

Limestone County Community Plan 2012

What Is a Community Plan?

The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office (CJD) requires that each county in Texas have a Criminal Justice Community Plan in order to identify gaps in services regarding criminal justice issues.

This document reflects the efforts of Limestone County citizens concerned with assuring that any gaps in services are addressed to the benefit of the entire county. 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 Limestone 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 can be addressed to the Community Plan Coordinator for Limestone County, at the Criminal Justice Program of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. Contact information is provided within this document.

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

Areas Represented

Incorporated Communities:

Coolidge	Groesbeck	Thornton	Mexia
Tehuacana	Kosse		

School Districts:

Coolidge ISD	Groesbeck ISD
Mexia ISD	

Brief Description and History of Limestone County:

Limestone County was created by the Texas Legislature in 1846, the first year of statehood. Springfield, which was established on the banks of the Navasota River in 1838, halfway between the present cities of Groesbeck and Mexia, was named the county seat by the legislature. However, in 1873 an election was held in Limestone County and the permanent location of the county seat was moved to Groesbeck.

With its location in Central Texas, there is easy access to Austin, Dallas, Houston and Waco. Recreation in Limestone County includes Lake Limestone, which is a paradise for fishermen and campers, and Fort Parker Lake. In 1993, The Old Restored Fort Parker was contracted by Groesbeck and the Texas Department of Wildlife for upkeep along with contributions from Mexia and Limestone County and has become a tourist attraction with events such as "Christmas at the Fort".

There are three school districts that serve Limestone County: Coolidge, Groesbeck and Mexia Independent School Districts. The county's two largest cities are Mexia and Groesbeck. These two cities along with smaller communities derive their main income from a mix of agriculture, small industry and other commercial opportunities.

Source: <http://limestone-tx.tamu.edu/>

Community Planning Team

Community Plan Coordinator for Limestone County: Cindy Rafter, the Criminal Justice Planner for the Heart of Texas Council of Governments

In developing this Community Plan, members of the team worked together to provide updates and changes to the previous plan. Some members serve in multiple capacities and categories.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Agency</i>
Daniel Burkeen	Limestone County
Judy Chambers	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
Dennis Wilson	Limestone County Sheriff
Theresa Tilotta	Limestone County Senior Services Project
R.T. Beck	Limestone County Sheriff's Office
Brian Swick	Limestone County Juvenile Probation
Chris Henson	Limestone County Sheriff's Office
Jerri Almy	Groesbeck Police Department
Lee Cox	Limestone County Sheriff's Office
Matt Groveton	Limestone County Office
Jesse Whisler	Mexia ISD PD
Kieara Jones	Family Abuse Center
Jacqueline Armstrong	Family Abuse Center

Identification of Community Problems

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. Countywide 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 Limestone 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 Limestone 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 issues 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 Limestone 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 problem areas identified, there is not current data to support the problem areas, due to the funding and program cuts taking effect within the last few months. The data collection will be added to the plan as the problem area statistics become available throughout the year.

Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

1. Specialized Equipment

Significant pressures 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-federal, state and local. Compounding the problem is that these pressures are being placed on systems that are frequently 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 Information Systems (IJIS).

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 and
- (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 entry of data in a county's IJIS system, is 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 county, or by state and federal agencies.

Problem Statement

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 Limestone County government and the majority of its communities have justice information management systems, Limestone 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.

Data Collection:

- Need for adequate funding for basic law enforcement equipment for smaller jurisdictions (i.e. vests, weapons, vehicles, cameras)
- Needed upgrade for radio equipment in the field

- Needed upgrade for Mobile Data Terminal System, to include the records management system and computer aided dispatch system
- Need for new facilities and furnishings for law enforcement

Recommendations:

- Basic equipment needs are a continuing need for smaller jurisdictions. This requires additional funding.
- Upgraded communications, specifically voter sites
- Air cards for mobile computers
- Cameras in school police vehicles
- Automated license plate readers

Resources/Successes:

- Radio communications are a centerpiece to the regional homeland security plan. Based upon funding availability, future equipment acquisition must conform to the regional interoperability plan to maximize the county’s communication effectiveness.
- In 2007 Limestone County purchased Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) for their patrol cars with \$30,000 of county money.
 - Limestone County is nearing implementation of MDT system in patrol units as of September 2008.
- Thermal imaging equipment is available through Groesbeck P.D
- Grant money was received in FY2008 for radio equipment replacement in Limestone County Sherriff’s Office dispatch center.
- Video enhancement equipment available through Groesbeck PD
- In 2010 Groesbeck PD purchased MDTs for their patrol vehicles through JAG Grant

2. Substance Abuse

In recent years the overall crime rate has decreased; however, studies show that a record number of crimes 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.

Data Collection:

In a study conducted by the Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice 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.

Recommendations:

- Pursue funding streams and resources to support prevention and treatment programs
- Support Drug/Alcohol Court programs with mandatory participation
- Seek medically supervised alcohol detoxification services for offenders suffering from acute alcohol abuse
- Work toward affordable residential and supportive outpatient services for offenders needing longer term care
- Utilize Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that provides affordable and appropriate treatment services for employees with alcohol problems

- Ensure supervision of all DWI offenders who are required by law to have an ignition interlock
- Develop a county special crime unit

Resources/Successes:

- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Teen Safe Program
 - Reality Education for Drivers (RED) Program: This is a one-day hospital based program for court referrals which focuses on traffic safety factors for those aged 15-19.
- Community Supervision & Corrections Department – victim impact panels
- Lighthouse for Men
- VOICE, Inc.
- Bluebonnet Trails Community Services

3. Increase in Domestic Violence Calls

Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the U.S. – more than muggings, rapes and auto accidents combined. The escalation of violence in families has become a justice, public health and economic problem for the families themselves and society as a whole. Domestic violence and violence between intimate partners is a problem for Limestone 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, ethnic, economic, social, and religious barriers. Violence between intimate partners continues to be a perpetual cycle leading victims into feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Data Collection:

Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the U.S.

- Source Book: Surgeon General’s Workshop on Violence and Public Health

Gaps in the community

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

There is a need for funding and programming of the following:

- Outreach, local resources not easily accessible
- Victim services funding
- Resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical disabilities
- Support groups for male victims
- Easier facilitation of obtaining a protective order
- Training for judges granting protective orders
- Outreach and awareness for elder abuse
- Non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence
- Outreach and awareness among various ethnic/cultural groups
- Awareness of available resources in the community
- Transportation
- Affordable and accessible childcare
- Comprehensive case management, and job training
- Seamless continuum of care
- Improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement and other local agencies
- Need for legal aid to process protective orders

Recommendations:

- Establish safety zones in the county (e.g. the hospital) where victims can stay until victims’ services personnel can transport them to shelter.
- Develop Sexual Assault Response Team (SART).
- Continue officer education in responding to domestic violence calls

Resources:

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center
- Hathaway House
- Crime Victims Coordinator at District Attorney's Office
- Adult Protective Services
- Heart of Texas Workforce Solutions
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4. Transportation

Data Collection:

- Transport of mental health individuals strains law enforcement (not enough personnel to transport; lack of appropriate mental health facilities).
- This places a financial burden on law enforcement due to the lengthy processing required to screen and assist individuals who have mental health issues. Processing and transport often require many additional hours of staff time.
- Improvements have been made in time management. Patients get medically served in Limestone County before going to Providence Hospital for mental treatment in Waco.

Recommendations:

- Additional personnel and vehicles
- Additional state beds would lessen the burden on law enforcement vehicles and personnel

Resources:

- None identified

5. Training for Law Enforcement

Data Collection:

- Training opportunities are hindered by inability to provide backfill, and lack of training and travel funds.
- Training continues to be mandated by the state. Funding is needed to provide on-site training to accommodate shift personnel. Training should include:
 - Crisis Management
 - Mental Health Issues
 - Victims Assistance
 - Legal updates

Recommendations:

- Seek funding in the next grant period to allow for sufficient training of staff.
- Ideally, it would be beneficial to have trainers within the departments. Recommend reimbursement for jurisdictions to send officer(s) to Train-the-Trainer courses.

Resources/Successes:

- Family Abuse Center – provides training to law enforcement (TCLEOSE)
- Advocacy Center – TCLEOSE accredited training
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center KidSafe Program: Provides training to law enforcement on Texas child passenger safety laws and enforcement practices.
- Heart of Texas Council of Governments' Regional Law Enforcement Training Program

6. Increase in Sexual Assault/Assault Allegations at State School

Data Collection:

- Each allegation has to be investigated by the Sheriff's Office and District Attorney instead of being handled by the campus

Recommendations:

- Hire another investigator for Sheriff's Office
- Hire an investigator for the prison
- Hire an investigator for the Mexia Supported Living Center

Resources/Successes:

- Sheriff's Office
- District Attorney
- Commissioner's Court funded new investigator position in 2007/2008 budget to help address sexual assault/assault allegations at Mexia State School
- CEC is addressing assistance with Detention Center criminal offenses
- Adult Protective Services
- Office of the Inspector General

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

1. Delinquent Behavior

Truancy is often the least enforced juvenile crime in most communities within Limestone County. There is substantial evidence that youth who become truant will eventually drop out of school. Truancy, tobacco, alcohol and other drug use are often linked and can lead to other chronic delinquent behaviors. Coupled with academic failure, truancy is an early warning sign of an “at risk” youth. According to the Department of Education/National Center for Education Statistics, over the past decade between 347,000 and 544,000, 10th through 12th grade students left school each year without having earned a high school diploma. Dropout rates for 16 to 24 year olds were reported at 11% nationally. (The Condition of Education 2001, National Center for Education Statistics)

The high percentage of students dropping out of high school threatens the overall well being of the community.

Data Collection:

- Truancy
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Sexual Aggression
- Date Violence
- Aggression/Anger Management
- Substance Abuse

Schools are generally understaffed with regard to student-teacher and student counselor ratio and find it difficult to address individual needs. At risk students may be overlooked and behind academically and unable to catch up before anyone identifies the problem and takes action.

The school, family and community at large must continue to work together to strengthen awareness and support students’ attendance, academic success and graduation.

Greater awareness on the importance of education and its life long impact, must be provided to middle and junior high school youth.

First-generation citizens are unable to navigate the complex systems of barriers for attending school.

Communities need to provide the full range of services to youth. In order to meet needs of youth involved in the juvenile justice system, targeted mental health and substance services must be available at all levels of need. Services that target this population include early intervention and prevention programs, diversion programs, services in detention, and aftercare treatment.

Risk factors in children should be identified as early as possible with services to include evaluations in all domains.

Intervention services, as needed should be available to all children.

There are currently no easily accessible and coordinated programs for youth experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Access to program and services for youth attending alternative schools submitted.

Interim services for youth on waiting lists is lacking.

There is a lack of communication and coordination between the involved systems which results in uneven access to services and programs, duplication of services, missed identification of at risk youth, philosophical barriers and ineffective intervention/treatment strategies.

Services are often provided in a piecemeal fashion or address only a fragment of the problem. Strategies should include intensive service plan coordination as well as a “wrap around” approach that targets all domains (psychological, academic, physical, family, social, economic, mental health/substance abuse).

Instances of delinquency, violence, and persistent misbehaviors children and youth continue to increase.

Recommendations:

- Support programs that will allow for the aftercare services that provide extended support, treatment and prevention.
- Expand stay-in-school, after school and school appreciation activities.
- Expose youth to the value of pursuing higher education through college visitation programs.
- Provide information to youth and parents regarding financial assistance for pursuing advanced training opportunities or education.
- Educate youth and parents on the value of graduation from high school; expose them to career opportunities related to school completion and advanced education.
- Continue programs that reduce risk factors associated with delinquency and emphasize protective factors that prevent such behavior. Supportive prevention programs should address issues of impulsivity, bullying, and racial name-calling and threats, as these are precursors to more violent and aggressive behaviors. Coping, social competency skills, enhancement of personal responsibility, and respect for others must be included in the curricula.
- Ensure 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.
- Raise awareness among policy makers of funding needs to develop new services or improve existing services.
- Educate the general public about the behavioral health needs of children and adolescents.
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health and/or substance abuse treatment programs.
- Support programs addressing Anger Management for children and adolescents
- Develop programs addressing goal setting for children and adolescents
- Foster outpatient counseling programs for children and adolescents
- Training for police and juvenile probation officers on dealing with juveniles and medication awareness.

Resources/Successes:

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center
- VOICE, Inc.
- Bluebonnet Trails Community Services
- MHMR
- Mexia ISD held an assembly for sexual aggression and dating violence in 2006
- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau (CTYSB) Communities in Schools (CIS)
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center TeenSafe program: This program is building a database for ages 10-19 including crash factors (MIP, MIC, DUI).

- DSHS Region 7 Limestone County Health Needs Assessment Coalition
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/limestone/default.shtm>

2. Residential Treatment Facilities

Data Collection:

- Long term and short term needed

Limestone County Juvenile Justice Division coordinates with MHMR for client mental health needs and assessments. However, resources are stressed due to the lack of counselors to accommodate Limestone and surrounding counties. Additional staff and mental health resources are needed. Due to recent mandated state laws person previously eligible for MHMR services have been reclassified as non-eligible. There remains, however, the need to address these individual's needs.

Recommendations:

- Support programs for treatment facilities with adequate staff and residential beds for in-house treatment. Currently, there are waiting lists at most facilities.
- Develop early identification and intervention programs that divert children and adolescents into treatment.
- Enhance availability of residential services in Limestone County for children and adolescents who need a structured therapeutic environment outside of their home.
- Develop a mobile mental health crisis unit that can respond to calls involving children and adolescents.
- 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.
- 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.
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health and/or substance abuse treatment programs.
- Create programs that address anger management for children and adolescents.
- Develop programs that address goal setting for children and adolescents.
- Provide outpatient counseling programs for children and adolescents.

Resources:

- None currently available.

3. Youth Substance Abuse

Data Collection:

- Lack of services for teen alcohol and drug abuse prevention or treatment programs
- Need for in-house treatment
- Need for follow-up care
- Need for prevention alternatives and education
- Need for additional enforcement of juvenile substance abuse for alcohol and cigarettes

Recommendations:

- Support funding sources for prevention, treatment and follow-up care for juveniles struggling with addictions and peer pressure
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health and/or substance abuse treatment programs
- Develop programs that address anger management for children and adolescents

- Develop programs that address goal setting for children and adolescents
- Develop early identification and intervention programs that can divert children and adolescents into treatment
- Grants for juvenile enforcement

Resources:

- Juvenile Probation Licensed Chemical Dependence Counselor
- Mexia P.D. provides an annual drug prevention publication for the community
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe Program
 - Conducted “Shattered Dreams” program in Mexia
 - Reality Education for Drivers (RED) program: Referrals are received from judicial system for “at risk” youth. The class covers traffic safety, risky driving, and alcohol/drug abuse.
- DSHS Region 7 - Office of Tobacco Prevention & Control

4. Training for Juvenile Service Providers

Data Collection:

- Lack of training for juvenile detention officers
- Limited qualified personnel

Recommendations:

- Support funding for the training of county personnel in identifying and responding to issues concerning juveniles/youth issues.

Resources:

- Texas Juvenile Probation Commission

5. Need for Comprehensive Mental Health Services

Data Collection:

Limited resources are available if the juvenile doesn’t qualify for MHMR services. Limestone County Juvenile Justice Division coordinates with MHMR for client mental health needs and assessments. However, at times the resources are stressed due to the lack of counselors to accommodate Limestone and surrounding counties. Additional staff and mental health resources are needed. Due to recently mandated state laws, persons previously eligible for MHMR services have been reclassified as non-eligible. There remains, however, the need to address their needs.

Recommendations:

- Support programs for the aftercare services for extended support, treatment and prevention geared towards the special needs of juveniles.
- More funding for personnel and facilities

Resources:

- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau (CTYSB) Communities in Schools (CIS)

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

1. Support Services

Data Collection:

Child Abuse:

- 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
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program
- Need multi-discipline investigation and response to child abuse; Children's Advocacy Center

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

- Stable victim resource revenues to enable organizations to maintain core services
- Resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps
- Support groups and counseling 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
- Comprehensive case management, transportation, and job search services
- Seamless continuum of care
- Improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement and other local agencies

Secondary Victims

Post suicide/homicide services for family members affected by suicide or homicide.

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
- 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
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment
- Need for suicide prevention program

Sexual Violence

- Need for local SANE response
- Need for local volunteers
- Need for training
- Need for training
- Need for outreach
- Need for counselor/case management

- Need for multidisciplinary Sexual Assault Response Team

Elder Abuse

- Shortage of mental health services reasonably accessed with a 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 adult victims
- Programs for adults who witness violence
- Resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps
- Easier facilitation and awareness for obtaining a protective order
- Awareness of available resources in the community
- Transportation
- Organized, identified emergency response team

Aftercare/Follow-up Care for Victims

- Long-term
- Short-term
- Need for suicide prevention program

Recommendations:

- Continue to support programs that address services for victims of violence and crime.
- Encourage collaboration of service agencies to network and bridge the services gaps that exist between the agencies.
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
 - Multi-disciplinary team through the Children's Advocacy Center
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) needed at Limestone Hospital
- Transportation for victims of crime appointments in Waco
- Forensic Interviewer
- Case management
- Counseling
- Multi-disciplinary Team

Resources:

- Advocacy Center – law enforcement training
- Family Abuse Center
- District Attorney's Office – Victims Assistance Coordinator
- Scottie's House
- Child Protective Services
- Adult Protective Services
- DSHS Region 7 Limestone County Health Needs Assessment Coalition
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/limestone/default.shtm>

2. On-Scene Victims Services

Data Collection:

There are limited on-scene victims' services due to personnel and funding issues.

Recommendations:

- Increase law enforcement awareness of services
- Encourage service providers to bridge the gap between their services and law enforcement to ensure law enforcement and schools are made aware of the victims services programs available.

- Victim services groups must collaborate and create a crisis intervention resource list for Limestone/Freestone jurisdictions and schools (plan to call it a “Bi-Stone County Resource List”).
- Support programs that address support services for victims of violence and crime.
- Develop a team of trained on-scene volunteers
 - To help calm the situation for crisis intervention

Resources/Successes:

- DPS Victims Assistance Coordinator
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children’s implementation of Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs
- DA’s Victims Assistance Coordinator

Social Services Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

1. Limited Service in the Rural Area for Indigent and Medicaid

Data Collection:

- Limited dental services
- Lack of assistance regarding in-home checkups for individuals on medication
- Limited services to low-income or persons without insurance who need medical, psychological and dental hygiene services

Recommendations:

- Continue to recruit dentists and other health practitioners
- Support programs like “Are You Okay” program
- DSHS continues to recruit doctors and other practitioners to provide gaps in services

Resources/Successes:

- Indigent Health Care Coordinator
- Are You Okay program
- Heart of Texas Workforce Center programs include:
 - Project RIO – for ex-offenders
 - Choices – for TANF recipients
 - Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
 - Food Stamps – Employment and training for food stamp recipients

2. Transportation

Data Collection:

- Limited transportation available for indigent/elderly/disabled individuals into the city for services:
 - Rural transportation hours are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., appointments must be made in advance, and no service is available during non-traditional business hours.

Recommendations:

- More vehicles and staff
- Extended hours to include evenings and weekends

Resources/Successes:

- Limestone County Transit System

3. Teen Pregnancy

Data Collection:

- In 2002, the birth rate for teens 15-17 years was 23.2/1,000 in the United States and 38.2/1,000 in Texas.
- In 2002, the Texas teen (15-17) pregnancy rate was 45.1/1,000. (Texas Vital Statistics 2002).

Recommendations:

- Support services that provide education, prevention and parenting skills to teen mothers

Resources:

- DSHS
- Planned Parenthood
 - Provides counseling and OBGYN exams

- Advocacy Center – sexual awareness training
- Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Kid Safe Program – provide educational classes and distribute car seats to those who qualify
- Groesbeck ISD offers program for teen pregnancy
- Brazos AHEC

4. Homeless Services

Data Collection:

- There is a need for a homeless shelter in Limestone County
- Need for health care for those who have no money or health insurance

Community Emergency Management Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

1. Involvement of the public/residents to work together and participate in neighborhood groups that will assist law enforcement and other first responders in the community.

Data Collection:

None currently available

Recommendations:

Homeland Security Strategic Plan includes private citizen involvement in emergency response and assistance including but not limited to:

- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
- Volunteers In Policing (VIPs)
- Protect Texas
- Fire Corps

Special Note – An increased emphasis is needed regarding outreach to local faith based organizations.

Resources/Successes:

- Neighborhood Watch is in place
- Sheriff's Department – "Wise Eyes" in place
- Protect Texas has been implemented with increased volunteer numbers
- DSHS Region 7 Faith-based presentations on preparedness

2. Need for Hazmat Team

Data Collection:

Due to legislation dissolving the Regional Drug Task Force, extensive training and education, as well as equipment for responders and law enforcement, will be needed in the counties to safely break down Meth Labs, as well as respond to chemical hazards and spills caused by transportation accidents and accidental releases.

Recommendations:

Support programs and funding to support training and equipment acquisition for all first responders and law enforcement in the county. Explore grant opportunities from EPA/GDEM for First Responder training.

Resources:

Limestone Medical Center does have some limited resources in this regard. Limestone Medical Center does have "fine – de-con" capabilities and equipment through regional funding.

3. Mandates to School Districts Concerning Emergency Planning

Data Collection:

None currently available.

Recommendations:

The school districts have begun and will continue to work with the County Emergency Coordinator as well as law enforcement and other first responders to prepare the school and school-aged children for potential catastrophic events.

Limestone Emergency Management is actively working with Limestone School Districts regarding mitigation and management of catastrophic events.

Resources:

Limestone County Emergency Management Coordinator . All Limestone School Districts SB11 mandated Emergency Plans are in place and have been vetted by EMC.

Resources Available

Included below are resources identified by the Limestone 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	Free Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs
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 jgoodnight@voiceinc.org www.voiceinc.org
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 jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org
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 Program 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 www.advocacycntr.org

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 jgoodnight@voiceinc.org www.voiceinc.org
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Mexia ISD PD	School Police	Mexia School District
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 program, transitional housing, emergency cell phones, and other services.

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.
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	Domestic violence shelter, counseling services (short

	Violence Shelter	and long term), case management, advocacy, Legal advocacy, outreach, Educational presentations, On-scene crisis intervention, Crisis hotline, Law enforcement training, Start First Violence Prevention program, transitional housing, emergency cell phones, and other services.
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Health / Medical / Substance Abuse:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MADD	Victim Services	Free Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs
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 jgoodnight@voiceinc.org www.voiceinc.org
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 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	Free Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs
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	HHSC	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.
Klara's 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	<p>Mental Retardation Services (254-757-3933)</p> <p>MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (254-752-3451)</p> <p>Eligibility:</p> <p>Adults (18+)</p> <p>Serving persons w/ severe and persistent mental illnesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schizophrenia • Schizoaffective • Bipolar and • Severe Major Depression <p>Fee: Based on monthly maximum fee schedule; accepting insurance, Medicaid and Medicare</p> <p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information/referral • Screening/assessment • Crisis services (day/night) • Crisis respite • Psychiatric/pharmacological • Jail-based assessment/ diversion services • Probation/Parole assessment and treatment • Case Management • Service Coordination • Supported Employment
MCYC-CIS, PACES	School Social Work	Work with students in schools who are at-risk for dropping out. Also work with students who are in juvenile detention.
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. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 jgoodnight@voiceinc.org www.voiceinc.org</p>

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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
Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe	Community-based injury prevention program	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. There are child passenger safety programs established in Mexia, Groesbeck, and Coolidge high schools.
Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center Trauma Services Kid Safe	Community-based injury prevention program	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. There are two current child safety seat fitting stations within Limestone County – Groesbeck P.D. and Mexia F.D.
Department of State Health Services	Public Health	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.

Health Service Region 7 Mission Statement

It is our mission that we commit, through personal and organizational excellence, to be an agent of change dedicated to achieving a healthier Texas.

Programs and Services

(please click on any of the links below to view information about those programs)

1. [Birth Defects Monitoring Division](#)
2. [Children With Special Health Care Needs](#)
3. [Consumer Health Protection](#)
4. [Epidemiology](#)
5. [Field Office Locations](#)
6. [Immunization Program](#)
7. [Public Health Improvement](#)
8. [Public Health Nursing](#)
9. [Sexually Transmitted Diseases](#)
10. [Tobacco Prevention and Control](#)
11. [Tuberculosis Elimination Division](#)
12. [Vision and Hearing Services](#)
13. [Zoonosis Control Program](#)

Public Health Improvement Program:

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.

To view the Limestone County Health Needs Assessment Executive Summary prepared by DSHS Region 7 go to:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/limestone/default.shtm>

Cindy deSa, MPH, MSW
Regional Coordinator
Office of Tobacco Prevention & Control
Phone: 254.771.6758
Cindy.desa@dshs.state.tx.us

Interagency Cooperation

The Limestone 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 strategic plan to aid in prioritizing and closing the identified gaps in the community.

The Planning Committee shared the different services they offered, as well as, services offered by agencies and individuals that were unable to attend the planning meetings. The team met only once to make updates and corrections to the previous year's plan. However, the cooperative working relationship is still in place.

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

Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Limestone 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 Limestone County Community Planning Team strives to meet periodically to review the plan and make necessary additions and deletions. At least one formal meeting of the entire group is each biennium, but agency and community representatives may submit suggestions and changes via telephone and e-mail throughout the year to the Community Planning Coordinator.

Drafts and 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. A current copy of the plan is posted on the www.hotcog.org website.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Team to improve outcomes for Limestone County families struggling with problems described in the plan's focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Limestone 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

Limestone County Community Planning Coordinator

Cindy Rafter, Criminal Justice Planner

Heart of Texas Council of Governments

1514 South New Road

Waco, Texas 76711

Office: 254.292.1891

Cell: 254.315.3322

FAX: 254.756.0102

Email: cindy.rafter@hot.cog.tx.us

www.hotcog.org