



COLLIN COUNTY

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLAN

2008



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
MAP.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
VICTIMS OF CRIME.....	8
JUVENILE JUSTICE.....	23
LAW ENFORCEMENT/CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.....	29

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 Plan Committees

Technical Advisory Committee

Jim Malatich

Executive Director
Crossroads Family Services

Niccole 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

Niccole 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

Niccole 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 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

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population	492,276	652,498	770,491	844,515	938,681	1,046,919	1,166,645
Households	184,211	241,931	276,980	311,901	346,593	386,321	431,137
Employment	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>
Collin County	724,900	748,050	3.19%
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.

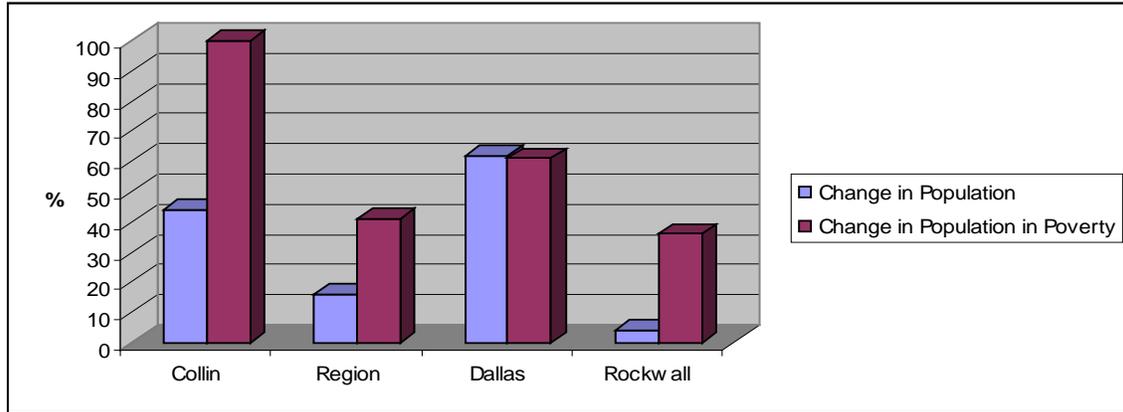
While Plano is nearly built-out, it is still growing but at a slower rate than other cities such as Frisco and McKinney. Frisco is projected to be larger than Plano by 2015. Frisco's child population, especially those under the age of ten, has seen an increase far exceeding the general population's numbers.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

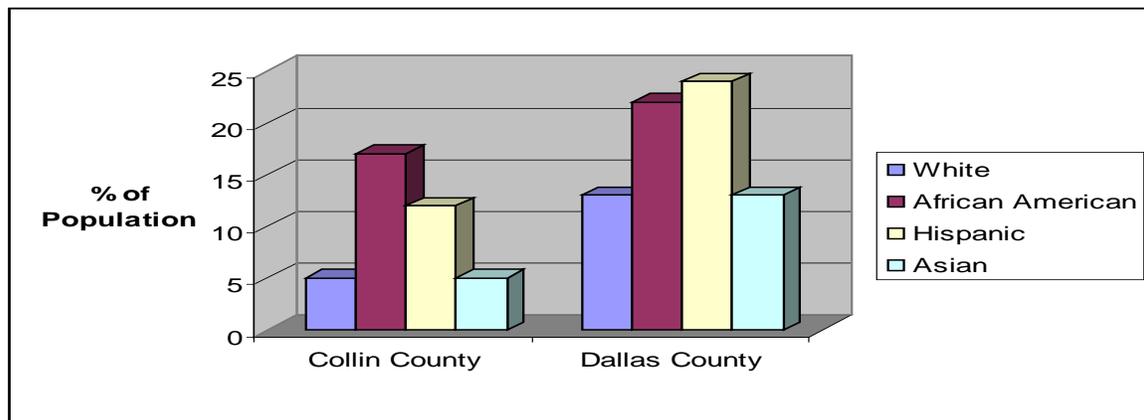


United Way- 2008 Community Needs Assessment

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

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

Bachelor's degree +	47.2%
Poverty rate	6.2%
Median housing value	\$191,000
Average mortgage	\$1,831
Median gross rent	\$906
Housing cost burden	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.

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

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

- *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

Year	2005	2006	2007
Event			
CAC: Forensic Interviews (Fiscal Year)	679	742	738
CAC: Therapy (Fiscal Year)	12,189	18,968	17,361
CAC: Community Resources (Fiscal Year)	7,302	9,856	7,804
Children in Foster Care	574	656	737
SANE Pediatric Cases	57	67	77
TTP Crisis Calls	48	38	58
Children in Family Violence Shelters	130	119	N/D
Children in Single Parent Families	30,113	29,976	N/D
Children Living in Poverty (Rate)	7.2	5.8	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>		
2005	2006	2007
2,589	3,054	3,016

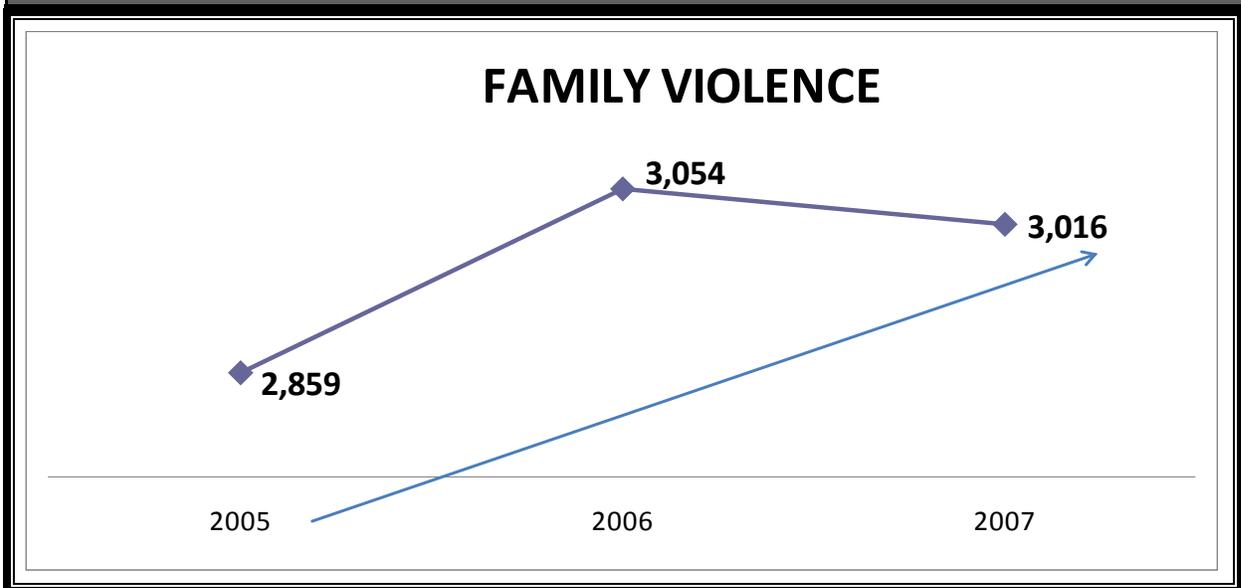


TABLE 2

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

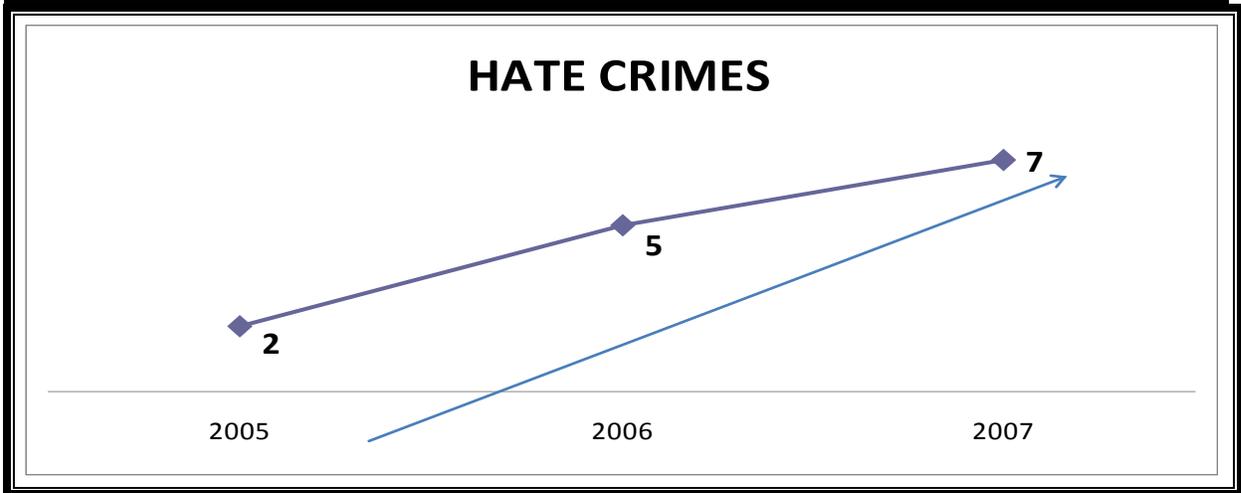


TABLE 3

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

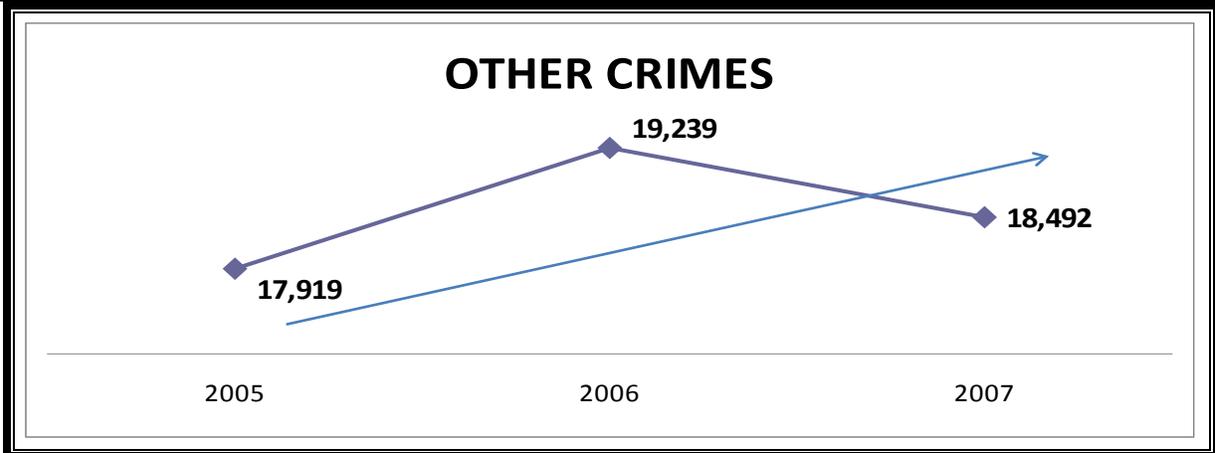
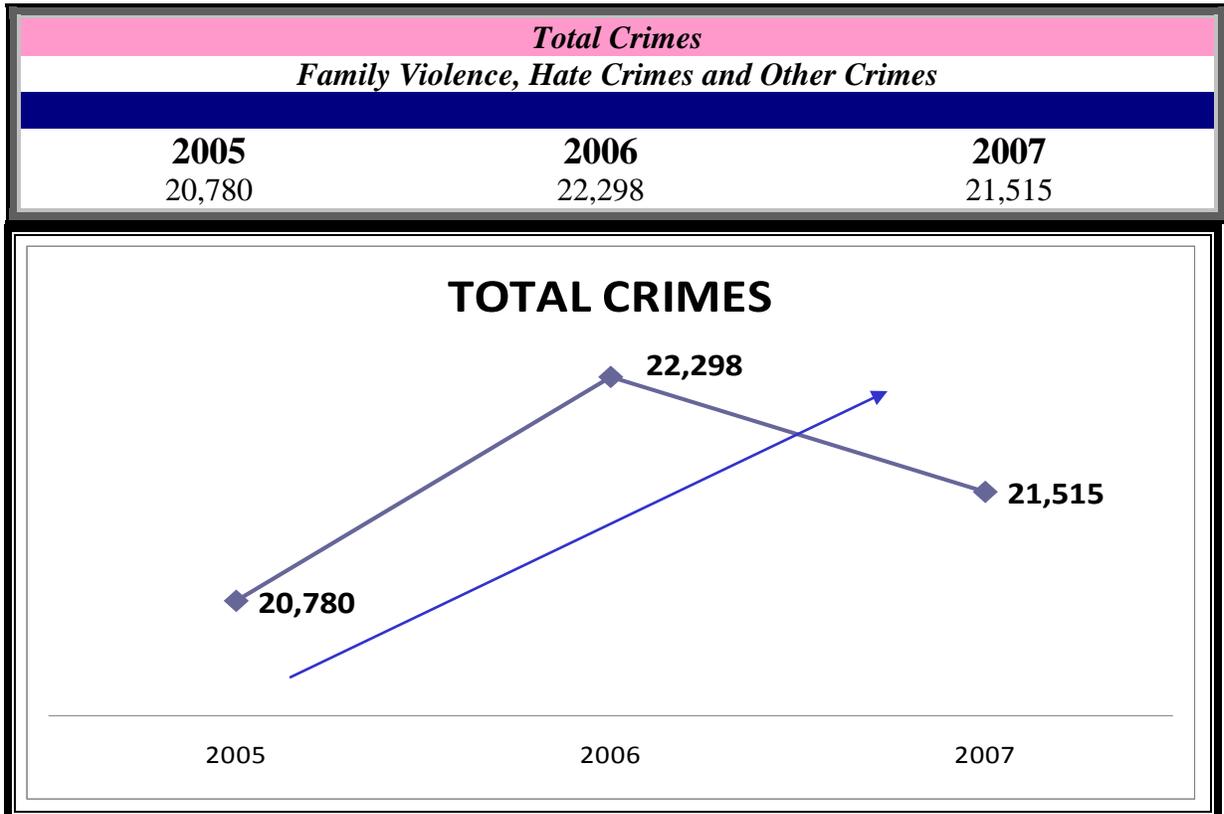


TABLE 4



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

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

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.

Juvenile Justice



Collin County Juvenile Probation Services



Collin County Juvenile Detention

The Mission:

“As the cornerstone of its philosophy, the Collin County Juvenile Probation Department will promote a balanced and restorative justice approach throughout the juvenile justice continuum to include both sanctions and rehabilitation through intervention services. Such efforts will address both offender accountability and provide for a safe and secure community. An individualized assessment in partnership with the offender, the family, and partner agencies will be utilized to achieve these goals. Assessment will directly address the offense, behavior pattern and their contributing factors to the offense. The department will provide the juvenile offender with opportunities to develop into a responsible citizen and lead a productive life in the family environment, whenever possible, while making the necessary restitution to both the victim of their crime and to the community at large. All of these endeavors are to be initiated by department personnel charged to provide quality, innovative, and comprehensive services to the offender and their family in a professional, dignified and caring manner, within a quality work environment.”

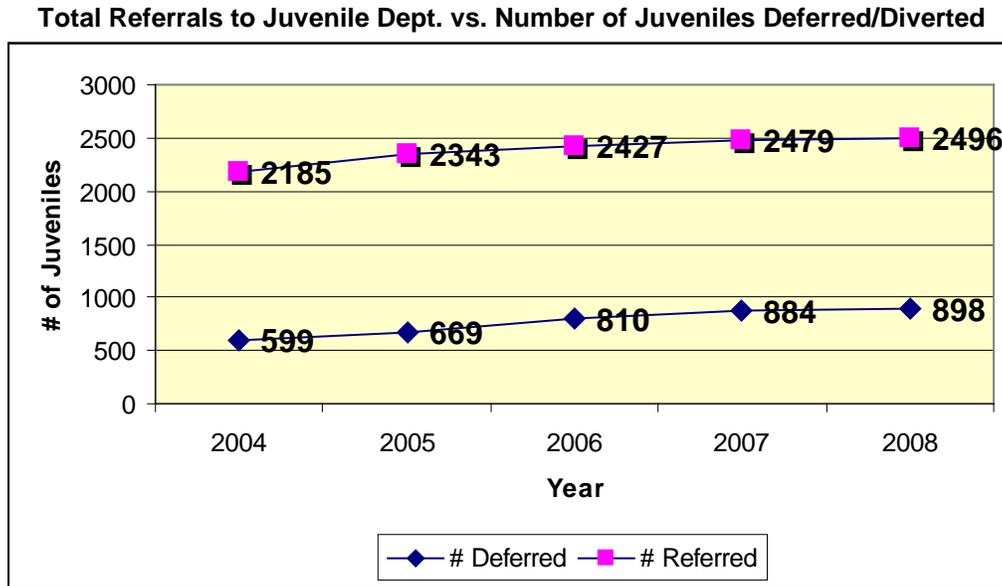
Intent:

The intent of the juvenile justice system is focused upon rehabilitation, as opposed to punishment, in an effort to maximize the chances of the juvenile becoming a well-adjusted and contributing member of our society. Young people should not be expected to have the same values and judgment as adults. This is especially true if they have been the victim of poverty, neglect, and abuse. Swift and effective intervention can often spell the difference between a law-abiding life and a career of crime. Young lives can be salvaged. If we do not deal appropriately with them as juveniles, we will most certainly deal with them later as adults, and the costs will be much greater.

Crime:

Juvenile crime continues to be a major problem within Collin County. Children often test the limits and boundaries set by their parents and other authority figures. Among adolescents, some rebelliousness and experimentation is common. However, a few children consistently participate in problematic behaviors that negatively affect their

family, academic, social, and personal functioning. These children present great concern to parents and the community at large.



Data From: Collin County Juvenile Probation Department

As one can see from the above chart, not only is juvenile crime on a steady increase in Collin County, but also, only 25% -35% of the juveniles are deferred while the rest 65%-75% are involved in the probation process. A breakdown of these crimes reveals that seventy-one percent of all juvenile offenses were misdemeanors, 20 percent were felonies and 9 percent were offenses such as truancy, runaway, liquor law violations or disorderly conduct (Beyond ABC: Growing Up in Collin County & Collin County Criminal Justice Plan).

Gangs:

“Gangs” consist of different types of members including core and leaders, associates and regulars, peripheral or fringe and “wannabees” or recruits. The core can be regarded as the inner clique who determines the basic nature and level of gang activity. They are generally more involved in delinquent or criminal activities than fringe members. Gang attributes include violent behavior, group organization, leadership, territory, recurrent interaction and use of symbolism. Gang membership appears to prolong the extent and seriousness of criminal careers. Many experts suggest a close relationship between youth gang members and organized crime. The disturbing increase in young people committing federal crimes of violence, especially gang-related crimes, necessarily means juveniles must be considered for prosecution.”

Gang members rob, sexually abuse and murder their victims. They use intimidation and violence to demean their prey. Guns, narcotics and acts of terrorism surround the lives Gang violence and tendencies as a whole has dramatically increased over the years.

Currently, there are no recorded numbers within Collin County that could be compared to the State or even the Dallas Metroplex area. However, many of the urban police

departments (Frisco, Plano & McKinney) and Collin County social service agencies are suspecting many crimes and violence to be gang related but not necessarily substantiated. There is no real number to report in Collin County that could be compared to the state or even the Dallas Metropolis area.

Effective strategies have involved focusing on prosecution and conviction. Law enforcement, prosecutors and task forces working together have all played a role in reducing gang violence. Community organizations, information sharing, neighborhood watch programs, graffiti clean-up programs, social service agencies, counseling programs as well as school tutoring and job opportunity programs have helped slow gang activity. It is believed that these efforts have helped decrease violent crimes by 10 to 15 %. (*Criminal Resource Manual – Gang Statistics 103; Suppression and Deterrence 104; Conclusion 149*).

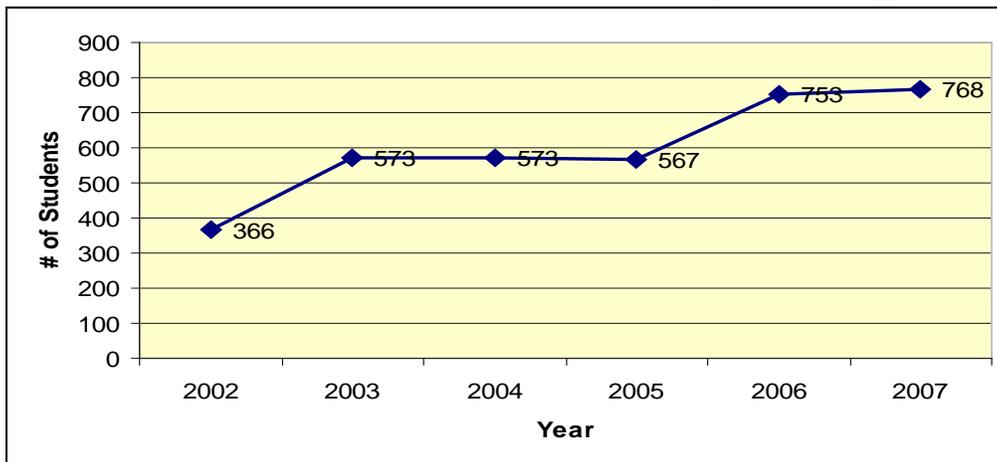
Gangs are more dangerous than when they were formed in the early 1800's. With today's technology, they are better organized and have access to sophisticated weaponry and mobility. They know no ethnic background as they did at one time and they have spread beyond big cities into smaller communities on a national level.

Contributing Factors

Substance Use;

From 2002 through 2007 there was a significant increase in the number of students being disciplined for possession of alcohol, tobacco or controlled substance on school grounds.

Students Disciplined for Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco or Controlled Substances on School Grounds (Collin County)

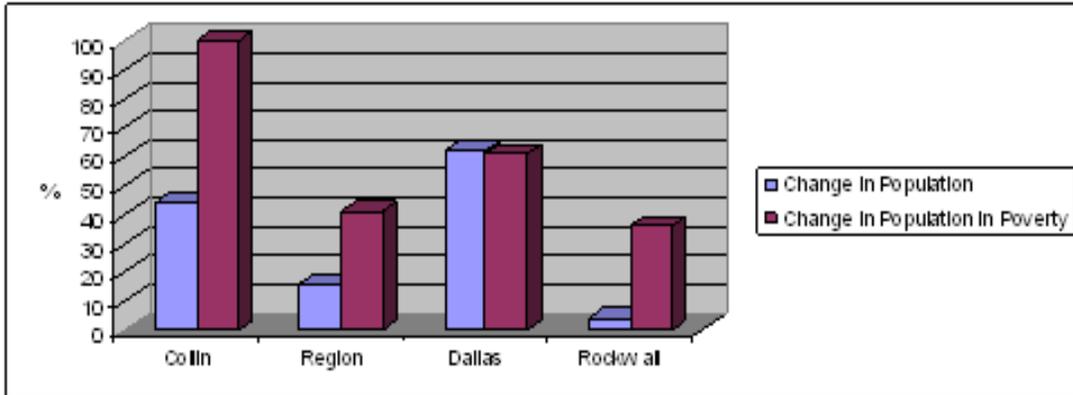


In 2002 the number of students disciplined was 366; in 2007 the number was 768. This represents an 85% increase in offenses in the last 5 years. During the 2006-2007 school year, 768 public school students in Collin County were disciplined for possessing alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances on school grounds. (Texas Education Agency, Disciplinary Data Products Annual District Summary)

Poverty

The Collin County Criminal Justice Plan reports that while Collin County grew by 44% from 2000 to 2007, 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%. Additionally, according to the 2008 United Way Needs Assessment, specific demographic groups in Collin County are showing significant increases in poverty levels which can have a direct impact on the increase in crime.

Change in Population vs. Change of Population in Poverty, 2000-2006 (UW, 2008)



As noted above, factors resulting from poverty, such as lack of transportation, lack of telephones, and limited resources create challenges in accessing services. Limited knowledge regarding the juvenile justice system, probation options and available community services contribute to the families remaining underserved. (Collin County Criminal Justice Plan, 2008- first draft).

Youth-at-Risk and their families who lack a social support system and who live at or near poverty are less likely to seek or receive assistance after entering the criminal justice system than people with more financial resources and interpersonal supports. Collin County is experiencing not only dramatic population growth, but extreme changes in the economic status of families residing in the county due to increased numbers of inhabitants and, higher than usual rates of unemployment and underemployment of those recently downsized or laid off from a job.

Family Instability:

Family instability affects the juvenile crime rate due to the fact that children have no means of support or stability through the parents unless the child participates in some type of after-school program. According to Collin County documents, the number of confirmed child abuse/neglect victims has increased since 2005. Standing at 925 victims in 2005, the number grew to 1203 victims in 2007. The child population has also grown over the same time period from 185,496 to 193,457 (Texas Department of Safety Report). In 2005, 227 protective orders were filed while 2007 shows an increase to 335 according to the Collin County District's Office. Collin County Children's Advocacy

Center reports that child sexual abuse has decreased between 2005 and 2007 from 1098 to 977 victims.

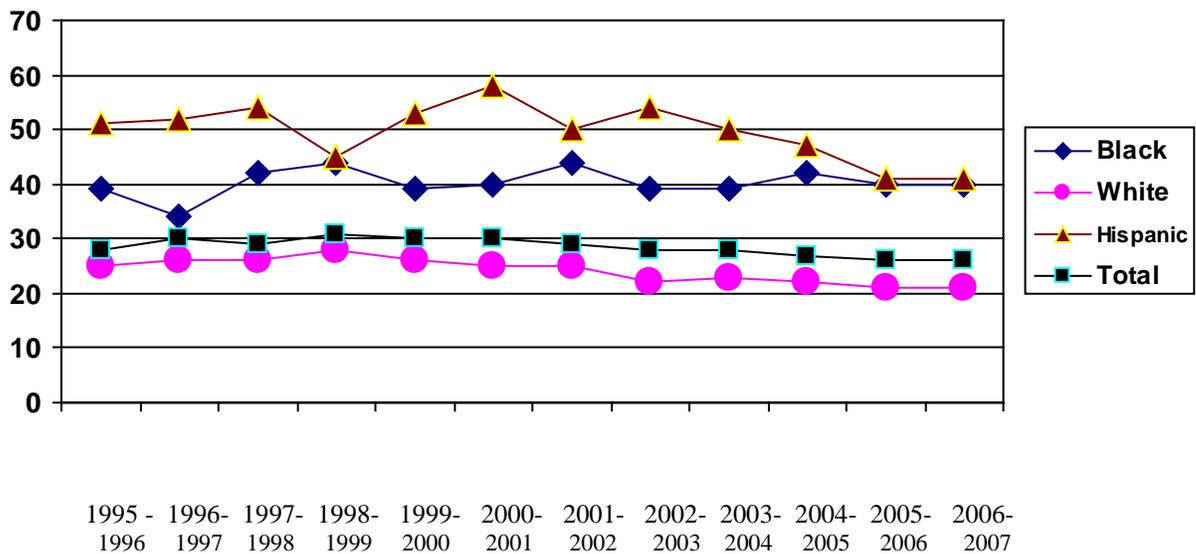
Foster care needs continue to increase year by year. 467 Collin County children needed a foster home. By 2007, the number had increased to 531 as reported by the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Divorces decreased in 2006 from 2652 to 2371. 2007 numbers have not yet been reported according to the state of Texas marriage and divorce index.

Single parent housing is strongly weighted towards females. Twice as many females are single parents. This number has varied over the years but remains fairly consistent averaging roughly 9,000 male single parents and 20,000 female single parents. (Fact Finder Census)

High School Drop Out:

Collin County High School Drop Out Rates



Other areas of educational concern for this population are illustrated by the following statistics:

- From 2004-2007, the rate of new entrances into the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEP) increased by 25%.
- The number of new commitments to the Texas Youth Commission from Collin County increased by 70% from 1998 to 2004.
- The rate of truancy referrals to juvenile probation from has increased by 79% over the last 3 years. In 2006-07, Collin County had the highest rate of truancy referrals to juvenile probation in the region: 5 referrals per 100,000 persons.

(all above drop-out information/data was obtained by the United Way of Greater Dallas).

There is high correlation between dropping out of high school and unlawful behavior. Therefore it is of utmost importance to ensure strong community support mechanisms are in place to reduce the drop out rate and decrease involvement in our local juvenile justice system. As seen in the chart above, the highest incident of drop-out is with the Hispanic population. Therefore, there is a high need for Spanish speaking truancy and other preventative programs.

Summary:

Collin County needs to continue and strengthen its firm commitment to take steps toward the prevention of juvenile crime. The implementation of strong and consistent enforcement of child support obligations and truancy laws are essential. Our schools must be kept free of gangs, drugs, and guns. Domestic violence cases must be taken seriously in order for our children to be raised in a safe and nurturing environment. Child abuse and neglect cases need to remain a high priority.

This comprehensive approach is the only answer. Police, Prosecutors, Courts, and the schools must work together with the family and our community to meet this challenge.



Introduction:

Collin County is located in the Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex just north of Dallas. Collin County encompasses 886 square miles (848 land and 38 water). The County is comprised of both urban and rural areas. Many consider the County “in-transition” from a rural community to an urban center. Several Fortune 500 companies call Collin County home along with numerous sporting arenas, business centers, entertainment venues and other points of destination. Growth in the county has also increased traffic volume and the number of major thoroughfares (U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 380, State Highway 5, State Highway 78, State Highway 289, State Highway 121 (121 Toll), Dallas North Tollway, and the President George Bush Turnpike). The growth in Collin County has caused many new challenges.

Law enforcement in Collin County has changed dramatically over time. In 1998 there were about 670 law enforcement officers (fulltime and non-paid reserves) who provided services to a community of approximately 400,000 residents. In 2008 there were more than 1,200 law enforcement officers who served a population nearing 750,000 residents. This represents an increase of 87% in population of citizens and an 85% increase in the number of law enforcement officers. With this tremendous growth, Collin County’s criminal justice needs have changed tremendously, as have the crimes that are committed in this community. The Collin County Community Plan will provide insight to its readers and to the many challenges faced by all sections of the criminal justice system. These sections include, but are not limited to: the district attorney’s office, law enforcement, community supervision, and victim service providers.

While the Community Plan is comprehensive and addresses many areas effecting the Collin County criminal justice system and law enforcement, it is not inclusive of all issues and needs that may arise in the county, and its local jurisdictions, as growth continues and new challenges, crimes, and the need for services increase.

Law enforcement in Collin County is divided into three categories: state, county and local enforcement. State level enforcement includes the Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Game Wardens, and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. County law enforcement includes the Collin County Sheriff’s Office, all Collin County Constable precincts, Collin County Fire Marshall’s Office, the Office of Homeland Security for Collin County, and investigators assigned to the Collin County District Attorney’s Office. Local law enforcement jurisdictions include the cities and towns of: Allen, Anna, Carrollton, Celina, Dallas, Fairview, Farmersville, Frisco, Garland, Josephine, Lavon, McKinney, Melissa, Murphy, Parker, Plano, Princeton, Prosper, Richardson, Royce City, Sachse, and Wylie. There are also other law enforcement agencies such as Dallas Area Rapid Transit and the Collin County Community College Police Departments that provide services in Collin County.

Collin County has significant issues with crimes as represented in Table 1 (Uniform Crime Report). It is predicted by law enforcement officials that crime will continue to increase as the population and demographics of the county change.

Table 1. Uniform Crime Report							
Year	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Auto Theft
2005	8	159	192	861	3163	12436	1100
2006	8	135	234	963	3475	13455	969
2007	5	140	250	827	3458	12991	821
2008	14	158	221	819	3602	12934	768

Other crimes that are a concern of law enforcement and the criminal justice system include Driving While Intoxicated, illegal narcotics, domestic violence and juvenile crimes.

Law enforcement is only one component of the criminal justice system. Once a crime is committed and the suspect is arrested, the criminal charges are filed with the Collin County District Attorney's Office. Table 2 illustrates the number of misdemeanor and felony filings in Collin County for the last three years. The District Attorney's Office, like most government entities, is challenged by the tremendous growth of the population, crimes, and persons needing services. The District Attorney's Office maintains a conviction rate of approximately 95%.

Table 2. Filings for Misdemeanor & Felonies				
Year	Misdemeanor Cases Filed	Felony Cases Filed	Number of Judges	Average Jail Population
2005	7125	3677	15	734
2006	7574	3899	15	792
2007	8525	3715	15	834
2008	8446	3776	15	882

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Interoperability

Interoperability among law enforcement agencies and other public safety entities has not been fully integrated in Collin County. During major events such as natural or manmade disasters, community events, multijurisdictional crimes and other incidents it is imperative that law enforcement agencies and other public safety providers can communicate. Currently, there are multiple radio systems utilized by government agencies. These systems do not communicate with each other and thus a critical delay of pertinent information can occur. In the near future there will be six (6) independent radio systems operating public safety emergency systems in Collin County. These communications centers include the cities of Wylie, Plano, Allen, McKinney, and Murphy in addition to the Collin County Sheriff's Office. While some of the radio systems have interoperability, not all do. In total there are more than 1,000 mobile radios and 100 console radios that are utilized by public safety officials in Collin County.

Training:

Training of personnel (dispatchers, 9-1-1 call takers, law enforcement personnel, and radio system support staff) may be required with additions of new equipment. Additionally, agencies should train together to address and overcome any interoperability issues that arise before they are needed in an actual emergency. Increased radio operability throughout the county will provide for a more timely, coordinated and safer response to emergency situations. This enhanced response will save money, time and more importantly, the lives of emergency workers, public officials, and citizens.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Staffing of personnel in each radio system will need to be trained on various procedures and types of equipment to improve interoperability among law enforcement agencies and other emergency services providers. This will include dispatch / communications personnel, 9-1-1 call takers and radio system support staff.

Equipment:

Law enforcement agencies and other emergency services in Collin County currently have a few devices / pieces of equipment that assist in successful interoperability issues. This equipment includes ACU 1000s and an Embassy switch. This equipment is aging and can be difficult to operate (requires technical expertise and other support equipment). Furthermore, there are only a few agencies with access to the equipment. In the case of a major incident, there would not be enough resources (equipment or personnel) to overcome interoperability between first responders. This lack of communications will result in duplication of efforts, miscommunications, officer safety issues, public safety concerns and numerous other problems. Additional equipment and training will be needed to overcome interoperability issues in Collin County and to insure that effective communications takes place. The equipment needed may include, but is not limited to, multiple command vehicles strategically placed throughout the community, enhancements to existing radio systems, and enhancements to the equipment used by individual agencies within Collin County.

Problem: School Safety

Littleton, Colorado; Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; Jonesboro, Arkansas; and Stockton, California all brought forth the need for increased security in schools. All these locations represent cities that have fallen victim to suspects that commit violent and heinous crimes in schools. Most incidences of school violence involve juvenile suspects that commit violent crimes against other students. The criminal act, or threat of an act, is enough to invoke fear in the hearts and minds of students, parents and administrators. A school should be a safe haven for children to come and learn in a peaceful environment free from murders, rapes, drugs, extortion, theft, assaults, and criminal mischief.

According to Collin County, there are 22 school districts within its jurisdiction. These districts range from very rural districts with only a few schools to large districts with more than 20 schools. In total there are approximately 150 individual public and private schools in Collin County with an attendance of more than 150,000 students. This population is greatly underserved by the law enforcement community with only a few jurisdictions devoting law enforcement personnel to schools. Additionally, many agencies have reduced the number of School Resource Officers due to budget constraints.

Training:

When law enforcement is active in schools through prevention programs, public awareness campaigns and the enforcement of state laws (family codes, education codes, and penal codes) crime is decreased and an environment conducive to learning is established. Collin County lacks the personnel and resources to adequately staff all public schools, and lacks consistency in prevention programs throughout the various school districts and from city to city. All public schools should be staffed with law enforcement officers that provide awareness, education, prevention and enforcement of Texas laws in an effort to not only establish an environment conducive to learning, but also maintain it. These officers must also be trained and proficient in juvenile procedures, education codes and family law.

Law Enforcement in the areas will also need to take advantage of regional response training for hostage/active shooters. The ability to train officers to respond to these emergencies may make the difference in having a successful outcome or a tragedy.

Officers will also need resources and materials related to the initiation and continuation of awareness, education and prevention programs. When adequate personnel and resources are dedicated to the children in Collin County, the number of criminal offenses that occur in schools, along with the associated fear, will decrease and a safe haven for children to learn will be created and maintained.

Specialized Program / Staff:

School Resource Officers are generally sworn police officers who are specially trained to operate effectively in a campus / school environment. Of the 22 school districts in Collin County, only a few have full-time dedicated police officers / police departments dedicated to them. Many of the schools in unincorporated areas of Collin County fall under the jurisdiction of the sheriff's office, which only has a few deputies dedicated to

the schools. Each deputy must, therefore, cover multiple schools and the associated responsibilities. Additional police officers are needed in most jurisdictions to adequately protect our schools and students.

Equipment:

Equipment associated with the protection of schools is minimal. Officers will need the equipment/ apparatus associated with being a police officer (ballistic vest, uniforms, radio, and a weapon) along with some specialized equipment. This may include, but is not limited to: computers, presentation projectors, and items associated with special presentations (shattered dreams, DARE, GREAT, and alcohol / tobacco / narcotics prevention). Lastly, the use of digital video systems and other safety / security equipment can be used by law enforcement to help keep our school campuses safe and secure.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Environmental Crimes

Several new types of crimes have come with the tremendous growth in Collin County. Included in these are environmental crimes. The illegal dumping of trash and used construction materials in Collin County is increasing with the construction activity in the area. The cost associated with cleaning illegal dump sites can be overwhelming. Illegal dumpsites contain a variety of materials from simple paper to caustic and explosive chemicals. These chemicals, many known to be hazardous to our health, may leak in the ground, creeks or into the local water supply. Many of the chemicals involved require special clean-up efforts to ensure the safety of the workers and the citizens in the area.

Data relating to the issue of environmental crimes is difficult to gather. Collin County has vast areas of rural (unincorporated land) and large areas of highly populated cities. Additionally, no one jurisdiction is responsible for the investigation of environmental crimes. Furthermore, no two agencies record/report this information in a manner in which conclusive data/statistics can be determined. However, a correlation has been determined to exist in that there is more illegal dumping in areas where there is open land adjacent to rapidly growing cities.

Training:

Due to the nature of environmental crimes and because it is not typical for most law enforcement officers to investigate or handle these crimes, special training is required. The training may focus on, but is not limited to, how to investigate environmental crimes, hazardous waste recognition and related legal issues.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Collin County lacks the personnel, training, and resources to effectively combat the act of illegal dumping. Additional personnel are needed to bring about awareness in the community, to educate the public and to enforce/successfully prosecute existing illegal dumping laws.

Equipment:

Equipment and other resources such as video cameras, night vision, computers, laptops, and chemical suits are needed for the investigation, successful apprehension and prosecution of those individuals who illegally dump trash and other materials. Illegal dumping has other side effects that include a negative image for the local area affected and encourages others to continue dumping in the same area, thus compounding the issue. The enhanced personnel (law enforcement and prosecutors) and resources will assist in stopping those suspects who illegally dump as well as ensure that areas that are already contaminated are properly cleaned. This will provide for a safe environment for both people and animals.

Response to Crime

Problem: Crime / Forensic Laboratory

Property crimes and crimes against persons including violent crimes are increasing in frequency as Collin County continues its rapid population growth. The increase in the frequency of crimes has put a strain on both local law enforcement and other organizations such as the Southwest Institute for Forensics Technology that is utilized to process evidence from major crime scenes. The rise in the number of major crimes has produced a significant backlog of evidence to be processed. This evidence is crucial to both law enforcement and those individuals charged with prosecuting people suspected of committing violent crimes. The backlog, and associated delay, can result in cases that are not solved and suspects that avoid prosecution. Collin County lacks the personnel, training, resources, and equipment to establish a Crime/Forensic Lab. The creation of a Collin County Forensics Lab will assist law enforcement throughout the region in processing evidence expediently and identifying suspects via methods such as automatic fingerprint identification, thus assisting investigators and prosecutors with the apprehension and successful prosecution of the individuals that commit major, and often times violent, crimes in the Collin County region. Initially, a location for such a lab would need to be acquired, along with all necessary equipment that would be needed to efficiently and accurately collect, preserve, and process evidence.

Training:

Personnel assigned to a crime laboratory would need to be specially trained in crime scene, protocols, DNA analysis, fingerprint comparisons, and other areas related to the forensics filed. Police officers, crime scene personnel and prosecutors would also need training in the proper collection and processing of evidence.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Resources to dispose of hazardous materials and to clean up violent crime scenes that contain biohazards would have to be developed and implemented. Specially trained Crime Scene (Forensics) personnel will need to be hired, along with the implementation of a policy and procedure manual for how the lab would operate. The lab would need to be able to analyze DNA, narcotics, firearms, and process evidence for latent prints, discover and analyze trace evidence from crime scenes, and other essential functions necessary in assisting law enforcement. The creation of a Collin County Forensics Lab would assist law enforcement agencies in the processing of evidence crucial to

investigating cases, apprehending criminals and successfully prosecuting criminals, due to the fact that the evidence was collected in a timely manner, processed correctly, and preserved accordingly.

Equipment:

The list of equipment needed to open such a facility is not conducive to listing in this document. Additionally, as technology evolves the types of equipment will change. For the purpose of this document, equipment will need to support a crime laboratory at an accredited level and to be recognized by the courts as a crime laboratory. In lieu of a regional Forensic Lab, many law enforcement agencies will need financial assistance to gain accreditation for their county or municipal crime labs. Additional funding will increase their effectiveness.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Building / Construction Thefts (includes metal theft)

Collin County and many of the cities within the county have been ranked as one of the fastest growing in the nation. This rapid growth rate has created unique problems for the county and cities within the county to overcome, such as a dramatic increase in construction-related thefts and offenses. Additionally, recent negative economic changes have caused an increase in construction thefts and the stealing of certain metals (recyclables) like copper. A single theft of copper from a residence under construction can equate to a loss of thousands of dollars. Additionally, deaths such as the one in Dallas, Texas (2008) can occur when metal thieves attempt to steal electrical components that still have power supplied to them. Occupied businesses also fall prey to metal thefts which include stealing air conditioning systems and copper wire.

Training:

Law enforcement in Collin County needs to take a proactive approach to addressing construction site thefts and the stealing of metals. Training needs to be provided to law enforcement officials, construction superintendents, and others in how to prevent these thefts. Additional training should also be available for officers on proper investigative techniques for construction site and metal thefts.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Future needs of law enforcement in Collin County may include, but is not limited to, those resources available by regional task forces, additional personnel for investigations and prosecutions, and funds to produce training materials / information packets to provide to officers and construction superintendents on preventing thefts.

Equipment:

Equipment and other resources such as video cameras, night vision, computers, and laptops may be needed for the investigation, successful apprehension and prosecution of those individuals who commit construction site and metal thefts. The enhanced personnel (law enforcement and prosecutors) and resources will assist in decreasing the number of offenses in Collin County related to construction site and metal thefts.

Crime Prevention / Reduction

Problem: Traffic / Population Growth

Collin County is located in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex just north of Dallas. Collin County encompasses 886 square miles (848 land and 38 water). The County is comprised of both urban and rural areas. Growth in the county has also increased traffic volume and the number of major thoroughfares (U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 380, State Highway 5, State Highway 78, State Highway 289, State Highway 121 (121 Toll), Dallas North Tollway, and the President George Bush Turnpike).

In 1998, there were approximately 400,000 residents. In 10 years this number has nearly doubled to a population nearing 750,000 residents. This represents an increase of 87% in population of citizens. The increase in population has resulted in an increase in traffic related crimes / accidents. Many crashes and traffic violations can be reduced through proper enforcement and public education. Among the most preventable offense is Driving While Intoxicated (DWI). Law enforcement agencies in Collin County file hundreds of these offenses yearly. According to the Collin County District Attorney's Office, two-thirds of all misdemeanor trials are for the offense of DWI. This puts an undue burden on the Criminal Justice system in Collin County. Another traffic related concern focuses on unsafe commercial vehicles in the county. The county, and entities within it, are able to legally enforce Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations on commercial vehicles, but many lack the resources and equipment to take enforcement action.

Training:

Law enforcement in Collin County must have the most up-to-date training regarding managing growth with a special emphasis on traffic related issues. Training may include, but is not limited to: DOT certification, DWI enforcement, boating safety, accident reconstruction, and growth management.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Future needs of law enforcement in Collin County may include, but is not limited to, those resources available to meet the needs of one of the fastest growing counties in the country. Includes DWI enforcement, traffic management, basic police resources, advanced / specialized police units (SWAT, K9, traffic, criminal investigations), and other areas needed to manage growth and provide a safe environment for the residents and visitors of Collin County. Another program that the Collin County must implement is Mandatory Blood Draws for all DWI suspects. Trained Nurses or Phlebotomists will need to be hired or serve under contracts to provide round-the-clock coverage to implement such a program. This program will increase convictions, reduce officer time spent in court, reduce the number of DWI trails and result in safer streets.

Equipment:

Such rapid growth strains city/county services to the limit. Police and fire services struggle to keep up with the growth rate and the increased calls for service. Cities struggle to expand personnel, equipment and other resources rapidly enough to meet the escalated demand for service. Mounting equipment needs may include such things as vehicle fleets equipment necessary to operate police cars, speed trailers / sky watch

towers, and the equipment needed for police officers, detectives, SWAT / Tactical teams, and other specialized units within a police agency. Items such as radar / laser units, weight scales for commercial vehicle enforcement, computers/ MDCs, radios, sirens, opticoms (traffic clearing devices), protective cages, and phones are often neglected items needed for basic patrol cars. Equipment such as ballistic vests, computer / software, bio/chemical protective clothing, weapons, and radios are in desperate demand by many agencies throughout Collin County. Many cities are forced to operate used equipment that is old, broken, and even dangerous. The average police car is estimated to cost between \$45,000 and \$60,000 dollars, and each officer can have more than \$3,500 of equipment needs (uniforms, radio, weapon, and bulletproof vests).

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Special Criminal Justice Services are Lacking in Collin County

Due to the explosive growth in Collin County, the diversity of crimes seen by law enforcement is expansive. To properly address the wide varieties of crimes with the goal of having a good outcome, special criminal justice services need to be provided. These services range from how crimes are responded to, investigated, and prosecuted, as well as how the victim is served. The Internet has also increased the need for special Criminal Justice Services due to child pornography, sexual predators, identity theft and other related online crimes.

Additionally, special Criminal Justice Services can include providing police services in non-traditional means. This includes, but is not limited to, providing law enforcement services at area lakes / parks, government sponsored special events (large special events, concerts, holiday celebrations and at festivals), mental health services and on school campuses.

Training:

Law enforcement and Criminal Justice officials in Collin County need specialized training in several areas to address special crimes. Special crimes can include, but are not limited to, sexual assaults, child pornography, child abuse, family violence, identity theft, terrorism, riot control, juvenile crimes and other special crimes / victims. Training should also be provided to enhance victim services and rights with the goal of restoring a victim's physical, emotional and financial health. Law enforcement and other criminal justice providers also need training to meet the ever growing number of persons suffering from mental health issues who are involved in the criminal justice system.

Special attention should be paid to the impact and effects of investigating special crimes and traumatic events on first responders. There is a growing need to address how civilian employees and uniformed personnel handle the stresses of their jobs in their personal and professional lives. A system of special peer counselors should be developed either as a regional response to a significant event or locally by the individual agencies to handle post traumatic stress for terrorist, natural and weather related disasters.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Specialized programs and staff includes special criminal investigators (Internet, child abuse, public corruption and family violence), prosecutors who specialize in these crimes, peer counselor and crime victim advocates. The county, and its entities, must also insure that the needs of persons with mental health issues are met. Additionally, there is a need for more Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) to serve victims of sexual assault (child and adult).

Equipment:

Special crime services and related investigations / prosecutions require various types of equipment. Some basic equipment needs may include computers, software (technical and specialized), specialized vehicles (boats, ATVs, Tactical / SWAT vehicles and equipment, investigative tools (such as those needed for sexual assaults and criminal investigations), surveillance equipment, interoperability equipment, hostage negotiations equipment, and other items needed to respond to, investigate, prosecute and serve victims of special crimes.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime**Problem: Technology in Collin County is Outdated & Ineffective**

The Criminal Justice system in Collin County often has outdated and ineffective technology. In the current technology driven world of cell phones, micro computers, text messaging, internet availability, and other security device, law enforcement and prosecutors have failed to keep pace with the latest / most advanced systems available. Technology is not a primary concern for most government entities, which can hamper law enforcement and criminal justice professionals. As technology continues to evolve, it is essential that law enforcement professionals maintain state-of-the-art equipment, keep current on trends and have the ability to recognize that many crimes being committed today involve computers. Law enforcement must also embrace new technology that can process information and assist the criminal justice system with vast amounts of data.

Training:

Law enforcement officers and other criminal justice professionals must have the most up-to-date training available. Technology is ever changing and personnel working in the criminal justice field must remain current in an effort to use technology to apprehend suspects and to prevent crimes. Training in computers, software, internet, investigations, identity theft, and other topics related to enhanced technology will be essential. Unfortunately, many of these types of courses are taught outside the field of law enforcement and / or are very costly.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Specialized units such as an auto theft task force, special crimes prosecutor, internet crimes investigative unit, financial crime investigator, and other such entities/units will be required to meet the challenges of how crimes are being committed in this technological era. Historically, police officers have fought crime on city streets, public parking lots and in the community/ neighborhoods. However, more and more crimes are being committed from behind a keyboard in cities / states hundreds and thousands of

miles away from the victim. A special breed of investigators, police officers and prosecutors will be needed to find these types of crimes from behind desks and not from a traditional police car. Due to the mobility of the criminal element and the vast reaches of Texas, the Nation and the world, more emphasis should be placed on Task Force operations to tie together all agencies within a region to other regions to share information, to solve more crimes, and to locate the criminals that law enforcement seek to bring to justice.

Equipment:

Technological equipment continually changes and progresses. It would not be possible to list all items of equipment that could be needed by law enforcement and other criminal justice professionals. However, broad topic items such as computers, servers, software programs, digital live scan (fingerprints and palm prints) machines, automate license plate recognition programs, digital cameras, mobile video recorders, MDCs, communications / radio equipment, surveillance equipment / cameras, and numerous other electronic / technological types of equipment.

Crime Prevention / Reduction

Problem: Law Enforcement / Criminal Justice Facilities

Law enforcement and other criminal justice professionals must have adequate facilities in which to work, train and store evidence / records. In Collin County, these facilities are often old, inadequate or do not exist. Law enforcement facility needs in Collin County include police stations, jails, training centers, firearms ranges, driving tracks, courts, and probation offices. Without proper training facilities and training, law enforcement is more prone to making mistakes. Often times these mistakes have tragic outcomes.

Training:

Some of the facility needs in Collin County include training for law enforcement. These centers will provide areas to improve / enhance training related to law enforcement functions. This includes, but is not limited to: classrooms, driving tracks, firearms ranges, and SWAT / Tactical facilities.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Providers of training will themselves need to have specialized training. The most beneficial means is to have “train-the-trainer” oriented instructions. Instructors will need to attend and keep current with the latest training in their area of expertise/ training topic.

Equipment:

Law enforcement training facilities will need to be equipped with the most state-of-the-art equipment to provide the most beneficial training to police officers. This equipment could include, but is not limited to: use of force and driving simulators, SWAT / Tactical exercises, computers, internet training, video displays, table- top exercise platforms, and physical fitness / safety equipment.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Narcotics

The use of illegal narcotics in the county continues to swell causing serious injury or death to users, increasing hospitalizations, escalating crime rates, and decreasing family support. Law enforcement in Collin County lacks the proper resources to adequately address the issue of illegal narcotics, prevent their use, and enforce state and federal laws.

The reduction in the use of narcotics in a community enhances that community's standard of living and decreases the cost to society in the reduction of the number of people hospitalized, treatment for addiction or death, and the reduction in the number of property/violent crimes associated with drug use and the sale/manufacture of drugs.

Training:

Law enforcement officials in Collin County must receive adequate training in the detection and enforcement of narcotics violations. This training will be needed for patrol officers, narcotics investigators, and prosecutors. Training may encompass basic narcotics laws, criminal interdictions, narcotics investigations and other related topics.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Collin County law enforcement agencies require additional resources, training, and qualified personnel to effectively prevent the manufacture, sell, and use of illegal drugs through awareness, education and enforcement of state and federal laws. These additional resources and qualified personnel will increase the effectiveness of a narcotics investigation and will help ensure a successful prosecution. Investigations can include, but are not limited to: RAVE parties, methamphetamine labs (lab clean-up), street level distribution, reverse stings, and other offenses related to illegal narcotics. Additionally, qualified personnel and equipment will be needed to raise drug awareness through public education and the media and step up prevention efforts, both in and out of school, in an attempt to limit the amount of people involved in illegal narcotics.

Equipment:

In addition to personnel, Collin County law enforcement needs the use of up-to-date technology, including but not limited to: the use of body-worn microphones, digital cameras, digital recording devices, computers, laptop computers, software, video equipment, surveillance equipment, radios, canines, canine equipment, and telephones.

Crime Prevention / Reduction

Problem: Community Relations & Crime Prevention Efforts

Modern policing was based on the theory that the police and the public should work together in an effort to prevent and detect crimes. This theory has evolved into a modern term known as Community Oriented Policing. In an effort to build relations between the community and the police, many agencies have developed specialized units (Community Relations, Neighborhood Police Officers, Crime Prevention, School Resource Officers)

and implemented non-typical police programs in the community. This investment of time, personnel and money yields great benefits when the community has strong bonds with its police department and criminal justice system.

However, many agencies in Collin County lack the resources to implement community programs and to assign personnel to them. Without these programs, partnerships between the police and community can suffer. The breakdown of these partnerships can result in mistrust of the police and the criminal justice system. It is imperative that agencies in Collin County develop and maintain good relations with the communities they serve.

Crime Prevention efforts may include, but are not limited to the following programs: theft, burglary, robbery, narcotics, sexual assaults, stranger danger, guns/weapons, identity theft, workplace violence, under-age drinking, helmet safety, neighborhood watches, business watches, and safety cities. The addition of equipment, personnel, and training will assist law enforcement in its objective to reduce crime in Collin County. The reduction of crime has a direct impact on the quality of life of the citizens and a reduction in the cost to society relating to crime.

Training:

For Community Oriented Policing to thrive every officer must embrace its philosophies. This will require officers to understand what Community Oriented Policing is and what it can accomplish. Special training is often needed related to Community Oriented Policing and related topics. These topics include Community Relations, Crime Prevention, School Resource Officers, Media Relations, and related areas within a police department / criminal justice system.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Many cities in Collin County already have officers / staff assigned to specialized community relations / crime prevention units. However, as resources and budgets tighten, these positions / units often are the first to see reductions in funding and staffing. Additionally, many smaller agencies lack the funding and resources to staff these units / positions at all. Oftentimes, citizens in the more rural areas of Collin County are underserved even though they need these services. Without alternate funding sources, the ability of law enforcement and the criminal justice system to expand community relations and crime prevention through additional personnel and programs / equipment, activities will remain stagnate or even decrease.

Equipment:

Community Relations and crime prevention programs will require equipment that includes, but is not limited to: computers, laptop computers, “in focus” machines (PowerPoint), digital cameras / video cameras, software, books, brochures, bicycles, helmets, posters and other forms of media.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Air Support / Helicopter

The number of incidences in which a helicopter could be utilized to assist law enforcement in Collin County continues to intensify as the population continues to increase rapidly. Law enforcement officers utilize helicopter/fixed-wing aircraft for a variety of reasons that include, but are not limited to: missing children and adults, fleeing suspects (car and on foot), officer safety, burglary and robbery in progress calls, surveillance, narcotics enforcement, surveillance and numerous other types of calls. Currently, if a helicopter is needed, it must come from the City of Dallas or from the Department of Public Safety in Garland. There can be a substantial delay waiting for one of these helicopters to come to Collin County. Additionally, the helicopter provides added officer safety at major calls because of the view from the air and use of specialized equipment such as FLIR.

While there is no formal data collected in Collin County in reference to providing Air Support for law enforcement and public safety, it is the opinion of the Collin County Community Plan Focus Group that this issue should be addressed.

Training:

Specialized training would be needed for the flight crews and for all officers in the appropriate use and application of a helicopter.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Collin County lacks the personnel, training and resources needed to implement and maintain such a unit. Personnel certified in helicopter operations and as peace officers would need to be hired. An interim alternative could be to create a consortium of multiple adjoining Counties and their member cities to equip and fund a regional helicopter program which could serve a large population (and tax base) and spread out the cost of such a program. This consortium could put up matching funds with Federal and State assistance to acquire aircraft, offset the initial start-up costs and supplement the formative years of the program. There are revenue sharing possibilities when used by Federal, State, and local agencies for missions such as fire surveillance, fire suppression, search and rescue and Medivac to further offset costs.

Equipment: Equipment needs would include, but is not limited to: a helicopter, night vision, FLIR, radios, and spotlights. Additionally, an appropriate yearly budget for maintenance would be needed.

Response to Crime

Problem: Coordinated Prosecution

The Collin County Criminal District Attorney's Office is solely responsible for the prosecution of the rapidly increasing number of crimes committed in Collin County. Law enforcement agencies in Collin County are growing rapidly, and many are incorporating modern computer and communications technology. It is critical that the District

Attorney's Office be able to effectively communicate with these agencies in three major areas.

First, the District Attorney's Office needs the capability to receive and file misdemeanor and felony case reports electronically. Electronic case filing greatly reduces the time and expense in the initial filing process, as well as the transmission of supplemental reports. An added result in a greater degree of uniformity in the reports received from the agencies. Additionally, this would also help reduce the jail population, and give prosecutors a far better opportunity to investigate and dispose of their cases in a timely fashion.

Second, the District Attorney's Office needs the ability to receive, file and track juvenile cases. Presently, this capability does not exist. As a result, law enforcement agencies cannot effectively track a juvenile's criminal history and involvement with the Criminal Justice System. This allows offenders to escape proper punishment in some cases.

Third, the District Attorney's Office needs the ability to electronically summons law enforcement officers to the court settings. This ability would result in fewer court settings, quicker disposition of cases and a reduction in the jail population, as well as a reduction in overtime payments by law enforcement agencies.

Finally, The District Attorney's Office lacks the technology, including hand-held personal devices, to effectively communicate with its own personnel. As crime increases, there is an growing need for personnel to travel outside the office to contact witnesses, victims and law enforcement officers. It is critical that personnel be able to quickly transmit and share information in these instances. While there is no formal data collected in Collin County in reference to Coordinated Prosecution, it is the opinion of the Collin County Community Plan Committee that this issue should be addressed.

Training:

Personnel from various law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's Office would need to receive training on any new system implemented to improve the filing of criminal cases. Additionally, training would need to be provided on any additional program/ software programs that are implemented to assist with better communications.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Specialized programs in this category would involve software and hardware updates.

Equipment:

The technology and computers used by the District Attorney's Office are obsolete and insufficient to process the paperwork and documents associated with criminal cases / prosecutions. The District Attorney's Office lacks desktop computers, laptop computers, color printers, scanners, servers, case management software and recording devices found in modern law enforcement agencies. This lack of technology causes unnecessary delays in the disposition of cases, case backlogs and increases in the jail population. It also prevents prosecutors from effectively presenting their cases in the courtroom, and protecting the rights of victims of crime. The technology and software used by the District Attorney's Office to communicate with law enforcement agencies are outdated and/or nonexistent.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Juvenile/Gang Crime/At-Risk-Youth

Criminal offenses committed by juveniles, a person less than 17 years of age, and gangs are increasing exponentially as the population in Collin County continues to expand. The majority of people establishing residency in Collin County are between the ages of 25 – 40 years old, and have children. As more and more children move into Collin County, the number of crimes they commit increases. Additionally, gangs, once a big city problem, are expanding to less populated areas. According to law enforcement officials, the City of Plano has at least three identified gangs that are based in the city. Other cities throughout the county report having numerous contacts with gang members that are passing through or have established residency in Collin County. An expanding and thriving Collin County offers juveniles and gangs new opportunities to commit crimes because the area is new/under development or lacks enough police resources. Juvenile crimes in Collin County have also become increasingly more severe. Juvenile crime used to be simple offenses such as criminal mischief and theft. Now juvenile crime includes homicide, robbery, aggravated assault, sexual assault, narcotics offenses, weapons possession, and many other serious offenses. As a prevention measure, Collin County agencies should strive to identify at-risk youth prior to them becoming involved in criminal activity. Working in a coordinated effort, Collin County agencies, schools and parents will be able to target enforcement, prevention, and intensive intervention directed at-risk youth. These efforts will cause a dramatic decrease in juvenile crime. Finally, it is crucial to reach at-risk kids as early as possible to deter them from becoming criminals in the first place.

Law Enforcement in Collin County lacks adequate personnel, training, equipment and resources to combat crimes committed by juveniles. The addition and implementation of training, equipment and personnel will reduce the number of crimes committed by juveniles in Collin County. The reduction of crimes will result in a higher quality of life in the community, a significant cost savings to taxpayers, more productive young members of society, and will save lives.

Training:

Training of all law enforcement officers in Collin County in the recognition of early warning signs, proper techniques for handling juveniles, investigative procedures and intervention techniques, along with other training related to juvenile crime will assist law enforcement in reducing the amount of crime committed by young individuals.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Dedicated personnel need to be established to target young offenders and to prevent recidivism. Dedicated personnel may include, but are not limited to: patrol officers, juvenile investigators, probation officers, and other civilian staff committed to the investigation, apprehension, successful prosecution, and intervention of young individuals who commit crimes.

Equipment:

Equipment such as computers, laptops, servers, shared databases, software, cameras, tape recorders, and other equipment will be necessary to adequately address this issue.

Crime Prevention / Reduction and Response to Crime

Problem: Domestic Preparedness / Homeland Security / Emergency Response

Emergency service providers, including law enforcement in Collin County, are tasked with providing a new and increased level of security throughout the community so as to prevent and/or deter acts of terrorism for which equipment and training has not been provided, or is very limited. Additionally, local law enforcement will be the first to respond to disasters that include acts of terrorism, biological/chemical exposures, or natural disasters (floods, tornadoes).

It should be noted that much attention is given to the larger metropolitan areas when it comes to domestic and international terrorist threats; however, it must be stated that the threat is just as real for smaller, more rural communities. A major terrorist action, severe weather event, or natural disaster at a large venue, town or school anywhere in Collin County could involve and commit as many resources as any similar event in either Dallas or Tarrant counties.

Collin County is one of the fastest growing counties in the country and is home to high tech businesses, telecommunications companies, and major retail corporations. Additionally, there are several companies that serve as contractors for the United States Armed Forces, including Raytheon. It is a combination of these factors that makes the Collin County area a prime target for terrorism/bio-terrorism. The identification of potential targets allows law enforcement officials to “target harden” these sites, thus deterring acts of terrorism in and around Collin County.

Collin County officials will also be tasked with developing an evacuation/emergency shelter plan in the event of an emergency. The efficiencies of these plans will save time, have less confusion, and most importantly, save lives.

Additionally, many of these companies use highly toxic chemicals that can be hazardous to the community if improperly used or involved in an industrial accident. Collin County is also considered to be in “tornado alley.” This area is prone to natural disasters that include, but are not limited to tornados and floods. The addition of new equipment, training, and multi-jurisdictional cooperation will enhance the Collin County Homeland Security efforts and initial responses by emergency workers.

The issue of domestic preparedness (emergency response/first responders) is new to most public safety agencies and lacks presentable data. It is the consensus of the Law Enforcement Focus Group that this topic is significant and warrants addressing on a countywide basis by law enforcement/prosecuting officials.

Training:

Basic emergency / Homeland Security training is lacking for most local law enforcement officers. This includes initial response to terrorist incident, recognition of terrorists / activities, and how to conduct investigations. Training must also be provided to law enforcement executive in an effort to prepare them for any large scale disaster / emergency. Every agency within Collin County must become NIMS (National Incident

Management System) compliant to assure a seamless influx of outside resources and funding should a State of Emergency be declared at the State or Federal level.

Specialized Program / Staff:

Specialized programs and staff can include personnel assigned to terrorism task forces or members of the Collin County Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Homeland Security has various non-law enforcement positions that include public health officials, intelligence analysts and computer technicians. The Collin County Department of Homeland Security houses a regional fusion center.

Equipment:

Many law enforcement agencies in Collin County lack the minimal equipment needed respond to a major incident / disaster. Equipment needs include, but are not limited to: personal safety devices (gas masks, protective suits, decontamination equipment, and self contained breathing apparatus), computers, radio interoperability equipment, radios, amateur radios, response vehicles (armored / command vehicles), software, plotters, first aid supplies, and other equipment needed to respond effectively to any Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE), natural or manmade disasters.

Besides the Regular Committee, additional thanks to following:

Jason Shearer, Lieutenant, Frisco Police Department
Tim Eshbauch, Collin County Juvenile Probation
Joe Williams, Chief of Police, Celina Police Department
Jeff Caponera, Sergeant, Anna Police Department
Shirlene Grant, Collin County Teen Court
Greg Davis, First Assistant District Attorney, Collin County District Attorney's Office
Pam Palmisano, Captain, Collin County Sheriff's Office
Mike Atkinson, Lieutenant, Wylie Police Department
Scott Stowers, Lieutenant, Wylie Police Department
Tim Blakeman, Collin County Substance Abuse Department
Michael Gromatzky, Captain, Collin College Police Department
Rex Redden, Captain, McKinney Police Department
Amy Williams, , Princeton Police Department
Jeff Barnett, Chief of Police, Princeton Police Department

