

Waller County Community Plan

2008

I. NAME OF PLAN

Waller County Community Plan

II. TARGET LOCAL AREA

County of Waller, Texas

Incorporated Communities:

Hempstead	Pine Island	Prairie View
Pattison	Brookshire	Waller
Katy		

Unincorporated Communities:

Cedar Creek	Fields Store	Monaville
Rock Island	Sunnyside	

School Districts:

Hempstead ISD	Waller ISD	Royal ISD
Katy ISD		

III. COMMUNITY PLANNING GROUP

A. Composition (Note: Some members may serve in multiple capacities/categories)

Community Development

Malcolm Brown – Hempstead Economic Development

Criminal Justice

Waller ISD Elton Mathis – Waller County District Attorney
Judge Ted Krenek

Juvenile Justice

Lewis Thomas – Waller County District Attorney’s Office
Stephanie Green – Brookshire Municipal Court

Public Agencies

Deborah Tallman – Career and Recovery
Cenaiyda Carranza – Family Services of Greater Houston
Lynna Wright – Texas Cooperative Extension

Education

Holly McLean – Schultz Middle School Waller ISD
Christy Smith – Schultz Middle School,
Susan Cardiff – Royal ISD

Faith-based Organizations

Joey Gentempo – His Father’s Heart
Carole Rinehart – Jubilee Ranch

Law Enforcement

James B. Fulton – Waller Police Department
Joseph L. Prejean – Brookshire Police Department
Gay Dickerson – Katy Police Department
Manuel Trejo – Hempstead Police Department

Victim Services

Debbie Cardoza – Focusing Families
Gloria Williams – Focusing Families
Officer Wardell – Prairie View A&M
Police Department
Shirmira Brandiburg – Focusing Families
Sandra R. Salas – Waller County District
Attorney’s Office
Lilie Barber – Focusing Families
Elma Murray – Waller County District
Attorney’s Office
Holly Brown – Focusing Families

Concerned Citizens

Ray Miller
Lillian Miller
Kim Parmer

B. Commitment Level

The Waller County Commissioners Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for development and implementation of the Waller County Community Plan. Additionally, the Commissioners Court supports grant applications from county departments as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in the Community Plan.

IV. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. Description of the Community

Waller County is situated in the lower coastal plain of southeast Texas. The county has a 2000 Census population of 32,663 and a land area of 514 square miles. The economy of Waller County revolves primarily around farming, cattle, forest products, construction and manufacturing. Mineral resources include oil and gas, salt domes, shell, gypsum, sulphur, sand, gravel, and brick clay.

The county was established in 1873. Its’ county seat and largest city is Hempstead which is located twenty-five miles northwest of Houston. Hempstead is the economic center of the county due to the intersection of Business 290 and Texas 6. Currently it hosts the annual festival for the renowned locally grown watermelons.

The city of Waller is on Texas Highway 290 with half of the city being located in Harris County. Brookshire, centered along Interstate 10 in the southern most part of the county, is the host to the county’s historical museum.

Waller County is home to Prairie View A&M University. Four Independent School Districts of Hempstead, Royal, Katy and Waller provide education to the youth of the county. Liendo Plantation tours and events provide historical information about the area.

Countywide the population is projected to increased 5.9% between 2008 and 2012. Currently whites compromise approximately 51% of the total population, with blacks/African-Americans representing 24% and Hispanics/Latinos at 24%.

B. General Public Safety Needs and Issues

Statistics gathered by government, schools and non-profit agencies in Waller County continue to identify significant problems faced by youth and families. Issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, child abuse and neglect continue to increase. There is a continued need for Domestic Violence Victim's programs, a Narcotics Task Force, prosecution services for narcotics cases; juvenile services including crime prevention services, transportation services, and detention services especially school police programs, after-school, summer programs and activities for youth.

In addition there is a need for health care services, substance abuse services, a Children's Assessment Center for child crime victims, a Community Outreach Center, Environmental Law Enforcement and a continued need for crime victim services.

Transportation remains a challenge faced by the agencies involved. Lack of funds and limited resources demonstrate the need for increased funding and continued emphasis in providing solutions for all of the problems identified in order that effective change may occur.

In each of the areas listed below, problems are identified that support the existence and severity of the problems as they are found in Waller County.

V. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

Juvenile Issues

Identified Problem

Need for I.S.D./School Resource Officers
Need for Mentors for at-risk students/drop out prevention
Need for programs for Alternative Education Program (AEP) students
Need for school-to-work programs
Need for Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Intervention and Counseling Services
Need for Family counseling services for Juveniles
Need for Youth Programs, especially after school programs
Need for Domestic Violence Counseling for Juveniles
Need for juvenile detention/holding facilities for juvenile offenders
Need for community service programs for juvenile offenders
Need for Emergency Shelters/Foster Care Homes
Need to expand programs for at-risk youth
Need for juvenile detention transportation

Community Issues

Identified Problem

Need for hospital and health care facility
Need for employment agency
Need for transportation
Need for organized after-school , evening, and summer programs for youth
Need for alcohol/substance abuse awareness, education and counseling programs
Need for substance abuse counseling centers
Need for juvenile/adult crime prevention education
Need for ESL Classes (English as a second language)
Need for Hot Check Writing Programs
Need for D.W.I. Classes
Need for Drug and Alcohol Education Programs/Tobacco Awareness Programs
Need for Basic Adult Education Classes/G.E.D. Programs
Need for Job Employment Programs
Need for Emergency Shelters and access
Need for teenage pregnancy programs

Victim Issues

Identified Problem

Need for a Victim's Assistance Program to include counseling for victims of crime, with particular attention to Sexual Assault victims and victims of Domestic Violence.
Need for a facility/agency to provide job training/skills to assist victims of crime in acquiring the training and skills necessary to obtain gainful employment in order to adequately support themselves and their families.
Need for forms of transportation for victims to get to and from doctor appts, jobs, stores, criminal procedures, etc.
Need emergency financial funds to ensure victims of crime can meet their financial needs while going through the crisis brought on by the crime committed against them.
Need for a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility for crime victims that have learned to rely on drugs and alcohol in order to deal with the crime committed against them.
Need for Law Enforcement Training

Law Enforcement Issues

Identified Problem

Sexual Assault Intervention Programs for Children & Families
Juvenile Detention Facility
Medical Facility (Hospital)
Juvenile Education regarding law enforcement
DWI Task Force
Narcotics Task Force
Funding for peace officers (specialized investigators: a) Domestic Violence,

b) Child Abuse, c) Sexual Assault, d) Narcotics
Training range for peace officer firearm qualification
Dispatch communication equipment
Law Enforcement Vehicles
Youth Centers for at risk youth
Funding for mental health holding areas for defendants and those with mental health issues in the temporary custody of law enforcement
Life skills programs
Assistance programs for victims of crime (i.e. victim's assistants/coordinators in prosecution/law enforcement agencies)

A. Data Collection

Juvenile Issues

1. Substance abuse by youths and their parents.

- % of respondents in a 2007 county wide survey conducted on drugs/alcohol addictions that stated alcohol as their drug of choice: 70
- % of respondents in a 2007 county wide survey conducted on drugs/alcohol addictions that stated marijuana as their drug of choice: 41
- % of respondents in a 2007 county wide survey conducted on drugs/alcohol addictions that stated crack/cocaine as their drug of choice: 18

2. Family conflict and discord.

- % of Family Protective Service Investigation Cases by Hempstead Police Department in 2007 relating to negl. Supervision: 35
- # of women and children sheltered by Focusing Families,2006: 62

Community Issues

1. Family needs (economic).

- % of Waller County children living in poverty, 2000 U.S. Census: 26

2. Substance abuse.

- % of the county that has dealt with or is presently dealing with addition issues: 97

3. Education and employment.

- % of students who graduated after four years of high school 2005-2006, Texas Education Agency: Katy ISD **85.3**, Hempstead ISD **88.5**, Royal ISD **88.0**, Waller ISD **85.3**. Statewide average: **82.8**
- Waller County average unemployment rate, July 2006 to June 2007 (TWC/The Work Source): **4.65**
- Texas average unemployment rate, July 2006 to June 2007 (TWC): **4.48**

4. Lack of transportation/mobility.

- Waller County has no public transportation system.

Victim Issues

1. Domestic violence and children.

- # of women served at Focusing Families, January 2006 to December 2006: 176
- # of children served at Focusing Families, January 2006 to December 2006: 244
- # of calls to Focusing Families hotline, January 2006 to December 2006: 1,591
- % of Family Protective Service Investigation Cases by Hempstead Police Department in 2007 relating to Physical Abuse: 31

Law Enforcement Issues

1. Sexual Assault Cases/Indecency with a Child

- % of cases increased at D.A.'s office, 2006 to 2007: 62
- % of Family Protective Service Investigation Cases by Hempstead Police Department in 2007 relating to Sexual Abuse: 17

2. Driving While Intoxicated

- % of cases increased at D.A.'s office, 2006 to 2007: 68

3. Drug (Felony & Misdemeanor)

- % of cases increased at D.A.'s office, 2006 to 2007: 55
- There have been a total of 459 felony indictments returned in 2007, a 288% increase over the 159 indictments returned in 2006 per District Clerk records

B. Resources

Included below are resources previously identified by the Waller County Community Planning Group as they relate to the county's primary risk factors. This list will be updated as necessary. These entities fall into three specific categories: **Juvenile Justice/criminal justice, health/medical/substance abuse, and Prevention/intervention/assistance.**

- Domestic Violence Prevention through VAWA grant
- Drug Trafficking Prevention and Prosecution through TNCP grant
- Crime Prevention Grant through Hempstead Police Department
- Hempstead ISD
- Waller ISD
- Royal ISD
- Katy ISD
- Prairie View A&M University
- Waller County Sheriffs Department

- Hempstead Police Department
- Waller Police Department
- Brookshire Police Department
- Prairie View Police Department
- Katy Police Department
- Juvenile Probation Department
- Waller County Community Supervision and Corrections Department
- Children’s Protective Services
- Victim Assistance Coordinators
- Recycling grant through Brookshire Police Department
- United Way
- Focusing Families
- Depelchin Children’s Center
- Local churches
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Texas Department of Health
- W.I.C. Program
- Texas Agricultural Extension Agency
- Community Resource Coordination Group
- Austin/Waller Interagency Council

Note: Many of these agencies are currently working together through the cooperative efforts of the various groups and entities. Many of these meet quarterly at the Austin/Waller County Interagency Council, the Community Resources Coordination Group, and the Waller County Community Planning Group. Local law enforcement agencies, local governments, Peace Officers Association., and Juvenile and Adult Probation Departments all work closely together towards law enforcement goals. The local school districts work together and with law enforcement and probation departments.

Prairie View A&M University is committed to working in the community, and works with other agencies to improve Waller County. Local Victim Assistance Coordinators also meet regularly to discuss the problems facing crime victims and possible solutions. Local churches work together to aid in alleviating problems.

VI. Community Problems and CJD Focus Areas

Following is a discussion of identified community problems, the manner in which there problems are being addressed, gaps in services, and how responses to these community problems could be improved.

Several problems were included in more than one category revealing that identified issues involve many different parts of our community. We will keep in mind all of the problems we have listed, but will focus our attention on the following areas as we

continue to develop this plan. Our major categories of concern are: (1) juvenile issues, (2) community issues, (3) victim issues, and (4) law enforcement.

- *Narcotics Task Force and prosecution services to curtail drug trafficking and violent offenses.*
- *Juvenile and Youth Programs, especially for prevention and detention services, including school police programs*
- *Domestic Violence Programs*
- *Substance Abuse Programs*
- *Sexual Assault Programs*

JUVENILE ISSUES

- 1. Delinquency.** There are several patterns of delinquency, some of them overlapping. Offenders may be violent or non-violent, first-time or habitual. Some tend toward gang behavior while others follow a track leading them to increasingly violent actions such as aggravated assault, rape and murder. The Community Planning Group believes it is important to focus resources toward specific types of delinquency patterns, as well as to the progression and development of offenses.
- 2. Children in need of supervision.** The lack of adequate and consistent supervision by the family and the community is a major contributing factor to delinquency and anti-social behavior among Waller County's youth. Poorly supervised children are exposed to danger and risk, and are more likely to engage in anti-social behavior. This includes truants, dropouts and runaways as well as children who are attending school but lack after-school supervision.
- 3. Substance abuse by youths and parents.** Alcohol and substance abuse go hand in hand with other delinquent acts-directly through drug trafficking and indirectly by providing motivation for other crimes such as theft and assault. Drugs and alcohol also contribute to family impairment by limiting parents' ability to properly direct and supervise their children. As a result of the county wide drug/alcohol addition survey conducted in 2007, many of the kids under 21 revealed that a lot of their parents were using drugs and alcohol. They stated they, the child, were not but they are not learning coping skills. Evidence shows that as much as they hate the disease of addiction, they will end up using themselves by the time they are 30 years old because they have learned no other way to cope with the problems of the world. Other statistics gathered included finding a lot of use and abuse of drugs and alcohol to be in the homeless, renters, high school dropouts, people working for minimum wage and those on welfare.
- 4. Family conflict and discord.** Domestic violence places children at risk for direct injury and decreased supervision while contributing to the development of physically and sexually aggressive behaviors, substance abuse and decreased

academic performance. Children victimized by domestic violence in turn tend to react in violent ways to their environment.

- 5. Lack of access to resources.** Several items were identified as needs for juveniles but due to lack of these resources, these programs were unavailable. Programs and resources identified were: A Community Center, Mentoring Programs, help for single-parent families, career awareness, teen parenting classes and teen court.

COMMUNITY ISSUES

- 1. Family needs (economic).** Sixteen percent of the overall population and 11.5% of families are living below the poverty line. Out of the total population, 20% of those under the age of 18 and 12.3% of those 65 and older are living below the poverty line.
- 2. Substance abuse**
Waller County does not have a substance abuse residential treatment facility. Such a facility is needed in order to make substance abuse treatment easily accessible for residents of the County. The few AA meeting that exist come and go.
- 3. Lack of transportation and mobility.** Lack of transportation is a contributing factor in a multitude of problems faced by Waller County residents. Access to school, the workplace, and service providers (including medical clinics, day care and various social services providers) is impeded when transportation is unavailable. Until free or subsidized public transportation is available countywide, many needy residents will be unable to access these services.
- 4. Substance abuse among adolescents.** Data from the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and various local surveys indicate that adolescent use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other illicit substances is a concern. Substance abuse is a factor in poor school performance, family conflict, motor vehicle accidents and criminal activity, school and police records show. Among youths admitted to TCACA-funded treatment facilities in 2002, the average age of first use was 13. Eighty-eight percent of those admitted were referred to treatment by the juvenile justice system.

Existing Resources: Career and Recovery, sporadic AA meetings

VICTIMS ISSUES

- 1. Domestic violence and children.** Families experiencing domestic violence have specific needs touching nearly every aspect of their lives. Without support in the areas of housing, employment, legal assistance, health and mental health, and violence prevention, victims frequently are unable to leave the violent situation for any length of time. Training for prosecutors, police, judges and service providers in the areas of domestic abuse, family violence, mental health and related issue remains an important need and should continue for the benefit of all concerned.
- 2. Lack of low-cost legal aid.** Victims of domestic abuse, elder abuse and other crimes need legal assistance in many areas: protective orders, divorce, landlord/tenant, immigration issues, employment issues, child custody, etc. Existing legal aid services, provided locally by Lone Star Legal Aid, are restricted to the very poor. While attorneys practicing in Texas are encouraged to provide a certain amount of pro bono services annually, it is not mandatory.
- 3. “Throwaway” and homeless youths.** Anecdotal evidence reveals that many youths have been abandoned to the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems by parents who are no longer interested in or capable of controlling them. As a result these youths are at high risk for substance abuse, sexual exploitation and crime.

Existing Resources: Focusing Families, Gulf Coast Legal Aid (Austin County)

VII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A. DESIRED OUTCOMES, BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Government agencies and private, non-profit groups have worked with Waller County residents to address community needs in many ways. Their efforts are reflected in better school performance, less crime, greater focus on important issues and expanded opportunities for all the county’s 32,663 residents. Yet many challenges remain.

Few will argue with these common goals: Livable, sustainable, drug-free and crime-free communities, high-quality schools, safe and affordable housing, plentiful high-paying jobs, a vibrant economy and a stable tax base. Communities that achieve these desired outcomes typically have in place support systems that help their neediest citizens overcome barriers to success—a safety net that returns dividends for the entire community. Quality affordable housing, for example, give low-income families an alternative to crime- and drug-infested neighborhoods while increasing the tax base and providing better opportunities for children and families to succeed. Transportation options, good child care and health care, and access to workforce services also help

individuals and families achieve their goals while reducing the impact on the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Waller County's support system is strong but fractured. This support system would be more effective if service-providers did a better job of collaborating, sharing information on clients, tracking levels and types of service, and otherwise benefiting from logical efficiencies. Moreover, if agencies worked harder to reduce duplication of services and found creative ways to fill priority gaps in service, the county as a whole would be better able to attain its goals.

In short, Waller County government agencies work with other public and private entities as well as citizens to overcome barriers to systemic change. These changes will require resources money, time, people, ideas, and a willingness on the part of elected officials to become visible public advocates.

B. EVALUATION MEASURES, PROCEDURES

The Waller County Community Planning Group will meet from time to time to review the Community Plan, goals and objectives, and progress toward obtaining desired outcomes.

The five-year plan will be reviewed and updated at the subcommittee level, with recommendations made to the full planning group for approval. Data also will be updated (and risk factors added, deleted or reprioritized) as new information becomes available.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Juvenile Issues Subcommittee

- **Lillian Miller – Concerned Citizen**
- **Shirmira Brandiburg – Focusing Families**
- **Carole Rinehart – Jubilee Ranch Ministries**
- **Ray Miller – Concerned Citizen**
- **Deborah Tallman – Career and Recovery**
- **Cenaiyda Carranza – Family Services of Greater Houston**
- **Stephanie Green – Brookshire Municipal Court**
- **Lynna Wright – Texas Cooperative Extension**
- **Holly McLean – Schultz Middle School**
- **Christy Smith – Schultz Middle School**
- **Lewis Thomas – Waller County District Attorney's Office**

Community Issues Subcommittee

- **Lynna Wright – Texas Cooperative Extension**
- **Gloria Williams – Focusing Families**
- **Kim Parmer – Drug and Alcohol Counselor**

Victims Subcommittee

- **Debbie Cardoza – Focusing Families**
- **Officer Wardell – Prairie View A&M University Police**
- **Gloria Williams – Focusing Families**
- **Lilie Barber – Focusing Families**
- **Sandra Salas – Waller County District Attorney’s Office**
- **Elma Murray – Waller County District Attorney’s Office**
- **Holly Brown – Focusing Families**

Law Enforcement Subcommittee

- **Elton Mathis – Waller County District Attorney**
- **James B. Fulton – Chief of Police, Waller Police Department**
- **Joseph Prejean – Chief of Police, Brookshire Police Department**
- **Joey Gentempo – Father’s Heart Ministries**
- **Manuel Trejo – Hempstead Police Department**
- **Gay Dickerson – Katy Police Department**

IX. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Waller County Community Planning Group gratefully acknowledges the assistance provided by the following agencies and organizations in the development of this plan:

- Judge Owen Ralston – Waller County Judge
- Focusing Families
- His Father’s Heart Ministries
- Waller Police Department
- Jubilee Ranch Ministries
- Brookshire Police Department
- Prairie View Police Department
- Hempstead Police Department
- Waller County District Attorney’s Office
- Katy Police Department
- Career and Recovery
- United Way
- Family Services of Greater Houston
- Texas Cooperative Extension
- Schultz Middle School
- Waller Independent School District
- Hempstead Economic Development
- Royal Independent School District
- Judge Krenek’s Office – Pattison, TX
- Royal ISD Police Department
- Children’s Protective Services

X. CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about the Community Plan, contact:

Kim Mathis

Waller County Community Plan Coordinator (979) 826-3290