play." That awakening led her to spearhead the creation of the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families in November 2007.

"I returned home to Texas brimming with possibilities," Justice O'Neill said. "I was anxious to spur a new way of thinking and to foster collaboration toward innovative solutions so that children, youth and families in the child-protection system have the tools needed for success."

### Statewide Legal Training Still Rolling

#### *Seven sessions left for attorney training in CPS cases*

With federal Court Improvement Program (CIP) grant funds, the Children's Commission contracted with the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) to deliver 14, one-day training sessions in CPS cases. The courses cover state and federal statutory material, case law, and best practices for attorneys ad litem, respondent parents' counsel and other practitioners. For more information or to register online, go to [www.naccchildlaw.org/?page=TexasTrainings](http://www.naccchildlaw.org/?page=TexasTrainings).

The remaining training dates are:

Texarkana	September 18	Dallas	November 6
Longview	October 2	Harlingen	December 2
Waco	October 20	Corpus Christi	December 4
Fort Worth	October 22		

### Conference for CPS Judges Highlights Change

#### *Judges connect, reflect at state conference*

Participants at the third CPS Judges Conference in Dallas this June gave the training high marks and several said it solidified in them a growing sense that things could be looking up for the system in Texas. "There seems to be a new threshold of understanding and cooperation lately between the judiciary and the agency," Associate Judge Phil Vanderpool, of the Northern Panhandle Child Protection Court in Pampa, said.

"You know, everybody's trying," Judge Vanderpool said. "This conference helps us all to better see the forest and the trees – it helps us connect with and see the big picture better and at the same time, we're afforded a rare opportunity to get together. That alone is valuable because we're getting a chance to discuss everyday practical challenges we face as judges."

This is the third year the Texas Center for the Judiciary (TCJ) has put on the training, which is funded by the federal Court Improvement Project (CIP) grant.

"Hopefully, this conference will become an institution in Texas," Judge Jean Boyd, of the 343rd District Court in Fort Worth, said. Judge Boyd has been hearing CPS cases for almost 18 years, and from her hectic bench, she has managed an overwhelming and increasingly complicated caseload like many other judges in Texas who hear CPS cases. The conference refreshes her, she said, and helps her stay on top of ever-changing state and federal statutes, rules and policies. "It helps me keep a finger on the pulse of the nation, so to speak," Judge Boyd said. "When for years, all you can seem to manage is your caseload, it's refreshing to come to a conference and feel encouraged that systems may be connecting on a new level, thanks, in part, to the Children's Commission."

This year, the conference featured a presentation and a no-holds-barred question and answer period from a panel of Texas DFPS executives, including Commissioner Anne Heiligenstein, Deputy Commissioner Joyce James, General Counsel Gerry Williams, and CPS Assistant Commissioner Audrey Deckinga. The session, dubbed "What DFPS Wants CPS Judges to Know," was a candid presentation where the panel wound up giving out their direct phone numbers to participant judges who asked for them – just in case the judges ever needed access to top-level state CPS decision makers.

This kind of frank, direct communication between heads of a massive state bureaucracy and a handful of in-the-trenches CPS judges might have seemed unheard of, according to Ms. Deckinga, until recently. Now, it seems to have become second nature in the new collaborative atmosphere that the Children's Commission has worked to institutionalize between stakeholders, she said. "I can't tell you how productive it has been to have made these new connections with judges. It feels like we're on the same page and working together."

CPS Judge Carol Clark, of the 321st District Court in Tyler, says the CPS docket becomes more difficult and complicated every year. She was to meet and hear Anne Heiligenstein at the conference, she said. "Her thoughts on this vast and greatly challenged system were interesting and indicates she understands the many problems her agency is facing."

"Judges can get so isolated," according to Judge Vanderpool, who hears CPS cases exclusively and full-time in his role as one of Texas's 14 judges who preside over specialized CPS courts, formerly called Cluster Courts. "That's one reason why this conference is so helpful," he added. "Because not only are the topics timely, but judges can get together and discuss points of law."

The third CPS Judges Conference demonstrated a collaborative spirit in Texas between CPS agency officials and CPS judges that the Children's Commission consistently practices and promulgates, Ms. Deckinga said. "There's nothing like coming together to build better understanding and to work on problems together."

≈

**APPENDIX D: JURIST IN RESIDENCE LETTER, 2009**



TO: Texas Judges Hearing Child Protective Services Cases  
FROM: Hon. John Specia (ret.), Jurist in Residence  
Office of Court Administration  
DATE: December 11, 2009  
RE: STAR Health & Psychotropic Medications

Greetings fellow judges! This is the first in what I hope and intend to be a monthly note, giving you current and compelling information you need for hearing your CPS docket. If you have any questions or topics that you would like to see covered, please let me know at [jurist@courts.state.tx.us](mailto:jurist@courts.state.tx.us).

For the first installment, I wanted to pass along information on health services for children in foster care provided through [STAR Health program](#), which contracts with DFPS through Superior HealthPlan, for physical and behavioral health care services for the benefit of children in care.

**Q:** What does STAR Health do?

**A:** STAR Health delivers physical and behavioral health services for each child in DFPS conservatorship and maintains an electronic “medical home” for each child.

**Q:** **When is a child eligible for STAR Health services?**

**A:** Upon entry to conservatorship and services can begin immediately.

**Q:** **Who is excluded?**

**A:** Children who are: placed outside of Texas; children from other states but placed in Texas; residents in Medicaid-paid facilities (nursing homes, state schools); children dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare; children who have been adopted and the adoption is finalized; in hospice; in DFPS conservatorship, but placed in a TYC facility or on probation.

**Q:** **Are older, transitioning youth covered?**

**A:** Yes. Youth who have aged out but have remained in paid foster care past their 18th birthday are eligible until the month of their 22nd birthday. Youth who leave foster care at age 18 are eligible for coverage until their 21st birthday. Youth who are 21 and 22 are eligible for coverage if they are

attending college or technical school. They must apply by calling 1-800-248-1078. It is not necessary for a court to extend jurisdiction beyond age 18 for this coverage to apply.

**Q: Does STAR Health cover prescription medication?**

A: No. Prescription medications are provided through the Vendor Drug Program through Health and Human Services, and not through STAR Health.

**Q: Do services need to be court ordered?**

A: No. As long as the service is medically necessary, no court order is required. However, if a judge orders a particular service or specific care that is covered by Medicaid, a signed copy of the order should be sent ASAP by DFPS via fax to Superior at 1-866-702-4837.

**Q: What happens if I order a service that is not covered by Medicaid?**

A: DFPS will seek that service through a private pay contract. When entering orders for services that are not covered, Judges should consider drafting an order that provides DFPS the maximum flexibility in contracting because not all providers are available even in a private contract situation.

**Q: Does STAR Health monitor the use of psychoactive medications?**

A: STAR Health routinely monitors the use of psychiatric medications in children who are in care to ensure compliance with state parameters and for appropriate prescribing.

**Q: What is a Psychotropic Medication Utilization Review (PMUR)?**

A: A review of the use of psychiatric medications for any child in care can be made by **any** caseworker, judge, foster parent, medication consentor or other concerned entity. A judge can request a PMUR by calling 1-866-912-6283 or by submitting an online request via [SHPNFC@centene.com](mailto:SHPNFC@centene.com) Star Health has committed to priority responses to inquires from judges concerning Children under their supervision.

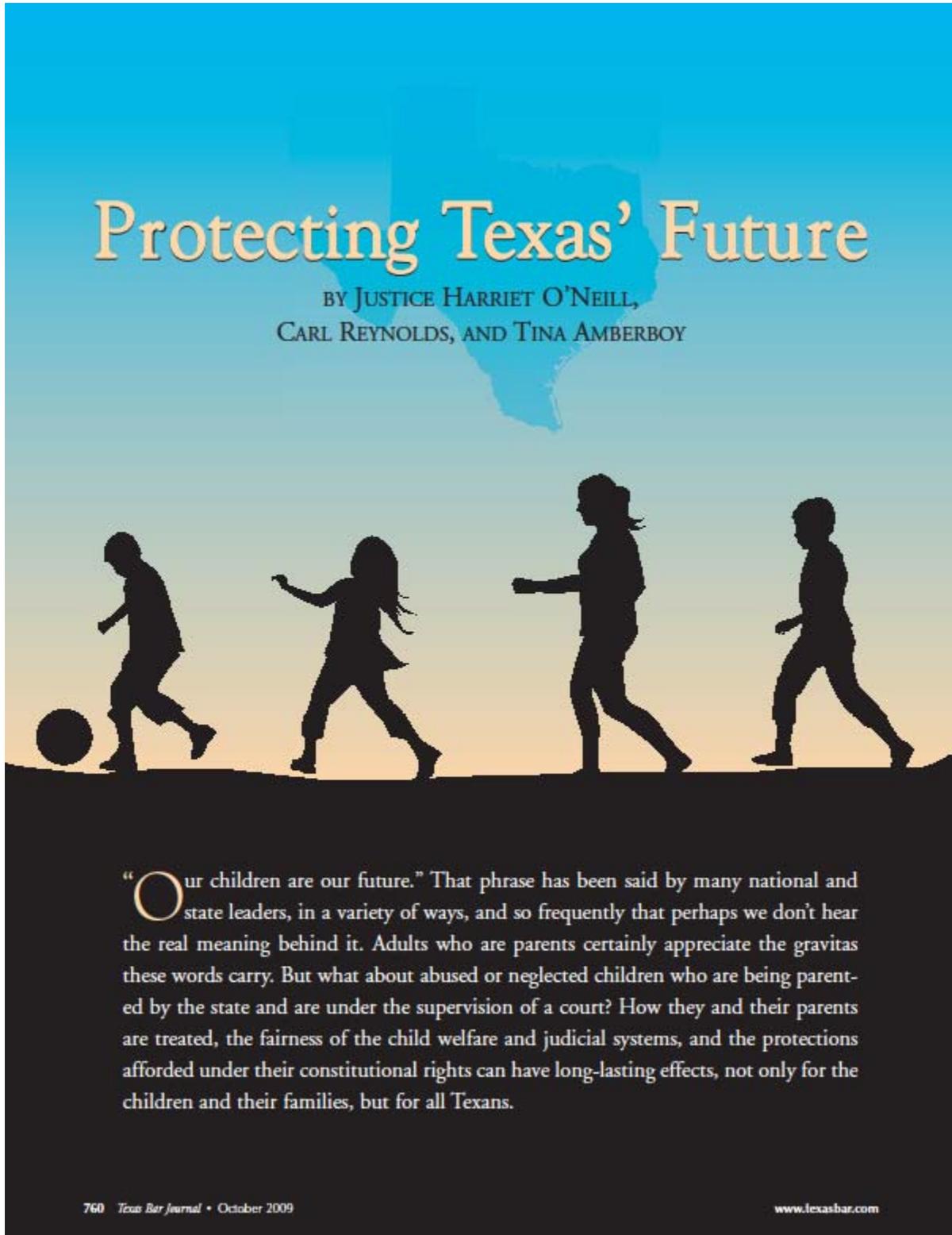
**Q: How are PMUR results made known?**

A: Once the PMUR is complete, the results will be provided to the caseworker and to any other entity requesting the information, if other than the caseworker.

**Q: Who can I contact if I have questions?**

A: If your question is regarding physical health, call 866-912-6283. If it regards behavioral health, or interpreting a psychological evaluation or psychiatric assessment, contact STAR Health's Integrated Mental Health Services (IMHS) at 866-218-8263. [Click here for a list of STAR Health contacts.](#)

**APPENDIX E: PROTECTING TEXAS FUTURE, TEXAS BAR JOURNAL, 10/2009**



# Protecting Texas' Future

BY JUSTICE HARRIET O'NEILL,  
CARL REYNOLDS, AND TINA AMBERBOY

“**O**ur children are our future.” That phrase has been said by many national and state leaders, in a variety of ways, and so frequently that perhaps we don’t hear the real meaning behind it. Adults who are parents certainly appreciate the gravitas these words carry. But what about abused or neglected children who are being parented by the state and are under the supervision of a court? How they and their parents are treated, the fairness of the child welfare and judicial systems, and the protections afforded under their constitutional rights can have long-lasting effects, not only for the children and their families, but for all Texans.

760 *Texas Bar Journal* • October 2009 [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com)

Protecting Texas' Future  
O'NEILL, REYNOLDS  
& AMBERBOY

The responsibility for protecting children while safeguarding parental rights is not exclusively that of the executive branch. The judicial and legislative branches of government also have a duty to act in a manner that provides the most efficient and protective process and structure for implementation of policy, law, and judicial practices affecting child and family welfare. One of the most compelling duties of state courts is to act as the gatekeeper for families in crisis. Questions that often arise are:

- How best to pursue improvements in child protection?
- How best to structure the intricacy of shared federal, state, and local governance?
- How to navigate the shared state-local funding of courts?

Collaboration is another term that is at times overused. But no word describes more accurately the alliance the Texas Supreme Court committed to when it formed the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families in November 2007.

After a two-year deliberative process, the Supreme Court created the Commission to respond to issues affecting child and family welfare in Texas — issues that are common across all states and jurisdictions, such as:

- overcrowded child protection dockets;
- lack of collaboration between the courts and the child welfare agency;
- the need for specialized training for judges, attorneys, and other professionals in the child protection system;
- the need for technology to effectively manage cases;
- providing effective and meaningful avenues for children, parents, family members, and foster parents to have a voice in decisions affecting their lives and their future;
- preparing children who age out of foster care for adulthood; and
- helping communities identify and sustain resources needed to aid families as they attempt to provide safe, stable environments for children.

One of the Commission's primary functions is to provide the collaborative structure to bring executive, judicial, and policy leaders together to discuss issues affecting child protection in Texas, with the goal of advancing ideas that further sound executive agency policy, carefully planned legislation, and improved judicial handling of child protection cases. The Commission also oversees and administers the federal Court Improvement Program Grant, which funds staff-directed and community-managed projects aimed at improving courts and court processes. The tasks undertaken in both roles are done in compliance with the Commission's strategic plan, which has five primary goals: promote judicial leadership to improve courts; identify and promote best practices to improve outcomes in child safety, permanency, and well-being; strengthen courts to meet the needs of children, youth, and families; improve the quality of legal representation; and promote accountability for court improvement.

[www.texasbar.com/tbj](http://www.texasbar.com/tbj)

In its two years of existence, the Commission has accomplished what many thought would take a decade or more to do. With total grant funding of \$2 million per year, the Commission has expanded judicial and legal training and engaged in a number of projects designed to improve outcomes for underserved populations, such as youth who are aging out of foster care, children who remain in state custody indefinitely, and youth in the dual custody of the juvenile justice system and child protection. Perhaps most significantly, it has focused on the tremendous problems courts experience tracking data that allows assessment of progress toward improving child welfare.

In its first year, the Commission developed fiscal and administrative policies, created a website and a newsletter, retained a jurist-in-residence to support Commission projects, established relationships with legislative staff and child welfare policymakers across the state, helped secure a new model court in Texas, constituted a team of professionals to assist local court improvement efforts, procured a contract for statewide attorney training, and published a comprehensive report on the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.

In its second year, the Commission made a major step to help courts track their cases and case outcomes. The Commission funded the Office of Court Administration, with govern-



**DISCREET, PROFESSIONAL  
INVESTIGATIONS  
RESULTING IN  
COURT-ADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE  
SPECIALIZING IN  
SURVEILLANCE**

**[www.texasinvestigators.com](http://www.texasinvestigators.com)**

**(713) 807-8811** BILL PELLERIN  
President  
TEXAS STATE LICENSE #A-7516  
 NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL CAPABILITIES [bpellerin@texasinvestigator.com](mailto:bpellerin@texasinvestigator.com)

Vol. 72, No. 9 • Texas Bar Journal 761

**Protecting Texas' Future**  
**O'NEILL, REYNOLDS**  
**& AMBERBOY**

nance from the Commission's Technology Committee, to develop a child protection case management system. Introduced in September to 17 county courts across the state, the system will allow judges to track different elements to measure safety, permanency, and well-being. Courts will be able to look at the data and identify issues, such as whether children were safe while in foster care or whether their placements were stable. Being able to track how quickly a child moves toward permanency, whether that is through reunification with his or her parent, which is the priority, or into a permanent placement with a relative or other responsible adult, helps judges identify which judicial practices contribute to the outcome. It will also enable judges to identify bottlenecks in the process so they can make changes where necessary. Another promising initiative is the creation of a Round Table Series, a forum that allows decision-makers to address pertinent topics, leading to changes in practice, policy, and law.

On a local level, two Texas courts — one in Austin and one in El Paso — are nationally recognized child protection model courts, which implement and report on innovative judicial practices. The Commission also provided significant funding to establish two public defender-type offices in Travis County to handle legal representation of children and parents, the first of their kind in Texas. Each office was recently voted the Most Family Friendly Government Office by the Best of Austin 2009 Readers Poll in the *Austin Chronicle*.

**What's Ahead?**

While the Commission had great success in its first two years, there is still much to do. This month, the Commission will host the third National Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children. State chief justices, child welfare directors, education directors, and state court administrators from

*The judicial and legislative branches of government also have a duty to act in a manner that provides the most efficient and protective process and structure for implementation of policy, law, and judicial practices affecting child and family welfare.*

around the nation will gather in Austin to examine child welfare policies and how they can be improved. The summit will include workshops and peer exchange events on topics such as engaging youth in and out of court, disproportionality of minority youth in foster care, and engaging relatives to care for youth.

Other projects on the horizon include an interactive, web-based bench book that is intended to help establish well-informed judicial practices. The bench book, to be launched next year, will be accessible to judges who have questions about hearings, case law, the Family Code, and other practice details. The book will include articles on child welfare issues and a list of judges who can act as a resource to other judges. Judges will have everything they need at their fingertips, which will inspire better judicial practices, and ultimately, better outcomes for children and families.

The Commission reflects the judiciary's most comprehensive effort to improve the lives and life chances of children and youth who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect and placed under court supervision. Why is this important? Because every child deserves a safe, stable, and permanent home, and because strong families pass on the tools for success to the next generation — our children, our future.

**Harriet O'Neill**

is a justice on the Supreme Court of Texas. Prior to that, O'Neill served as a justice on the 14th Court of Appeals.

**Carl Reynolds**

is director of the Office of Court Administration.

**Tina Amberboy**

is executive director of the Supreme Court Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families.



**CLEonline.com** ...Delivering CLE to your desktop.™

Earn all of your MCLE **participatory** credits online... on YOUR time and at YOUR convenience.

**FEATURE SEMINARS THIS MONTH**

Texas Family Law Update - First Quarter 2009 1.0 Hr.  
 HBA Presents: "Champion of the Over-Privileged: Tricks and Traps of Representing Corporate Executives" 1.25 Hrs.  
 HBA Presents: "Nuts and Bolts of Texas Criminal Law" 1.25 Hrs.  
 HBA Presents: "Fundamentals in Real Estate" 1.25 Hrs.

\*\* Discounts available to members of the Houston Bar Association and Austin Bar Association \*\*

www.CLEonline.com 1-800-522-7566

## APPENDIX F: COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN, FUTURE TRENDS IN STATE COURTS, 2009, NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS

### COMMISSIONS COLLABORATING FOR CHILDREN

#### Carl Reynolds

Director, Office of Court Administration, Texas

#### Tina Amberboy

Director, Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families, Texas

*All states are required to demonstrate meaningful multidisciplinary collaboration between the judicial branch and the child-welfare agency, a challenge in good times, made more difficult with severe budgetary constraints. Some states have developed special commissions for this purpose, sustaining the energy and connections needed for systemic improvement.*

Legislative and judicial processes are preordained. But what about all the business in between, where there is more discretion to determine the process and structure and much of the work of implementing public policy takes place? How best to pursue improvements in child protection; to structure the intricacy of shared federal, state, and local governance; and to navigate the shared state-local funding of courts that exists in many states? Texas and other states have worked to reap the benefit of multidisciplinary collaboration through commissions appointed by the states' supreme courts to bring some measure of governance and strategic vision to this challenging arena.

In 2004 the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care issued "Fostering the Future," a report that made recommendations about how to move children from foster care into safe, permanent, nurturing families and prevent unnecessary placements. As part of the report, the Pew Commission recommended four key strategies for strengthening courts in the child-protection system:

1. Courts must have the ability to track children's progress, identify children in need of attention, and identify sources of delay in court proceedings.
2. Courts and public agencies should be required to demonstrate effective collaboration on behalf of children.

3. Children and their parents must have a direct voice in court, effective representation, and the timely input of those who care about them.
4. Chief justices and state court leadership must take the lead, acting as the foremost champions for children and making sure recommendations of the Pew Commission are enacted (Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, 2004).

#### A Sampling of Judicial Commissions on Children

- Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care [http://www.courts.wa.gov/committee/index.cfm?fa=committee.home&committee\\_id=50](http://www.courts.wa.gov/committee/index.cfm?fa=committee.home&committee_id=50)
- Ohio Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Courts <http://www.sconet.state.oh.us/Boards/familyCourts/default.asp>
- Vermont Justice for Children Task Force <http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/jc/Shared%20Documents/committee-justicechildrenrenewed08.pdf>
- New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children <http://www.courts.state.ny.us/ip/justiceforchildren/index.shtml>
- Nebraska Supreme Court Through the Eyes of a Child Initiative <http://www.throughtheeyes.org>
- Georgia Supreme Court Commission on Children, Marriage and Family Law <http://www.getmarriedstaymarried.org>
- California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tfids/bluerib.htm>

In September 2005, the Pew Commission recommendations were the subject of the Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children in Minneapolis. This watershed event stimulated more focused judicial attention on the plight of children and youth in foster care. However, exercising visible judicial leadership as recommended by Pew is not necessarily easy, comfortable, or customary for a supreme court, nor does it come naturally to many trial judges who are called upon to handle and champion child-abuse cases. Several states have pursued the four Pew strategies through the formation of judicial commissions to develop policies designed to improve courts for children, youth, and families in the child-protection system.

Texas is an excellent example of the complexities and benefits of establishing a court-appointed commission. Since 1993, the Texas Court Improvement Program had been governed by the Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care, chaired by Judge John Specia of San Antonio. This multidisciplinary collaboration had made significant improvements over the years and laid a solid foundation of interaction between a number of judges and the child-welfare agency, CASA leadership, the University of Texas School of Law, and others in the field. All it lacked was greater visibility and a more sustained connection to the Supreme Court of Texas.

Returning from the Minneapolis Summit and starting in November 2005, Justice Harriet O'Neill took the leadership role in Texas, bringing to bear her analogous experience with the creation of the Texas Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission and Foundation. She now serves as the chair of the Supreme Court Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families (commission), having launched a two-year consensus-building effort to establish a commission with the official status, credibility, and the imprimatur of the Supreme Court of Texas (see Permanent Commission on Children, Youth and Families Web site). Mindful of the many stakeholders already involved in child welfare in Texas, Justice O'Neill and the supreme court did not leap too quickly to create a commission. Inspired by Minnesota, the Texas team visited Chief Justice Judith Kaye and the New York Permanent Commission on Justice for Children, and Justice Moreno with the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care. Then there was a study of the issue by a consultative group formed by court order (see Foster Care Consultative Group, 2007) and, in September 2007, a remarkable public hearing of the court to receive testimony from a myriad of stakeholders (see Public Hearing on the Children's Commission, 2007).

One of the most important structural components of any commission is the willingness of judges to serve. Texas benefits from the leadership of Justice O'Neill and a broad representation on the commission of the major constituencies in Texas child welfare. The court order establishing the commission is deliberately detailed regarding history, process, problem identification, structure, and strategies (see Supreme Court of Texas, 2007). The 19-member commission brings together public and private institutions to work toward reducing the amount of time children spend in foster care and ensuring better outcomes for children and families.

Members include judges, Child Protective Services (CPS) and Health and Human Services officials, trial judges, attorneys, legislators and other elected officials, the vice president of a nonprofit foundation, and a former state bar president. Judge Specia, the former chair of the Task Force on Foster Care and a very active former board member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, has retired from the bench but stays heavily involved with the commission as the Jurist in Residence to the Office of Court Administration. Other members of the former task force have continued their service on the commission or its committees.

**Five Primary Goals of the Commission**

1. Promote judicial leadership to improve courts;
2. Identify and promote best practices to improve outcomes in child safety, permanency, and well-being;
3. Strengthen courts to meet the needs of children, youth, and families;
4. Improve the quality of legal representation; and
5. Promote accountability for court improvement.

So, the deliberative process that built up to the creation of the commission worked well, as has execution of the commission structure and composition. The formal commission is a relatively small group with executive-level membership that retains a close relationship with the stakeholder community through appointment to a much larger collaborative council, with membership from foster youth and families, parents, attorneys, CASAs, juvenile justice, and many other child-protection advocates. Another process decision that began in Texas after the second summit, in New York, was the simple step of holding a weekly meeting to connect the judicial branch to the executive branch. This meeting developed into an opportunity for staff from the legislative branch to stay tuned in as well, with executive and legislative staff usually joining by conference call, saving time and money. Finally, the commission's carefully developed procedures and process have been reduced to procedural guidelines to direct the staff in handling its grant-related duties, and providing notice to stakeholders and the interested public of how it all works (see Permanent Commission on Children, Youth and Families, n.d.).

The commission serves two primary functions. It oversees and administers the Court Improvement Grant, which funds the staff-directed and community-managed projects aimed at improving courts and court processes. It also serves as an umbrella organization to facilitate efforts of subject-matter experts, judicial and executive branch leaders, and key policy makers to discuss issues affecting child protection in the State of Texas, with the goal of advancing ideas that result in sound executive agency policy, carefully planned legislation, and improved judicial handling of child-protection cases. The tasks undertaken in both roles are done in compliance with the commission's strategic plan, which has five primary goals.

The commission's success since November 2007 has been notable. In less than two years, and with total Court Improvement Project funding of \$2.0 million per year, it has expanded judicial and legal training and engaged in a number of projects designed to improve outcomes for underserved populations, such as youth who are aging out of foster care, children who remain in state custody indefinitely, and youth in the dual custody of the juvenile justice system and child protection.

In addition, funding has been provided to the Office of Court Administration to address the significant data challenges in an enormous state with 254 counties and a highly decentralized court system. Coming out of the Minneapolis Summit, that work has been guided by the publication *Building a Better Court: Measuring and Improving Court Performance and Judicial Workload in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases* (ABA et al., 2004) and its successor publications in the *Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases* (U.S. Department of Justice et al., 2008-09). A signal achievement of that effort has been the development of a functional-requirements-reference model to give vendors of court-case-management software an authoritative set of requirements for creating specialized modules for court software systems. The reference model consists of a number of Web pages presented in an interactive format, providing overviews of the court process, timelines, a feature to allow deep drill-down into the particulars of each subprocess, and detailed descriptions of the data requirements (see Texas Office of Court Administration, *TexDECK Functional Requirements Home Page*). The reference model has, in turn, been the basis for development of a case-management system for one group of associate judges hearing child-protection cases in Texas and

**Court Performance Measures  
In Child Abuse and Neglect Cases:**

**COURT PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Courts have a particular interest in performance domains.

Safety Permanency Timeliness Due Process Well Being

**ASFA Goals: Safety, Permanency, Well Being**

Adopted and Revised in 1997, 1999, 2002, 2004, and 2008, the ASFA goals have national and state-wide implications for child abuse and neglect cases. The ASFA goals are: Safety, Permanency, and Well Being. The ASFA goals are: Safety, Permanency, and Well Being. The ASFA goals are: Safety, Permanency, and Well Being. The ASFA goals are: Safety, Permanency, and Well Being.

**CIP 2008 Conference**

- Meeting Agenda (pg. 401)
- Alliance Letter (pg. 123)
- CIP Meeting Materials (pg. 401)
- CIP Meeting Conference (pg. 401)

**Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases.**  
[www.courtandchildren.org](http://www.courtandchildren.org)

has been enhanced by inclusion of the capability to measure progress on certain performance measures included in the *Toolkit*.

A commission is nothing more, or less, than an entity charged with managing the difficult job of bringing disparate voices together for the greater good, in other words, to structure collaboration. Having such a structure helps to identify issues, task people with addressing them, and hold them accountable. It requires dedicated resources and enormous effort, but the returns on that investment can be extraordinary.

## RESOURCES

---

American Bar Association, Center on Children and the Law, National Center for State Courts, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2004). *Building a Better Court: Measuring and Improving Court Performance and Judicial Workload in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*. Williamsburg, VA: National Center for State Courts. <http://www.ncjfcj.org/images/stories/dept/ppcd/pdf/buildingbettercourt.pdf>

Foster Care Consultative Group (2007). "Creating a Permanent Commission for Children, Youth and Families: Supreme Court Consultative Group Report and Recommendations." Report to the Supreme Court of Texas, Austin, March 1. <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/reports/consultative-group-report.pdf>

Permanent Commission on Children, Youth and Families, Supreme Court of Texas Web site. <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children.asp>

— (n.d.). "Procedural Guide for the Supreme Court Permanent Judicial Commission on Children Youth and Families (Children's Commission)," Supreme Court of Texas, Austin. <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/pdf/ProceduralGuidelines.PDF>

— (2008-11). "Strategic Plan." <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/children/pdf/StrategicPlan2008to2011.pdf>

The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care (2004). "Fostering the Future: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care." Research report, Pew Commission, May 18. <http://pewfostercare.org/research/docs/FinalReport.pdf>

Public Hearing on the Children's Commission (2007). Video and PowerPoint, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas, September. <http://stmarytxlaw.mediasite.com/stmarytx/Viewer/Viewers/Viewer320TL.aspx?mode=Default&pid=7cca5175-524e-48cc-b40d-3493c23738c5&pid=8889633e-cdf-4fe9-8124-07e6b7525511&playerType=WM7#>

Supreme Court of Texas (2007). "Order Establishing Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families," November 20. <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/MiscDocket/07/07919300.pdf>

Texas Office of Court Administration, TexDECK Functional Requirements Home Page. <http://www.courts.state.tx.us/oca/texdeck/frd/texdeck%20functional%20requirements.htm>

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Center for State Courts, American Bar Association, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (2008-09). *Bolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/courttoolkit.html>

**APPENDIX G: THIRD NATIONAL JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT ON THE  
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY TEXAS  
STAKEHOLDERS, 10/2009**

**SUMMIT III ACTION PLAN**

**Goals & Action:**

**Goal 1:**

Safely Reduce PMC Population

**Action:**

- Establish a workgroup
  - Set a meeting
  - Identify data required
  - Develop a strategy
- Preliminary rules: -- achieve a 25% reduction of PMC kids within 12 months of the project start date
  - - 100% of children placed in PMC after the start date of the project achieve true permanency within 1 year of PMC order date

**Goal 2:**

Improve Education Outcomes with Greater Collaboration

**Action:**

- Establish an education subcommittee of the Commission
- Identify state level education partner such as Sen. Shapiro, Sen. Nelson, Texas Assoc of School Boards
- Build relationships with identified party
- Legislative initiative to deal with transportation issue
- Roundtable on education with small group to f/up with a larger Roundtable

**Goal 3:**

Improve Education Outcomes by Keeping Kids Closer to Home

**Action:**

- Develop electronic passports
- Identify appropriate school
- Promote use of judicial checklist
- Identify relatives prior to 2011 funds and begin training them to become licensed foster parents

- Education judges of Fostering Connections Act
- look at implementing contract with relatives being licensed in preparation for Fostering Connections Act \$\$
- Special court order to allocate more rights for family preparing for guardianship (PMC)

**Goal 4:**

Reduce Disproportionality Through at Least One Judicial Conference

**Action:**

-Develop conference agenda through subcommittee that has been established through TCJ in prep for conference being held on 5/10 – 5/11/2010

- Phase I will include focus on an introduction to the issue, data supporting it, and what's happening in each region
- Training on the issue and strategies having impact
- Assign a task to each participant to take back to their jurisdiction (e.g., brownbag CLE on dispro issues, UR training in county or region for court teams, meet with regional dispro specialist)
- Evaluation: how many judges will be trained in the year
- Target audience
  - Judges serving on the –Commission (est 7 or 8)
  - Child Protection Court Judges (est 15+)
  - Urban District Court Judges (8 – 10)
  - TCJ Curriculum Committee (?)

**Goal 5:**

Reduce Disproportionality by Training on Implicit Bias in New Judges School

**Action**

- Meet with TCJ Curriculum committee
- Establish whether judicial ethics is available for the curriculum

## **APPENDIX H: LEGAL REPRESENTATION STUDY / OUTLINE**

Adequate legal representation is essential to ensure the protection of rights that have constitutional dimension. For families to receive satisfactory legal representation, attorneys who represent children and parents need sufficient training and fair compensation. Making sure that families have quality representation is one of the top goals for the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families (the Commission) in 2009 and 2010. Investing more in legal representation up-front may ultimately cost counties less because better representation produces better outcomes and allows cases to be resolved in a more timely manner. In 2008, the Commission approved a study to evaluate several aspects of child and family legal representation, including the impact that quality representation has on timing, outcomes, and due process in child abuse and neglect cases.

What the study will examine:

- qualitative data based on interviews with judges and other stakeholders regarding several elements affecting quality representation, including different appointment models used by the counties such as appointment by a judge according to local custom or rule, a children's law office model that uses a managing attorney with associate attorneys and support staff, individual contracts executed by counties or local jurisdictions with individual attorneys or law firms, public defender models, and state or county-run offices of child or parent representatives.
- the method of appointment (rotation, random, by specialization, open or closed lists); timeliness (at what point in the case an attorney is appointed for both children and parents); and duration of appointment employed by each county surveyed (how long does each type of attorney appointed remain on a parent case and a child case).
- Local practices regarding qualifications required of attorneys, including training or other requirements used in counties by judges making the appointments.
- Local practices regarding training, including how many hours of training are required, whether the jurisdiction has training and/or requirement tracking systems, and how often training occurs, and recommendations about whether training should be mandatory, how often it should occur, and what type of training is necessary, which may necessitate changes to the Texas Family Code.
- Use of the dual role attorney ad litem and the impact on children/cases.
- Any methods used to evaluate the quality of the representation provided.
- Compensation, including whether fees are paid hourly, flat fee per hearing or per case, different fees paid for in-court versus out-of-court work, whether payment is or should be stratified (for example: more experienced attorneys receiving higher compensation).
- The total amount each county spends annually on court appointments in child protective services cases broken down by child and parent representation.

Oversight

The study will be overseen by a Project Manager and Research Assistant who will utilize a workgroup comprised of national, state, and local stakeholders. This group will monitor the design, information or data collection, analysis, and report writing.

Who will be interviewed?

- Judges who hear child protection cases,
- Attorneys who represent children and parents,
- County and district prosecutors & DFPS Regional Attorneys
- CASA, DFPS caseworkers, parents, and foster youth.
- Other stakeholders as deemed appropriate.

**APPENDIX I: MATCH TOTALS**

<b>Commission Meetings/Activity Match Report - FY 2009 (Non-Subgrantee)</b>				
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Hrly Rate</b>	<b>Total hrs</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>
Denise	Askea	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Catherine	Babbit	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Deedra	Baker	\$30.00	5	\$150.00
Emy Lou	Baldrige	\$100.00	4	\$400.00
Conni	Barker	\$50.00	18	\$900.00
Mari Kay	Bickett	\$100.00	8.5	\$850.00
Dayna	Blazey	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Roy	Block	\$35.00	10	\$350.00
Karin	Bonicoro	\$45.34	19	\$861.46
Collete	Bonstead	\$30.00	2	\$60.00
Susan	Boone	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Jean	Boyd	\$87.31	1	\$87.31
Mark	Briggs	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Glenn	Brooks	\$30.00	2	\$60.00
Cynthia	Bryant	\$67.31	7	\$471.17
Jane	Burstain	\$35.00	13	\$455.00
Darlene	Byrne	\$67.31	19	\$1,278.89
Stephen	Casey	\$12.00	4	\$48.00
Mary	Cassin	\$30.00	1	\$30.00
Sylvia	Chavez	\$45.31	3	\$135.93
Charlie	Childress	\$180.00	3	\$540.00
Irene	Clements	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Cathy	Cockerham	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
William B.	Connolly	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Penny	Cook	\$20.00	3	\$60.00
Duncan	Cormie	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Cathy	Crabtree	\$50.00	10	\$500.00
Susan Hopkins	Craven	\$45.00	9	\$405.00
Audrey	Deckinga	\$30.00	10	\$300.00
Jennifer	Deegan	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Patricia	Dixon	\$12.00	5	\$60.00
Jessica	Dixon Weaver	\$30.00	2	\$60.00
Camile Glasscock	DuBose	\$67.31	19.5	\$1,312.55
Barbara	Elias-Perciful	\$65.00	22.5	\$1,462.50
Elma Salinas	Ender	\$67.31	2	\$134.62
Tomas	Esparza, Jr	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Bruce	Esterline	\$100.00	3	\$300.00
Harper	Estes	\$350.00	3	\$1,050.00
Christopher	Felleisen	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Benigno J.	Fernandez, M.D	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Katie	Fillmore	\$12.00	5	\$60.00
Ann	Forman	\$30.00	7	\$210.00
Mike	Foster	\$30.00	12	\$360.00
Deborah	Fowler	\$30.00	2	\$60.00
Paul E.	Furrh, Jr	\$30.00	6	\$270.00
Oscar	Gabaldon	\$50.48	1	\$50.48
Joe	Gagen	\$100.00	11	\$1,100.00
Stewart W.	Gagnon	\$600.00	14	\$8,400.00
Hal	Gaither	\$65.00	8	\$520.00
Richard	Garcia	\$50.48	16.5	\$832.92
Eileen	Garcia-Matthews	\$20.00	6	\$120.00
Rosanna	Garry	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Tom	Gaylor	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Sylvia	Greigo	\$20.00	10	\$200.00

FY 2009 Texas CIP Grants Assessment

Commission Meetings/Activity Match Report - FY 2009 (Non-Subgrantee)				
First	Last	Hrly Rate	Total hrs	Total Amount
David	Halpern	\$30.00	10	\$300.00
Jason	Hassay	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Bonnie	Hellums	\$67.31	15	\$1,009.65
David	Henry	\$12.00	2	\$24.00
Leslie	Hill	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Marcy	Hogan Greer	\$150.00	6	\$900.00
D'Ann	Johnson	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Gilford	Jones	\$67.31	3	\$201.93
Kristi	Jordan	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Alicia	Key	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Peter	Koelling	\$30.00	5	\$150.00
Mike	Kopp	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Jamie	Lamond	\$12.00	3	\$36.00
Michelle	Latray	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Richard	LaVallo	\$20.00	14	\$280.00
Donald	Lee	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Tracy	Leissner	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Tracy	Levins	\$30.00	8	\$240.00
Rebecca	Lightsey	\$40.00	11	\$440.00
Jessica	Lynch	\$12.00	1	\$12.00
Patricia A.	Macias	\$67.31	6	\$403.86
Diana	Martinez	\$30.00	7	\$210.00
Kim	Martinez	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Madeline	McClure	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Lamar	McCorkle	\$30.00	11	\$330.00
F. Scott	McCown	\$85.00	16	\$1,360.00
Jeanne	Meurer	\$67.31	5	\$336.55
Malcom	Miranda	\$30.00	1	\$30.00
Ten	Moran	\$20.00	14	\$280.00
Cathy	Morris	\$45.19	3	\$135.57
Robert	Nolen	\$31.73	2	\$63.46
Katie	Ogden	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Harriet	O'Neill	\$72.00	11	\$792.00
Austin	O'Toole	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Judy	Powell	\$35.00	12	\$420.00
Joy Hughes	Rauls	\$35.00	10	\$350.00
Mary Christine	Reed	\$30.00	9	\$270.00
Chensse	Robison	\$30.00	1	\$30.00
Carolyne	Rodriguez	\$75.00	17	\$1,275.00
Dean	Rucker	\$85.00	26	\$2,210.00
Fairy Davenport	Rutland	\$100.00	24.5	\$2,450.00
Dustin	Rynders	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Robin	Sage	\$85.00	19	\$1,615.00
Peter	Sakai	\$67.31	2	\$134.62
Jack	Sampson	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Drew	Sartin	\$30.00	1	\$30.00
Virginia	Schnarr	\$46.03	7	\$322.21
Michael	Schneider	\$67.31	3	\$201.93
Susan	Schultz	\$30.00	6	\$180.00
Johana	Scot	\$35.00	9	\$315.00
Aaron	Setliff	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Cheryl Lee	Shannon	\$72.91	16	\$1,166.56
Mark	Sims	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Madison	Sloan	\$30.00	11	\$330.00

FY 2009 Texas CIP Grants Assessment

Commission Meetings/Activity Match Report - FY 2009 (Non-Subgrantee)				
First	Last	Hourly Rate	Total hrs	Total Amount
Andrea	Sparks	\$40.00	9	\$360.00
Steve	Spencer	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Bryan	Sperry	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Leslie	Strauch	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Sabrina	Sullivan	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Kristi	Taylor	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Margaret	Tenorio	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Gloria	Terry	\$30.00	13	\$390.00
Larry	Thorne	\$85.00	3	\$255.00
Yvonne Gonzalez	Tourelles	\$20.00	4	\$80.00
Veronica	Trevino	\$30.00	9	\$270.00
Linda	Uecker	\$35.00	1	\$35.00
Olen	Underwood	\$85.00	1	\$85.00
G. Allan	Van Fleet	\$680.00	4	\$2,720.00
Gina	VanOsselaer	\$40.00	4	\$160.00
Arabia	Vargas	\$30.00	10	\$300.00
Charlotte	Velasco	\$30.00	3	\$90.00
Doug	Warne	\$85.00	1	\$85.00
David	Williams	\$30.00	4	\$120.00
Committee Hours Total			855	
CASH VALUE				\$52,946.30
Tina Amberboy, Executive Director				
Hours Total			2080	
Hourly Rate			\$45.73	
CASH VALUE				\$95,118.40
NACC Training Hours Total				
Hours Total			3622.75	
Hourly Rate			\$30.00	
CASH VALUE				\$108,682.50
Parental Rep. Scholarships Hours Total				
Hours Total			293.25	
Hourly Rate			\$30.00	
CASH VALUE				<u>\$8,797.50</u>
TOTAL IN-KIND MATCH				<u>\$265,544.70</u>
Texas Bar Foundation Grant (Commission Video)				
CASH VALUE			\$25,000	
TOTAL CASH MATCH				<u>\$25,000.00</u>
GRAND TOTAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE / ACTIVITY MATCH VALUE				<u>\$290,544.70</u>

FY 2009 Texas CIP Grants Assessment

<b>GRAND TOTAL MATCH - FY 2009</b>				
<b>October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009</b>				
	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Data</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>TOTALs</b>
<b>TOTAL COMMISSION MEETING/ACTIVITY MATCH (CASH + IN-KIND)</b>	\$163,374.35	\$1,986.66	\$123,183.69	\$290,544.70
<b>TOTAL SUBGRANTEE MATCH (CASH + IN-KIND)</b>	<u>\$10,879.01</u>	<u>\$179,700.30</u>	<u>\$394,692.33</u>	<u>\$1,889,231.84</u>
<b>TOTAL COMBINED MATCH (MEETING/SUBGRANTEE)</b>	\$674,248.36	\$176,691.96	\$519,836.22	
		<b>GRAND TOTAL ALL MATCH</b>		<b>\$1,370,776.54</b>