

**Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force  
Texas Center for the Judiciary, Austin, TX  
Meeting Notebook  
July 24, 2009**

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**MINUTES of Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force**  
**Meeting date: April 24, 2009**

**Call to order:** A regular meeting of the Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force, was held at the Texas Center for the Judiciary, Austin, TX on April 24, 2009. The meeting convened at 9:13AM, Chair Hon. Larry Thorne presiding.

**Members in attendance:**

Roy Block	Joyce James
Cozette Bustamante	Margaret Lalk
Cathy Crabtree	Valerie Milholland
De Shaun Ealoms	Dan Powers
Jon Evans	Fairy Rutland
Joe Gagen	Larry Thorne
Rolf Habersang	Gerry Williams
Denise Hyde	

**Members not in attendance:**

Fred Chavez  
James Lukefahr

**Staff in attendance:**

Colette Bonstead  
Cherisse Robison  
Ginny Woods

**Guests in attendance:**

Susan Miller  
Julie Shores  
Andrea Sparks

**Welcome and introductions,** by Hon. Larry Thorne. Judge Thorne welcomed members and guests.

**Adoption of revised agenda:** No additional changes were made to the revised agenda. Judge Thorne suspended vote.

**Approval of minutes:** Motion was made by Joe Gagen, and seconded by Denise Hyde, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2009 meeting. Motion carried without opposition.

**9:20 AM Legislative Update,** by Andrea Sparks, Texas CASA Director of Public Policy and Outreach.

**9:30 AM Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Update,** by Julie Shores, CFSR Lead Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Ms. Shores presented an update on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) PIP. DFPS will submit their PIP on Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, but it will not be finalized for another 6-8 months due to negotiations with the federal government. Joyce James indicated that DFPS's appeals from Round 1 were successful and that the fines had been repealed.

**9:50 AM Three Year Assessment,** by Ginny Woods and Cherisse Robison. Ms. Woods presented the *CJA Task Force Three-Year Assessment Staff Report*. The Task Force discussed the recommended strategies and the *2009-2012 Strategic Plan*. Ms. Woods also discussed potential methods of implementing the strategies as well as the *Proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants*. Ms. Robison presented the proposed *FY10 Implementation Plan*.

**Approval of Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies:** Motion was made by Joe Gagen, and seconded by Rolf Habersang, to approve the Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies, as recommended by the staff. Motion carried without opposition. See Attachment A, CJA Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies.

**Approval of Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants:** Judge Thorne suspended vote so that the criteria could be revised. Judge Thorne appointed Margaret Lalk, Fairy Rutland, and Gerry Williams to a working group responsible for compiling suggested revisions and drafting the criteria. A final vote on the Proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants will be done via email. Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Dan Powers, to approve an email vote on the proposed Criteria for Awarding Partnership Grants. Motion carried without opposition.

**Approval of CJA Partner Organizations:** Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to approve Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas (CACTX) and Texas CASA as CJA Partner Organizations. Cathy Crabtree and Joe Gagen abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

**Approval of 2009-2010 Implementation Plan:**

Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to set aside \$500,000 to solicit partnership grant applications. Cathy Crabtree and Joe Gagen abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Cathy Crabtree, and seconded by Rolf Habersang, to set aside \$250,000 to solicit a grant application from Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) to support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention. Joyce James and Gerry Williams abstained. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Dan Powers, and seconded by Cathy Crabtree, to set aside \$150,000 to solicit a grant application from the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases. Motion carried without opposition.

Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Joyce James, to set aside \$20,000 for the use of scholarships in FY2010. Motion carried without opposition. Task Force members are to submit possible program suggestions to the Grant Proposal Review Committee via email.

Judge Thorne called for a majority vote on the use of either (1) one Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Fall or (1) one in the summer and one in the Fall. The use of two RFPs passed by a majority vote. The Task Force set aside \$80,000 to award through the summer competitive grant solicitation process.

Judge Thorne charged the Legislative Committee with determining which Task Force strategies should be recommended to the Texas Legislature for an interim session review. The Legislative Committee will report on its recommendations at the July 24<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting.

Judge Thorne appointed Roy Block to serve on the Legislative Committee.

**Approval of 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures:** Motion was made by Rolf Habersang, and seconded by Cathy Crabtree, to approve the proposed 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures. Motion carried without opposition. See Attachment B, 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures.

**Appointment of 2009-2010 Grant Proposal Review Committee.** Larry Thorne appointed De Shaun Ealoms, Denise Hyde, Joyce James, Margaret Lalk, Valerie Milholland, Fairy Rutland, Cozette Bustamante, and Gerry Williams to the 2009-2010 Grant Proposal Review Committee. The Committee will be responsible for reviewing grant applications and Intent to Submit Applications (ISA) using tools provided by the staff and making funding recommendations to the Task Force.

**Discussion of CJA Task Force membership and elections,** by Ginny Woods, CJA Project Director. Ms Woods presented the current membership of the CJA Task Force by discipline and encouraged discussion on the types of individuals and disciplines the Task Force may want to add. Some suggested disciplines/organizations included the Texas Municipal Police Association, Texas Police Chiefs Association, and the Texas Principles Association. Ms. Woods reminded Task Force members that they must submit names and resumes of potential members to the Nominating Committee no later than 30 days before the July Task Force meeting.

Judge Thorne appointed Jon Evans to serve on the member Nominating Committee.

**Report on Budget,** by Colette Bonstead, CJA Financial Associate. Ms. Bonstead updated the Task Force on the current status of the budget. See Attached CJA Budget dated 4/24/09.

**CJA Status Report,** by Cherisse Robison. Ms. Robison provided status updates on the program performance of current CJA projects.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at **12:40PM.**

These minutes were approved at a Texas Children's Justice Act Task Force meeting on July 24, 2009.

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### **CJA Task Force Three Year Assessment Strategies**

1. Provide MDTs with adequate support, training, and networking opportunities, so they will stay well-engaged and coordinated.
2. Encourage the revision of investigative protocols for dealing with children with disabilities.
3. Support the use of specialists with expertise on disabilities to serve as single, consistent advocates for children with disabilities through the entirety of their case.
4. Support local and statewide multidisciplinary training for child-protection professionals on one or more of the following topics: Disabilities, Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC), Substance Abuse, Cultural Competency, Engaging Families and Youth, Mental and Behavioral Health, Sexual Exploitation, and Child Trafficking.
5. Support the development and promotion of training for first responders.
6. Encourage the revision and/or development of protocols, policies, or best practices for first responders and schools.
7. Ensure forensic interviewers are adequately supported and trained, including opportunities for more peer reviews.
8. Support strength-based, family-focused initiatives.
9. Support policies that retain CASAs and AAL after Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) has been awarded.
10. Support the used of specialized child-protection professionals to focus on children in PMC.
11. Support training opportunities for CPS staff designed to strengthen levels of accountability, enhance staff support, and improve workforce retention.
12. Support the creation and/or expansion of coordinator positions to help the child victim and the victim's family access and complete services.
13. Encourage the use of specialized courts or highly committed, specialized judges to hear child abuse and neglect cases.
14. Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships.

APPROVED - April 24, 2009

**Children's Justice Act Task Force**

*Proposed 2009-2010 Grant Review Procedures*

CJA grant applications shall be reviewed using the following procedures:

The CJA Task Force Chair shall nominate willing members of the CJA Task Force to serve on the Grant Proposal Review Committee. Task Force members with a conflict of interest involving a prospective subgrantee are prohibited from serving on the Committee. Grant Applications will be submitted to CJA Staff and then forwarded to the Committee for consideration. The Committee shall review each application utilizing the scoring instrument provided by CJA staff. After all applications have been scored, the Committee shall present their funding recommendations to the Task Force. The Task Force shall vote on the applications. If deemed beneficial, applicants may be required to submit an "Intent to Submit an Application" (ISA) document as a precursor to the full application. The Grant Proposal Review Committee will also be responsible for reviewing the ISAs and making recommendation as to which applicants shall submit full applications.

# CJA Budget

4/24/2009

## Fiscal Year: October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009

Income	
GY 08 Remaining Funds:	\$ 416,490.25
GY 09 Grant Income:	\$ 1,356,331.00
Interest Income:	\$ -
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,772,821.25</b>
<b>Budget Reserve</b>	<b>\$ 100,000.00</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 294,800.00</b>
<b>Total Budgeted</b>	<b>\$ 1,378,021.25</b>
<b>Funds Remaining for New Projects</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

Total Grant Income	\$ 1,772,821.25
Operating Expenses	\$ 140,836.48
Project Expenditures	\$ 388,612.40
<b>FY 09 Unexpended Funds:</b>	<b>\$ 1,243,372.37</b>

	Budget	Expenses to Date	Balance
Abilene Police Department	\$ 42,909.00	\$ 9,665.82	\$ 33,243.18
CAC of Hidalgo County	\$ 96,421.00	\$ 9,818.07	\$ 86,602.93
CAC of Smith County	\$ 45,789.00	\$ 21,879.53	\$ 23,909.47
CAC of Texas	\$ 94,922.00	\$ 46,893.37	\$ 48,028.63
CAC of Texas - Forensic Interview	\$ 2,345.00	\$ 2,345.00	\$ -
CAC of Tom Green County	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 25,510.79	\$ 24,489.21
CASA of Hidalgo County	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,852.22	\$ 147.78
CASA of Trinity Valley	\$ 43,036.00	\$ 14,563.89	\$ 28,472.11
Dallas CAC	\$ 65,700.00	\$ 21,312.07	\$ 44,387.93
Greater Dallas Council on A & DA	\$ 99,999.00	\$ 41,957.67	\$ 58,041.33
Navarro County CAC	\$ 24,625.00	\$ 9,572.94	\$ 15,052.06
Northeast CAC	\$ 7,474.00	\$ -	\$ 7,474.00
Nueces County CAC	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 28,698.46	\$ 46,301.54
Rusk County CAC	\$ 8,000.00	\$ -	\$ 8,000.00
TCU Institute of Child Development	\$ 57,125.00	\$ -	\$ 57,125.00
Texas CASA	\$ 251,916.00	\$ 96,911.10	\$ 155,004.90
Texas Foster Families Association	\$ 12,372.00	\$ 12,372.00	\$ -
TX Office for Prev of Dev Disabilities	\$ 61,129.00	\$ 11,431.29	\$ 49,697.71
UTHSC-SA	\$ 141,750.00	\$ -	\$ 141,750.00
Zero to Three	\$ 69,362.00	\$ 11,214.60	\$ 58,147.40
Training Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Organization Grants	\$ 20,640.89	\$ 986.39	\$ 19,654.50
Individual Scholarships	\$ 79,506.36	\$ 12,109.88	\$ 67,396.48
CJA Task Force	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 8,517.31	\$ 16,482.69
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$ 1,378,021.25</b>	<b>Total Expenses \$ 388,612.40</b>	<b>Balance \$ 989,408.85</b>

## **Grant Proposal Review Committee Report**

**June 10, 2009 at 9 a.m.** a meeting of the Grant Proposal Review Committee was held to discuss the ISA for Texas CASA, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, DFPS, and the competitive grant solicitation.

Members present: Cozette Bustamante, De Shaun Ealoms, Denise Hyde, Margaret Lalk and Fairy Rutland. Members absent: Valerie Milholland. Also present: Ginny Woods; Heidi Penix; and Colette Bonstead.

Program instructions for each grant were distributed May 8, 2009. CJA staff posted the competitive grant solicitation to the CJA website. Additionally, approved partners, Texas CASA and CACTX, were given their grant instructions, and individualized solicitations were sent to both OCA and DFPS regarding the specialized court and CPS training strategies, respectively.

As a precursor to the full application, all prospective applicants were required to submit an Intent to Submit an Application (ISA) form by June 5<sup>th</sup>. CJA staff reviewed each ISA submission to ensure completeness and eligibility. Additionally, staff reviewed the Financial Capabilities Questionnaire for each prospective applicant and if applicable, their past performance under a CJA grant. ISAs that did not meet the initial criteria were screened out and these entities were not invited to submit a full application. Submissions satisfying the initial criteria were passed forward for the Grant Proposal Review Committee's review.

At the meeting, the Committee reviewed each ISA to ensure the applicant was an eligible entity under the applicable RFA; the proposed project was within the scope of the CJA grant; and the proposed activities addressed one or more of the CJA Task Force strategies. The Committee documented additional questions and concerns regarding each application.

**July 1, 2009 at 1 p.m.** the Grant Proposal Review Committee held a separate meeting to discuss the OCA child protection court proposal. For the purposes of this proposal only, Joe Gagen and Judge Larry Thorne were also appointed to the committee.

Members present: De Shaun Ealoms, Joe Gagen, Denise Hyde, Margaret Lalk and Fairy Rutland. Members absent: Valerie Milholland and Judge Larry Thorne. Also present: Carl Reynolds, Executive Director, Office of Court Administration, Mena Ramon, Deputy General Counsel, Office of Court Administration, Ginny Woods, Heidi Penix, and Colette Bonstead.

The committee reviewed the ISA for OCA and documented additional questions and areas of concern. Representatives from OCA were then invited to join the meeting. OCA explained that CJA funds were no longer needed for the creation of an additional Child Protection Court. The Committee brainstormed other possible ways for OCA to address strategy 4.6. Following the meeting, OCA was going to discuss additional possibilities with the regional presiding judges and report back the Committee.

**July 23, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.** a meeting of the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force Grant Proposal Review Committee was held.

Members present: De Shaun Ealoms, Denise Hyde, and Fairy Rutland. Joe Gagen attended for the discussion of the first agenda item only, the child protection court project. Members absent: Cozette Bustamante, Margaret Lalk and Valerie Milholland. Also present: Ginny Woods; Heidi Penix; and Colette Bonstead.

Following the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, staff sent out notifications to all prospective applicants (CJA partners, DFPS, and entities submitting competitive proposals). The notifications included the questions and concerns raised by the Committee about a particular application.

Full applications were due July 10<sup>th</sup>. Staff distributed the full applications to the Committee and provided a tool for assessing and scoring the applications. Each Committee member, the CJA Project Director, and the CJA Grant Administrator reviewed and scored each application. CJA averaged the scores for each application and ranked the applications according to their scores.

**Child Protection Court Project** – July 8, 2009, OCA submitted additional grant ideas to CJA staff. The committee discussed the additional ideas.

- 1. The Grant Proposal Review Committee recommends setting aside \$117,000 for OCA to develop a proposal to employ a staff attorney to assist the child protection courts in implementing the best practice principles employed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Model Courts.**

**Training Scholarships** – CJA Task Force members submitted conferences ideas to which to send child protection professionals for training. Scholarship suggestions were due July 10, 2009.

- 2. The Grant Proposal Review Committee recommends the following conferences for CJA scholarship opportunities:**

- a) Texas Foster Family Association Annual Training Conference  
Oct. 8-10, 2009  
Corpus Christi, Texas
- b) Texas CASA Annual Conference  
Oct. 7-10, 2009  
San Marcos, TX
- c) Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas Annual Conference Strengthening Partnerships, Protecting Children  
Nov. 2-4, 2009  
Omni Austin Downtown  
Austin, TX
- d) ChildSafe Annual Child Abuse Conference  
December 7-8, 2009  
San Antonio, TX

- e) National Children’s Advocacy Center Annual Symposium  
March 22-25, 2010  
Huntsville, AL
- f) National Children’s Alliance Annual Leadership Conference  
June 6-9, 2010  
Washington D.C.
- g) Crimes Against Children Conference  
August 2010  
Dallas, TX

**3. The Grant Proposal Review Committee also recommends exploring a partnership with the Texas Judicial Commission to offer the National Institute of Trial Advocacy training to lawyers representing children.**

**DFPS** – The committee did not feel the DFPS proposal would effectively address strategy 3.4.

**4. The Grant Proposal Review Committee recommends not funding the current DFPS proposal. The Committee recommends appointing a working group to develop alternative project idea to effectively address Task Force strategy 3.4. The Committee further recommends setting aside \$100,000 for this purpose.**

**Partnership Grants -**

**5. The Grant Proposal Review Committee recommends approving the partnership grants proposals as requested: (1) Children’s Advocacy Centers Texas in the amount of \$249,565, and (2) Texas CASA in the amount of \$249,366.**

**Competitive Solicitation Grants-** CJA staff provided the Committee with the rank and average review score of each competitive application.

**6. The Grant Proposal Review Committee recommends approving the following top six ranked proposals:**

<b>CASA of Travis County, Inc.</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>
<b>TCU Institute of Child Development</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>
<b>East Texas Child Advocates</b>	<b>\$44,599</b>
<b>Children’s Advocacy Center of Smith County</b>	<b>\$34,735</b>
<b>Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>
<b>Harris County</b>	<b>\$18,658.56</b>

## Legislative Committee Report – July 20, 2009

A meeting of the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force Legislative Committee was held July 20, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. via teleconference.

Members present: Joe Gagen, Committee Chair; Gerry Williams; and Joyce James. Members absent: Cathy Crabtree and Roy Block. Also present: Ginny Woods; Heidi Penix; and Joy Hughs Rauls, Director of Community Relations, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas.

The CJA Task Force is legislatively mandated to make training and policy recommendations regarding the reform of State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse. As a vehicle for fulfilling this mandate, the Legislative Committee was tasked with developing a list of recommendations for Texas Legislature interim studies. Prior to the committee meeting, committee members suggested interim study topics consistent with the CJA Task Force strategic plan. The committee met Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> via teleconference to finalize their recommendations.

The Legislative Committee proposes the following recommendations for interim session studies:

1. Evaluate current policies, protocols, and available training within the school system for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse or neglect and make recommendations for improvements. (Strategies 1.1 and 1.2)
2. Evaluate current protocols and available training for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect and make recommendations regarding training and protocol improvements. (Strategies 1.1 and 1.2)
3. Research ways to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases involving children with disabilities, including ways to improve investigative practices and protocols and advocacy efforts. (Strategies 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3)
4. Examine judicial oversight in child abuse and neglect cases in which the State has been granted Permanent Managing Conservatorship, including how often hearings are waived and whether attorneys and/or CASA volunteers are appointed for the child. (Strategies 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3)
5. Explore and identify best practices associated with criminal and child protection courtroom experiences for children.
  - Criminal Courts: Identify and study best practices for making the criminal courtroom environment more child friendly for young victims and witnesses to crime, including discussions regarding (1) Development and dissemination of best practice guidelines to local county clerks and criminal court judges; (2) Implementation of guidelines for use of comfort items/support person in court during proceedings; and (3) Exploration of possible methods to utilize/train family advocates and provide court preparation activities to work with children and families prior to court appearances.
  - Child Protection Courts: Identify current best practice standards associated with child protection courts and compare these standards to current practices in the Texas Child Protection Courts; make recommendations for practice improvements

The Legislative Committee further recommends that the approved recommendations are included in a letter addressed to the lieutenant governor or speaker of the house and signed by Judge Thorne. A copy of the letter should also be sent to the chair of the respective committee. Additionally, the Legislative Committee requests the opportunity to review the letter before Judge Thorne signs it.

## **Officers' Nominating Committee Report – June 27, 2009**

Committee members: Joe Gagen, Committee Chair, Valerie Milholland, Fairy Rutland, and Margaret Lalk.

Pursuant to Article 5 of the Children's Justice Act Bylaws, committee chairpersons shall serve as nominating committee to propose a slate of officers for election. Joe Gagen nominated Judge Larry Thorne and Valerie Milholland for another one year term of office. The committee conferred via email. Valerie Milholland abstained regarding her nomination.

The committee on officer nominations is unanimous in its recommendation to nominate (1) Honorable Larry Thorne, Chair, and (2) Valerie Milholland, Vice Chair to another one year term.

Joe Gagen, Committee Chair

## **Members' Nominating Committee Report – June 30, 2009**

A meeting of the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force Legislative Committee was held June 30, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. via teleconference.

Members present: Margaret Lalk, Committee Chair; Jon Evans; Dan Powers; and Fairy Rutland. Members absent: Rolf Habersang. Also present: Ginny Woods; Heidi Penix; and Colette Bonstead.

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Children's Justice Act Bylaws, a general election of members shall be held annually in the last quarter of the federal fiscal year. Any current member may submit the name of a potential nominee to the Nominating Committee no later than 30 days before the Task Force meeting at which the nomination of members will be considered if the member has obtained the consent of the nominee and the nominee's resume or biographical summary. The CJA Nominating Committee shall confer for the purpose of reviewing potential nominees, and if the committee elects to recommend nominee(s), their name(s) shall be submitted to the Task Force, along with the appropriate resumes or biographical summaries. Only those names placed in nomination by the committee shall be considered by the Task Force for membership. Total Task Force membership may not exceed 25.

The Task Force is federally mandated to include the following members:

1. Prosecuting Attorneys
2. Civil Court Judges
3. Criminal Court Judges
4. Law Enforcement Representatives
5. Individuals Experienced Working with Children with Disabilities
6. Child Advocates
7. Defense Attorneys
8. Court Appointed Special Advocates
9. Health Professionals
10. Mental Health Professionals
11. Child Protective Service Agencies
12. Parent Group Representatives

Other members may be added at the discretion of the Task Force. The Assistant Commissioner of CPS, the Executive Director of Texas CASA, and the Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas shall be standing membership positions and not subject to the general election.

The Task Force general election is scheduled for July 24, 2009. Task Force members forwarded potential nominees to the Members' Nominating Committee. The nominating process closed June 26<sup>th</sup>, and the committee met via conference call, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

In accordance with the requirements and restrictions set out by the federal grant program and the CJA Task Force bylaws, the committee proposes the following slate of nominees:

**NOMINEES TO MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES REQUIRED BY THE GRANT**

**Prosecuting Attorneys**

1. Kriste Burnett, Assistant District Attorney, 83<sup>rd</sup>/112<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office, Cleburne
2. Randi King, Assistant District Attorney, Jefferson County Attorney's Office, Beaumont

**Civil Court Judges**

3. Judge Larry Thorne, District Judge, 317<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, Beaumont\*

**Criminal Court Judges**

4. Judge Chris Oldner, District Judge, 416<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, McKinney\*

**Law Enforcement Representatives\*\***

5. Lt. Cozette Bustamante, Director, Crime Scene Unit, San Antonio Police Department, San Antonio
6. Tom Gaylor, Deputy Executive Director, Texas Municipal Police Association, Austin

**Individuals Experienced Working with Children with Disabilities**

7. Dr. Rolf Habersang, Department of Pediatrics, Texas Tech University Health Science Center, Amarillo\*

**Child Advocates**

8. Fairy Rutland, Director, Appeals Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Austin

**OTHER NOMINEES**

9. Joyce James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Family Protective Services, Austin
10. Trista Miller, Youth Specialist, Region 7, Department of Family Protective Services, Austin
11. Daniela Carrasco, Youth Specialist, Region 9, Department of Family Protective Services, Midland
12. William Briley, Biological Father, Lubbock



**Summaries of Laws Affecting CASA and the Children We Serve  
From the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session**

**1. STRENGTHENING CASA’S ABILITY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER ADVOCACY TO MORE CHILDREN IN CPS CUSTODY**

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 1 Sen. Ogden/ Rep. Pitts	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	<p>General Appropriations Bill</p> <p>Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$7 million in additional funding for CASA to recruit, train and supervise new volunteers for 4,000 children</li> <li>• \$4 million in additional funding for Children’s Advocacy Centers</li> <li>• \$32.2 Million to fund rate increase for foster care services (foster homes and child placing agencies)</li> <li>• \$12.3 million to fund additional Family Based Safety Services staff to increase face-to-face contact with children and their parents (in family based safety services)</li> <li>• \$6.5 million to implement provisions of Federal Fostering Connections Act (including relative guardianship program authorized in SB 2080 and HB 1151)</li> <li>• \$3.6 million for more day care services for relative caregivers</li> <li>• \$8 million to strengthen services to youth transition from foster care (including seed money for 8 new transition centers)</li> <li>• \$5.4 million to strengthen CPS services to families</li> <li>• \$0.3 million to support the Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and other immigration-related processes</li> <li>• \$4.4 million to increase funding for at-risk prevention programs</li> <li>• \$2.8 million for additional staff at the Statewide Intake call center to maintain average hold times for callers</li> <li>• \$6.3 million for tablet PCs for all substitute care workers by the ends of the FY 10-11 biennium</li> </ul>

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 1369 Sen. Lucio/ Rep. Hunter	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009.  Effective September 1, 2009.          Effective December 1, 2009	Ensures that new CASA programs are eligible to receive state funding and emphasizes that CASA's priority is serving more children with volunteers. Tightens up the appointment process for attorneys ad litem.  <u>CASA:</u> CASA programs must: (1) provide advocacy services to abused or neglected children with the goal of obtaining permanent placement for the child in the child's best interest and (2) comply with recognized standards for state volunteer advocate programs.  Any part of the funds Texas CASA receives for license plate sales can be used for public awareness. (Local programs also receive funds from license plate sales and these funds can be used like other state funds.)  Requires measurable goals for number of volunteers and number of children receiving CASA services. The former required new CASA to provide services for 2 years before receiving state funding. New CASA programs need only wait six months (instead of 2 years) to receive state funding.  <u>AALs:</u> A local administrative judge must keep a list of all attorneys qualified to serve as attorneys ad litem. The list must contain all of the attorneys that meet the state and other requirements and have registered with the local administrative judge's court as an AAL.
HB 1462 Rep. Pickett/ Sen. Uresti   Companion SB 1051	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Allows state agencies to give their employees paid leave for up to five hours a month to attend mandatory training or to perform volunteer services for CASA. The Lieutenant Governor or the Speaker of the House determines the leave policy for legislative staff. The head of the agency determines the leave program for legislative agencies.

**2. HELPING FOSTER YOUTH FIND PERMANENT HOMES AND BECOME HEALTHY ADULT CITIZENS**

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 43 Sen. Zaffirini/ Rep. Gonzalez Toureilles  Companion HB 4065	Signed by the Governor May 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Increases the time a foster or former foster youth has to take advantage of the tuition fee waiver by allowing the youth to have until age 25 to first enroll in college. Clarifies that tuition and fees charged for a "dual credit" in which the student may receive both high school and college credit are eligible for the exemption. Clarifies that youth in conservatorship who age out of care are eligible regardless of whether the youth was living in paid or unpaid substitute care prior to turning 18.
SB 703 Sen. Nelson/ Rep. Rose	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Directs DFPS and Department of State Health Services to enter into a memo of understanding (MOU) so that DFPS will not have to pay for verification of birth information or a certified copy of a birth certificate if a child is in the managing conservatorship of DFPS, parental rights have been terminated, and the child is eligible for adoption. Intended to remove barriers to timely adoptions.
SB 983 Sen. Davis/ Rep. Rose  Companion HB 705	Signed by the Governor May 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Requires DFPS to provide important documents to children about to age out of foster care. DFPS must provide a copy of his or her: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• birth certificate;</li> <li>• immunization records;</li> <li>• the information contained in the child's health passport;</li> <li>• a personal identification certificate, a social security card or its replacement, if appropriate; and</li> <li>• proof of enrollment in Medicaid days</li> </ul> at least 30 days before the child is discharged from foster care.  DFPS, TEA, and DPS shall develop a plan to ensure that each child in DFPS PMC is given the opportunity to complete a driver's education course and obtain a driver's license before leaving conservatorship. This bill applies to any child in the conservatorship DFPS on or after September 1, 2009.

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<p>SB 939 Sen. Watson/ Rep. Hughes</p>	<p>Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009.</p> <p>Effective January 1, 2010.</p> <p>Effective immediately. Applies to Fall Semester 2009 tuition and fees.</p> <p>Effective to suits rendered on or after June 19, 2009.</p> <p>Effective immediately.</p>	<p>Requires MOUs between the TEA and DFPS to evaluate educational outcomes for foster children, broadens eligibility for college tuition and fee waivers to children who are not reunified with their parents by age 18, and enhances and improves permanency planning. Crafted to address deficiencies found in Texas under the Federal Child and Family Services Review.</p> <p><u>Memo of Understanding:</u> Requires a MOU between DFPS and the TEA to exchange appropriate information about students in foster care in order to evaluate educational outcomes.</p> <p><u>Tuition exemption:</u> Extends tuition waiver benefits to children in PMC of relatives (was formerly limited to adopted children and children aging out). Expands eligibility for children to receive tuition and fee waivers to any child who enrolls in a class no later than their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday (was formerly 21<sup>st</sup> birthday) and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• was in the Department’s managing conservatorship and was adopted;</li> <li>• aged out of care;</li> <li>• placed in DFPS conservatorship after 14 years of age with parental rights terminated; or</li> <li>• placed in PMC with a person not the parent.</li> </ul> <p>TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will develop outreach programs so that high school students in DFPS conservatorship are aware of the availability of the college tuition and fees exemption.</p> <p><u>First Permanency Hearing:</u> Requires that the first permanency hearing after termination of parental rights and the naming of DFPS as conservator occur within 90 days rather than 180 days. Subsequent placement reviews will continue to be conducted at least once every six months until the child is adopted, placed in PMC with someone other than DFPS, or the child becomes an adult.</p> <p><u>Permanency Plan:</u> Requires DFPS to have a permanency/concurrent plan that includes both a primary permanency goal and an alternate permanency goal for all foster care children. If the permanency progress report recommends continued CPS involvement, it must also describe the permanency plan and ensure that a final order consistent with that permanency plan is accomplished. Requires DFPS to document a compelling reason why permanency goal is in the best interest of the child if the permanency goal is not adoption, PMC with a relative, or returning the child to a parent, and requires DFPS to identify a family member or other caring adult who has made a permanent commitment to the child. Courts can order DFPS to provide parent services for up to six months after the placement review hearing if the court determines that reunification with a parent whose rights have not terminated is in the best interest of the child and services are likely to result in the child’s safe return to his or her parent.</p>

<b>Bill # and Author/Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 1332 Sen. Nelson/ Rep. Rose	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Requires that DFPS consider placing a child with a foster parent with whom the child previously resided if DFPS determines that placing the child with a relative or designated caregiver is not in the child's best interest, and if the placement is available and is in the child's best interest.
SB 2248 Sen. Zaffirini/ Rep. Patrick	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Provides assistance for students transitioning from one school to the next by requiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the transfer of records to the new school not later than the 14<sup>th</sup> day after enrollment,</li> <li>• the development of procedures for awarding credit for completed coursework at the former school,</li> <li>• increased access to extracurricular activities and tutoring programs,</li> <li>• a memo of understanding between TEA and DFPS to lessen adverse impact of a transfer, and</li> <li>• the acceptance by the school of a special education referral from the former school.</li> </ul> A student placed in substitute care in Texas is eligible to enroll full-time in courses provided through the state virtual school network (online high school courses). The Act applies beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.
HB 704 Rep. Rose/ Sen. Davis	Signed by the Governor May 23, 2009. Effective immediately.	Gives courts the option to extend continuing jurisdiction over a foster child who ages out of care, if requested by the youth. To be eligible for extended court jurisdiction, the youth must be continuing in voluntary foster care (living with a residential provider regulated by DFPS) and/or continuing to receive transitional services. Extended jurisdiction ends on the date the youth turns 21 or when the youth withdraws consent, whichever occurs first. Managing conservatorship by DFPS is not extended, but an attorney and/or guardian ad litem may be appointed or continued. The court may extend jurisdiction without the youth's consent only if the court believes that the youth may qualify for guardianship services, but this extended jurisdiction ends when the guardianship issue is resolved.
HB 1043 Rep. Orr/ Sen. Nelson	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Gives individuals who are 25 years old or younger and were under the PMC of DFPS on the day before his or her 18th birthday a hiring preference in employment in an executive branch state agency over other applicants for the same position who do not have a greater qualification. Does not apply to private secretary or deputy positions or an individual holding a strictly confidential relation to the employing officer.
HB 1629 Rep. Naishtat/ Sen. Uresti  Companion SB 1376	Signed by the Governor May 23, 2009. Effective immediately.	Supports current DFPS and Texas Youth Commission (TYC) efforts to improve service delivery for CPS youth in TYC placements and in TYC parole situations. Increases coordination between the court that hears the juvenile case and the family court that oversees the conservatorship case for the youth, and requires the family law court to review services and rehabilitation efforts at each permanency and placement review hearing. Prohibits the court from dismissing the case of a youth in DFPS permanent conservatorship while the youth is under TYC supervision unless the youth is adopted, or permanent conservatorship is transferred to another individual. Requires the DFPS and TYC to enter into memorandum of understanding for data sharing with respect to common clients.

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
HB 1912 Rep. Rodriguez/ Sen Uresti	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	<p>Requires DFPS to expand transition planning to children age 14 and older in PMC, including enrolling them in PAL services before they turn 16. Requires foster care providers to assist youth age 14 and older to gain “experiential life skills training” which may include grocery shopping, balancing a checkbook, accessing transportation, etc. Makes youth over age 18 eligible for transitional living allowance benefits even when the youth is living with a person who is designated as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect if DFPS determines that despite the person’s prior history, the person no longer poses a threat to the health and safety of the youth. DFPS shall require contractors who provide transitional living services to foster youth to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing services;</li> <li>• job training and employment services;</li> <li>• college preparation services;</li> <li>• services that will assist youth in obtaining a general education development certificate; and</li> <li>• any other appropriate transitional living service identified by DFPS.</li> </ul>

3. **ENCOURAGING SAFE, PERMANENT HOMES WITH RELATIVES RATHER THAN FOSTER CARE**

<b>Bill # and Author/Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<p>SB 2080 Sen. Uresti/ Rep. McClendon</p> <p>Similar to HB 1151 Rep. Thompson/ Sen. Nelson</p>	<p>Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.</p>	<p>Creates a task force to establish a strategy for reducing child abuse and neglect and improving child welfare and health. The task force will submit a strategic plan no later than October 1, 2010. Task Force sunsets September 1, 2011.</p> <p>Implements the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 by creating a relative guardianship assistance program entitled the Permanency Care Assistance Program. The Program will provide financial assistance equal to or less than foster care rates to relatives who assume permanent custody for children in the state’s conservatorship, but only if the relative becomes a verified foster home and serves as the permanent managing conservator for the child for 6 months. DFPS is required to adopt rules for the Program by April 1, 2010.</p> <p>Sunset Provision: New assistance agreements are prohibited after August 31, 2017 unless further authorized by the legislature, although payments under existing agreements may continue after that date.</p> <p>The bill also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extends permanent care assistance up to age 21 for youth if they were the agreement with the relatives was entered after the child’s 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and the child is enrolled in high school, GED program or higher education, participating in a program that promotes employment, is employed, or is incapable of doing any of these activities due to a documented medical condition;</li> <li>• extends adoption assistance up to age 21 for youth if they were adopted at the age of 16 or later and enrolled in high school, GED program or higher education, participating in a program that promotes employment, is employed, or is incapable of doing any of these activities due to a documented medical condition;</li> <li>• extends foster care up to age 22 if the child is enrolled in high school or a GED program;</li> <li>• extends foster care up to age 21 if the child is enrolled in higher education, employed, participating in a program that promotes employment, or is unable to do any of these due to a documented medical condition.</li> </ul> <p>Directs DSHS to establish a Texas Medical Child Abuse Resources and Education System (MEDCARES) grant program which will award grants to hospitals, health centers, and other entities involved in the detection, investigation, and treatment of child abuse and neglect for the purpose of improving assessment, diagnosis, and treatment.</p>

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
HB 1151  Rep. Thompson/ Sen. Nelson  Similar to SB 2080 Sen. Uresti/ Rep. McClendon	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Similar to SB 2080. In addition to SB 2080's provisions, this bill makes amends Family Code provisions governing private custody cases and requires that any training DFPS makes available for foster parents, adoptive parents, kinship caregivers and department caseworkers include training on trauma-informed programs and services. The department shall pay for the training provided under this section with gifts, donations, and grants and any federal money available through the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act.
SB 2385 Sen. Shapleigh/ Rep. Naishtat  Companion HB 1068	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Requires DFPS to file a number of documents at the adversary hearing and subsequent hearings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a copy of the child placement resources form;</li> <li>• a copy of any completed home study; and</li> <li>• the name of a relative and designated caregiver, if any, with whom the child was placed.</li> </ul> If DFPS has not placed with a relative or other designated caregiver by the time of the hearing, the caseworker will be required to file a statement explaining why no designated caregivers have been selected for placement and what efforts are being made to place the child with a relative caregiver.

**4. CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES REFORM-RELATED LAWS**

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 1050 Sen. Uresti/ Rep. McClendon	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Lays out requirements and guidelines for the disclosure of information related to child fatalities that result from abuse or neglect, upon request. It is intended to implement the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act requirement that directs states to provide for the disclosure of such information. Requires DFPS to disclose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• age and sex of child;</li> <li>• date of death;</li> <li>• whether in DFPS conservatorship at the time of death; and</li> <li>• whether the child resided with parents or guardians at time of death.</li> </ul> Requires DFPS to release specific additional information depending on whether the child was living with parent/guardian/managing conservator or in substitute care at the time of death.
SB 1598 Sen. Watson/ Rep. Herrero  Companion HB 1940	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Allows the creation of an authorization agreement that would allow adult aunts, adult uncles, adult siblings, and grandparents caring for a child to consent to medical and dental care, enroll the child in school, enroll the child in extracurricular activities, get health insurance, and employment of the child. Allows adult relative to apply for and receive public benefits on behalf of the child.
SB 1646 Sen. Van de Putte/ Rep. Naishtat  Companion HB 3259	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Creates a Council of Children and Families, including the DFPS Commissioner or her designee. The Council will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinate the state’s health, education and human services to ensure that children and families have access to needed services;</li> <li>• improve coordination in state agencies, advisory councils on issues affecting children, and local levels of service;</li> <li>• prioritize and mobilize resources for children; and</li> <li>• facilitate an integrated approach to providing services for children and youth.</li> </ul>
SB 1723 Sen. Van de Putte/ Rep. Guillen	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Mandates that DFPS provide information manuals to voluntary caregivers, as well as relative or designated caregivers, regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an index of telephone numbers;</li> <li>• the rights and duties of relative or designated caregivers; and</li> <li>• the role of the voluntary caregiver, including information on how to obtain any documentation necessary to provide for a child’s needs.</li> </ul>

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 1824 Sen. Lucio/ Rep. Lucio III	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Creates an Interagency Task Force for Children with Special Needs to improve the coordination, quality and efficiency of services for children with special needs, defined as children younger than 22 years of age diagnosed with a chronic illness, intellectual or other developmental disability, or serious mental illness. DFPS will be part of the task force. Duties include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinating with federal agencies to compile a list of opportunities to increase flexible funding for services for children with special needs;</li> <li>• conducting a review of state agency policies and procedures related to service deliver for children with special needs;</li> <li>• performing a needs assessment; and</li> <li>• developing a five year plan to improve services for children with special needs.</li> </ul>
SB 1838 Sen. Patrick/ Rep. Zerwas  Companion HB 494	Signed by the Governor May 20, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Adds a ground for termination of parental rights if there is a court finding that the parent has been convicted of the murder of the other parent, the attempted murder of the other parent, or the solicitation of a murder of the other parent.
HB 1041 Rep. Parker/ Sen. West	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Mandates school district adoption and implementation of a policy addressing sexual abuse of children to be included in the district improvement plan. Teachers, students, and parents gain awareness regarding sexual abuse of children including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse. Creates a nine member task force to establish a strategy to abolish child abuse and neglect and to improve child welfare. Governor, lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house will appoint members of the task force no later than October 1, 2009 and will abolish the task force on September 1, 2011.
HB 2225 Rep. Parker/ Sen. Nelson	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Creates a 9-member adoption review committee that, along with DFPS, will conduct an extensive review of the foster care system to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify obstacles to permanent placement, including adoption; and</li> <li>• develop ways to improve the system by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ reducing length of time in substitute care;</li> <li>○ reducing the number of foster children placed outside their home county; and</li> <li>○ enhancing adoption procedures.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> The adoption review committee expires September 1, 2011.

<b>Bill # and Author/Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
HB 2386 Rep. Castro/ Sen. Uresti  Companion SB 2106	Signed by the Governor May 27, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Amends current law relating to the sealing of juvenile records by authorizing juvenile courts to immediately seal the record of a juvenile, if the juvenile successfully completes a drug court program or another special program ordered by the court. Gives judges the necessary discretion to encourage juveniles to participate in intervention programs deemed to be successful in their communities.
HB 3137 Rep. Gallegos/ Sen. Nelson	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Requires DFPS to develop a statement that lists the rights and responsibilities of foster parents in licensed and child placing agency-verified foster homes. CPS must distribute the statement to each foster parent in a foster home and to child placing agencies. Child placing agencies must distribute the statement to their verified foster homes and foster parents.
HB 3689 Rep. McClendon/ Sen. Hinojosa  Companion SB 1020	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective immediately.	Requires a coordinated strategic plan that includes the development of common data sources and data sharing among TYC, TJPC, DFPS, DSHS, TEA and other state agencies that serve youth in the juvenile system. Adds DFPS to the list of agencies required to accept and disclose information concerning "special needs offenders." Requires DFPS to enter into a memo of understanding with other agencies relating to the continuity of care and services programs for juveniles with "mental impairments" in the juvenile justice system.

**5. MISCELLANEOUS LAWS THAT MAY AFFECT CASA PROGRAMS**

<b>Bill # and Author/ Sponsor</b>	<b>Status and Effective Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
SB 61 Sen . Zaffrini/ Rep. Vaught  Companion HB 528	Signed by the Governor May 29, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Raises the age to 8 under which a child must be secured in a child passenger safety seat system, unless the child is taller than 4'9". Changes the fines for someone who drives a vehicle and fails to properly secure a child under age 8 in a car seat.
HB 671 Rep. Darby/ Sen. Seliger	Signed by the Governor June 19, 2009. Effective September 1, 2009.	Increases the penalty for theft from a nonprofit corporation to the next higher category of offense.

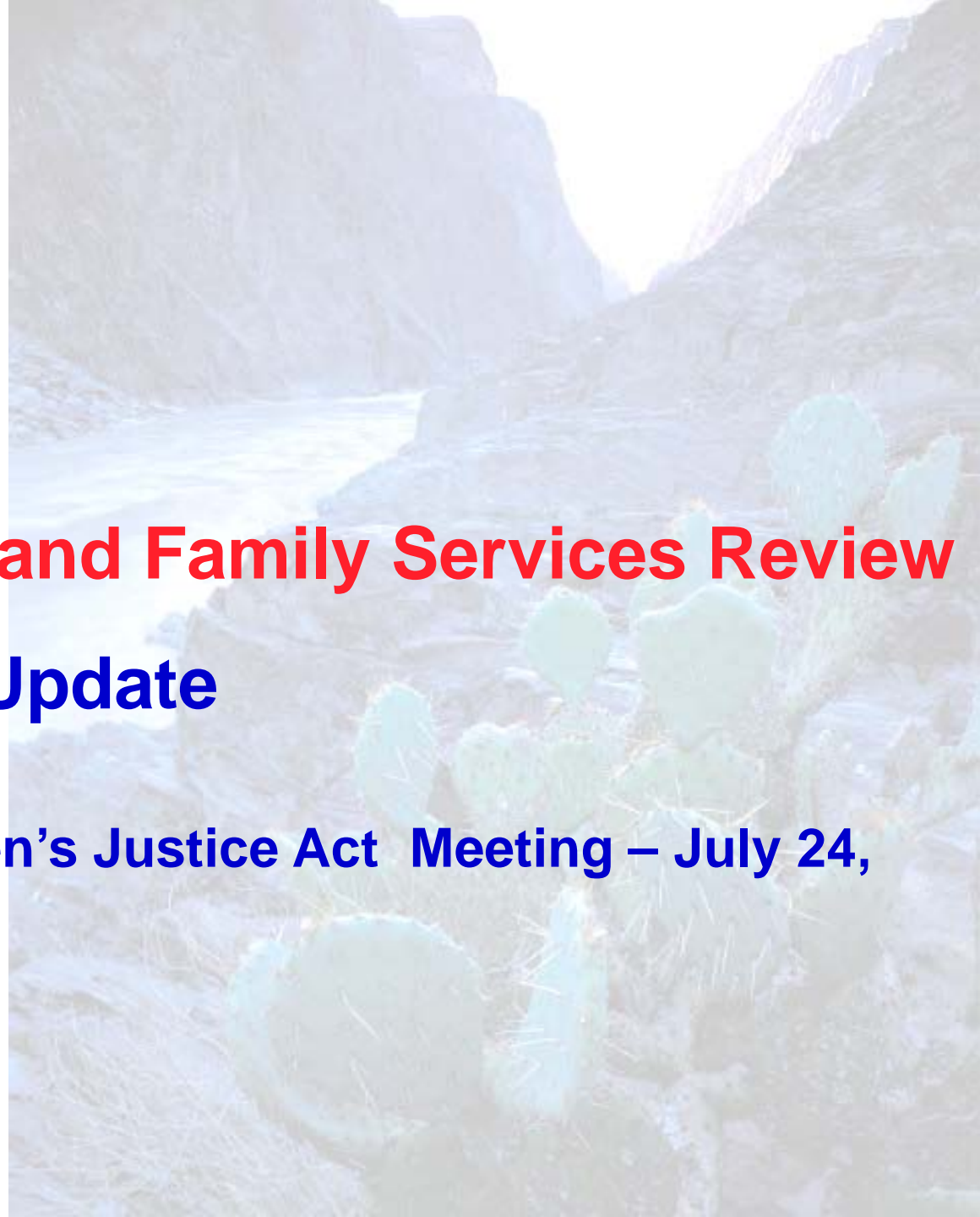
\*\*Thank you to Texans Care for Children for providing summaries for some of these bills



# **Texas Child and Family Services Review**

## **Round 2 Update**

**Texas Children's Justice Act Meeting – July 24,  
2009**





## Child & Family Services Review (CFSR)

- ★ 1994 - Congress mandated that the Children's Bureau change the method for monitoring State child welfare systems
- ★ 2001 - The Children's Bureau implemented the Child and Family Service Reviews to:
  - Provide feedback to States on performance and outcomes
  - Assist States in becoming self-evaluating
  - Assemble data to inform national policy
  - Ensure Federal funds are spent appropriately
  - Monitor child welfare programs, with an emphasis on accountability and continuous and sustainable improvement



# The CF SR Process

**Two phases to the process:**

- ★ **Statewide Assessment**
  - Uses Statewide Data
  - Self Evaluative
- ★ **On-Site Review** (3 sites, including the largest metro area)
  - Case review
  - Stakeholder interviews

**States that are not in substantial conformity for any of the CF SR outcomes or systemic factors enter into a Program Improvement Plan (PIP).**

**Financial penalties may be incurred if States do not successfully complete their PIP.**



# CFSR: Seven Outcomes

## **Safety**

1. Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
2. Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

## **Permanency**

1. Children have permanency and stability in their living arrangements.
2. The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

## **Child and Family Well-Being**

1. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
2. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
3. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.



# CFSR: Seven Systemic Factors

- ★ Statewide information system
- ★ Case review system
- ★ Quality assurance program
- ★ Staff and provider training
- ★ Service array
- ★ Agency responsiveness to the community
- ★ Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention



# Texas CFSR Round 1 ... the “Status Check”

- \* Texas was assessed a financial penalty for not meeting one targeted outcome (Well-Being 1 – specifically, caseworker visits with children and parents).*
- \* The penalty was appealed and subsequently rescinded.*
- \* There is no penalty or financial effect from Round 1 on Texas CFSR Round 2.*



## Texas CFSSR Round 2

*\* March 2008: Round 2 On Site Review held (Sites: El Paso, Dallas & Harris counties).*

*\* January 26, 2009: ACF sent a formal draft to the state.*

*\* February 9, 2009: DFPS responded to the draft.*

*\* March 25, 2009: ACF sent the Round 2 Final Report to the state.*



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

- ★ Safety 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect --- not in substantial conformity.
  - ★ Lack of consistency in screening and assessment
  - ★ Lack of consistency in timeliness for initiating investigations



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

- ★ Safety 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate --- not in substantial conformity.
- ★ Lack of consistency in ensuring risk and safety assessment services are provided to reduce risk
- ★ Not consistently supporting reunification or protecting safety during visitation



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

- ★ Permanency 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations --- not in substantial conformity.
  - ★ Rate of re-entry into foster care remains very low.
  - ★ 25% of children had 2 or more placements or were in unstable placements.
  - ★ Lack of consistency in establishing child's permanency goal timely, reunification goal maintained too long
  - ★ Lack of consistency in attaining goals
  - ★ Lack of consistency in achieving adoptions timely
  - ★ Did not make concerted efforts to ensure a long-term stable placement, especially noted inappropriate use of long term foster care for children under 15 years.



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

- ★ Permanency 2: The continuity of family relationships & connections is preserved for children --- not in substantial conformity.
  - ★ Children are routinely and consistently placed in close proximity to parents or potential permanent caregivers.
  - ★ Children are routinely and consistently placed with siblings.
  - ★ Lack of consistency in promoting visitation between siblings
  - ★ Lack of consistency in efforts to maintain child's connection with extended family, culture, community
  - ★ Lack of consistency in efforts to maintain/strengthen the parent-child relationship while children are in foster care
  - ★ Lack of consistency in seeking and evaluating relatives as placement resources



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

- ★ Well-Being 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs --- not in substantial conformity.
  - ★ Lack of consistency in assessing & meeting services needs
  - ★ Lack of consistency in involving families (especially fathers) in case planning
  - ★ Lack of consistency in efforts to maintain/strengthen the parent-child relationship while children are in foster care
  - ★ Although more consistently assessing and addressing the needs of children, less effectively assessing service needs of mothers and fathers
  - ★ More consistent in maintaining contact with children in CVS, but still there were inconsistencies in both foster care and in homes cases



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

★ Well-Being 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs --- in substantial conformity.

★ 97.1% substantially achieved.

★ Consistently assessed children's educational needs

★ Consistently maintained contact with children's schools to ensure specialized services, tutoring, or IEPs were in place



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Outcomes

★ Well-Being 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs --- not in substantial conformity.

- ★ Physical health item stronger than mental health item
- ★ Lack of consistency in health assessments & dental services
- ★ Lack of consistency in assessing and addressing mental health needs
- ★ Lack of sufficient mental health and substance abuse treatment resources for children and families



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Systemic Factors

## ★ Statewide Information System – in substantial conformity

- ★ The Texas information system (IMPACT) can identify the status, demographic characteristics, locations and goals for all children in foster care.
- ★ IMPACT is a strong case management tool, allowing for extensive reporting and tracking capabilities.



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Systemic Factors

## ★ Case Review System - not in substantial conformity:

- ★ Lack of consistency in engaging parents meaningfully in case planning
- ★ Lack of consistency in notification of hearings and reviews to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers
- ★ Some courts encourage youth and foster parent attendance in hearings and provide opportunity to be heard; some do not.



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Systemic Factors

## ★ Quality Assurance System – in substantial conformity

- ★ Texas has effective licensing standards and policies to ensure children in foster care are provided quality services
- ★ Texas has a robust QA system, similar to the CFSR process
- ★ Supervisors utilize information and data reports to provide feedback to caseworkers and to track themes
- ★ QA results are used and plans are developed to increase compliance.



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Systemic Factors

## ★ Training – in substantial conformity

- ★ Texas has a process in place for ensuring initial training is completed within a new caseworker's first year and before receiving a caseload.
- ★ New caseworkers receive on-the-job-training opportunities.
- ★ Texas uses an established formal curriculum (PRIDE) to train foster and adoptive parents. Ongoing training is required and readily available.



# Texas CFSR Round 2 Systemic Factors

## ★ Service Array System - not in substantial conformity:

- ★ Key resources are insufficient around the states (substance abuse, mental health, placement resources)
- ★ Lack of services in all areas of the state to meet identified needs of families involved with DFPS
- ★ Lack of consistency in individualizing services to meet the unique needs of children and families served.



# Texas CFSR Round 2

## Systemic Factors

### ★ Agency Responsiveness to the Community – in substantial conformity

- ★ Several major statewide initiatives that significantly involve key stakeholders and communities in planning.
- ★ Stakeholders are included in the annual review of the state plan, as well as development of the PIP.
- ★ There is considerable coordination of services among various child welfare funding streams.
- ★ The use of Title IV-E funding for juvenile justice youth is appropriate.



# Texas CFSR Round 2

## Systemic Factors

### ★ Foster & Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention – in substantial conformity

- ★ Standards are reasonably in accord with best practice.
- ★ Specific licensing standards are applied to all licensed child care institutions and foster care providers.
- ★ The most recent Title IV-E Eligibility Review support stakeholder comments and Statewide Assessment indications that standards are appropriately applied.
- ★ All foster, adoptive, and kinship families receive a criminal background check before becoming verified.
- ★ Cross-jurisdictional resources to locate placements for waiting children are diligently used.



## Texas CFSR Round 2 ... What's next?

- ★ Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Negotiation
  - ❖ Initial PIP Draft Proposal was submitted to Administration for Children and Families on April 27, 2009 and a Second Draft Proposal was submitted on July 9, 2009.
  - ❖ Cross-cutting themes will be used:
    - ❖ Addressing workforce issues to build critical decision making and strategic practice implementation skills
    - ❖ Building placement capacity
    - ❖ Addressing barriers to permanency
    - ❖ Strengthening the FBSS program
  - ❖ Targets for achievement are negotiated
- ★ When completely negotiated, Texas will have three years to complete all activities and achieve the PIP targets



## For more information:

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OR

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# CJA Budget

7/22/2009

## Fiscal Year: October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009

Income	
GY 08 Remaining Funds:	\$ 416,490.25
GY 09 Grant Income:	\$ 1,356,331.00
Interest Income:	\$ -
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,772,821.25</b>
Budget Reserve	\$ 100,000.00
Operating Expenses	\$ 294,800.00
<b>Total Budgeted</b>	<b>\$ 1,378,021.25</b>
Funds Remaining for New Projects	\$ -

Total Grant Income	\$ 1,772,821.25
Operating Expenses	\$ 184,971.81
Project Expenditures	\$ 732,324.79
<b>FY 09 Unexpended Funds:</b>	<b>\$ 865,624.66</b>

	Budget	Expenses to Date	Balance
Abilene Police Department	\$ 42,909.00	\$ 19,675.94	\$ 23,233.06
CAC of Hidalgo County	\$ 96,421.00	\$ 21,011.22	\$ 75,409.78
CAC of Smith County	\$ 45,789.00	\$ 33,164.56	\$ 12,624.44
CAC of Texas	\$ 94,922.00	\$ 72,440.50	\$ 22,481.50
CAC of Texas - Forensic Interview	\$ 2,345.00	\$ 2,345.00	\$ -
CAC of Tom Green County	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 38,984.17	\$ 11,015.83
CASA of Hidalgo County	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,852.22	\$ 147.78
CASA of Trinity Valley	\$ 43,036.00	\$ 20,096.18	\$ 22,939.82
Dallas CAC	\$ 65,700.00	\$ 33,373.24	\$ 32,326.76
Greater Dallas Council on A & DA	\$ 99,999.00	\$ 63,014.99	\$ 36,984.01
Navarro County CAC	\$ 24,625.00	\$ 15,256.41	\$ 9,368.59
Northeast CAC	\$ 7,474.00	\$ 3,067.64	\$ 4,406.36
Nueces County CAC	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 52,443.11	\$ 22,556.89
County CAC	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 4,625.10	\$ 3,374.90
Institute of Child Development	\$ 57,125.00	\$ 48,449.49	\$ 8,675.51
Texas CASA	\$ 251,916.00	\$ 151,049.66	\$ 100,866.34
Texas Foster Families Association	\$ 12,372.00	\$ 12,372.00	\$ -
TX Office for Prev of Dev Disabilities	\$ 61,129.00	\$ 31,009.69	\$ 30,119.31
UTHSC-SA	\$ 141,750.00	\$ 12,096.03	\$ 129,653.97
Zero to Three	\$ 69,362.00	\$ 44,986.09	\$ 24,375.91
Training Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Organization Grants	\$ 20,640.89	\$ 15,786.84	\$ 4,854.05
Individual Scholarships	\$ 79,506.36	\$ 24,904.53	\$ 54,601.83
CJA Task Force	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 9,320.18	\$ 15,679.82
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$ 1,378,021.25</b>	<b>Total Expenses \$ 732,324.79</b>	<b>Balance \$ 645,696.46</b>

**Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc.**  
**Strengthening CAC Multidisciplinary Teams and Leadership**  
**CJA Grant (FY09) – Status Report 7.15.09**

Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas has developed and conducted specialized, unique training for a total of **192 individual child abuse professionals** through the first 10 months of the current grant cycle. All of these trainings are focused on sustaining CACs and their Multidisciplinary Teams Trainings in a manner that ensures the most effective collaborative efforts possible so that child victims and their families can truly have positive outcomes – not just in terms of the case disposition – but in their lives. Specific trainings developed and presented through support of this CJA Grant include the following:

**I. Team Leadership Training**

**Objective:**

Cultivate Leadership among core disciplines addressing child sexual and physical abuse by bringing together local children's advocacy center multidisciplinary teams of similar size/scope for purposes of cross-training, peer learning, networking and focus on establishing core leadership for the multidisciplinary team. Attendees from each local center team include representatives from law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, forensic interviewing, medical, mental health and CAC program staff.

**Primary Components of Training:**

Developing Group Norms, Identifying and Understanding Diverse Social Styles on Teams, Working with Change and Resistance, Understanding the Cultures of Each Discipline, Common Dysfunctions of Multidisciplinary Teams, Working with Conflict.

**Offerings in FY09:**

Two three-day events. Four teams attended the first offering in January 2009 (29 total participants) and Five Teams attended the second offering in March 2009 (37 total participants). These includes multidisciplinary teams from children's advocacy centers located in the following Texas cities: Dallas, Fort Worth, Lubbock and Amarillo & Lewisville, Midland, Rosenberg, Texarkana and Bastrop.

**Performance Data:**

January 2009 Offering:

100% of participants reported an increase in knowledge at the completion of the training. Six month follow-up evaluations are currently being administered (six month observations solicited from attendees and the executive directors of the local center teams).

March 2009 Offering:

97% of the participants reported an increase in knowledge at the completion of the training. Six month follow-up evaluations will be administered in September.

## **II. Train the Trainer**

### **Objective:**

Developing an effective plan for delivery of ongoing training for forensic interviewers and CAC multidisciplinary teams by providing training for CACTX staff and contract trainers from throughout Texas.

### **Primary Components of Training:**

Building Positive Climate and Learning Communities, Participatory Discussion Methods, Adult Learning Cycle and Adult Learning Styles, Planning and Delivering Curriculum for Audience Comprised of Diverse Learning Styles.

### **Offerings in FY09:**

One two-day offering for 11 participants.

### **Performance Data:**

100% of participants reported increased knowledge and skills.

## **III. Customized MDT Trainings – Orientations, Advanced Training**

### **Objective:**

Strengthen Developing CAC Multidisciplinary Teams and Established CAC Multidisciplinary Teams facing inherent cross-discipline personnel, management and philosophical challenges by providing customized, on-site training for all members. These customized trainings are provided for all new CAC teams in their first year of operation and for established teams, upon request.

### **Primary Components of Training:**

MDT Orientations for New CAC Teams include general information about the CAC model and its intended purpose, the role of the various discipline and agencies, inherent challenges for CAC teams, and direction regarding the development of shared Team protocols.

MDT Advanced Trainings for Established Teams focus on areas specifically identified by individual CAC teams as areas they are struggling with or wishing to improve (i.e. Conflict, Co-Location, Information Sharing and Confidentiality, Protocol Review and Revision)

### **FY09 Offerings**

Two one-day MDT Orientations – 54 total participants representing law enforcement, prosecution, CPS, medical, mental health, forensic interviewing, CAC program staff, victim advocates.

One Advanced MDT Training – 20 total participants representing law enforcement, prosecution, CPS, medical, mental health, forensic interviewing, CAC program staff, victim advocates.

### **Performance Data:**

MDT Orientation #1 (Kaufman County CAC): 100% of respondents reported increased knowledge and understanding of the CAC model and their role in effective MDT functioning.

MDT Orientation #2 (Eastland County CAC): 82% of respondents reported increased knowledge and understanding of the CAC model and their role in effective MDT functioning.

ADVANCED MDT Training (Abilene CAC): 100% of respondents reported increased knowledge and understanding of the CAC model and their role in effective MDT functioning.

## **IV. Networking Forums**

### **Objective:**

Further evolve the CAC model and improve the handling of child abuse cases by bringing together CAC Executive Directors and Program Directors in discussion forums to address issues of concern and develop creative strategies and approaches through open, facilitated dialogue, sharing of ideas, peer support and mini-training opportunities.

### **FY09 Offerings and Primary Components of Training:**

Three of the four Forums in FY09 were focused on evaluation and assessment of children's advocacy centers and their ability to effectively support child abuse professionals as well as children and families served. Attendees at each session met with their peers from like size/scope CACs from throughout the state to discuss current practices and challenges in conducting effective and meaningful assessment and evaluation activities. Students from the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service (UT-LBJ School) met with Directors to gather input and initiate a project aimed at the development of statewide shared outcomes for CACs.

The fourth Forum in FY09 was for CAC Program Directors and focused on challenges faced in maintaining a healthy and effective Multidisciplinary Team in light of inherent turnover within the various agencies as well as effective strategies for supporting forensic interviewers and other direct service staff.

41 total participants at the four Forum.

### **Performance Data:**

100% of the respondents reported an increased commitment to the CAC model and an increase in their knowledge and understanding as it relates to enhancing service delivery for child victims and heir families.

## **V. Better Outcomes Through Effective Team Facilitation Training**

### **Objective:**

Enhance functioning and productivity of Multidisciplinary Teams by providing designated team facilitators with training to develop an understanding of group dynamics, group facilitation and team management skills.

### **Primary Components of Training:**

Understanding Various Learning Styles, Developing Learner vs. Judger Mindsets and Questioning Patterns, Effective Approaches to the MDT Case Review Process, Participatory Discussion Methods, Giving and Receiving Feedback, Building Positive Climate, and Managing Conflict.

### **Offerings in FY09:**

One three-day offering for up to 20 CAC Team Facilitators. Scheduled for September 22-24, 2009.

### **Performance Data:**

Participants will complete evaluations at the culmination of each of the three days of the training as well as 6-9 months following the delivery of the training to inquire about application of learnings. Target is to have a minimum of 90% or participants report an increased knowledge and understanding of the role of the facilitator in ensuring effective functioning of the CAC multidisciplinary team.