

# Falls County Community Plan 2012

## **What Is a Community Plan?**

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This plan is formally known as the Falls County Criminal Justice Community Plan, the purpose of which is to identify gaps in services regarding criminal justice issues. The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office (CJD) requires that each county in Texas have a Criminal Justice Community Plan.

The document that is represented here reflects the efforts of many in Falls County that are concerned with assuring that any gaps in services that are identified are closed in a way that will both solve the problem and provide as great a benefit to the community as possible. It is with grateful acknowledgement that the names of those involved in the process of developing this plan are listed in the following pages under "Community Planning Team".

Though the final draft of this plan was completed in November 2011 this is a work in progress. As new criminal justice goals are identified, the constituency of the planning team and priorities in the plan are subject to change. Such updates may be reported to the Falls County Community Planning Coordinator throughout the year, and the plan amended accordingly.

If you are reading this plan and have not been involved in its development, you are invited to join in this ongoing effort. Any questions you may have may be addressed to the Criminal Justice Program of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. Contact information is provided within this document.

The Falls County Commissioner's Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for development and implementation of the Falls County Community Plan. Additionally, the Commissioner's Court, Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) and the Heart of Texas Governing Board (Executive Committee) supports grant applications from county departments as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in the Community Plan.

## Areas Represented

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### Incorporated Communities:

Golinda	Lott	Marlin	Rosebud
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### Unincorporated Communities:

Chilton	Westphalia	Reagan
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### School Districts:

Rosebud-Lott ISD	Westphalia ISD
Chilton ISD	Marlin ISD

### Brief Description and History of Falls County:

Falls County, a rectangle of 765 square miles located in Central Texas near Waco and Temple, was established in 1850 and named for the Falls on the Brazos River. The county's approximately 17,000 citizens are chiefly tied to the land with 55% of the total county economy dependent on agriculture. The remaining 45% of the economy is derived primarily from local and county government, correctional institutions, educational institutions, nursing homes, hospitals, small businesses and independent manufacturers.

Texas Cooperative Extension in Falls County reaches out to adults and youth, males and females of all ethnic backgrounds to help individuals and families improve their lives, properties, economic status and self-sufficiency. By conducting seminars, workshops, demonstrations and camps, County Extension Agents provide educational tools and information to the diverse peoples of Falls County to better manage their farms, ranches, businesses, health, animals, financial security and family relationships. Working through and with volunteers, Agents extend their knowledge and expertise into every corner and village in the county.

<http://falls-tx.tamu.edu>

## Community Planning Team

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Community Plan Coordinator for Falls County: Cindy Rafter the Environmental and Criminal Justice Planner for the Heart of Texas Council of Governments

In developing this Community Plan, team members discussed each of the three sections within the plan, serving in a multiple capacity/categories due to the size of the group.

### Community Planning Team:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Judge Sharp	Falls County Judge
Jeff Watkins	Emergency Management Coordinator
Mary Ivy	Family Abuse Center
Brenda Bradford	Falls County District Attorney's Office
Judy Chambers	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
Nita Wuebker	Falls County Juvenile Probation
William McDonald	City of Marlin
Amy Perkins	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
Viviana Triana	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
Kathy Richardson	Faith, Hope & Charity
Gloria Woodard	Faith, Hope & Charity
Neddie Moore	People Helping Hurting People Heal
Shirley King	Faith, Hope & Charity
Darrell Allen	Marlin Police Department
Pat Hollins	City of Marlin

# Identification of Community Problems

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## General Public Safety Needs and Issues

Crime is a complex and multifaceted problem, and crime control requires the constant and coordinated efforts of a wide range of public and private agencies. County-wide criminal justice planning is an essential precursor to the effective coordination of all varieties of crime amelioration activities in the county. The agencies that compose the Falls County criminal justice system jointly strive to enforce lawful standards of conduct, protect individuals and communities, assist victims, improve institutional capabilities, and engage the community and its citizens in crime prevention while preserving individual civil liberties and protecting basic human rights.

It is necessary to strive toward these goals by helping to facilitate the collaboration of community groups, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts and correctional agencies throughout the County. A broad approach to defining the crime problem and designing methods for its control has been identified as a priority. Issues related to crime have been studied and analyzed on a continuum from the overall social environment to post-crime responses, including community structure and dynamics, crime prevention, early intervention, and various types of criminal and juvenile justice agency responses. Within these parameters, this planning process develops, implements, and refines the community criminal justice plan to help meet the emerging needs of Falls County. The goal of this planning process is to achieve a significant reduction in the frequency and severity of crime to facilitate a sense of pride, health and safety in all our communities by:

- Promoting the planning and implementation of comprehensive strategies to prevent and control crime in general and violence in particular, throughout the community
- Identifying philosophical principles that will promote the participation of law enforcement, judiciary, prosecution, corrections, victims, treatment providers, educators, media, business and citizens throughout the community in the development of strategies to prevent, reduce and control crime and violence in the community
- Promoting the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of all segments of the criminal and juvenile justice system

## PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The building of assets in youth and the community is an important component of a community plan. Therefore, it is imperative that prevention issue take precedence over those based on incarceration and deterrence, if the long-term impact of crime control spending is to be maximized. Nonetheless, the control of known delinquents who present a clear threat to public safety must also remain an important strategy.

In each of the areas below, problems are identified and data is included that supports both the existence and severity of the problems as they are found in Falls County. Below is a discussion of the problems, the manner in which the problems are being addressed, and strategically how responses to these community problems could be improved. In some identified problem areas there is not current data to support them, due to recent program funding cuts. The data collection will be added to the plan as the problem area statistics become available throughout the year.

## **Juvenile Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Delinquent behavior put students' education at risk.**

Truancy is rated as a minor juvenile crime and is often the least enforced in most of Falls County communities. There is substantial evidence that youth who become truant will eventually dropout of school and put themselves at high risk of becoming disadvantaged unproductive citizens. The linkages of truancy and tobacco, alcohol and other substance abuse items can lead to other chronic delinquencies, and possibly foster other violent behaviors. Truancy is the first sign of a youth in trouble. Coupled with academic failure, these two indicators may be the initial signs that a young person is overwhelmed with life and is entertaining the ghastly decision to drop out of school. For example, data from the Department of Education/National Center for Education Statistics shows over the past decade, the number of high school students choosing to leave school without a diploma was between 347,000 and 544,000. National dropout rates for 16 to 24 year olds were reported at 11% (The Condition of Education 2001, National Center for Education Statistics.)Marlin ISD enrollment: Pre-K thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade - 588 students; 6<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> - 227 students; 9 thru 12- 288 students. Student body total 1103.

#### Problem:

Our students are not internalizing basic concepts of learning between head start, pre-K and elementary grades. Students who are placed instead of being promoted to the next grade level find themselves faced with even greater challenges. An academic, as well as cognitive weakness at an early age become a factor in the high percentage of our high school dropouts and drastically affects how our young people view their future.

- Student needs are not identified in a timely manner.
- Young people's life outcomes are seriously diminished.
- Future economic security of the target area is jeopardizes.
- Increased number of individuals with low educational attainment levels.
- Lack of resources for academic, intervention and prevention services and community support at an early age.

#### Problem:

Our schools are generally understaffed with regard to student-teacher and student-counselor ratio. Our pre-K and elementary level students are the most effected and is the most critical age for positive socialization instructions. Many of our youth who fall through the cracks have low self esteem and difficult with conflict resolution, and their cries for help are not wholly considered. These beginners are stereotyped and labeled as tattlers and troublemakers. They soon become negatively reinforced by being placed on punishment for ultimately not having the ability to socially adjust within the classroom setting. The possibility of our children's needs remaining unidentified increases, and opportunities to provide the needed intervention to help our students have success in life is missed. This renders our educational system impotent to form healthy relationships with students and their parents. Unidentified needs presents barriers for our teacher/counselor that fosters a non-caring attitude as well as distrust within the student - teacher/counselor connection.

- Special needs of youth unidentified, in particular, anger and depression issues.

- Social barriers and ineffective intervention/prevention treatment strategies.
- Individual needs are not addressed effectively and in a timely manner.
- Risk factors affecting cognitive abilities in children are not identified in a timely manner
- Limited focus on the importance of education and its life-long impact at the elementary, as well as the middle and junior high grade levels.
- Lack of resources in the community to provide programs and services to stimulate student's potential for success in life.

Problem:

Our high school building presents safety issues for staff as well as students. Many security issues such as a limited camera system throughout the building, entrance doors are not secure, no phone systems or inter communication devices available in class rooms, inadequate intercom system (pockets of no sound in various sections) , construction of library rotunda presents a hazard of someone being thrown over ). Staff has limited ability to communicate with each other when in various parts of the building. No strategic check in process, such as teacher access cards, no resource officers on campuses, staff and students are not in compliance on hazardous drill policy and procedures.

- High school structure needs upgrade to enhance student and staff safety.
- Security system is inadequate
- Staff has no intercommunication devices

Problem:

Parents of younger children do not have the parenting skills and are challenged in providing academic support for their school age children. Many parents are under-educated themselves and working multiple jobs to maintain their families. Mental health issues are not properly identified and addressed. Many families are single parent households who have financial struggles, and are most times unable to give parental presence showing support for school functions and become stressed when they are called away from their employment to address behavior issues at school. Available options of programs and services for esteem building and youth empowerment are limited and poorly advertised. Available services provided by outside sources are scheduled on limited days with hours of operation.

- Parents lack parenting skills and are limited in providing academic support.
- Limited number of parents engaged in the support of academics, school functions and ultimately student potential.
- Students lack a sense of value and responsibility of a high school education and sense of community to become a productive citizen.
- Lack of communication and collaboration between community service providers and referrals
- Restricted access to services and programs resulting from the lack of communication.
- Technology divides due to lack of understanding and familiarity of computers and other forms of technology tools.
- Community has limited youth and young adult development programs engage to support school age students.
- Lack of resources available to support community initiatives for mentorships and youth and young adult development and apprenticeship programs.

Problem:

Youth/teens/young adults are at risk for a community that is not fully engaged in physical and social development and support. Our society presents an ethnic and racial disparity that fosters a detachment of our youth from their heritage.

- Community void of crime amelioration activities.

- Community void of citizens having a sense of neighborhood unity and belongingness.
- Community void of relevant programs designed specifically for ethnic and cultural awareness.
- Community void of a sense of ownership for the success and maintenance of the relevant programs.
- Population of people who do not have ways and means to advance their quality of life opening up vulnerable pathways that can lead youth to trouble.

Problem:

Youth/teens/young adults (15 – 21 years) in our community are handicapped with a criminal record from occurrences that could be supervised in the community without jeopardizing the public safety. Keeping lower risk youth offences out of the system can benefit our community and greatly improve life outcomes and reduce the chance of them coming in contact with the system. Our court systems need viable options for dealing with low risk repeat offenders. Students are trapped by criminal records at an early age making themselves ineligible for employment and financial aid. Unemployable teens place a burden on the parents as well as the community to support this soon to be adult citizen. This places continual strain on our already weakened economy

- Unsupervised youth at risk
- Teens and young adults hanging-out on Main Street... no place to go. No or limited community activities outside of school setting to channel youth energy.
- No or limited structured environments specifically designed for youth/teens/young adult activities.
- Substance usage, abuse and sells.
- Vandalism; Little or no self respect or respect for authority
- Promiscuous sexual activity and sexually transmitted diseases
- Teenage pregnancy, single parents households
- Low self confidence and esteem
- Fighting and bullying
- Curfew violations, truancy, dropouts
- Limited awareness and access to programs and services for youth and teen needs
- Stereotyping of troubled youth and teens
- No easily accessible and coordinated programs for families.
- Services are often provided in a piecemeal fashion or they address only a fragment of the problem.
- Instances of delinquency, violence and persistent misbehaviors in children, youth and teens continue to increase

Need:

- To build and maintain a collaboration of community stakeholders to do strategic planning that resonate to the core issues and significantly address our problems for change.
- Platforms for effective communication between school, family and the community at large to discuss issues of school attendance, community stimulus, academic success.
- Initiatives that invest in our youth and young adult leadership development.
- Teacher – counselor and school staff to have a higher level of sensitivity for early evaluations in all domains (psychological, academic, physical, family, social, economic, mental health/substance abuse) of pre K, elementary, youth and teens at risk.
- Full range of services and programs to support parents with pre-school and school age children.
- Intervention and parenting classes for parents to identify and obtain skills to address esteem and delinquency issues.

- Awareness of available programs and services specifically for individual and family access to local counseling services to assess and assist delinquency issues.
- Developed and implemented diversion programs and aftercare treatment services. In particular programs that allow time for one on one attention and instructions for those students with learning and behavior issues.
- Strategies that include intensive service plan coordination as well as a “wrap around” approach that targets all domains of:
  - Youth involved in the juvenile justice system.
  - Youth involved in substance abuse, particular tobacco and alcohol.
  - Youth experiencing co- occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.
  - Youth experiencing fear, anger, mental health abuse and disorders.
  - Youth attending alternative learning environments
  - Community base alternatives for repeat offenders.
- Early intervention and prevention programs to build relationships with law enforcement in the community targeting youth at all levels.
- Programs and activities for youth and teens not involved in the juvenile justice system.
- A community teen center in the community located in a safe area for teens to take ownership and hang out during non school hours. Centers with evening hours.
- Facilities in the community that allow for physical stimulation such as swimming, skating, bowling. Supervised, constructive recreation in the community for youth and teens involvement.
- Specifically tailored activities that allow for intellectual stimulation and creative thinking such as the Arts and crafts.
- The school, family and community at large to work together to tighten communication regarding the importance of school attendance, community stimulus, academic success and graduation.

Recommendations:

- Community stakeholders collaborate and intentionally engage by giving support for funding sources to allow for intervention, prevention, treatment and follow-up care for juveniles at risk for mental health, drug use, all abuse issues
- Support community recreation facilities that can enhance youth/ teen/ young adults’ leadership development.
- Explore the feasibility of Resource officer and campus police (s) to collaborate with Truant officer in the school district.
- Provide funded education and training via funded programs for youth/teens to deter delinquent behavior such as Drop Out Prevention programs, First Time Offender programs, Teen Court, Drug Court, DARE programs, G.R.E.A.T. programs and other type programs.
- Support projects designed for offenders of non-violence issues and traffic violations
- Misdemeanor drug cases and fighting with domestic violence charge refer to 1st Offender and Pre-trial Diversion programs.
- Educate parents via court ordered and non court ordered parenting classes
- Expand stay in school, after school and school appreciation activities.
- Provide funded prevention programs addressing coping skills, social competency skills and enhancement of personal esteem, sex education and abstinent programs, responsibility and respect for self and others.
- Initiate, support and continue programs that reduce risk factors associated with delinquency and strengthen protective factors that prevent such behavior.
- Enhance availability of services, both inpatient and outpatient for children and adolescents who have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder.

- Develop mechanisms for improving communication and collaboration among providers who serve juvenile offenders.
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health and /or substance abuse treatment programs.
- Raise awareness among policy makers of funding needs to develop new services or enhance existing services.
- Educate the general public about the behavioral health needs of children and adolescents.
- Programs addressing Anger Management for children and adolescents.
- Funded programs addressing esteem building, goal setting and career pursuits for children and adolescents.
- Funded programs providing intellectual stimulation of the Arts and culture awareness.
- Support initiatives that provide exposure trips for life experiences.
- Expose youth to the value of pursuing higher education and career opportunities via college tours and exposure trips for student inspiration and motivation.
- Provide incentive programs for academics such as dual credit college courses.
- Provide information to youth and parents regarding financial assistance for pursuing advance training or apprenticeship opportunities or education.

Resources:

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- First Christians Community Learning Center
- CIS (Community In Schools)
- ACE (Afterschool Program)
- MYAA: Marlin Youth Athletic Association
- Boys and Girls Club
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Teen Safe Program
- VOICE, Inc.
- Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau Family Counseling Services
- MADD (Alcohol and drug prevention and education programs)
- Faith Hope and Charity (Afterschool program)
- PHHPH (People Helping Hurting People Heal: Cognitive skill and esteem builder program)
- STAR Program (Twin City Mission 1<sup>st</sup> Offender Program)
- Ministry of Truth (LCDC -Drug Awareness Classes)
- Elite Sports LLC (Youth Athletics Group)
- Young DIVA (Mental Health Support for sexually abused girls)
- Girls Scouts of America

**2. Lack of role models/mentors for juveniles as well as lack of motivating factors for youth**

Data Collection:

- Role models not engaged in community
- Limited parental involvement – majority single parent families
- Generational issues – grandparents raising grandchildren
- No recreational/athletic facilities
- Limited after school programs
- Limited career/education exploration for general population – There is a PACES program; however, not all youth are eligible to participate

#### Recommendations:

- Continued support for funding agencies offering services
- Violence prevention/parenting classes
  - Start “survivors” group for children
  - Fatherhood Initiative – parent support group
- Mentorship programs

#### Resources:

- MCYC offers programs to children of incarcerated parents
- PACES offers counseling, case management and mentoring programs to youth
- Faith Hope and Charity
- Booker T. Washington Boys & Girls Club
- Communities in Schools (CIS)
- After school programs at Rosebud Lott and Chilton ISDs

### 3. First Offenders Program

This program is a delinquency prevention program that both parents and children are involved in. The program works to inform parents and children how crime can build from a minor offense to major offenses if nothing is done in the beginning stages of criminal activity. This program is currently running but is limited in scope – the parent and child attend court for delinquency behavior prevention.

#### Recommendations:

- Support funding for programs that provide education and skills to first time offenders in order to prevent entering further into the criminal justice system
- Drug Court
- Teen Court
- Leadership Marlin – youth leadership group
- Need to expand court focus to address drug issues and other specific delinquency issues

#### Resources:

- STAR Program/Twin City Mission
- Word of Truth Drug Education

### 4. Aftercare/Follow-up Programs

- a. Limited counseling services; out-of-area travel is required to receive counseling
- b. Limited aftercare services for victims and/or family members of domestic violence, suicide, homicide, sexual assault, child abuse, etc.

#### Recommendations:

- Support programs that will allow for the aftercare services that provide extended support, treatment and prevention.
- Counseling services are limited due to juvenile and/or family members having to travel out of area to receive counseling. Support for a local resource available more than just on call basis.

#### Resources:

- PHHPH Program
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- MHMR
- Family Abuse Center
- Library

- Falls County Victim Advocates

## **5. Referrals for Treatment**

- a. Limited resources, if the juvenile doesn't qualify for MHMR services
- b. Residential for mental health and substance abuse
- c. Long-term
- d. Short-term

### Recommendations:

- Support programs that will allow for treatment facilities to operate and support beds for in-house treatment. Currently, there are waiting lists.
- Funding of additional staff and mental health resources to be supported as well as resources for those individuals that do not qualify for MHMR. Recent mandated state laws limit person(s) that qualify for services under MHMR.
- Need for Medicaid private practitioner.
- Local counselor needed for court mandated-counseling

### Resources:

- Heart of Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Addiction (HOTCADA)

## **6. Transportation**

- Transport of adolescents for counseling/juvenile sentencing and local general access for juveniles.
- Need transportation from Lott for juveniles to access counseling

### Recommendations:

- Need for more public transit
- Need for more personnel and vehicles
- Coordination among services
- Need for city transportation

### Resources:

- Waco Transit

## **Victim Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Limited Support Services**

#### **Child Abuse**

- Limited foster and adoptive parents
- Shortage of mental health services reasonably accessed/sliding scale
- Limited number of police, social workers, etc. with second language capabilities for intervention
- Resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps
- Affordable childcare
- Comprehensive mental health case management services for child victims
- Programs for children who witness violence

#### **Domestic Violence**

- Stable victim resource revenues to enable organizations to maintain core services
- Resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps
- Support groups for male victims
- Standardized requirements and easier facilitation for obtaining a protective order
- Training for judges granting protective orders
- Specialized services and awareness for elderly victims of domestic violence
- Non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence
- Outreach and awareness to various cultures represented in the community
- Awareness of available resources in the community
- Transportation
- Services specific to lesbian/gay population within community and schools
- Comprehensive case management, transportation, and job search services
- Seamless continuum of care
- Improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement and other local agencies

#### **Sexual Assault**

- SANE program needed

#### **Secondary Victims**

Services for secondary victims affected by all crime. Secondary victims of crime often go unnoticed. However, they may experience severe trauma as a result of the crimes. Identified needs include the following:

- Services specific to dealing with traumatic grief
- Education and intervention services concerning traumatic grief
- Resources for adults dealing with issues of grief, etc.
- Services for mental health issues
- Organized, identified emergency response team
- Specific training for service providers in trauma issues
- Services to non-English speaking populations
- Awareness of services to address victim rights
- Improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement and other local agencies

#### **Recommendations:**

- Continue to support programs that address support services for victims of violence and crime
- Continue collaboration of agencies in services provided. Agencies are encouraged to network and bridge the gaps that exist between the agencies that provide services for victim support, prevention and treatment
- Transportation continues to be an issue
- Begin PFLAG program
- Local counselor needed for court-mandated counseling
- Assign assistant district attorney to handle misdemeanors

- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)<sup>3</sup>
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)
- Explore development of CAC and development of SANE programs
- Offender TX provider – BIPP sex offender

Resources:

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Family Abuse Center
  - Bi-lingual legal advocates available
- Educational victim services programs available to schools

**2. On-Scene Victims Services**

- Limited law enforcement and public awareness of services offered by agencies
- Limited bi-lingual services

Recommendations:

- Increase law enforcement awareness of services and persons willing to respond to on-scene incidents
- Agencies that provide these services are encouraged to bridge the gaps between their services and law enforcement, to ensure law enforcement and schools are well aware of the agencies' services to assist law enforcement and schools, as well as the victims.
- Transportation
- Coordination among services
- Safe houses
- Develop a team of trained on-scene volunteers

Resources:

- Falls County Advocates
- Department of Public Safety
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Falls County District Attorney's Office

**3. Aftercare/Follow-up Care for Victims**

- Long-term
- Short-term
- Transportation from Lott

Recommendations:

- Support services that will allow for funding to continue services to victims that require a longer recovery time
- Local counselor needed for court-mandated counseling

Resources:

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Family Abuse Center
- MADD

## **Criminal Justice Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Substance Abuse**

In recent years the overall crime rate has decreased; however, studies show that a record number of crimes being committed today are driven by drugs and/or alcohol. Drug driven crimes can be defined as an offense committed for the sole purpose of obtaining monies for the purchase of illegal substances or the sale of such substances.

In a study conducted by the Department of Justice – Bureau of Statistics, 61,000 convicted prisoners reported that their offenses were committed in order to obtain money for drugs. The study also revealed that of 12,658 homicides committed, 4.5% of the homicides were related to narcotics. Since the mid 1980s, almost every state and federal court system has experienced an overload of drug offenses on its dockets.

The high recidivism rates associated with drug-related offenses has proven that prosecution and incarceration alone will not break the cycle of recurrence of drug-related offenses. Based on the belief that drug abuse treatment is demonstrably more effective in reducing both drug addiction and drug-related crime, jurisdictions developed an alternative approach to the traditional adjudication process.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were four alcohol-related fatalities in Falls County in 2005. In the state of Texas in 2005, there were 1,569 total alcohol-related fatalities

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety Web site, 9,212 juveniles and 120,484 adults were arrested in the state of Texas in 2005 for drug abuse. Recorded on the same Web site, 249 juveniles and 92,230 adults were arrested for driving under the influence in the same year.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Pursue funding streams and resources that offer local support groups, prevention and treatment. Support Drug/Alcohol court Programs with mandatory participation.
- Medically supervised alcohol detoxification services for offenders suffering from acute alcohol abuse
- Affordable residential and supportive outpatient services for offenders needing longer term care
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that provide affordable and appropriate treatment services for employees with alcohol problems
- Supervision of all DWI offenders who are required by law to have an ignition interlock
- Assign assistant district attorney to alleviate case load
- Case management services for ex-offenders

#### **Resources:**

- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe Coordinator
- MADD – failure to stop and render aid program
- VOICE, Inc.
- Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- Bibleway Community Development Academy offers awareness, prevention and support groups.
- Pearfrong Christian Center

### **2. Insufficient Funding for Law Enforcement, Fire Departments and Court Personnel**

Significant pressures are being placed on the Justice Information Systems, resulting from the post-September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. Information-sharing and new technologies are emphasized at all levels of federal, state and local government. Compounding the problem, these pressures are being placed on systems that are old, have limited functionality, and lack the flexibility to address new functional or technical requirements.

Texas counties are striving to improve their Justice Information Systems (JIS) and adopt a new generation of systems referred to as Integrated Justice Systems (IJS). This integration occurs at two levels:

1. A comprehensive system architecture that serves the needs of all justice related and law enforcement agencies within a county government.
2. The ability to integrate a county's justice information with other governments, including other local, state, and federal agencies within that county. A single data entry into a county's IJS system will enable the information to be made available to all agencies within the county boundaries, as well as state and federal government justice agencies.

For example, a police officer making a traffic stop could have immediate access to the vehicle registration data, and determine if the driver has outstanding warrants within the county, in another city, or by state and federal agencies.

Information systems operated by Texas justice agencies have been proprietary and incapable of linking and exchanging information; consequently, the justice community must address new strategies to deliver effective and efficient information related services throughout the State of Texas. During the past year, federal and state agencies, urban counties, rural counties and municipalities from across Texas have been discussing the need to collaborate on development of an integrated justice information system. Although justice agencies require the same information, they have historically focused on capturing only that information necessary for their own processes legacy systems.

Although Falls County government and the majority of its communities have justice information management systems, Falls County is one of 254 Texas counties which have inadequate resources to develop an integrated justice information system that can effectively share information with federal, state, county, local governments.

#### **Funding Issues**

- Not enough funded positions to meet the optimal needs of the community
- Not able to pay competitive wages for more qualified personnel
- No funds to create and operate specialized programs
  - Drug task forces
  - Investigation follow-up
  - No specialized unit to respond to the manufacturing of illegal drugs

#### **Training for Law Enforcement**

- Training opportunities hindered due to not having backfill, or funds to travel to training
- Mandates for training coming from state. Funding needed to bring training in locally and to accommodate shift personnel.
  - Crisis management
  - Mental health issues
  - Victims assistance

#### **Specialized Equipment**

- Radio communication interoperability
- Insufficient funds to purchase basic law enforcement equipment for smaller jurisdictions (i.e. vests, weapons, vehicles, etc.)

- Thermal imaging equipment

#### Recommendations:

- Search for additional funding in the next grant period to allow for sufficient training for staff.
- Ideally, it would be beneficial to have trainers within the departments. The need is to provide reimbursement to jurisdictions to send officer(s) to Train-The-Trainer courses.
- In some smaller areas, the need is great to update existing equipment and replace broken/outdated equipment
- Support and search for funding that will allow jurisdictions to purchase/replace basic equipment.
- Thermal Imaging- A non-evasive way of finding or locating missing persons or fugitives.
- Funding for qualified personnel, as well as competitive pay for existing employees to reduce turn over rate inside departments/agencies.
- Recommended that the county hire person(s) for community grant
- Writing to obtain grant funds. As well as exploring the possibilities of internship grant writers from the surrounding colleges and universities. (Volunteer organizations or Americorp)
- Agriplex Drug Task Force was dissolved by the Office of the Governor, after budgets were submitted for approval. The Drug Task force had been in existence for 18 years, and no money was set aside by the region to absorb the costs of this specialized training.

#### Resources:

- HOTCOG Law Enforcement Training Program
- Radio communications are in the regional homeland security plan. Once this system is up and running, it will accommodate all jurisdictions to be able to communicate.
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children – Court Accompaniment and Law Enforcement Training

### 3. Increase in Domestic Violence Calls

Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the U.S. – more than mugging, rapes, and auto accidents combined, according to the Surgeon General’s Workshop on Violence and Public Health. The escalation of violence in families has become a justice, public health, and economic problem for the families themselves as well as society as a whole. Domestic violence and violence between intimate partners is a problem for Falls County, because the county lacks a cohesive plan for reducing the number of incidents and the resources to mediate the damage done to the victim families. Domestic violence crosses all racial, economic, social, and religious barriers. Violence between intimate partners continues to be a perpetual cycle leading victims into feelings of hopelessness and despair.

#### Gaps in the Community

The following issues require a concerted effort by all entities involved in the victim and criminal justice arena.

- Programs needed for outreach, local resources not easily accessible
- Lack of stable victim resource revenues threatens the ability of organizations to maintain core services
- Lack of resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps
- Lack of support groups for male victims.
- Lack of standardized requirements for obtaining a protective order.
- Lack of training for judges granting protective orders.
- Lack of specialized services and awareness for elderly victims of domestic violence.
- Lack of non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence.
- Lack of awareness among minority groups, cultural groups, and immigrants.

- Lack of awareness of available resources in the community.
- Lack of transportation.
- Lack of affordable and accessible childcare.
- Lack of awareness of cultural differences and needs.
- Lack of comprehensive case management, job training, transportation, and job search services.
- Lack of seamless continuum of care.
- Need for improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement and other local agencies

**Recommendations:**

- Establish safety zones in the county (for instance in the hospital) where victims can stay until victims services can come to transport them to shelter
- Need for CASA program
- Need for BIP program
- Local counselor needed for court-mandated counseling

**Resources:**

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Family Abuse Center

**4. Training and Awareness for County Residents Needed**

Educate citizens to aid understaffed law enforcement

**Recommendations:**

- Promote and support local community volunteer programs such as:
  - Neighborhood Watch (NW)
  - Citizens on Patrol (COP)
  - Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
  - Fire Corps
  - Police Reserves
- Continue to provide training to volunteers to keep them active in the community. Combine all volunteer agencies and offer cross training to those who are interested.
- Monthly parent education classes

**Resources:**

- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Kid Safe Program
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG)

**5. Transportation**

Transport of mental health individuals takes law enforcement out-of-pocket for hours. There is a current financial burden due to law enforcement continuing to experience long processing times of individuals that are considered mental health patients. The processing and travel time take some jurisdictions out of service for a number of hours.

**Recommendations:**

- Need for more personnel and vehicles
- Coordination among services
- Need for city transportation

**Resources:**

- Central Texas Senior Ministries

## **Health and Social Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Mental Health Issues**

#### Data Collection:

- Limited beds for short/long term in-house services – people are returning to society without full services
- Persons on Medicare have harder time receiving care
- MHMR has clientele restricted services
- Need for indigent services or funding to assist with those counselors offering services on a sliding scale based on income

#### Recommendations:

- More local inpatient beds or local beds in adjacent counties
- More civil beds in State hospitals
- Transportation for mental health clients

#### Resources/Successes:

- Hickory Trail Hospital, DeSoto
- Falls County Healthcare Center

### **2. Sexually Active Minors**

#### Data Collection:

- High teen pregnancy rate
- Increase in juveniles with sexually transmitted disease

#### Recommendations:

- Education and awareness with parents
- Outreach in schools
- Prevention efforts
- Collaboration among agencies

#### Resources/Successes:

- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau STAR program
- Planned Parenthood – Nobody's Fool program

### **3. Difficulty for persons in rural areas to access transportation to services offered in City of Waco**

#### Data Collection:

- Transportation remains to be a problematic area.
- Support grants and funding streams that offer these services, as well as, for those nontraditional hours

#### Recommendations:

- Public awareness on existing programs
- Marketing existing services

#### Resources/Successes:

- Waco Transit via 6 to Success
- Rural Transit District Contractors

### **4. Lack of Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

Data Collection:

- Lack of access to employment
- Lack of awareness of employment opportunities

Recommendations:

- Education and awareness to disabled population
- Increase services to assist with employment – develop competitive employment program

Resources/Successes:

- HOCTILC
- MHMR
- DARS
- DADS

**5. Lack of Adequate Bi-Lingual Services**

Data Collection:

- Lack of translators
- Cultural barriers
- Fear of using services
- Confusion when seeking and receiving services

Recommendations:

- Funding of translators
- More bi-lingual literature
- More culturally sensitive literature

Resources:

- Department of State Health Services
- ESL classes at First Presbyterian Church

**6. Lack of Communication of Available Programs/Services to the Public and Providers**

Data Collection:

- Lack of “one-stop shop” to find services
- Lack of seamless referral system or network

Recommendations:

- Manual for health & social services
- Forum for regular communication networking
- General quality health education

Resources:

- 2-1-1
- Falls County Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG)

**7. Homelessness**

Data Collection:

- Lack of adequate health and mental health services

Recommendations:

- Develop permanent housing for individuals
- Get homeless individuals into ongoing services

- Develop a street outreach program to address the homelessness issues of street youth by building trusting relationships with them, encouraging them to leave the streets, and providing assistance for them to move and adjust to safe and appropriate living arrangements.
- Provide a network of services to runaway and homeless youth that include outreach education, intervention and prevention services, counseling, shelter and related services.

Resources/Successes:

- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau – Safe Place/Street Outreach Program
- VA Homeless Program

**8. Need to address chronic diseases in the community**

Data Collection:

- Limited resources to provide education
- Lack of awareness
- Need more prevention education
- High rates of chronic diseases in our community (HIV, STD, Diabetes, Stroke)

Recommendations:

- More disease education and prevention
- Promote more intervention services and programs

Resources:

- Falls County Health Center
- Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

## **Emergency Preparedness Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Homeland Security Strategic Plan includes private citizens' involvement in emergency response and assisting in public needs**

Including, but not limited to:

- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
- Neighborhood Watch
- Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)
- Protect Texas

Recommendations:

The HOTCOG will work with jurisdictions and the County Emergency Management Coordinator to develop and/or build upon programs in all areas of the region.

Resources:

- Heart of Texas Council of Governments
- Department of State Health Services

### **2. Mandates to school districts concerning emergency management and response.**

Needs:

- NIMS compliant emergency management plans
- Various agency involvement in drills and actual events

Recommendations:

- The school districts and Education Service Center Region 12 will continue to work with the County Emergency Management Coordinator as well as law enforcement and other first responders to prepare the school and school aged children for potential catastrophic events.
- CERT in schools
- Work with school districts that do not have NIMS compliant plans
- Coordinate multi-agency involvement in drills and incidents

Resources:

- Falls County Office of Emergency Management
- Education Service Center Region 12

## Resources Available

Included below are resources identified by the Falls County Community Planning Team that are available to provide services that could potentially help in closing criminal justice gaps:

### Juvenile Justice:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MADD	Victim Services	Alcohol and drug prevention programs that focus on underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. There are also several FREE school programs, provisions of speaker for various needs or events and an educational "Minor in Possession" class available for juvenile offenders.
The Freeman Center	Substance Abuse Treatment	Individual/Group counseling; relapse prevention, education and life skills training.
ESC Region 12	Education	College preparedness for students, student leadership forum
VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after school and summer programs. La Voz Para La Familia program is parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a>
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or 800-841-1255 <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a>
Central Texas Youth Services Bureau (CTYS)		Provides full services to Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Falls, McLennan, Milam, Limestone, and Freestone counties. Each county has local CTYS offices except Falls which is served from Waco and Freestone which is served from our Groesbeck office.
HOTRMHMR	Mental Health	Provide a full array of mental health services to children involved in the criminal justice system. Provide truancy court support, provide assessment and treatment services to children in detention facilities, provide cross referencing of all children booked into detention with the State data system, provide specialized intensive casework services to children on Probation in McLennan County.
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter	Start First Violence Prevention Curriculum available to all school districts within the counties. Counselors are made available for group and individual

		counseling. In servicing is also available to teachers and administrators.
Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe	Hospital	The Teen Safe Youth Traffic Safety Educational program focuses on teen traffic safety, driving responsibility, underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. The program also educates parents on the laws relating to teen traffic safety. This prevention program is a combination of videos, simulations and written materials along with computer-based simulations. This program is FREE.
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501C3 Non-Profit	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24-hour hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, short-term counseling and case management, legal advocacy, and assistance in filing Crime Victims Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim Center program. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, and the Court Appointed Special Advocates program serves foster children in Hill and McLennan counties. Educational presentation on victim's issues and prevention are available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a>

### Law Enforcement:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
TX Dept of Public Safety	Law Enforcement	All crime victims in region are eligible for services: crisis intervention; personal advocacy; assistance filing for crime victims compensation; court accompaniment;
VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after school and summer programs. La Voz Para La Familia program is parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a>
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or 800-841-1255 <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a>
HOTRMHMR	Mental Health	Provide training and consultation services for law enforcement through workshops, jail personnel training, academy trainings and through on-going

		discussions with line staff. Provide emergency services which include 24-hour crisis supports, inpatient services, evaluation unit placements, and information and referral. Work with jail staff in all six counties providing services to inmates while incarcerated who have mental health issues. Provide specialized intensive casework services in Hill and McLennan Counties pairing mental health staff with probation and parole officers. Provide regional screening and continuity of care services for all inmates in TDC in the Central Texas area.
Family Abuse Center	Domestic Violence Shelter	Domestic violence shelter, counseling services (short and long term), case management, advocacy, Legal advocacy, outreach, Educational presentations, On-scene crisis intervention, Crisis hotline, Law enforcement training, Start First Violence Prevention Curriculum, transitional housing, emergency cell phones, and other services.
HOTCOG Law Enforcement Training Program		Provides 20 + LE training classes each year. Input on TCLEOSE classes offered comes from regional law enforcement agencies and the Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee (LETAC).

### Victim Services:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MADD	Victim Services	Free Victims Services to those families who's loved one was killed or injured by an intoxicated driver including failure to stop and render aid & child endangerment cases. Some services include crisis counseling, personal advocacy, help finding financial assistance, assistance filing crime victim's compensation, emotional support, resource and service referrals, court accompaniment, assistance through the legal process, and support group.
TX Dept of Public Safety	Law Enforcement	All crime victims in region are eligible for services: crisis intervention; personal advocacy; assistance filing for crime victims compensation; court accompaniment;
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501c3 non-profit organization	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24-hour hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, short-term counseling and case management, legal advocacy, and assistance in filing Crime Victims Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim Center program. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, and the Court Appointed Special Advocates program serves foster children in Hill and McLennan counties. Educational presentation on victim's issues and prevention are available.

		Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 www.advocacycntr.org
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	HHSC	Educational events regarding prevention. Education regarding Texas Law and Elder Law Assistance with filing complaints and making reports to abuse. Links to Texas Legal Services Center and victims compensation.
HOTRMHMR	Mental Health	Full array of mental health services to people who have been victimized who fall into our targeted population identified by State Health Services which include individuals with a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder or Major Depression.
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter	Domestic violence shelter, counseling services (short and long term), case management, advocacy, Legal advocacy, outreach, Educational presentations, On-scene crisis intervention, Crisis hotline, Law enforcement training, Start First Violence Prevention Curriculum, transitional housing, emergency cell phones, and other services.

### Health / Medical / Substance Abuse:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MADD	Victim Services	Alcohol and drug prevention and intervention programs for juveniles and adults
The Freeman Center	Substance Abuse Treatment	Detoxification Services- Medically monitored detoxification, relapse prevention, education; individual counseling; referrals. Residential Services- gender specific counseling, relapse prevention, education and life skills training; referrals, supervised living. Outpatient services- Individual/Group counseling; relapse prevention, education and life skills training. COPSD services- individual/group counseling; referrals
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	Health and Human Services	Educational events regarding health and wellness, public benefits, health insurance, prevention and resources in the HOT region. Legal documents to protect rights of health care choices
VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after school and summer programs. La Voz Para La Familia program is parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> www.voiceinc.org
Bluebonnet Trails Community	Substance Abuse	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral

Services	Treatment	(OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or 800-841-1255 jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org
HOTRMHMR	Mental Health	Provide specialized substance abuse services to people who also have a co-occurring psychiatric disorder.
Waco-McLennan County Public Health District	Public Health	HIV/AIDS STD Clinic

### Prevention / Intervention:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MADD	Victim Services	Alcohol and drug prevention and Intervention programs for juveniles and adults
ATIC Cooperative Ministries	Faith Based	Working toward coordinating local thrift stores to improve & expand services, reduce expenses and improve management to better serve indigent and low income families and many who fall through the cracks.
The Freeman Center	Substance Abuse Treatment	Provide drug/ alcohol education and intervention as needed.
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	<b>HHSC</b>	Educational events regarding, Prevention of ID Theft, Scams, Financial Abuse. Education regarding Texas Law and Elder Law Assistance with filing consumer complaints and making reports to abuse.
Klaras Children's Center ECI	Early Childhood Intervention	Early intervention services to children ages birth to 3yrs who have developmental delays. Services are community based and family focused.
HOTRMHMR	Mental Health	Mental Retardation Services (254-757-3933)  MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (254-752-3451)  Eligibility:  Adults (18+)  Serving persons w/ severe and persistent mental illnesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schizophrenia</li> <li>• Schizoaffective</li> <li>• Bipolar and</li> <li>• Severe Major Depression</li> </ul> Fee: Based on monthly maximum fee schedule; accepting insurance, Medicaid and Medicare

		<p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information/referral</li> <li>• Screening/assessment</li> <li>• Crisis services (day/night)</li> <li>• Crisis respite</li> <li>• Psychiatric/pharmacological</li> <li>• Jail-based assessment/ diversion services</li> <li>• Probation/Parole assessment and treatment</li> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Service Coordination</li> <li>• Supported Employment</li> </ul>
VOICE, Inc.		<p>Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after school and summer programs. La Voz Para La Familia program is parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families.</p> <p>John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a></p>
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	<p>Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free.</p> <p>Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or 800-841-1255 <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a></p>
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter	<p>Domestic violence shelter, counseling services (short and long term), case management, advocacy, Legal advocacy, outreach, Educational presentations, On-scene crisis intervention, Crisis hotline, Law enforcement training, Start First Violence Prevention Curriculum, transitional housing, emergency cell phones, and other services.</p>
Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe	Hospital	<p>The Teen Safe Youth Traffic Safety Educational program focuses on teen traffic safety, driving responsibility, underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. The program also educates parents on the laws relating to teen traffic safety. This prevention program is a combination of videos, simulations and written materials along with computer-based simulations. This program is FREE.</p>
Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Kid Safe	Hospital	<p>The Kid Safe program is an injury prevention program sponsored by the Trauma Center at Hillcrest Hospital, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation. Kid Safe offers free educational classes and presentations to parents, caregivers, children, teenagers, and the community in general. Kid Safe also provides a child safety seat and booster seat distribution program. Currently, Kid Safe provides services to McLennan, Bosque, Hill, Falls, Limestone, Coryell, and Bell counties.</p>

<p>Department of State Health Services</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Health Service Region 7 is one of eleven health service regions of the Department of State Health Services, the state governmental agency responsible for bringing comprehensible public health services to the citizens of Texas. Health Service Region 7 serves a 30 county area in Central Texas.</p> <p><b>Health Service Region 7 Mission Statement</b></p> <p>It is our mission that we commit, through personal and organizational excellence, to be an agent of change dedicated to achieving a healthier Texas.</p> <p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <p><i>(please click on any of the links below to view information about those programs)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#"><u>Birth Defects Monitoring Division</u></a></li> <li>2. <a href="#"><u>Children With Special Health Care Needs</u></a></li> <li>3. <a href="#"><u>Consumer Health Protection</u></a></li> <li>4. <a href="#"><u>Epidemiology</u></a></li> <li>5. <a href="#"><u>Field Office Locations</u></a></li> <li>6. <a href="#"><u>Immunization Program</u></a></li> <li>7. <a href="#"><u>Public Health Improvement</u></a></li> <li>8. <a href="#"><u>Public Health Nursing</u></a></li> <li>9. <a href="#"><u>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</u></a></li> <li>10. <a href="#"><u>Tobacco Prevention and Control</u></a></li> <li>11. <a href="#"><u>Tuberculosis Elimination Division</u></a></li> <li>12. <a href="#"><u>Vision and Hearing Services</u></a></li> <li>13. <a href="#"><u>Zoonosis Control Program</u></a></li> </ol> <p><b>Public Health Improvement Program:</b></p> <p>The mission of DSHS Division for Regional and Local Health Services is to serve the needs of Local Public Health Agencies, DSHS Health Service Regions, and local communities in building and maintaining capacity to provide essential public health services responsive to local needs.</p> <p>Contact: Danny Daniel  Special Projects  Falls County Hospital and Clinics  254.803.3561</p>
<p>Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children</p>	<p>501c3 non-profit organization</p>	<p>Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24-hour hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, short-term counseling and case management, legal advocacy, and assistance in filing Crime Victims Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim Center program. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, and the Court Appointed Special Advocates program serves foster children in Hill and McLennan counties. Educational presentation on</p>

		victim's issues and prevention are available.  Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 www.advocacycntr.org
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### **Emergency Management**

<b>Name of Agency</b>	<b>Agency Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Falls County Emergency Management Office: EMC is Jeff Watkins	Emergency Management	The Falls County Emergency Management Office plans for disasters that may occur in the area and coordinates with other emergency management offices regionally to ensure the safety of the county.

## **Interagency Cooperation**

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The Falls County Community Planning Team was very involved in the planning process. All agencies were proactive in their approach to identifying the needs of the communities and by putting their own special interests aside they succeeded in developing a plan to aid in prioritizing and closing the identified gaps in the community.

The Planning Team shared the different services they offer, as well as, services offered by agencies and individuals that were unable to attend the planning meeting. The team met to make updates and corrections to the previous year's plan, and the working relationship was cooperative and productive.

Law enforcement, juvenile justice, victims services, emergency management, and social services groups agreed to continue to work together to reach the overall objectives of making the Falls County communities a safer environment, as well as, increasing awareness through intervention and prevention and education.

## **Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Falls County Community Planning Team works in conjunction with other planning groups in the county to ensure a regular exchange of ideas. Individuals active in the planning process generally serve on many of these committees and share mutual concerns.

The Falls County Community Planning Team meets each biennium to review the plan and make necessary additions and deletions. Agency and community representatives may submit suggestions and changes via telephone and e-mail throughout the year to the Community Planning Coordinator. Annual updates of the Community Plan are circulated via e-mail with requests for comments, updates, and changes. Wherever possible, e-mail is used to reduce the need for meetings, printing, postage, etc. The most current plan is posted on the [www.hotcog.org](http://www.hotcog.org) website.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Team to improve outcomes for Falls County families struggling with problems described in the plan's focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Falls County agencies and organizations to address problems with local funds, as well as, grant funds from multiple state and federal sources. To the extent that these funds are available, the Community Planning Team will continue to urge agencies to provide programming that addresses the outlined focus areas.

## Contact Information

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Falls County Community Planning Coordinator

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