

HUNT COUNTY

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY PLAN

**Victim Services & Juvenile Justice –
Updated 2010**

Law Enforcement – Updated 2012

HUNT COUNTY

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY PLAN

FY2010

Chairperson:

**Kacy Flanagan, Executive Director
Hunt County Rape Crisis Center
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Greenville, TX 75404**

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HUNT COUNTY

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY PLAN

INTRODUCTION:

The Community Planning process for Hunt has been an opportunity for an ongoing network of social service providers, youth advocates, and members within the criminal justice field to formalize our community's needs in a written plan. The planning process has offered us new opportunities for collaborative efforts something that becomes more and more important as funding and social services become scarcer.

The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office requested that each community identify justice related needs so gaps in services, existing programs, new initiatives, and funding opportunities may be addressed and resources increased. The 2009 Hunt County Criminal Justice Community Plan is a direct response to that request, resulting in a comprehensive plan that is strategically sound and relevant to our community's needs.

COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

A critical element in this plan was to identify problems specific to rural Hunt County. This was accomplished by drawing upon various sectors of the community, allowing Hunt County residents to define our own problems and develop our own solutions.

Members of the Hunt County Interagency Network, a group that has been established for over 15 years, formed the core community planning group, extending and encouraging participation to collateral agencies and the public at large. We will continue working towards the goal of community inclusiveness and increasing diversity among participants.

The group chair and committee chairs are listed below. A list of all participants and the agencies/organizations they represent can be found in the appendix.

Community Plan Chairperson: Kacy Flanagan, Crisis Center of Northeast Texas

Focus Group Chairpersons:

Law Enforcement and Justice System: Ashley Wilemon, Crisis Center of Northeast Texas

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: Allen Brown, Hunt Count Juvenile Probation

Victim Services: Roger Robertson, Women in Need

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A community plan is only as good as the group that develops it. We sincerely thank each member of the planning group for their time and commitment and for caring enough to improve our community. Your individual expertise and opinions combined with your willingness to work together is what made this endeavor work.

We also extend our appreciation to Kelly Schmidt, Criminal Justice Specialist with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG). Kelly not only offered support and assistance, she was diligent in her efforts to convey NCTCOG's expectations for the Community Plan.

DEFINING HUNT COUNTY

Hunt County Texas was created in 1846 by the first legislature in the new state of Texas. Hunt County is located 48 miles northeast of Dallas and covers 841 square miles of land and 42 square miles of water. Greenville is the largest city in Hunt County and also serves as the county seat. The 2000 Census reports 77,960 persons living in Hunt County.

Hunt County is home to ten (10) school districts, five (5) private school systems, and there are six (6) institutes of higher education to serve residents. Greenville employers fill 16, 954 jobs, drawing from a labor force of 556,674 within a 40-mile radius. There is a growing population of non-English speaking residents for which social services are difficult to access.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

The Hunt County Juvenile Justice Focus Group has identified several areas of concern while dealing with juveniles, their families, and community in the Juvenile Justice system. These include but are not limited to the following problem identification statements.

The following is a brief overview of the juvenile justice system in Hunt County. Hunt County has one juvenile court, Hunt County Court at Law # 1, that hears all juvenile cases excluding truancy and Class C Misdemeanors and those cases are heard by any of the County's Justice of the Peace Courts or the various City Municipal Courts. All juvenile cases are prosecuted by the Hunt County Attorney's Office.

The starting point for all juvenile referrals heard by the juvenile court is Hunt County Juvenile Probation Services (HCJPS). HCJPS consists of a Juvenile Probation Department and a 37 bed pre-adjudication juvenile detention center that serves as a regional juvenile detention center. HCJPS receives referrals in the form of offense reports from all law enforcement agencies in Hunt County, and receives some referrals directly from families and schools. HCJPS provides intake, assessment, resource coordination, and detention services for all referrals. The involvement of HCJPS with juveniles and their families begins at the point of initial referral, which in most cases is the point of arrest, and continues until the juvenile is discharged from the system such as when the juvenile completes a term of probation or upon completion of required programming.

The Justice of the Peace and Municipal Courts hear all the Class C and truancy referrals. Class C offenses originate by ticket or referral from police agencies throughout Hunt County and truancy cases are generally referred by each of the ten independent school districts in Hunt County.

Other programs or agencies in the county, such as Child Protective Services, MHMR, Providence, STARS, YMCA, Hope Center, Independent School Districts, Boys and Girls Club, Drug Free Greenville, Women in Need, Glen Oaks Hospital, etc. provide support, intervention, counseling, and educational services.

Overall, Hunt County does not have adequate local resources to provide juvenile justice related services for juveniles and their families.

Hunt County Juvenile Justice Plan Data Requirements
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1. Juvenile Population in Hunt County by Ethnicity:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Juvenile Population (Age 10-17)	9,025	9,056	9062
African American	1,176	1,204	1226
Anglo	6,360	6,255	6205
Hispanic	1,374	1,478	1508
Other	115	119	123

2. Juvenile Population in Hunt County by Age:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Age 10	1,254	1,214	1223
Age 11	1,271	1,287	1292
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Age 13	1,293	1,275	1292
Age 14	1,261	1,321	1281
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3. Summary of Referral Activity to Hunt County Juvenile Probation:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Total Referrals	400	340	344
# of Juveniles Referred	292	256	267
# Adjudicated to Probation	71	57	55
# Sent to TYC	6	17	12
# Sent to Residential Placement	8	8	18
# Cases Under Supervision	67	104	137
# of Violent Felonies	41	63	34
Referral Rate per 1000 Juveniles	44	38	38

4. Referrals to Hunt County Juvenile Probation by Ethnicity:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Total Referrals	400	340	344
African American	135	115	130
Anglo	197	182	178
Hispanic	63	38	35
Other	5	5	1

6. Referrals to Hunt County Juvenile Probation with known gang affiliation:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Total # of Referrals	400	340	344
# of Referrals w/known Gang Affiliation	26	21	29

- **Number of known gangs in Hunt County: 19.**
- **List of known gangs in Hunt County:** Blood Gangs (includes Dark Town Bloods, VNS Varrío Northside, Young Money Click or You Blood Cash Money, CB Always Crunk Bitches, Darktown Realist Gangsters, Darktown Dynasty, MHH-Most Hated Hogs, Easthill Hen 109 MOB, SUR 13, and YBG Young Blood Gang). Crip Gangs (includes: C-Walkers 357 Set, Texas Hardhitters, Headbangers, and Awesome 8). Sex Gang: Meet to Meet (M2M). White Supremacist Gangs (includes: Aryan Circle, Aryan Brotherhood, NEO Nazis, and Skin Heads).

7. Juvenile Justice System:

- A) **Number of Probation Officers in Hunt County: 6.**
- B) **Number and Description of Juvenile Courts in Hunt County:**
 1. Juvenile Court of the entire county that hears all juvenile cases.
 2. Class C Misdemeanors and Truancy cases are handled by any of the 5 Justice of the Peace Courts or by a city municipal judge.
- C) **Number of pending court cases in Hunt County Juvenile Court:**
As of 08/28/08, total number of pending cases: 44.
- D) **Description of specialized Caseloads handled by the Juvenile Probation Department:**
 1. One Intensive Supervision Probation Officer carries a caseload of High Risk Offenders.

2. One Court Officer carries a caseload of all Pending and Active Court Referrals.
3. One Progressive Sanctions Level 1, 2, and 3 Probation Officer handles all Entry Level Referrals and Coordinates Community and Department Provided Services for all Level 1-2-3 Offenders and their families.
4. One gang officer provides intelligence, and assists in providing education intervention regarding all gang related referrals.

E) Hunt County operates a 37 bed pre-adjudicated Juvenile Detention Center. This is operated as a regional facility and provides detention beds for the counties of Kaufman, Ellis, Rockwall, Lamar, Hopkins, Delta, Franklin, and Rains.

Kalei Beelitz, Hunt County Juvenile Probation Services; Alan Brown, Hunt County Juvenile Probation Services; Marcus Elder, Boys and Girls Club of Northeast Texas; Natalie Ausbie-Reynolds, Department of Family and Protective Services; Tracy Rodriguez, Greenville ISD.

Juvenile Justice narrative responding to questions 1-5:

I. Family Instability:

- (1) Family instability within our county is steadily increasing. The functioning of the family is effected dramatically by the emotional turmoil both within and outside of the family unit. Divorce and/or unemployment can be traumatic for children in the family, causing them to become withdrawn or act out their stress and anxiety. Likewise, family violence and child abuse in the home can result in increased risk for juvenile delinquency for the children in the family. While foster care is a response to a problem, it creates additional stress and turmoil for the children, leaving them more susceptible to acting out. While it is obvious in how instability affects the family, it also impacts the surrounding community. The behaviors that lead to family instability contribute to an additional set of negative behaviors such as drug abuse, lower academic functioning, runaways, delinquent behavior, and gang involvement.

(2) The table below represents contributors to family instability:

YEAR	Family Violence reports*	Protective Orders filed**	Child Abuse confirmed reports***	Child Sexual Abuse reports	Divorce	Children in Foster Care	Number unemployed	Single Parent Households
COUNTY 2003	2,500	200	250	150	1,000	300	5,000	700
STATE 2003	160,000	2,000	150,000	60,000	80,000	25,000	580,000	200,000
COUNTY 2004	3,000	250	300	175	1,500	350	6,000	800
STATE 2004	175,000	3,000	170,000	75,000	84,000	27,000	690,000	300,000
COUNTY 2005	3,200	300	400	200	1,000	400	7,000	900
STATE 2005	187,811	4,000	206,000	100,000	81,000	32,000	737,000	400,000

Sources:

As indicated in the data above, the family instability within our county is steadily increasing. Our county exceeds the state average in family violence reports and unemployment rates. While divorce numbers decreased from 2004 to 2005, the unemployment category increased by 40% from 2003 to 2005.

- (4) The county has one family violence shelter located in the county seat. The shelter provides temporary housing to 12 families at any one time. Counseling, support groups, information and referral, and safety planning are available.

The county's Children's Advocacy Center provides forensic assessments and counseling services to children suspected to have been abused and their non-offending family members.

The county has one Workforce Center located in the county seat, which provides job searches, resume development, job seeking education and training, and information on child care.

Local churches will often provide marriage counseling to their congregations.

Referrals for services or reports to police or Child Protective Services are made when abuse, neglect, or other related family behaviors are found during juvenile probation department intake investigation or on-going supervision of juveniles and their families.

- (5) There are limited marriage education programs available in the county for families to access that could potentially decrease the likelihood for family violence in the home. The pregnancy resource center located in the county seat does offer parenting classes.

There are limited services available for children abused by their families, which contributes to the acting out behavior of adolescents. Increased family stability will improve the adolescent functioning in the family and the community.

There is currently only one agency providing after-school programs and they have a waiting list.

The County Attorney's office does not have a dedicated staff person to process protective orders.

There are no outpatient programs that might prevent the escalation of abusive behavior in the home.

The county does not have a Family Preservation Program to provide intensive counseling to high risk families.

Specialized training to law enforcement in dealing with juvenile offenders, and training in responding to family violence calls/reports is not available on the local level. Officers must travel over 50 miles to the regional training center, which is neither cost effective nor convenient.

There are very few foster homes available in our county. There are few residential placement beds available in Hunt County or in the region; and there are zero post-adjudication or residential treatment beds available in Hunt County. Children are frequently placed in homes or facilities outside the county, in some cases they may be placed hundreds of miles away.

There is only limited to zero availability of sex offender treatment and evaluation of juvenile sex offenders.

II. Substance Abuse

- (1) Substance abuse continues to be a major concern for Hunt County residents. Substance abuse impacts all aspects of person and family life and contributes to some of our most devastating social problems. Substance abuse plays a huge role in juvenile criminal activity. All cases that Hunt County Juvenile Probation Services receives are for screened for substance abuse. The actual number of referrals to Hunt County Juvenile Probation Services is not an alarming number, but approximately 80% of the total referrals receive by HCJPS has or has been touched by a substance abuse related issue.

Referrals to Hunt County Probation for Drug Related Offenses:

Calendar Year	2005	2006	2007
Felony	11	4	6
Misdemeanor	17	13	17

- **Average age of 1st time users: 13**
- **77% Male**
- **23% Female**
- **___% Referred by Juvenile Justice Agency**

State/local data discussion

Outpatient substance abuse counseling is only available on an extremely limited basis in Hunt County, and inpatient is simply not available in Hunt County.

Substance abuse often plays a key role in family violence, juvenile criminal activity, child neglect and abuse, truancy, and unemployment. We need substance abuse programs that extend beyond the scope of addressing just chemical dependency. Other program issues should include, but not be limited to; job training, life skills, anger management, and after-school programs that target fostering resiliency skills for juveniles.

An effective management information system infrastructure does not currently exist in Hunt County. The purpose of an MIS would include: Data collection, Policy recommendations, service matrix formalization, ongoing identification in gaps in services/needs assessment, and a collaborative case management system.

Hunt County currently has established an Interagency Network Group that was formed 17 years ago. However, this coalition does not address juveniles with multiple needs; it is designed to be an information sharing group. Hunt County also has an active Community Resource Coordination Group, the purpose of this group is to staff children that are served by multiple agencies, but require additional services, including out of home placement. There is a lack of activities that bring services, agencies, resources, and people together with the common objective of assisting the client obtain their treatment goals. Many of the juveniles entering the criminal justice system often have multiple problems, including but not limited to; substance abuse; housing, truancy, victims of violence, or poor life coping skills. These same juveniles often times have limited access to resources and lack health insurance. Although many may be eligible for assistance, their families do not have the knowledge to begin the application process. Case management would address multiple needs and ensure that juveniles in the system are receiving all available services to propel them towards independence.

Hunt County is part of an ongoing managed care pilot project – NorthSTAR. The project blends state, federal, and Medicaid funding for substance abuse and mental health treatment for indigent clients. Although the goal of NorthSTAR was to increase access and increase the number of service providers from which a client can choose, that has not happened in Hunt County. In fact, the number of service providers has decreased. There currently no practicing Psychiatrists in Hunt County that are NorthSTAR providers and there is only one private counselor that accepts NorthSTAR. The burden of clients continues to fall on the local MHMR and one other agency that offers a limited number of treatment sessions. Additional funding is necessary to effectively address substance abuse and related issues for juveniles.

III. Education (Problems in School—Violence, Truancy.etc.)

- (1) The visible trend is that there are an increasing number of offenses occurring on school campuses. Aggressive behavior aimed at school personnel is steadily increasing. Student on student violence is increasing. Destruction and theft of property is on the rise. Truancy continues to be a problem. Gang presence in some of the schools is becoming more of an issue. Drug related issues at or around school is becoming more prevalent.

- (2)
- (3)
- (4) The community is becoming more concerned about the behaviors being displayed and tolerated in some of our schools. With assistance from the juvenile court judge, the largest school district in the county is making a visible effort to rid their school system of the most serious and persistent misbehaving juveniles and/or they are attempting to make it more difficult and less rewarding for the to act out. This same school district is also making an effort with the assistance of their school resource officers and HCJPS to educate their staff about gang related issues in order to better be able to recognize and prohibit gang related behavior from occurring on campus.
- (5) More intervention and prevention options available to the Justice of the Peace Courts, Municipal Courts, and Juvenile Court.

More intervention and prevention options available for the schools.

More staff and programming available to schools and courts to combat truancy

More education for school personnel regarding recognition and prevention of drug, gang, or violent behavior.

IV. Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System

- (1) The gateway to the juvenile justice system in Hunt County comes primarily through the Justice of the Peace Courts, Municipal Courts, and Juvenile Courts by way of referral from all the county police agencies and school districts.
- (2) In 2007 the total juvenile age population in Hunt County was 9062 with the following break-down: 14% black, 68% white, 17% Hispanic, and 1% other. The referral rate to HCJPS for 2007 is broken down as follows: 38% black, 52% white, 10% Hispanic, and 0 % other. The previous 3 years data was almost identical percentages. There is no central data base available to give the broken down percentages for referrals to Justice of the Peace Courts and Municipal Courts.
- (3) The referral percentages have remained close to the same for the past 3 years for referrals made through HCJPS. The data was not available from the Justice of the Peace Courts and Municipal Courts.
- (4) The various law enforcement agencies are required to keep demographic data regarding the agency's activity. HCJPS closely monitors its referrals and diligently works to make appropriate referrals for all juveniles and their families.
- (5) In all areas more training is necessary, along with more available staff, and programming.

V. Gangs

- (1) There are currently 19 known gangs that operate within the borders of Hunt County. Many of these 19 have not had members involved in the juvenile system but the trend seems to be moving toward more overall gang involvement by juveniles referred to courts at all levels. An increasing number of violent crimes are being seen as possible gang related.
- (2) Statistical information for the past three years for referrals to HCJPS report only juveniles with known gang affiliation. Suspected affiliation is a much larger number but is not being tracked. The other referral locations don't have a central data base to track gang affiliation.
- (3) The nature of the gang phenomenon is that is visible within the community but difficult to track. Most of the offenses committed by suspected or known gang members are not listed as gang related. The problems with gang activity at schools are many but may go unnoticed because of the sophisticated and ever changing nature of the gang culture. In both school and community, gang culture promotes and rewards a life of disobedience. Hunt County is in somewhat of an early stage of gang development.
- (4) The juvenile judge of Hunt County has been very proactive in getting information out to the schools and community regarding the how to recognize and put a stop to in school gang activity. The largest school district has been conducting staff development training with assistance of their Resource Officers and HCJPS. HCJPS has recently been providing gang training for community groups.
- (5) The county needs the following to address the issue of gang activity: more education for law enforcement, service providers, and the community; more staff, space, and equipment (including technology related equipment) to assist law enforcement, probation, schools, prosecution, and the courts to monitor and hold gang member accountable for their choices. Funding is needed to provide educational and intervention related programming for gang members and their families.

VI. and VII. Barriers to Services and Juvenile Justice System Vulnerabilities

These two sections are viewed as similar issues. Barriers to services and system vulnerabilities tend to be connected. The jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system may expand into all areas within a community or region. The best interests of each juvenile and the community must always be considered. Each juvenile in the system is viewed as a part of a family unit. The decisions made regarding a child in the juvenile justice system may impact that child and his/her family for the remainder of their lives.

The juvenile justice system by nature is vulnerable because of the lack of funding and resources for all jurisdictions, especially the smaller jurisdictions like Hunt County. In Hunt County there is a constant struggle to locate appropriate services for juvenile referrals and their families. There is an across the board shortage of everything including but not limited to: mental health and substance abuse treatment both inpatient and outpatient; programming and education for juveniles, their families, and the community; mental health crisis screening and intervention both inpatient and outpatient; information sharing and technology to assist each agency in areas of communication, tracking, coordination, investigation, monitoring, etc.; medical and mental health services

for confined juveniles; equipment for agencies to provide services such as transportation and community programming, support, and protection; residential placement at all levels from emergency shelter services to post-adjudication placement; training for all levels of service providers; manpower at all levels; prosecution and disposition options; pre-adjudication detention operation funding; etc. The tendency in juvenile justice is that historically it is an area funded last and is often not much more than an afterthought in the budgeting and funding process.

The current state of juvenile justice is now more confusing and possibly precarious than it has been in years. The Texas Youth Commission crisis has led to the Sunset commission recommending that the Texas Youth Commission and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission should be dissolved and combined to create one large Texas Juvenile Justice Agency. This situation may cause the juvenile justice system to be in a state of uncertainty for several years. Funding and operational methodology may take significant time to determine. Local jurisdictions such as Hunt County may be placed in the position of dealing with funding loss and unfunded mandates. All this is a realistic fear and concern for all jurisdictions across the state.

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VICTIMS OF CRIME FOCUS GROUP SECTION

Victims of Crime Introduction:

Victim Advocates

Hunt County lacks an adequate number of victim advocates and advocacy programs of provide optimal services to victims of crime. Steady growth in the population increased and crime rates have continually depleted their limited resources. In existing increased advocates and advocacy programs, provided by social services agencies as well as through the justice system (law enforcement, adult probation, DA's office) are trying to keep up, and communities and social services are struggling to maintain core services and programs. These victim programs and agencies need encouragement and financial support to provide consistent and adequate victim services to all victims of crime. Victim advocates and advocate programs actually save the county money by helping break the cycle of victimization and by helping victims access scarce resources in a timely and efficient manner

Interaction with law enforcement agencies in most scenarios is the first opportunity for victims of crime to receive any type of victim services, and for most, this is the only opportunity. Therefore there is a need for a sufficient number of trained victims advocates who are designed to deliver only victim services.

Law mandates that every law enforcement agency have a victim services liaison; however, in most agencies, this individual is an active duty officer or staff member with multiple job responsibilities, and the role of victim services provider is in addition to other job duties. There is a strong need for these positions to be filled full time and 100% devoted to providing victim services to all victims of crime throughout the judicial system.

Roger Robertson, Chair, Women in Need
Sherry Sheffield, PhD, LCSW, Texas A&M-Commerce
Tracy Rodriguez, LMSW, Greenville ISD
Kacy Flanagan, Executive Director, Crisis Center of Northeast Texas
Whitney Hunter, Victim Services, Crisis Center of Northeast Texas
Sue Samples, Victim Services, Crisis Center of Northeast Texas

Victims of Crime narrative responding to questions 1-5:

The below are provided for each focus group and were taken from federal and state priorities/guidelines. Each community plan will address each of these problems at the minimum. You will answer questions 1-5 for the first problem, answer 1-5 for the second problem, and so on. If the planning group elects to address additional problems, please ensure that additional problems are addressed using the same format and place that info at the end of the 4 problems below.

Take each of the community **problems** below and answer questions 1-5. (See sample for further guidance.)

- I. Child Abuse
- II. Domestic Violence
- III. Sexual Assault

I. Child Abuse

- 1) In 2002, there were 189 confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect in Hunt County. Out of these cases 84 children were placed into the custody of Child Protective Services (CPS). Currently, Hunt County CPS has 4 caseworkers to manage these cases and guide families to an eventual resolution, be that reunification with the family, relative placement, termination of parental rights, or remaining in foster care for possible adoption. Also in 2002, Hunt County CPS had 3 investigators to research the 761 reports of child abuse or neglect. CPS caseworkers and investigators are overwhelmed with new and on-going cases, making it virtually impossible to manage their cases without some assistance.

In October 2002, a child advocacy program began. Twenty-nine children have been placed in CPS custody since that time. The court has appointed a child advocate volunteer to represent these children as “Guardian ad Litem.” Child advocate volunteers assist in monitoring visitations, transportation, and gathering information for the court.

Child advocate volunteer also can conduct home assessments for potential placement. This assists in expediting placement in a potentially permanent home or by establishing these children in relative or kinship placement, removing them from the foster care system. However, the burgeoning caseloads and immediate needs of these children for exceed the number of volunteers available at this time. Therefore, there is still a tremendous need for resources to address the unique needs of these children and their families. The children of Hunt County deserve to have a safe home to thrive and grow. These children need the chance to grow into productive adults and not repeat the abuse cycle that plagued their own childhood. By involving the community as volunteer child advocate, it will increase the awareness of the abuse and neglect in Hunt County.

- 2).

Confirmed Victims of Child Abuse

2005	2006	2007
1025	984	1044

Children in Foster Care

2005	2006
109	191

Children in Family Violence Shelters

2005	2006
99	144

Children in Single Parent Families

no data for 2005, 2006, 2007

1990	2000
2807	4247

Children living in Poverty

2003	2004
4326	4481

Births to Teenage Mothers

2002	2003	2004
189	201	154

Child Deaths

2003	2004	2005
9	16	13

Source: www.dfps.state.tx.us, www.kidscount.org, www.txdps.state.tx.us

- 3). The above data show that child abuse is a serious problem for Hunt County. Over the past 5 years there has been a significant increase in the number of confirmed child abuse cases, children in foster care, and the number of child deaths. Of those deaths in 2004, 10 were considered to be violent deaths. In comparison with state data (need to add state data).....
- 4). Currently Hunt County is responding by providing a multidisciplinary team approach to the investigation and prosecution child abuse cases. In 2004 the county implemented a Children's Advocacy Center and protocols were put in place to determine procedures for handling each case. Crisis response to child abuse victims is currently provided by the Crisis Center of Northeast Texas and a coordinated investigation by Child Protective Services and Law enforcement. Abuse victims and their non-offending caregivers are then referred to a variety of services provided by the Crisis Center such as long-term counseling, medical exams, assistance with Crime Victim Compensation and protective orders. If it is determined by the Multidisciplinary Team foster care is needed, a coordinated response by the above mentioned agencies and the victim is then referred to Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for case management. When a criminal case is tried, court accompaniment is provided by the Crisis Center for the victim and their non-offending caregiver. In each step of the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases, a coordinated effort is made to not continue to traumatize the child victim.
- 5). The most pressing need in our community is an additional Forensic Interviewer and additional recording equipment to conduct Forensic Interviews. This would also include training for additional interviewers as well as additional space for two

to three interview and Team observation rooms. Additional training for cyber crimes against children and on-going training for Team members regarding current and new investigation techniques and technology are needed as well. Additional Child Protective Services investigators as well as a county-wide Crimes Against Children law enforcement task force are desperately needed.

II. Domestic Violence

1) Using each problem above, describe how it impacts the victim as well as the community. (Define and describe the elements of the problem well enough so that someone unfamiliar will understand.)

Domestic Violence does not occur in a vacuum. The effects on victims of abuse and children touch every aspect of their lives as well as those around them. Violence directed against victims by their intimate partners (current or former spouses, boyfriends, dating partners) is an epidemic of proportions that has devastating physical, emotional, financial and social effects on women, children, families and our communities. Domestic Violence is not only a crime it is a violation of human rights.

Domestic Violence and Family Violence are used interchangeably. As defined in the Texas Family Code (Section 71.004), Family Violence:

- (1) An act by a member of a family or household against another member of the family or household that is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, assault or sexual assault or that is a threat the reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, assault or sexual assault, but does not include defensive measures to protect oneself;
- (2) Abuse by a member of a family or household toward a child of the family or household; or
- (3) Dating violence as defined by Section 71.0021.

"Domestic violence involves a continuum of behaviors ranging from degrading remarks to cruel jokes, economic exploitation, punches and kicks, false imprisonment, sexual abuse, suffocating actions, maiming assaults, and homicide. Unchecked, domestic violence usually increases in frequency and severity. Many victims suffer all forms of abuse. Verbal and emotional abuse may be subtler than physical harm, but this does not mean that it is less destructive to victims. Many have said that the emotional scars take much longer to heal than the broken bones." National Expert on Family Violence, Barbara Hart.

The problem of Domestic Violence requires the resources of the entire community to address the needs of victims and their children. It's not just a family affair. Intervention requires activities provided by the local shelter, as well as services provided by crisis responders, police and fire department officials, ambulance drivers, medical services, judicial (including private attorneys), other social service programs, local churches, juvenile probation and children's protective services.

2.) Using each problem above and specific data types, provide supporting data for the three most recent years available for your county as well as the state to show

comparison (table/graph format, real numbers not percentages, verifiable and cite the source).

Uniform Crime Report Family Violence Data Hunt County 2005-2007			
	2007	2006	2005
Hunt County			
CO SO	234	241	289
Celeste	0	0	1
Commerce PD	108	93	77
Greenville PD	452	420	557
Tx A&M Commerce	11	17	14
Caddo Mills PD	0	0	2
West Tawakoni PD	20	26	19
Quinlan PD	5	8	1
Hawk Cove PD	0	0	5
Total Incidents Hunt County	830	805	965
State of Texas Incidents	189,401	186,983	187,811

Data Source Texas Department of Public Safety Uniform Crime Reports 2005, 2006 & 2007

3.) Using each problem above, provide a narrative discussion of the data (discuss the trends in the data, compare/contrast with state data, etc.).

Domestic Violence

Family Violence trends in Hunt County have closely followed the overall State of Texas trends. The major difference in reviewing the comparison was a significant change reported in Greenville in the time period reported for 2005 compared to 2006. During that reporting period there was a 25% decrease. It is believed that this may reflect the filing of more serious charges than Family Violence. Comparative data for 2006 compared to 2007 indicates an increase of incidents of family violence reported at an increase of 7.6% in Greenville vs. the state increase of 1.3% for the same time period. Overall Hunt County reported a 3.1% increase vs. Texas at 1.3%.

Only about half of domestic violence incidents are reported to police. The most common reasons for not reporting domestic violence to police are that victims view the incident as a personal or private matter, they fear retaliation from their abuser, and they do not believe police will do anything.

* Lawrence A. Greenfield et al. (1998) Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends and Girlfriends. Bureau of Justice Statistics Fact book. NCJ #167337

Services reported By Women in Need (local shelter offering residential and non residential services) reflected residents 312 and non residents 1,134 for 2008. This reflects an increase from 2007.

4. Describe how your community is currently responding to the problem.

While Women In Need is the recognized provider of services for domestic violence in Hunt County. Women In Need is not the only provider of services and the following description will utilize the public health model that describes *primary*, *secondary* and *tertiary* prevention efforts or interventions to describe how Hunt County is responding to domestic violence. To date, with limited funding/under funding for domestic violence services, primary prevention activities aimed at preventing the *initial* perpetration or victimization are limited to traditional community education activities, public service announcements, media awareness etc. In addition to these activities Women In Need has implemented Expect Respect a prevention program to help high school students explore relationships, gender roles, coercion, and control, help young men and women to have more responsible and healthy relationships in high school, college and beyond into adulthood. In addition to high schools this program has been presented to Hunt County Juvenile Probation offenders for the last three summers.

Unfortunately secondary and tertiary interventions are necessary because primary prevention is not widespread or powerful enough to stop the violence *before* it occurs.

Secondary prevention or intervention stops further harm and violence. These activities happen immediately after the violent event occurs and include steps that decrease the likelihood that the event will recur. Women In Need provides secondary prevention activities such as: 24-hour-a-day shelter; a crisis call hotline available 24 hours a day; emergency medical care; intervention services(direct services for a resident, nonresident, or program participant child or adult victim of family violence) including but not limited to: safety planning; understanding and support; advocacy; case management; information and education; and resource assistance: emergency transportation; legal assistance in the civil and criminal justice systems inclusive but not limited to ; identifying individual legal needs; explaining legal rights and options; providing support and accompaniment in the pursuit of those options; assisting in safety planning; providing advocacy: information about educational arrangements for children; information about training for and seeking employment; and a referral system to existing community services. This form of prevention also includes short-term help for the victim to find new living quarters, sources of income, ways of caring for the children as the family copes with domestic violence, and more.

Other services are provided by crisis responders, local city police, Hunt County Sheriffs Dept. and fire department officials, other social service agencies, judicial system (County attorney for Protective Orders and prosecution of batterers), Children's Protective Services. Each one of these groups brings their areas of expertise and services to help victims of domestic violence.

Tertiary prevention or intervention addresses the long-term effects of the violence. Women In Need includes rehabilitation efforts, such as working with survivors in support groups and assistance in obtaining resources to negate the impact of victimization.

Tertiary prevention addresses the long-term effects of violence, including but not limited to deep costs to individuals and society on all levels – health, productivity, economic, safety, well-being, and more.

(5) What are the current needs in your community in order to respond to the problem? (Describe needs of all the responders, i.e., law enforcement, social service providers, courts: More staff? More training? More equipment? More programs? More space?)

Victims of Domestic Violence are more likely to seek help in establishing a violence free lifestyle when they are in a crisis state. This usually happens when the victim has been attacked (emotionally, verbally or physically) or their children have either been the subject of threats or actual violence and the adult victims normal responses are not working. Positive knowledgeable quick responses by all providers of service (law enforcement, county attorney’s office and victims service providers) are needed to assist the victim in their effort to get help.

The needs are for additional staff are fairly consistent for all service providers with an adequate number of victim advocates needed, additional law enforcement personnel assigned strictly to victims services and an additional assistant county attorney for protective orders and prosecution of abusers.. Staff assigned to victims services should all be trained in domestic violence services, have appropriate equipment, office space to work in and knowledgeable of victim’s behavior. Availability of culturally competent staff and bilingual staff is greatly needed for all providers.

Transitional Affordable Housing for victims still remains a needed resource as waiting list for public housing is still 18 plus months. Legal representation for victims involved in divorce proceedings and custody issues are needed.

III. Sexual Assault

1. Sexual assault is a crime that effects the victim in the most personal and physical way. Victims are brutalized physically, but also have long-term emotional and physical scars. Sexual assault is a crime that is one that is the most unreported. Individuals in the community are unwilling to begin conversations regarding this issue. It is in fact a crime that no person wants to discuss or believe happens in the community.

2. The data

	2005	2006	2007
Reported Sexual Assaults (Texas)	8500	8400	8400
Reported Sexual Assaults (Hunt County)	19	20	38
<i>Services provided (adult victims)</i>	<i>*579</i>	<i>1075</i>	<i>1098</i>
<i>Total Adult Victims</i>	<i>243</i>	<i>414</i>	<i>618</i>
<i>Adults Molested as Children</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>290</i>	<i>432</i>

3. The above data show that reporting the crime of sexual assault has increased over the past three years. However, the number of victims seeking crisis services has dramatically increased. It is evident that reported sexual assaults are disproportionately less than the number of victims seeking services in Hunt County.
4. Currently victims of sexual assault receive crisis services from the Crisis Center of Northeast Texas. This agency provides medical, law enforcement and court accompaniment, crisis intervention, a 24 hour hotline, assistance with Crime Victims Compensation and Sexual Assault Protective Orders as well as long term counseling. A county wide Sexual Assault Response Team has been established to ensure a team approach to the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases. Cases are staffed on a monthly basis and include professionals from law enforcement, prosecution, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and Crisis Center personnel.
5. Additional training for law enforcement, medical personnel, prosecution, and victim advocates is needed immediately. Training SART members will provide victims with better and coordinated investigations and prosecution of cases. Additional victim advocates are needed to assist the growing number of victims seeking services. Equipment is needed to conduct quality sexual assault medical exams; specifically a Colposcope or Secure Digital Forensic Imaging System. Additional SANEs are needed to cover acute medical exams.

IV. Underserved Victims of Crime

Currently there are no agencies that officially provide services to underserved victims of crime such as survivors of homicide, victims of assault, robbery, gang violence, hate crimes, and victims of intoxicated drivers. The Hunt County Sheriff's Department and the Hunt County District Attorney's Office both employ Crime Victim Liaisons. Other law enforcement agencies do not have the funds or the man power to provide this service. The Crisis Center of Northeast Texas does not have special training or specific programs for these victims, the agency does provide victim services such as assistance with Crime Victims' Compensation and accompaniment when needed.

FY12 HUNT COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY PLAN LAW ENFORCEMENT SECTION

LAW ENFORCEMENT/CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Communications (Radio Interoperability)

Hunt County has two major municipalities that have complete 800 MHz stand alone radio systems. Smaller municipalities have contracted with the Sheriff's Office communications for dispatch and radio service. The Sheriff's Office and Greenville Police Department have different radio systems. This creates a problem for radio interoperability between neighboring law enforcement jurisdictions. Hunt County law enforcement agencies need additional equipment, qualified personnel to effectively operate new systems and migrate existing radio systems to interoperable capability between all jurisdictions within Hunt County and jurisdictions outside the county for regional response capabilities.

If these needs are met, it will decrease communication barriers and response times when an incident involves multiple agencies. Radio interoperability will increase interagency coordination, officer safety, and existing capabilities while also increasing effectiveness. Radio interoperability will also make Law Enforcement in Hunt County more prepared to deal county-wide threats such as terror attacks and natural disasters.

Communication (Interagency Verbal or Data Communications) Criminal Intelligence Database & Network of Users

Criminals are not limited to jurisdictional boundaries and typically perform multiple offenses. They tend to operate within a "comfort zone" and utilize the same techniques. Hunt County has **INSERT** different law enforcement agencies; many are smaller with very limited investigation / criminal analysis capabilities. Even the larger agencies are not linked to share information. There are officer safety issues involved too. Information may be developed by an agency and that agency may issue an "officer safety" bulletin through dispatch channels, however, that bulletin will never reach the street officer or investigators of other agencies not directly linked to the original broadcast. Officers in other agencies will receive the broadcast from dispatchers, who are often very busy. When the dispatchers are busy, the information will not be communicated immediately. This causes an Officer Safety issue if an Officer makes contact with a suspect and is not aware of the problem. This also makes Law Enforcement in Hunt County less effective. Many jurisdictions do not have mobile data terminals (MDT) capabilities within the county. This creates a secondary problem of data sharing and data retrieval from the state, county, and local jurisdictions intra-agency records. The increase and upgrading of equipment for high speed mobile internet and data base connection would assist in alleviating many of the current interagency communication problems. Additionally, the implementation of a county-wide data system that has connection ability from mobile computers would assist in verbal / data communications by creating a web-based talk group, multi-jurisdictional crime reporting, and suspect information sharing. A central database and agency/member access through the Internet will permit instant information transfer. The use of this type of system and increased equipment capabilities would

assist local law enforcement agencies in communications by increasing the amount of information sharing and cooperation between agencies. Also, the system would notify patrol officers immediately of crimes that are occurring that cross jurisdictions.

Burglary (Theft in General)

Hunt County law enforcement agencies have experienced an increase in burglaries/thefts in general. Commercial and Residential growth county-wide has overwhelmed law enforcement agencies in the area of patrol capabilities and increased criminal investigations. This has become a serious problem for many law enforcement agencies. In addition, burglaries/thefts in residential and commercial construction sites have been one of the highest categories of burglary/theft identified by local law enforcement. The solutions to communications and criminal intelligence database would assist in

alleviating many of the problems identified with burglaries. Developing a special unit comprised of members from Hunt County law enforcement agencies to handle the overload of reports filed would help reduce the amount of unsolved cases that would otherwise remain unsolved due to shortage of personnel. This unit would also enhance the communications between the law enforcement agencies in Hunt County.

Language Barrier Problems (Several Languages)

Hunt County Law Enforcement Agencies are tasked with the interpretation of various languages represented with the increased diversity of Hunt County citizens. The patrol officers, dispatchers, investigators, school resource officers and other law enforcement agents all have a complicated job with interpreting the language of complainants, suspects, business representatives, and others within a community. The population and diversity of Hunt County citizens has steadily increased. Spanish is predominantly the language that causes barriers that law enforcement officers must overcome to properly execute their duties. However, there are many other international languages that cause language barriers in Hunt County. An organized county-wide language interpretation task force could assist in investigation of crimes with language barriers. This task force would consist of specialized employees or law enforcement officers of multiple agencies with bilingual capabilities in different languages. Secondly, training and continued education of law enforcement first responders in Spanish and language etiquette would improve communication and effectiveness. Additionally, law enforcement use of private or regional organizations that provide language interpretation, such as "the language line" utilized by dispatch, could be adapted to assist law enforcement with language barriers in immediate patrol contacts. Also, sign language education and knowledge has also been identified as a need throughout the county. These language barrier solutions would assist in alleviating many of the barriers that language creates in criminal investigations and would provide a higher level of patrol officer safety.

Grant Identification System or Streamline Grant Process

Hunt County law enforcement agencies currently research and implement many existing state and federal grant opportunities. There are hundreds of grant opportunities that Hunt County jurisdictions are unaware. Others have short time-lines or are not budgeted. Many grants that are identified within the middle of the existing fiscal budget year require matching funds. These local matching funds have not been budgeted and need

additional funding, research, and approval from city councils or county commissioners. The short time-lines that some grants require makes the application process difficult and impractical. This causes a problem for local jurisdictions to implement new grant funded programs and continue existing grant funded projects. Hunt County law enforcement agencies have the need for early identification of grant funded opportunities and a central repository for those grants. The education of grant funding organizations can assist in early notification of grant opportunities. Therefore, grant applicants will have the availability of budgeting for matching funds during the agencies budget process, and the addition of a repository to assist law enforcement agencies in sharing in the identification process.

Homeland Security / Domestic Preparedness

Hunt County law enforcement agencies are in need of various specialized personal protective and emergency response equipment. Hunt County law enforcement also needs response training, intelligence gathering equipment and dedicated personnel to assist in preparing for, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering from domestic and foreign acts of terrorism, potential threats of terrorism, and target hazard identification. Hunt County has experienced a growth in business and industrial growth. This increase has brought businesses and industries that are considered a targets for natural and man-made disasters. Many of these companies store and manufacture hazardous materials, military, government, and sensitive materials. In addition, many of the targets exist because they simply provide a service or a resource to the community in and outside of our county. These identified targets are what makes Hunt County a potential vulnerable target area. The various law enforcement agencies in Hunt County can assist each other by creating multi-jurisdictional response teams to combat terrorism. These response teams would have the opportunity to share intelligence information, emergency response equipment, and coordination of mitigation efforts. The mitigation efforts by law enforcement agencies may include coordination with businesses, industries and targets within the community. The education and training of these organizations can assist in hardening these targets by increased security measures and individual employee attention. Additionally, each individual agency would need the capability of immediate access to personal protective equipment in the event of a biological, chemical or other hazardous incident. The problem of domestic preparedness is not easily solved or prevented. The use of mitigation efforts, information sharing, target hardening and intelligence gathering can assist in preventing a terroristic event.

Child Safety Seat Inspections Programs / Checkpoints / Education

Hunt County law enforcement agencies are in need of child passenger safety training and educational programs. Despite advances in highway and vehicle design, and an increased restraint use, the number of children who die/injured each year in crashes is unacceptable and in many cases preventable. Over ¾ old and under killed in collisions were unrestrained. National studies reflect approximately 80% of child safety restraint systems used were used incorrectly. Many local child safety seat checkpoints report a misuse of over 90%. Although most parent/care givers attempt to do the right thing, correct installation can sometimes be difficult. Vehicles and seat belts are designed primarily for adult passengers. As a result, compatibility problems often occur between child restraint systems and safely belts. Child restraint systems are 71% effective in reducing deaths

for infants in passenger cars and 54% effective in reducing toddler deaths. The various agencies in Hunt County can have a large impact on the misuse and lower the death rate by implementing educational programs and providing checkpoints for correct installation of child safety restraint systems. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issues child safety restraints to those who either cannot afford an appropriate seats for their child or are transporting a child in an unsafe manner. Some of the programs include injury prevention for child passengers, technical training in child seat use and installation, as well as provide education information to the public. Many other programs can be found on the NHTSA website www.nhtsa.dot.gov. These programs offer valuable tools and information for law enforcement officers and the general public. However, the use of outdated or incorrect educational material (such as air bag safety warnings) can have deadly results. Due to the large amount of information on passenger safety from vehicle manufactures and child safety seat manufactures it is often difficult for local agencies to ensure they are disseminating updated and accurate information. As a part of the Presidential Initiative for Increasing Seat belt Use Nationwide, President Clinton asked all Americans to always wear seat belts as a first line of defense against traffic injuries and fatalities and ALWAYS keep children ages 12 and under buckled in the backseat. As a result of the initiative the Secretary of Transportation prepared a plan to design a National Strategy which emphasizes personal responsibility to buckle up and to properly secure all children while riding in motor vehicles. While no safety program is 100% effective in all circumstances, many deaths and injuries can be prevented with proper use of seat belts and child restraint systems. Through public-private partnerships, strong legislation, high visibility enforcement and effective public education, Hunt County can reduce injuries to children involved in traffic accidents. The training of emergency responders in correct use and installation of child safety restraint systems would enable Hunt County Law Enforcement to conduct child seat safety checkups as well as education events.

Centralized Crime Lab (Extensive Capabilities)

The local law enforcement agencies in Hunt County have experienced an increase in crimes of property and persons. Smaller agencies lack any capability of laboratory analysis. The smaller agencies must rely on the state forensic laboratory for identification and analysis, and they do not have the financial means for private laboratory analysis. Additionally, the larger agencies use either the state forensic lab, which sometimes causes an extended time frame before results are known, or private forensic laboratories, which can be very expensive. The expensive private firm solution and untimely state laboratory solution have caused several problems including: loss of evidence, lost chain of custody, evidence integrity, time sensitivity, lab tech court appearances and additional evidentiary concerns. There is a need in all law enforcement agencies within Hunt County for a fully capable forensic laboratory. A centralized criminalistic/forensic laboratory within Hunt County composed of civilian criminal lab technicians and specialized crime scene evidence team would be beneficial in many ways to Hunt County Law Enforcement, as well as create jobs for people who work at the laboratory. The laboratory will need the capabilities of analyzing everything from DNA to chemical identification and trace evidence. Therefore, there is a need for specialized scientific equipment, personnel, facilities, and transportation. This concept needs the input of all county agencies for success and court integrity. The addition of a centralized criminal forensic laboratory will assist law enforcement agencies with timely crime scene evidence detection as well as uniform procedures for the collection, preservation and identification of evidence. Uniform procedures will make training of

new officers easier, raise the rates of conviction and help dispel challenges to the integrity of the chain of custody of evidence in court.

Mental Health / MHMR Response = Emergency Mental Commitment/Detentions

Emergency mental health incidents have continued to rise throughout Hunt County. These crisis incidents require the immediate response, protection and stabilization of the scene by law enforcement in order to prevent imminent danger to the person or to others. Many times the appropriate protective response requires law enforcement to make an immediate emergency mental detention without a warrant. Currently, indigent persons in need of MHMR treatment or evaluation can only be taken to Green Oaks hospital in Dallas, unless they have health insurance. This trip takes at least 2.5 hours out of the schedule of an Officer. The long process has a potential of encouraging no action or delayed action in situations that should be immediately disposed of. Hunt County law enforcement agencies need a local MHMR approved mental health facility that is located in-county and that can accept indigent persons and persons involuntarily detained for emergency mental health reasons.

Residential / Urban Comprehensive Traffic Enforcement

Hunt County's current annual growth rate is 1.1%. However, a neighboring county, Rockwall County, had a growth rate of 7.9%, which was one of the highest in the nation. This growth is part of a trend of huge growth in North Texas. This growth is spreading west and north from Dallas and Hunt County is in the line of this growth. This growth has resulted in increased traffic flow in Hunt County. As with traffic flow on the interstate highways, urban infrastructure is often unable to handle the larger traffic demands. The major neighborhood complaint heard throughout the county is traffic issues such as speeding, red light, and stop sign violations. These problems affect quality of life in the communities, along with financial impact on cities through enforcement efforts and accident investigations. Rising health care and insurance costs are also affected by higher accident rates. A comprehensive enforcement program aimed at violations in urban and residential areas would allow cities to maintain officer availability for call response and still respond to these citizen complaints. This type of program would also increase voluntary compliance by drivers.

Victim Assistance Programs

The county lacks an adequate number of victim advocates and advocacy programs. Hunt County has traditionally lacked the funds to provide victim assistance services. The number of victim's advocates should reflect and grow with the rise in the population. Historically, sexual assault is underreported. Child abuse victims are growing at an exponential rate, the number of reported family violence, robbery and aggravated assault cases to law enforcement continues to rise as well. Moreover, it is essential for the community and all levels of local government, from municipality to state, to understand the issues involved in victimology.

Law Enforcement Criminal Justice System Focus Group

Chair: Bryan G. Barrett- Chief of Police- Caddo Mills Police Department

Focus Group Members:

Caddo Mills Police Sergeant Lynn Booth, Wolfe City Police Chief Jimmy Doolin, Hunt County Sheriff Randy Meeks, and Captain Lana Adams; Celeste Police Chief Roger Mueller, Commerce Police Chief Kerry Crews, University of ATM Commerce Chief Donna Spinato and Assistant Chief Bryan Vaughn, Quinlan ISD Police Chief Joe Venable, Greenville Police Sergeant Steve Waldin and Greenville Assistant Chief Scott Smith.