



# COLLIN COUNTY

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLAN

2008



# Acknowledgements

*I would like to thank the following people who gave freely of their time, expertise and extensive knowledge in developing the 2008 Collin County Community Justice Plan.*

**Jim Malatich**

*Collin County Community Justice Plan Chair*

## 2008 Collin County Community Justice Plano Committees

### Technical Advisory Committee

**Jim Malatich**

Executive Director  
Crossroads Family Services

**Nicole Frazier**

Crime Victim Advocate  
City Of Allen Police

**Caralee Gurney**

Director of Public Relations  
Boys & Girls Club

**Ken Myers**

Allen Police Dept.

**Tonia Cunningham**

Victim Advocate  
Frisco Police Department

### General Introduction

**Michelle Patrick**

WIC Director  
Collin Co. Health Care Services

**Tonia Cunningham**

Victim Advocate  
Frisco Police Department

**Shirletta Best**

CDBG Administrator  
City of McKinney

**Nicole Bursey**

Client Services Director  
Frisco Family Service Center

**Janetta Michaels**

Director of Operations  
Collin Co. Children's Advocacy Center

**Tracy Westhoff**

Assistant Director  
Samaritan Inn

**Tommy Blakeman**

CCSAP

**Jim Malatich**

Executive Director  
Crossroads Family Services

### Victims of Crime

**Nicole Frazier**

Crime Victim Advocate  
City of Allen Police Dept

**Susan Etheridge**

Executive Director  
CASA

**Meredith Marsh**

Clinical Director  
Crossroads Family Services

**Tonia Cunningham**

Victim Advocate  
Frisco Police Department

**Bob Fine**

Program Director  
Hopes Door

**Katherine Howard**

DFPS Program Director

**Janetta Michaels**

Director of Operations  
Collin Co. Children's Advocacy Center

**Claudia Alexander**

Executive Director  
The Turning Point Rape Crisis Center

### Juvenile Justice

**Caralee Gurney**

Director of Public Relations  
Boys & Girls Club, Collin Co.

**Tim Eshbaugh**

Collin County Juvenile Probation

**Tonia Cunningham**

Victim Advocate  
Frisco Police Department

**Nicole Frazier**

Crime Victim Advocate  
City of Allen Police Dept

**Michelle Peel**

Investigator  
Allen Police Department

**Shanette Brown**

Community Development Coordinator  
Neighborhood Services Division  
Planning Department, City of Plano

**Pastor Rock Carpenter**

Executive Director  
Collin County City of Hope

**Shirlane Grant**

Teen Court Coordinator  
McKinney

### Law Enforcement

**Sgt. Ken Myers**

Allen Police Dept.

**Tonia Cunningham**

Victim Advocate  
Frisco Police Department

**Lt. Mark Sanderson**

Collin Co. Rural Child Abuse Task Force

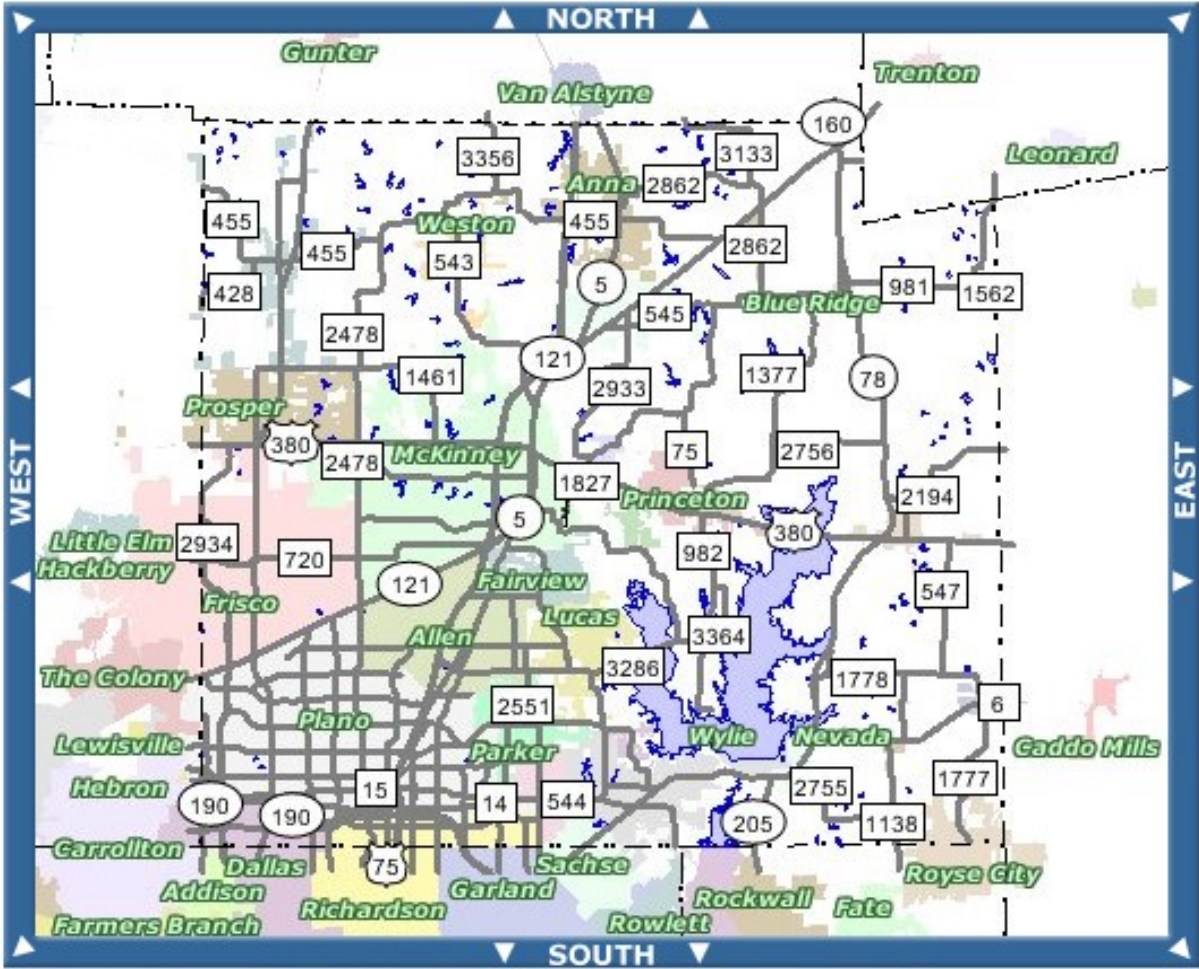
**John Duscio**

Chief of Police  
Wylie Police Department

**Major Chuck Ruckel**

Major Chuck Ruckel, MS, LCC  
Collin County Sheriff's Office

# Collin County



# **COLLIN COUNTY FY2008 CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A Little Trivia**

The county and its seat are both named in honor of Collin McKinney, one of the five men who drafted the Texas Declaration of Independence and the oldest of the 59 men who signed it.



### **Population**

Collin County is an 886 square mile area with 848 square miles of land and 38 square miles consisting of water. Located north of Dallas, it includes 31 incorporated communities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2005 there were 652,498 people living in Collin County. However, the population is projected to be 770,491 within the next two years and 844,515 in 6 years.

### **Collin County**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>Population</b>	492,276	652,498	770,491	844,515	938,681	1,046,919	1,166,645
<b>Households</b>	184,211	241,931	276,980	311,901	346,593	386,321	431,137
<b>Employment</b>	204,057	246,912	292,533	352,732	403,178	456,658	517,264

NCTCOG estimate adjusted from 2000 Census count. Does not include group quarters.

Collin County is one of the fastest growing counties not only in Texas but in the entire United States as well. According to North Central Texas Council on Governments (NCTCOG) in 2007 over 40 percent of the growth in the region was located in five cities, three of which are in Collin County; McKinney (added 6,200 persons), Frisco (added 5,500 residents and Plano (5,200 persons). The outlying, rural areas of Collin County are also experiencing substantial growth. NCTCOG (2008 Estimates) reports the following growth percentages: Lavon 26%, Princeton 13%, Fairview 12%, and a greater than 8% growth in Melissa and Anna.

## Estimated Population Change From 2007-2008 For Collin County by City

<i>City</i>	<i>Estimated Population 1/1/07</i>	<i>Estimated Population 1/1/08</i>	<i>Growth Rate 2007-2008</i>
<b>Collin County</b>	<b>724,900</b>	<b>748,050</b>	<b>3.19%</b>
Allen	76,600	78,500	2.94%
Anna	7,100	7,800	9.86%
Celina	4,650	4,850	4.30%
Fairview	7,650	8,600	12.42%
Farmersville	3,350	3,350	0.00%
Frisco	92,100	97,600	5.97%
Lavon	1,550	1,950	25.81%
Lowry Crossing	1,350	1,350	0.00%
Lucas	5,100	5,150	0.98%
McKinney	112,000	118,200	5.54%
Melissa	3,500	3,900	11.43%
Murphy	12,450	12,900	3.61%
Parker	3,300	3,350	1.52%
Plano	255,700	260,900	2.03%
Princeton	5,100	5,750	12.75%
Prosper	6,050	6,350	4.96%
Wylie	35,400	37,000	4.52%
Rest of Collin Co.	50,300	52,000	3.38%
Split Cities	41,650	38,200	-8.28%

**North Central Texas Council of Governments. Research and Information Services 2008**

From 2000 to 2007 Collin County population increased by 44%. A breakdown of this growth shows that the Hispanic population has increased by 85% while the African American population increased by 115%.

Further analysis shows that the outlying, rural areas of Collin County are also experiencing dramatic change. This comes not only from the development of the surrounding cities but also from the emergence of large population pockets in the northern and eastern sections of the county. This evolution was unexpected only a few years ago. As in some Collin County cities, the immigration population is on the rise in the rural areas too. The county's current racial makeup is 81% White, 10% Hispanic or Latino, 7% Asian, 4% Black or African-American, 4% from other races, less than 1% Native American, less than 1% Pacific Islander and 2% from two or more races.

While Plano is nearly built-out, it is still growing but at a slower rate than other cities such as Frisco and McKinney. Frisco is projected to be larger than Plano by 2015. Frisco's child population, especially those under the age of ten, has seen an increase far exceeding the general population's numbers. In fact, this growth area alone is ten times the growth of the population in general and this

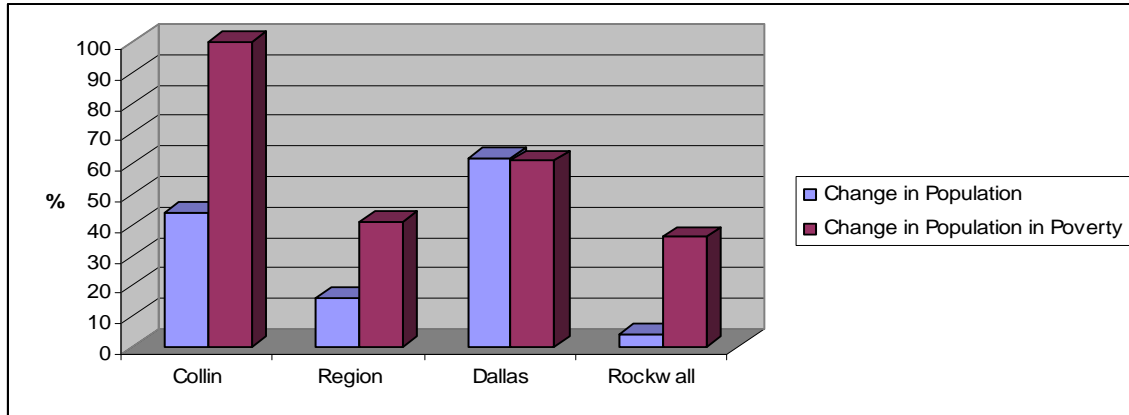
impact will be noticeable. Conversely, because of the current demographics of Plano, Collin County faces an aging populace and the accompanying needs thereof as well in the very near future.

The largest age group in Collin County is the 25 to 44 year olds which make up about 38% of the total population. During this same time period, there was a 44% increase in the number of female head of households with children under 18 in the county.

## Population vs. Poverty

Regarding the change in population and poverty, Collin County grew by 44% from 2000 to 2007 while the number of persons living in poverty increased by 100%. In comparison over the same time period, the Region (Dallas, Rockwall, Collin & Denton counties) grew by 16% and the number of persons living in poverty increased by 41%.

### **Change in Population vs. Change in Population in Poverty, 2000-2006**

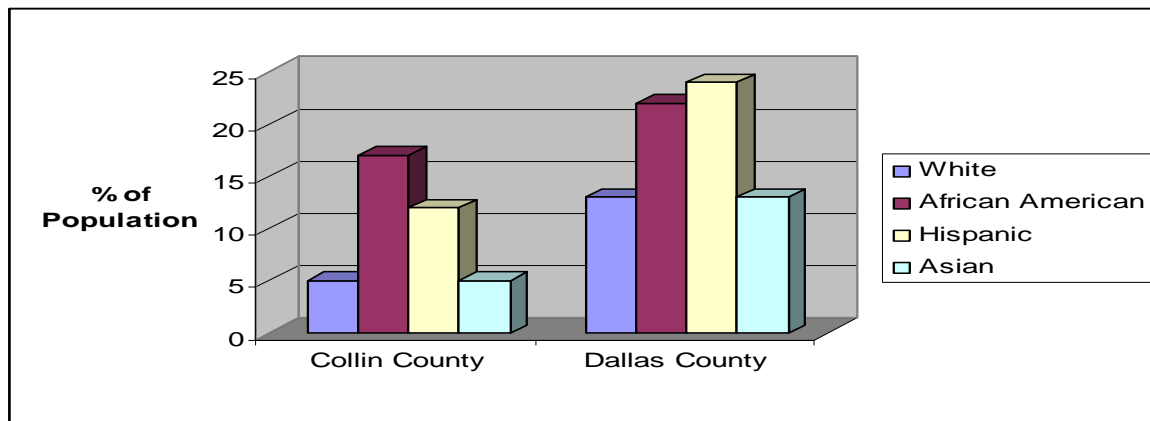


United Way- 2008 Community Needs Assessment

## Population vs. Ethnic Background

The Chart below is a comparison of Collin and Dallas counties with regards to race and ethnic background. Regarding Collin, there is a vast difference between the percent of White persons in poverty as compared to the percent of African Americans who live in poverty. When comparing Collin County to Dallas County in this same area, Collin County has a much larger gap.

### **Percent of Persons in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity of Collin and Dallas Counties in 2006**



United Way- 2008 Community Needs Assessment

## **Significant Findings In Income For Collin County Between 2004-2006**

- 65% increase in the number of seniors aged 65+ are living in poverty.
- 36% increase in the percent of children under the age 18 are living in poverty.
- 67% increase in the percent of African Americans living in poverty.
- Highest percent of seniors living in poverty in the region in 2006 (10.9% of all seniors).
- 17.1% of all residents report they need help with reading English.

## **Other Significant Findings**

- Licensed child care capacity has increased at a faster rate than the childhood population (34% vs. 22% respectively).
- Only 1,400 out of an estimated 7,200 eligible children received subsidized child care in 2006.
- There was a 20% increase in the number of children in foster care from 2003-2007, but there was a 76% decrease in available foster and adoptive homes.
- It is estimated that about 19% of the total population had no health insurance in 2005.
- The infant mortality rate increase from 3.5 per 1,000 live births, to 5.1 per 1000 live births between 2000 and 2004. This represents a 46% increase.

(Data from United Way- 2008 Community Needs Assessment)

## **Collin County Facts**

<b>Population</b>	724,900
<b>Average annual wage</b>	\$96,629
<b>Largest segment of population</b>	White/Anglo 81%
<b>Veteran population</b>	8.3%
<b>Percent unemployed</b>	4.5%
<b>Median household income</b>	\$74,051

<b>Bachelor's degree +</b>	47.2%
<b>Poverty rate</b>	6.2%
<b>Median housing value</b>	\$191,000
<b>Average mortgage</b>	\$1,831
<b>Median gross rent</b>	\$906
<b>Housing cost burden</b>	Own home: 30% Renters: 38%

As expected, along with this growth comes an increase in crime in the county. Statistics indicate the number of violent crimes in particular is growing at a rate faster than population increases would dictate. Although some of this can be attributed to the increased numbers of inhabitants, other contributing factors include higher than usual unemployment and under-employment of those recently downsized out of or laid off from a job.

# Victims of Crime

## Introduction

The days, weeks, months and even years after a person is a victim of crime can often be chaotic, overwhelming and highly emotional. Family, friends and the community are impacted by the crime. Not every crime victim will seek assistance immediately following the event; some may wait to find services at a later date. When the victim does seek out assistance, it is crucial that services are available as soon as possible in order to decrease the emotional and physical impacts on victims of crime. It is imperative that when a victim seeks services that they are met with compassion and support. A victim may not understand the legal process of the crime, the medical procedures or the methods of therapy that are available to them. Many victims have symptoms such as confusion, fear, anxiety, emotional numbness, rage and the inability to sleep. Victims of crime are of all races, religions, sexes and socio-economical backgrounds. The services that are rendered to these victims should accommodate their needs.

Collin County, one of the fastest growing counties in the USA, faces the challenge of meeting the increased demand for immediate and accessible services of crime victims that accompanies its rapid growth. Victims need to have the option of immediate, assessable, and affordable services available to meet their immediate needs. They also have needs that go beyond the immediate crisis such as, information and referrals, advocacy, peer and community support, transportation, education, therapeutic services, case management, increased safe housing opportunities, and an overall increase in staff serving crime victims. These identified gaps in service within Collin County leaves victims susceptible to further victimization.

In the following paragraphs, gaps in services will be further examined. There is an increase in the amount of crime victims in Collin County and the services that are available to them must increase simultaneously. The victim's mental and emotional well being must be the goal. The services in Collin County are limited, thus the victims of crime along with their family and friends tend to suffer. These victims have already been thrown into a confusing and traumatic world that they never dreamed would be a part of their life. They have rights and they deserve to have services made available to them so they are not revictimized due to lack of resources in this county. Their rights are guaranteed through *Article 56, Texas Code of Criminal Procedure*. These rights include, but are not limited to the right to protection for their safety and the safety of their family, right to be informed of court proceedings, right to information about the investigation, and the right to receive information about the Crime Victims Compensation Fund. Victims also have the right to be kept informed by probation and parole regarding the offender's compliance or revocations including their release from incarceration. Many victims are not aware of these rights, we must make it our responsibility to create awareness, get information to crime victims, and bring hope to the Collin County community.

## Child Abuse

Child abuse is a crime against the innocent and vulnerable. Over the last three years Collin County has experienced a not only a growth in population, but an increase in cases reported to Child Protective Services (CPS) (See Table 1). The rise in child abuse cases reported coupled with the increase in cases involving a family member who is the offender is alarming. Victims of child abuse may suffer a variety of problems related to

their abuse. They may experience emotional, mental and health disruptions, which may lead to physical symptoms. Victims experience fear and safety concerns, as well as family discord. Impacts of child abuse and symptomology do not just impact the victims; they extend to their family members who often struggle with similar issues and the community at-large.

According to *Child Help USA (2006)*, the perpetrator's identity is known to 90% of victims. Collin County's local child advocacy center reports that 93% of child abuse offenses are committed by family members. In cases involving a know perpetrator, the non-offending parent may also be burdened with financial strain due to the removal of the offender. Furthermore, the community is also impacted by child abuse in multiple ways. Victims of child abuse may have difficulties in school, thus resulting in a strain on educators. Victims of child abuse, if there is no intervention, are 67 times more likely to engage in juvenile delinquent behavior. Untreated victims are 30% more likely to commit a violent crime and 28% more likely to be arrested as an adult. Abused children who receive no intervention carry the feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem into adulthood. They are 2.5 times more likely to abuse alcohol and 3.8 times more likely to become addicted to drugs. The unfortunate fact is that 1/3 of untreated child victims will abuse their own children.

Public safety becomes a community concern when offenders are not held accountable due to lack of reporting, prosecution, or when they are released on bond. The workplace is also impacted by child abuse when the non-offending parent has to miss work to deal with the investigation and judicial processes. Families may experience stress, confusion and depression during the healing process, which is a pervasive problem.

**TABLE 1**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Source</b>			
Collin Co. Child Population (TDFPS Data Book '05, '06,'07)	<b>185,496</b>	<b>186,601</b>	<b>193,457</b>
CPS Intake Calls/Referrals (TDFPS Data Book '05, '06,'07)	<b>3894/3380</b>	<b>4351/3794</b>	<b>4450/3579</b>
CPS Cases Confirmed (TDFPS Data Book '05,'06,07)	<b>925</b>	<b>1090</b>	<b>1203</b>
Collin County Children's Advocacy Center Cases (Fiscal Year: July-June)	<b>3855</b>	<b>3998</b>	<b>4257</b>
Collin County District Attorney's Office: Crimes Against Children Unit, Grand jury Referrals			
<i>True Bill</i>	<b>144</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>119</b>
<i>No Bill</i>	<b>32</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>36</b>
Collin County District Attorney's Office: Crime Against Children Unit, Dispositions			
<i>Guilty</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>79</b>
<i>Not guilty</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Dismissals/Mistrials</i>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>

- *The DA Crimes Against Children Unit prosecutes the majority of our cases however there are quite a few that go to other courts and we are unable to track them. Therefore the prosecution numbers are not representative of the disposition for all of our cases that are filed with the DA's Office*

There are many needs in Collin County for victims of child abuse. It is imperative that the focus of treatment be centered on the victim and may include both physical and psychological needs for the child and affected family members. Access to resources for the child and their family is a vital and essential component of recovery. Many families lack transportation resources to get to therapy, pre-trial meetings and the necessary interviews needed for prosecution of the offender. There are times when a family has young children and no option for childcare to attend necessary treatment and appointments. These families are overwhelmed by the acts of violence perpetrated on the child, and need to have a safe and trusted place to go for their chance of healing. Funding for these much needed resources is continually being cut, or completely eliminated.

As the data reflects, the child population is increasing in Collin County. The increase in cases reported results in a higher level of judicial intervention (See Table 1). The Collin County District Attorney's office has seen a lower level of grand jury referrals, but this does not indicate that there is a decrease in abuse (See Table 1). This may be due to lack of reporting or reluctance on the victim or victim's family. Dispositions at the District Attorney's office have decreased, but the level of dismissals and mistrials has increased. The numbers of children being abused has the potential to increase due to population, lack of resources and lack of education.

There is a significant need for additional Child Protective Service Investigators, law enforcement detectives, forensic interviewers, specialized prosecutors, and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. Due to the population growth of Collin County and the increase of computer facilitated crimes against children, an additional strain is being put on a system that is already beyond capacity. Due to the lack of prosecutors and the lack of available courts, criminal cases are delayed in going to trial. This has a serious detrimental effect on a child's ability to move forward with their life, puts other children at risk while the offender awaits trial, and diminishes the prosecutor's ability to hold the offender accountable.

Child Protective Services has 'new' guidelines resulting in more children being placed with relatives when removed from their parent's care. These relatives are often ill-prepared and unable to take on the expense of caring for these children. Local advocates and caseworkers connect families with local resources such as, legal aid, Texas Crime Victims' Compensation and financial assistance programs. Caseworkers have seen a dramatic increase in the number and severity of cases in the last year. When an appropriate relative-placement cannot be made, children are placed in foster care. There continues to be a chronic need in Collin County for local placement options. There is no option for those children who need a more structured, therapeutic environment. Residential treatment facilities for these children are extremely scarce and often children have to be placed in group homes due to this deficiency. A continuing challenge is a need for more adoptive homes willing to adopt older children or those with medical and intellectual challenges.

Many child victims and their family members have mental health and psychiatric needs that can not be met within our community. Child psychiatric needs currently exist in Collin County; however there are very few providers. Many clients do not have insurance, or a means to pay for services. Several agencies utilized a sliding-fee-scale

that is accessible to all Collin County residents; however, those clients without transportation and/or access to the larger cities go untreated.

Training and education is necessary to inform staff and the community regarding community trends regarding child abuse, as well as gaps in services for victims of child abuse as discussed above. Education of school officials, sports association professionals, coaches and childcare employees needs to be enhanced for awareness and reporting procedures. The child victim has a right to services; these services need to be available on an ongoing basis to both child and the child's family.

Additional foster homes, therapists, advocates, caseworkers, and pediatric psychiatrists are needed to provide the best intervention for child abuse victims. Several agencies in Collin County currently provide these services to victims and their family members; however they are reaching their capacity.

Collin County is taking action to identify, protect and improve the lives of abused and neglected children. Child Protective Services (CPS), law enforcement, prosecutors, medical and mental health providers, and community resource caseworkers are working jointly to provide seamless services to victims of child abuse. With improvements in public safety and transportation, as well as increased staffing in the following areas, Collin County will be a leader in the State in serving victims of child abuse:

- Public education and awareness
- Therapy
- Advocacy
- Case Management
- CPS Investigators
- Law Enforcement Detectives
- Forensic Interviewers
- Specialized Prosecution
- SANE Examiners
- Foster Care Staff and Homes
- Pediatric Psychiatrists

**TABLE 2**

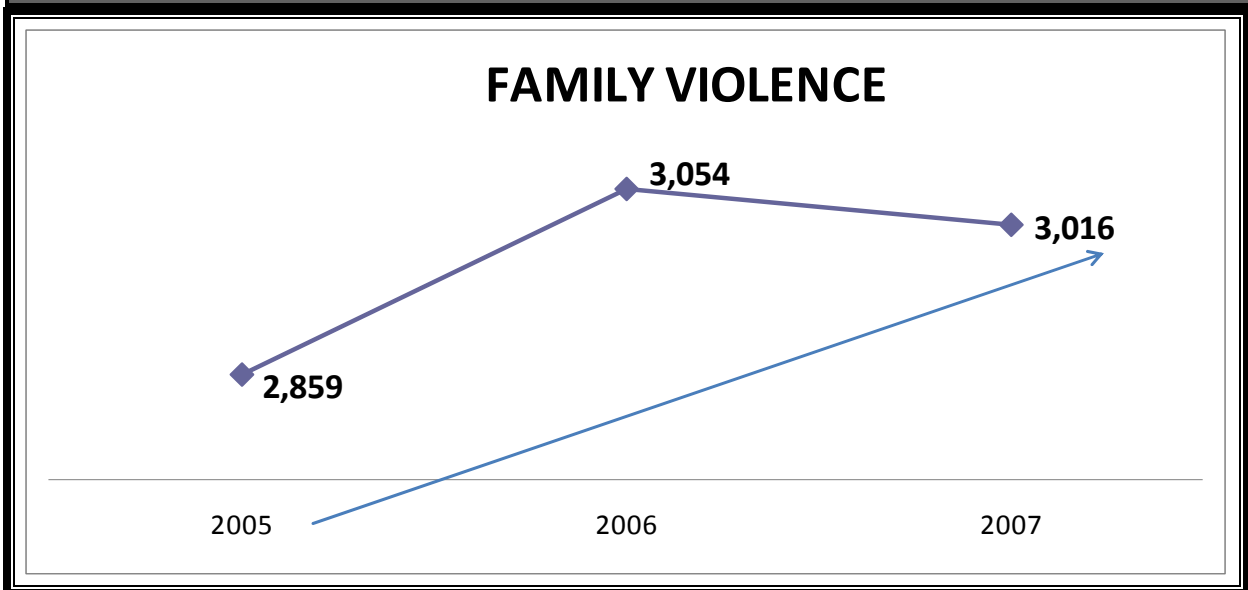
<b>Year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Event</b>			
CAC: Forensic Interviews (Fiscal Year)	<b>679</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>738</b>
CAC: Therapy (Fiscal Year)	<b>12,189</b>	<b>18,968</b>	<b>17,361</b>
CAC: Community Resources (Fiscal Year)	<b>7,302</b>	<b>9,856</b>	<b>7,804</b>
Children in Foster Care	<b>574</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>737</b>
SANE Pediatric Cases	<b>57</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>77</b>
TTP Crisis Calls	<b>48</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>58</b>
Children in Family Violence Shelters	<b>130</b>	<b>119</b>	N/D
Children in Single Parent Families	<b>30,113</b>	<b>29,976</b>	N/D
Children Living in Poverty (Rate)	<b>7.2</b>	<b>5.8</b>	N/D

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is pervasive permeating all socioeconomic boundaries affecting men and women of all ages and racial backgrounds. Domestic violence is an act of violence between intimate partners or family members. Collin County lacks the resources to effectively reach out to these victims. There is a lack of education in schools and churches, as well as among the general public. Violence between intimate partners is a transgenerational cycle that causes feelings of hopelessness, depression, despair, shame, and anger. Based on the rise in population and violence-related crimes, Collin County needs enhanced methods of reaching those impacted in order to provide assistance, advocacy, and support to break free from the cycle of abuse (See Table 1-4). Victims who succeed in breaking free of an abusive situation need a safe place to stay, transportation, education, enhanced legal services, childcare, therapy, and job training services. These needs are not being met in Collin County. While there have been strides to make this county safer for victims of domestic violence, there is a need for further advances.

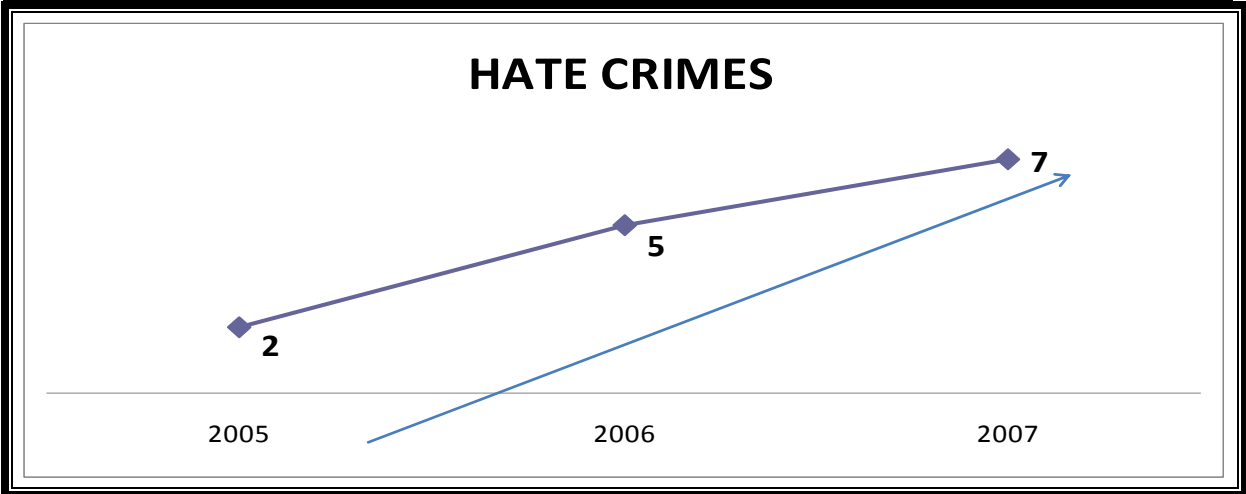
**TABLE 1**

<i>Family Violence</i>		
<i>An act by a member of a family or household against another member that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault or a threat that reasonably place that member in fear of imminent physical harm.</i>		
<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
2,589	3,054	3,016



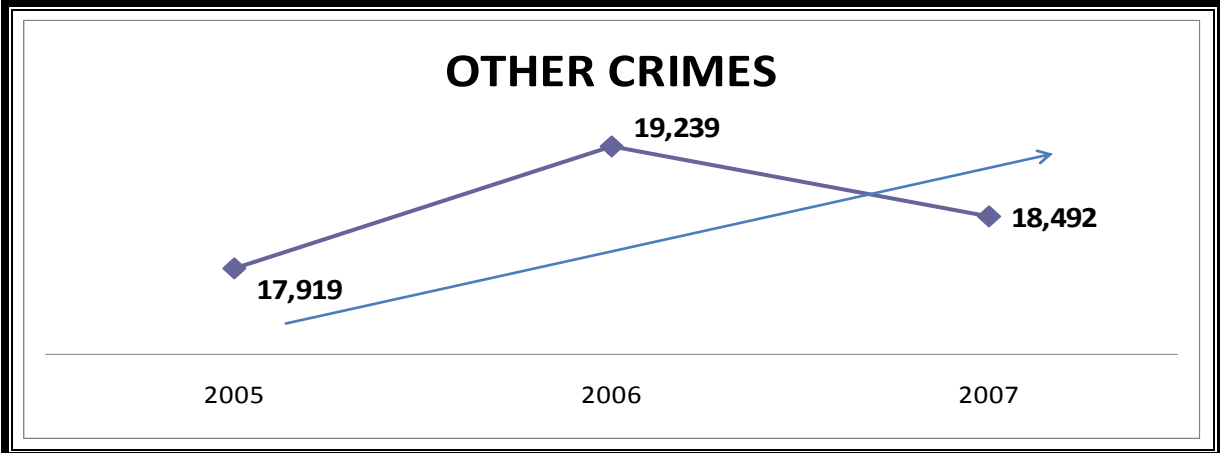
**TABLE 2**

<i>Hate Crimes</i>		
<i>Motivated by Prejudice, Hatred, Violence, Simple Assault, Aggravated Assault, Intimidation or Vandalism</i>		
<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
2	5	7

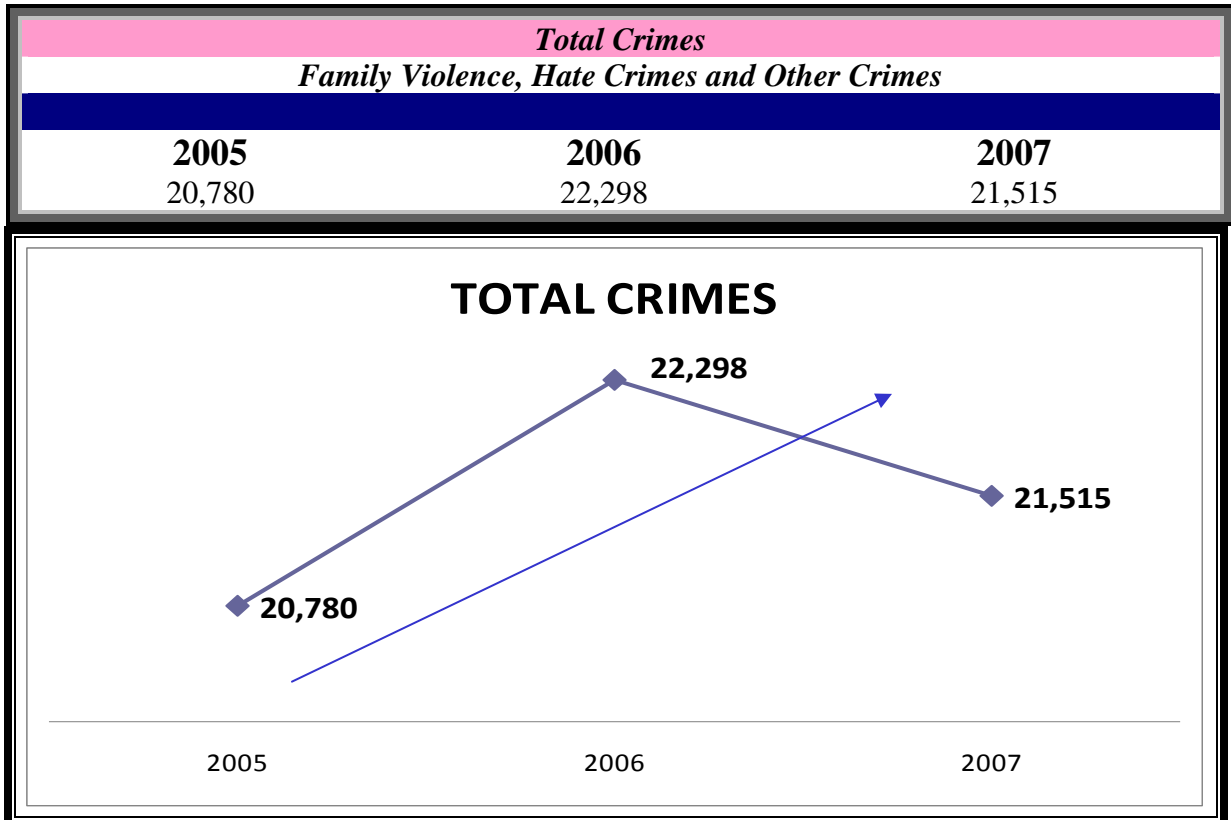


**TABLE 3**

<i>Other Crimes</i>		
<i>Murder, Rape, Robbery w/Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, and Auto Theft</i>		
<b>2005</b>		
<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
17,919	19,239	18,492



**TABLE 4**



Based on the statistics trends above, it is evident that there is a continued growth in violence-related crimes in Collin County. As a result of increased incident reports, there is a greater demand for victim services in our area. There is an even greater need to provide accessible services to Collin County residents living in smaller and rural communities. Victims of crime who live in these areas face various challenges in accessing domestic violence services. They may be unaware of their rights and unaware of services, or choose not to access them. In Collin County, domestic violence service providers and allied professions find that victims often feel they have to stay in their violent situations due to lack of transportation, affordable services and available shelter(s).

Individuals who don't speak English often remain in violent situations due to lack of resources in their native language. Collin County lacks multilingual services for victims of domestic violence. With the addition of multilingual services in Collin County, victims of domestic violence have a greater chance of breaking free from the cycle of violence.

Currently three of Collin County's local law enforcement agencies employ crime victim advocates who serve as liaison between the city and the community at-large. Victim advocates work jointly with local police departments, specifically the Crimes Against Persons Unit (CAPERS) and the Family Violence Unit (FV), as well as community agencies, local medical centers and schools to for the purposes of referrals, collaboration and coordination of services. Advocates are able to inform the victim of their shelter options, financial resources such as Crime Victims Compensation and Relocation

Program maintained by the State of Texas, which provides reimbursement to victims for costs accrued due to the crime, as well as counseling referrals and other assistance based on client need(s). Advocates work closely with the District Attorney's Office to aid victims in obtaining Protective Orders and to provide support through court accompaniments. The District Attorney's Office has a Family Violence Unit which specializes in domestic violence cases. Local police agencies are equipped with literature entailing community resources for victims of domestic violence.

Safety for victims of domestic violence is vital. Currently Collin County is home to two shelters; one specializing in domestic violence and the other in homelessness. These shelters offer education, counseling and referrals to help the victims gain knowledge and insight on domestic and family violence, as well as a chance to break free from the chains of an abuser. In addition, local hospitals are provided with information on local resources. Local organizations and collaborations meet regularly to increase awareness and network agencies for the purposes of promoting cohesion and streamlined services. Annually, a local council hosts a family violence conference to further educate and train both professionals and the community at-large.

The needs for services for victims of domestic violence are two fold: an overall increase in services and resources, and making services financial feasible and assessable to all victims of domestic violence regardless of location and language. Collin County would greatly benefit from an increase in the following services:

- Domestic Violence Shelter(s)
- Transportation
- Education and Awareness
- Legal Services
- Childcare
- Therapy
- Advocacy and Case Management
- Job Training
- Public education and awareness
- Therapy
- Advocacy
- Case Management
- CPS Investigators
- Law Enforcement Detectives
- Forensic Interviewers
- Specialized Prosecution
- SANE Examiners
- Foster Care Staff and Homes
- Pediatric Psychiatrists

Many victims of domestic violence have been out of the workplace for some time and need to familiarize themselves with marketable job skills. Since many of the services are offered in Plano, victims have a difficult time not only finding transportation, but also finding the time to get to the location of the services. Services are desperately needed in areas beyond Plano. Collin County public transportation is extremely limited, which hinders those who do not live within walking distance of services. Abusers isolate their

victims for the purposes of detaching the victim from support systems and gaining power over the victim. Thus, many victims lack the support they need to seek out resources. Living in an abusive situation often leaves victims fearful, distrusting, and isolated. Education is a vital component of domestic violence treatment; education for the victims, the community and professionals on the cycle of violence, issues of power and control, and resources. It is important that the education provided includes cultural sensitivity. Government funding cutbacks make it difficult to provide prevention, education and assistance as several Collin County agencies have had to decrease staff and/or eliminate programs.

There is also a lack of resources for the offending population. Offenders need the opportunity to gain insight and understanding of their behavior in order to implement their children from future assaults. Sexual violence victims may experience extreme disruption in their leisure activities, employment and community life. There are times when they live in fear that they are followed or stalked so they retreat into their own homes which may lead to psychosis. They suffer in relationships, finances and at times with their health. There are both medical and mental symptoms that need treatment when sexual violence has occurred.

Sexual violence also has an impact on the community and society as a whole. Rape is one of the costliest crimes for victims in the United States. The estimated cost is \$127 billion per year; this does not include child sexual abuse. The average cost of being a rape victim is estimated at \$110,000. This does not begin to compare to victims of other crimes. A victim of robbery has an estimated cost of \$16,000 and a victim of drunk driving is \$36,000 (Children's Safety Network Economic and Insurance Resource change. If a victim does leave an offender and the offender does not receive treatment, the cycle perpetuates. The offender needs treatment such as therapy and support groups. Offenders need more resources such as Batterer's Intervention Programs and Anger Management counseling. Drugs and alcohol may also play a part in the behavior of the offender. Treatment for all of these issues may aid the offender in changing his behavior so that they can have healthy relationships in the future.

### **Sexual Assault**

Victims of sexual violence experience various levels of trauma. There are numerous negative psychological, emotional and physical effects for victims. Some victims experience depression, anxiety, chronic illness and eating disorders. Many survivors who have experienced assaults have a fear that they will be unable to protect themselves or Center, 2005). However, aside from the monetary costs of being a sexual assault victim, there are mental, emotional and physical issues that take days, months or perhaps years to recover.

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety (UCR), reported adult female rapes in Collin County increased each year from 2003 (134) to 2005 (159). In 2006, the number of reported rapes dropped to 135 yet rose to 140 in 2007. This may be to a reduction of actual rapes or a decrease in the victims reporting the offense (See Table 1). We do know that these statistics do not include other forms of sexual violence such as harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or adults molested as children. Sexual assault is one of the most under reported crimes in the United States (National Center for Victims of Crime, 2008). Fewer than 39% report to law enforcement (Shannon M. Catalano, 2005). Victims often experience anxiety, and a fear of revictimization from

law enforcement. They fear that they will be blamed for the offense by the judicial system or the community. The victim of sexual violence can be reluctant to seek assistance thus prolonging the healing process. They often do not realize the importance of reporting for prosecutory reasons and the criminal investigation. Without the victim's involvement and participation, the prosecution's case is weak and often results in a no bill or case dismissal. The low reporting rate ensures that few perpetrators of sexual assault will be charged or convicted. This may mean that the offender remains free within the community to commit further sexually violent crimes. The arrests for forcible rape are below the crimes that are reported. It is estimated that only 6% of rapists nationwide serve time in jail (RAINN.org).

Collin County's local Rape Crisis Center provides comprehensive services to sexual assault survivors through a range of crisis intervention and counseling services. In 2007, 868 clients were served, 2006 there were 974 and in 2005 there were 882 clients receiving services (See Table 1). The fluctuating crime rates are reflected in these service numbers. However, Collin County has seen an increase in the need for services, as evidenced by more hotline calls per year, and an increase in the amount of clients who are adults sexually abused as children. In 2007, Collin County responded to 154 hospital calls for advocacy to acute sexual assault victims and in 2006, there were 161 calls for this service. The slight decrease in the number may be caused by victims not reporting or seeking medical treatment at local hospitals. Collin County's local Children's Advocacy Center performed 86 sexual assault forensic exams in 2005, 52 exams in 2006 and 44 exams in 2007. The statistics for 2008 are not complete, but Collin County as a whole has experienced an increase in sexual assault cases. There are normal fluctuations expected at periods of time, but should sexual assault cases continue to increase, the need for services will also rise. Some causes for the fluctuation may include the increase in number of persons in poverty and worsening economic conditions (Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Collin County, 2008). Sexual assaults crimes affect individuals of all ages. In Collin County, 40% of acute sexual assault victims served are under the age of 18.

**TABLE 1**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Event</b>			
Number of reported rapes (National: UCR)	<b>94,347</b>	<b>92,757</b>	<b>90,427</b>
Number of reported rapes (State: TX Dept Public Safety)	<b>8,505</b>	<b>8,406</b>	<b>8,430</b>
Number of reported rapes (Local: Collin County UCR)	<b>159</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>140</b>
Clients seen at the Rape Crisis Center	<b>882</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>868</b>
Acute Sexual Assaults (data from Rape Crisis Center)	<b>136</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>161</b>
Arrests for Forcible Rapes (data from DPS)	<b>2,262</b>	<b>2,257</b>	<b>2,103</b>

Collin County approaches the issue of sexual violence through collaboration with other agencies. In 2003, Collin County established the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner's program (SANE) and the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). These programs have improved the response to acute sexual assault offenses. The communication and cooperation among various entities such as local law enforcement, hospitals and non-profit agencies have enhanced the effort to become unified. Collin County works diligently to ensure that victims of sexual violence are receiving appropriate care, advocacy, follow-up and support. Collin County's multidisciplinary efforts aid law enforcement and the criminal justice system so they are able to carry out their investigation and prosecution effectively. Response teams and crisis services available to victims in Collin County, various agencies offer awareness and prevention education to combat sexual violence. For many years, such efforts have extended to local middle and high schools to raise awareness of sexual harassment and sexual assault among local youth. Awareness and prevention education is also available to Collin County residents of all ages through community groups, outreach events and professional training.

The acknowledgment that sexual violence is a large issue in this county remains low. There is a strong denial that sexual assault and other violent crimes can be problematic in the wealthiest county in Texas. There is a lack of public knowledge on sexual assaults, which results in poor community support for agencies serving sexual assault victims, low reporting of these crimes, and increased challenges for successful prosecution and conviction of perpetrators. Collin County needs increased support from municipal and county governments, as well as business entities and school districts to fund and market advocacy, crisis response and education/prevention efforts. Due to the current decline in the economy, Collin County needs to develop local resources to manage sexual violence issues. The SANE and SART programs need training and funding to be sustainable. These two programs have greatly improved response to sexual assault in Collin County, but the danger of losing these programs is high due to loss of funding and leadership instability.

Technical assistance in maintaining and renewing broad-based community collaborations as well as funding support is needed. Training and education for professionals (law enforcement, emergency medical, school counselors and teachers) who may encounter victims of sexual violence is greatly needed. More prevention-based programs are needed to reduce sexual harassment, assault and abuse. Collin County agencies have offered these services in the past and will continue to provide such training, but can not do so without additional funding and community support. The community needs to be aware that the training is crucial to provide public awareness. Services are free of charge to victims of sexual violence, but due to the size of Collin County and the lack of public transportation; many victims find it difficult to access services. There is a need for advocacy, crisis intervention, legal aid and counseling services to be made available throughout the county rather than being concentrated in one area. Local agencies are beginning to explore ways to offer services in multiple locations, but funding to cover operational, equipment and personnel costs will be necessary.

The need for multilingual staff to manage clients who do not speak English is in demand. Language and cultural barriers further reduce the rate of reporting sexual assaults. Finding and utilizing personnel who speak key minority languages and are familiar with cultural differences will be necessary to increasing the response to sexual assault for this

population. In order to track data and reporting of sexual violence, technical assistance is important so funding is necessary to maintain and update systems. Legal assistance for victims is often a need not only for prosecution of the offender but to deal with related matters such as divorce, child custody, protective orders and housing. Affordable and accessible legal aid for these victims is an unmet need throughout the area.

### **Underserved Victims**

Many crime victims are underserved. They often do not receive services and support that fully meet their physical, emotional, psychological, and financial needs in the aftermath of crime. According to the Office for Victims of Crime (2008), meeting the needs of victims is far more difficult when access to their rights and resources are complicated due to factors such as geographical isolation, language barriers, cultural intolerance, lack of availability and accessibility. Four similar areas as identified by the State of Texas (1-4) in which victims remain underserved in Collin County are identified as: victims without access to services, victims with immigration barriers, victims with disabilities, victims of financial crimes. Additional gaps in services in Collin County were identified as (5-9): insufficient number of victim advocates, legal services, prevention, crisis housing and funding.

- 1) Victims who live in rural or smaller communities are challenged with geographical accessibility to services. Residents living outside Plano in Collin County are faced with the choice of either long travels and/or limited public transportation. If victims are unable to travel the long distance to police stations, crime victim advocates, courthouses, hospitals, and legal aid offices either as a result of poor public transportation in Collin County or insufficient personal transportation means, they remain underserved.

Factors resulting from poverty such as, lack of transportation, lack of telephones, and limited resources also create challenges in accessing services. Limited knowledge regarding the criminal justice system, crime victims' rights, local services and shelters contributes to the victims' remaining underserved due to lack of resource accessibility. Improvements in public transportation would greatly increase victims' access to services.

- 2) Immigrant victims remain underserved as a result of no available services within Collin County. Immigrant victims often fear deportation and the criminal justice system (due to lack of awareness and understanding of rights), as well as, experiencing challenges with language barriers and poverty. Currently, Collin County residents are forced to seek immigrant services outside the county. Necessary services include education of rights, legal advocacy specific to immigration, documentation assistance, U Visa assistance, safe housing, and job training. Services need to be made available in their native language and with cultural sensitivity and understanding.
- 3) Victims with disabilities face a variety of challenges in accessing services. Victims service provides need to be educated and trained on the specific needs of victims with disabilities. Collin County has limited services for victims with impairments of sight, hearing, and speaking, as well as cognitive, developmental and physical disabilities. These impairments may affect accessing services, understanding services, communicating needs, and following through of services

offered. They may furthermore, amplify the emotional and psychological effects of trauma. Implementation of victim-related services, locations, and staff serving populations with disabilities is needed in Collin County.

- 4) Victims of financial crimes, such as identity theft and fraud, suffer trauma similarly to those of violent crimes. Victims of financial crimes are often confronted with the loss of lifetime or savings funds, destruction of credit rating, and loss of freedom. Victims of financial crimes, like those of violent crimes often lack knowledge of available services, have limited access to services and resources, suffer emotional and psychological affects, and lack understanding of their rights and the judicial process. Currently Plano offers an educational class on identity theft, however for residents living outside Plano they struggle in accessing this resource due to lack of accessibility.
- 5) Currently, there are two major law enforcement agencies without victim advocates. Victims are served in these agencies by the administrative assistants who have many other job duties; therefore they are unable to devote the necessary time to serve victims in the county.
- 6) Currently Collin County has one legal aid office, which is inadequate for a county of its size. Victims of abuse need legal advocacy and representation regarding divorce and child custody. These are issues that can cause a victim a great deal of stress. Collin County is in dire need of additional legal resources that are accessible and affordable. Like that of abuse victims, victims of identity theft also need legal advice. Many times, these individuals do not have access to a computer in order to file the appropriate paperwork. Furthermore, their finances may have been compromised, thus limiting their opportunity to obtain legal council.
- 7) Programs that promote anti-victimization are needed in Collin County. Programs such as these benefit community members by bringing awareness to the community. This may include presentations on how to detect domestic violence, dating violence, and how to avoid identity theft, and other circumstances of fraud. This would also include primary prevention which attempts to stop the offenses before they become a crime.
- 8) Collin County has one homeless shelter and one shelter for domestic violence victims, which does not meet the current need for crisis housing. There are times when both shelters are full and the victim is left with two options: remain in the hostile environment or relocate to another county. There needs to be collaboration between hotels and agencies that work with victims. This may be a temporary arrangement until the victim can access another resource. It gives the victim a safe place to stay where they can empower themselves, begin the healing process and determine the next step in becoming free from abuse.
- 9) Funding is necessary to add services to the law enforcement agencies. With the latest cut in Federal and State funding adding additional employees has been eliminated. Local programs are working diligently to maintain current programs. There are non-profit groups who depend on funding in order to continue

providing services. They depend on donations along with government funding and when either is lacking, their ability to continue programs is at risk.

Collin County's response to the underserved population thus far has been through collaboration. Collin County has a variety of collaborative efforts for the purposes of networking, identification of gaps in services, training, and implementation of services.

**Collin County Social Services Association (CCSSA)**, provides an opportunity for agencies to meet monthly for the purposes of cross-training, sharing of information, and Identifying gaps in services and training. Once gaps are identified CCSSA brings in outside speakers to educate and train members.

**The Collin County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)** was formed to enhance services to victims of sexual violence. This group is comprised of law enforcement, hospital staff, sexual assault nurse examiners, District Attorneys and victim advocates. SART meets to discuss cases and to review information pertaining to the case. This group has worked diligently to maintain a cohesive bond so victims who need the help will have streamlined services available during a crisis.

**The Collin County Crime Victims Advisory Council (CVAC)** was formed to assist those who work in victim services by providing a place to network and discuss any issues related to serving the people of the Collin County. This group helps in drawing attention to National Crime Victims Rights Week by hosting a variety of activities during this week and honoring a Victim Advocate of the Year.

**The Collin County Council on Family Violence (CCCFV)** is a prominent group that was spearheaded by the Junior League of Plano. This group consists of all agencies such as, law enforcement, local hospitals, District Attorneys offices, Collin College, social service agency and legal aid services. CCCFV strives to end domestic violence in Collin County. The CCCFV promotes community awareness and education by hosting a yearly conference. This conference brings in knowledgeable speakers from all over the United States and Canada for the purposes of providing awareness and training on family violence. Furthermore, the council is responsible for publishing a brochure printing that guides the victim through the judicial process and resources they may need in crisis. CCCFV has made great efforts to bring awareness to the community through education and public speaking to other groups to promote ending domestic violence.

**The Children First Collin County Coalition (CFCCC)** focuses on enhancing the well being of the children in Collin County. They continue to address many issues through the publication of Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Collin County, which illustrates Collin County's success, as well as area of needed enhancement. The coalition consists of five team groups. These groups include professionals from education, health, safety, family strengthening and economic security. Each subgroup is beginning to identify goals that will help the group at-large help children in the community. A seminar series of educational presentations also helps inform the community as to the problems within the county that affect the children. This group has many members and continues to grow by conducting seminars.

These groups foster and maintain a variety of networks throughout the county. In addition to the above collaborations, strengthening of relationships between Collin County agencies and the District Attorney's Office has greatly benefited victims of crime. Collin County's local DA's Office has been instrumental in providing assistance to obtain orders of protection for victims. Victims can be very fearful and hesitant to proceed with orders for fear of retaliation. It is the goal of both the attorneys and the victim advocates to work together with victims of crime because the judicial process can be confusing and overwhelming. With the guidance of crime victim professionals, victims feel secure in the prosecution process.

Several cities within Collin County have employed Crime Victim Advocate/Liaisons for the purposes of providing advocacy including, but not limited to, awareness of rights, information on judicial and legal processes, court accompaniment, as well as emergency financial, legal, and housing assistance. Victim Advocates assist officers with referrals and protective orders. Advocates conduct follow up contact with victims to make sure they have the resources they need in their time of crisis. At times, advocates are called out to crime scenes to aid in guiding the victims to needed resources. They assist victims in meeting with investigators and the District Attorney's office with regard to investigations, protective orders, and pre-trial meetings. Advocates in the District Attorney's Office, social services agencies, the local Rape Crisis Center, Children Advocacy Center and Police Department(s) work together to help victims through their trauma. Crime victims' advocates in all agencies speak at various functions to bring more awareness to what happens when someone is affected by a crime. Advocates speak at local churches, schools, civil associations, volunteer groups, and college classes to educate the community on legal processes and resources available.

Printed brochures and publications are another resource that can be given to victims with lists of local resources. Printed materials provide victims with information to use either at the time of the offense or at their convenience. They can also utilize printed materials by giving them to friends and family members in their time of need. There is a printed directory, Collin County Cares, which is a directory of services for Collin and surrounding counties. It is an ideal resource to have when a victim is in need of a variety of referrals. This book is used by numerous professionals and is updated periodically to add new resources or delete the services that are no longer available. Tours of agencies in the local area offer advocates a way to see where they are sending victims. These tours are informative and a way to familiarize themselves with services and resources. Advocates also attend trainings on legislative issues and new services in their area.

There is no universal solution to meeting the needs of the underserved victims of crime. However, Collin County can improve its response to the underserved population of crime victims by implementing victim services throughout smaller and rural communities, as well as services that meet the needs of non-English speaking clients, immigrant victims, victims with disabilities, victims of financial crimes, by improving transportation, and increasing legal and anti-victimization services.