

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

ECTOR COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Love is the good  
way we feel when  
we talk to someone  
and they want to  
listen and don't tell  
us to go away  
and be quiet.

ANNUAL REPORT 1974

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE  
PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNITS, 021 - 13 & 21  
ECTOR COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1 9 7 4

Staff

Martin Theophilus, Supervisor  
Bruce Carter, Juvenile Worker  
Fran Wilson, Caseworker  
Kathy League, Juvenile Worker  
Chad Spears, Intake Worker  
Beverly Mahon, Intake Worker  
Gloria Godfrey, Intake Worker  
Linda Hannah, Unit Steno  
Donna Malone, Clerk Typist  
Ginnie Storey, Clerk Typist

Jane Conner, Supervisor  
Billie O'Dowdy, Foster Care Worker  
Sylvia Ramirez, Case Aide  
Connie Wagner, Foster Licensing Worker  
Pat Jones, On-going Worker  
Gail Goodrum, On-going Worker  
James Allison, On-going Worker  
Katie Gustafson, On-going Worker  
Shirley Muery, Unit Steno  
Patsy Prater, Clerk Typist  
Elma Fuentes, Clerk Typist

Children's Services Board

Mr. Jay Poynor, Chairman  
Dr. William D. Furst, Vice-Chairman  
Mrs. Shirley Rodman, Secretary  
Mr. Keith Dial, Member  
Reverend Anthony Montez, Member  
Reverend H. L. Steger, Member  
Mr. Joel B. Locke, Member  
Mrs. W. E. Connell, Member  
Mrs. Mary McDowell, Member  
Mrs. H. H. Heap, Member

The following Board Members also served during 1974.

Mrs. Earl Tripp, Member  
Mr. Winfred Richmond, Member  
Mrs. William R. Barnes, Member

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to numerous persons who assisted us in making Children's Services effective during the past year.

ECTOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT

Honorable Michael D. Earney, County Judge

COMMISSIONERS

Erskin Wunsch	Precinct Number 1
Bill Elms	Precinct Number 2
Julian Pressly	Precinct Number 3
Salvador Guerrero	Precinct Number 4

LEGAL COUNSEL

Our staff presented cases to both District Courts and we would like to thank both Judges R. L. McKim and C. V. Milburn for their interest in the youth of Ector County.

We were represented in court and received consultation from County Attorney Bill McCoy and his assistants, Mike Atkins and Alex LeFeuvre. We appreciated the time they have taken in helping us protect children from serious harm.

LOCAL SUPPORT

We feel Ector County is fortunate to have numerous agencies and groups, who are vitally interested in providing services to families. This is especially true when a child is in danger. Special thanks go to the staff at MHMR, the Odessa Police and Juvenile Departments, Permian Basin Rehabilitation, the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, YES, 3-T Learning Center, and local medical professionals.

Ector County has numerous departments that have assisted us this past year including the County Auditor's Office, County Treasurer, County and District Clerks, County Welfare, County Court-At-Law Judge Phillip Godwin and the Juvenile Department, Sheriff's Department, Purchasing Office, the personnel at Medical Center Hospital, and the Ector County Independent School District.

FOSTER PARENTS

It is impossible to truly show our appreciation to the foster parents of Ector County. The amounts paid to the foster parents for the care of children can not begin to reimburse these families for the love and security they give our foster children.

The foster parents who served Ector County during 1974 are:

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Benavidez  
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Ciulla  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Blanch  
Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Allen  
Mr. and Mrs. Juan Calderon  
Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Cavender  
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Cranmer  
Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Eaton  
Mr. and Mrs. Valentino Garza  
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Heard  
Mr. and Mrs. Abel Martinez  
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Richards  
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Stevens  
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Waddell

THE YEAR - MCMLXXIV

Child abuse became the focus of attention for the State Department of Public Welfare during 1974. In the summer of 1973, Children's Services began showing a slide presentation depicting the child abuse problem in this area to groups in Ector County. In early '74 the Beaumont area released a similar slide presentation that stimulated state-wide interest and resulted in the State Child Abuse Campaign. Because of the increased number of referrals, the Department of Public Welfare Protective Services Staff was doubled throughout the state. Ector County had been assigned three protective service workers, a case aide, a supervisor, and three clerical persons until the latter part of 1974. By the first of January 1975, the staff in Ector County was increased to eleven social workers, a case aide, six clerical persons, and Mrs. Jane Conner was promoted as a second supervisor to handle the larger staff. This brought the State Welfare Department's investment for protecting children in Ector County to over \$200,000 per year.

The increase in staff brought a decrease in average caseloads from (33 in January 1974 to 16 in December 1974). This is making more individual attention possible for each family. With the new public awareness, more cases are being reported, and problems are being identified earlier before the child is injured. So now Children's Services is able to provide preventative services rather than just crises intervention.

The staff has also been specialized into four divisions. One division is intake, where three workers make the initial contact on all complaints. They evaluate each referral for validity and will either help the family by providing a brief service or by referring the case to the on-going casework staff. The on-going staff consists of four workers who will carry approximately twenty (20) cases each, and who provide very intensive treatment services for abusing and neglecting parents.

There is a juvenile section with two workers who work with older non-delinquent children. This includes the counseling and return of runaway children that are turned over to Children's Services by local law enforcement personnel. We also have a foster care division that includes two workers and a case aide. One worker takes foster parent applications, studies the home and licenses foster homes who are approved. One worker supervises all the children in foster care and makes adoptive placements. The case aide assists by transporting children, acting as interpreter, and completing special assignments.

There is still a lot to be done. There is a tremendous need for a home for older children. We are working with numerous children who have behavior problems, or who have run away and have no place to go. Their parents are refusing to take them home, and foster parents can not be expected to handle these young people, who may be using drugs, are promiscuous or who have serious behavior problems, so we are attempting to establish a group home locally. We continually

need foster homes for younger children also, families who are willing to take in a child temporarily until the child's family can be helped and the child returned. We need persons who can give a lot of themselves and at the same time give the child positive support so he can also help his parents.

A volunteer program is being started to assist the various parts of our department in delivering services to the community. We need persons who are willing to give time and are interested in helping people.

Many persons have felt the problem of child abuse only existed in the more populated areas of the state. This is not true, as Children's Services worked with an average of 350 children per month during 1974. An average of seventeen cases of child abuse were reported each month with a total of 494 cases of child abuse or neglect reported to us for the year. Seventy-six runaway children were handled. Our staff is available to the community 24 hours a day and received an average of 36 emergency calls per month for a total of 432.

Most of our cases were reported by individuals, with relatives and the local law enforcement agencies comprising the next largest referral sources. A total of 81 children were removed from their homes, with 70 of these being placed in foster care and the remainder with relatives.

During 1974 Dr. Furst and Children's Services held several seminars on child abuse. Our intent was to make persons aware of the problem in our area, and hopefully get help to those families that were brought to our attention. We received a good response from



everyone and it made us realize that the people of Ector County are willing to get involved when children are in danger. We ask that you continue to assist us by contacting our office when you see a child who is in need of help.

TABLE 4

RATIO OF CHILDREN PLACED IN SUBSTITUTE CARE  
TO TOTAL OF CHILDREN SERVED

<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>
$\frac{133}{538} = 25\%$	$\frac{123}{669} = 19\%$	$\frac{167}{755} = 22\%$	$\frac{130}{625} = 21\%$
<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>
$\frac{80}{585} = 14\%$	$\frac{85}{623} = 14\%$	$\frac{65}{557} = 12\%$	$\frac{99}{985} = 10\%$
<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	
$\frac{83}{1108} = 7.5\%$	$\frac{82}{1186} = 6.9\%$	$\frac{87}{1092} = 8\%$	

This chart reflects that in the past several years the percentage of children that have been removed from their homes, as compared to the total number of children served, is less than five or ten years ago. This, we feel, shows that our goal of working with the family so that the child might remain in his own home is successful.

\* \* \* \* \*

SOURCE OF REFERRALS

Courts	16%
Individuals	15%
Law Enforcement	14%
Relatives	13%
Schools	8%
Medical	6%
Texas Welfare Dept.	6%
Other (self referrals, agencies, etc.)	22%
	<hr/> 100%

TABLE 5  
FUNDING

	<u>1974 Budget</u>	<u>1975 Budget</u>
Board & Lodging	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Drugs - Medical	3,350.00	2,500.00
Clothing	1,800.00	2,400.00
Travel	4,000.00	6,420.00
Office Supplies	1,700.00	900.00
Office Equipment Maintenance	200.00	200.00
Telephone	2,100.00	1,500.00
Dues - Subscriptions	250.00	250.00
Unwed Mothers	2,400.00	2,500.00
Machinery - Equipment	-0-	4,850.00
Sanitation Supplies	150.00	350.00
Building Materials	150.00	500.00
Electric	480.00	1,500.00
Water	150.00	200.00
Gas	300.00	300.00
Miscellaneous	<u>2,000.00</u>	<u>2,400.00</u>
TOTAL	\$34,030.00	\$41,770.00

During 1974, Ector County expended for Children's Services...\$ 32,990.62

During the same period, the Department of Public Welfare  
paid for the administration of Children's Services in  
Ector County .....\$113,519.77

Table 5 - continued

In addition to administrative costs, the Department of Public Welfare paid Medicaid medical coverage for the children and reimbursed Ector County for their foster care expenditures in the amount of	<u>\$8,498.66</u>
During 1974, the adoptive and natural parents reimbursed Ector County's general fund in the amount of	<u>\$2,546.11</u>
For 1975, Ector County has budgeted	<u>\$41,770.00</u>
In order to cover administrative costs, plus travel expenses, supplies, training, and Medicaid coverage in 1975, the Department of Public Welfare is expected to spend over	<u>\$175,000.00</u>