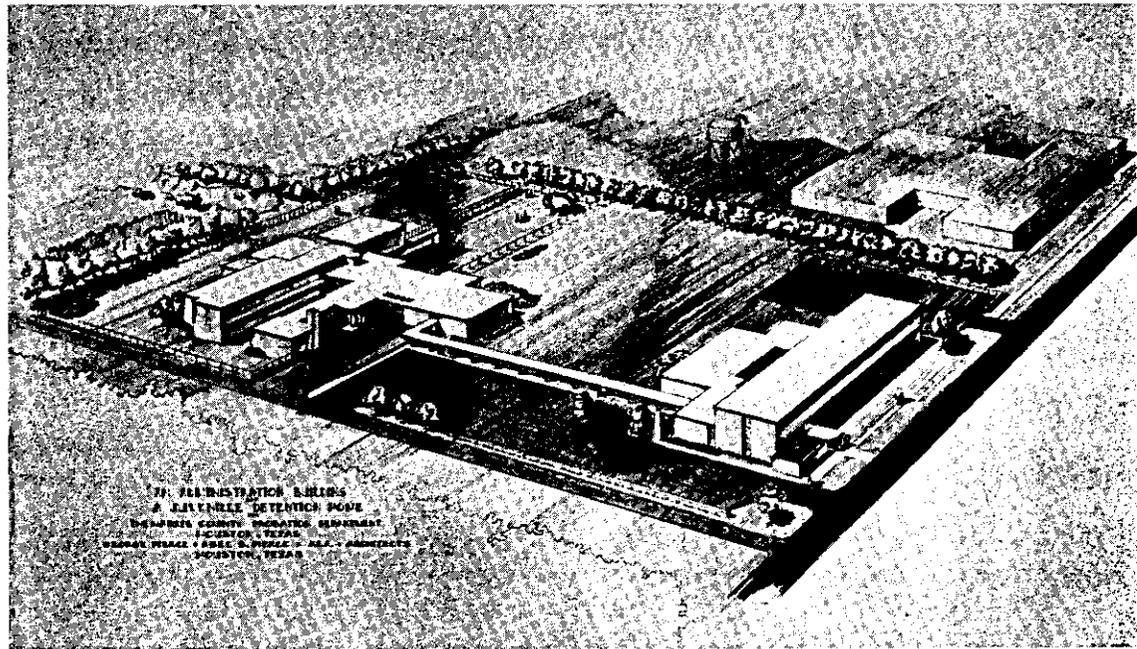


1956 Annual Report



77. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
A. JUVENILE DETENTION HOME
HARRIS COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT
HOUSTON, TEXAS
WILLIAM PURKAY & JOHN D. PURKAY, A.E.C. ARCHITECTS
HOUSTON, TEXAS

NEW ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND JUVENILE DETENTION HOME

HARRIS COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT
HOUSTON, TEXAS

PAUL IRICK
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER



R. O. D. SCHOENBACHER
ASST. CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

1225 ELDER STREET
HOUSTON 10, TEXAS

PROBATION DEPARTMENT
OF
HARRIS COUNTY

To: All Citizens of Houston and Harris County
The Honorable Commissioners' Court
The Honorable Juvenile Board

This booklet is the Annual Report of the Harris County Probation Department for 1956, submitted for your information and approval.

In the following pages you will find a synopsis of the problem found in our community, a review of the service offered by the Probation Department, and information about the children who need this service.

The statistics in this booklet relating to Delinquency and Dependency apply only to the cases within the scope of the Probation Department, and do not attempt to show the extent of Delinquency or Dependency in Harris County.

We appreciate the splendid cooperation given us by the Law Enforcement Agencies. The Juvenile Divisions of the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff's Department deserve special commendation for their understanding and assistance in working with these children with problems.

The efforts of all Public and Private Social Agencies and other interested citizens, together with the work of our governing Juvenile Board and Commissioners' Court, have enabled us to make progress in helping these unfortunate children.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Irick".

PAUL IRICK,
Chief Probation Officer.



Honorable J. W. Mills

Judge of
Juvenile Court

Judge of the Court
of Domestic Relations

Harris County Juvenile Board

Honorable Bob Casey, Chairman, Harris County Judge

Honorable Spurgeon Bell, Judge, 125th Judicial District Court
Honorable Ewing Boyd, Judge, 55th Judicial District Court
Honorable Byron Johnson, Judge, 80th Judicial District Court
Honorable Tom Coleman, Judge, 151st Judicial District Court
Honorable E. B. Duggan, Judge, Criminal District Court Number 1
Honorable William M. Holland, Judge, 127th Judicial District Court
Honorable Wilmer B. Hunt, Judge, 133rd Judicial District Court
Honorable Dan W. Jackson, Judge, 129th Judicial District Court
Honorable Langston G. King, Judge, Criminal District Court No. 2
Honorable J. W. Mills, Judge, Court of Domestic Relations
Honorable Ben Moorhead, Judge, 11th Judicial District Court
Honorable John Snell, Judge, 152nd Judicial District Court
Honorable Ben F. Wilson, Judge, 61st Judicial District Court
Honorable A. C. Winborn, Judge, Criminal District Court No. 3
Honorable Phil D. Woodruff, Judge, 113th Judicial District Court

Harris County Commissioner's Court

Honorable Bob Casey, Harris County Judge

W. Kyle Chapman, Precinct Number 1

V. V. Ramsey, Precinct Number 2

Philip E. Sayers, Precinct Number 3

E. A. Lyons, Jr., Precinct Number 4

The Philosophy of the Court of Domestic Relations, The Juvenile Court for Harris County

J. W. MILLS

THE act of creating the Court of Domestic Relations for Harris County, effective September 27, 1953, gives the Court concurrent jurisdiction with the District Courts in the County of all cases involving adoptions, delinquent, neglected or dependent children, and all jurisdiction, powers and authority placed in the District Courts under the juvenile and child welfare laws of Texas, and in all divorce and marriage annulment cases as well as independent actions involving child custody or support. The Juvenile Board having designated the Court of Domestic Relations as the Juvenile Court of Harris County gives the Court exclusive jurisdiction in all neglect, dependency and delinquency cases.

Authorization of the Texas Juvenile Court Law in relation to neglected dependent and delinquent children, as in other states, is very broad in definition and the authority given the court, the general objectives being to provide authoritative protection for neglected and dependent children, to control delinquency and rehabilitate young offenders who are in conflict with our laws.

Juvenile offenders must be held responsible for their misdeeds but we must keep in mind that we are dealing with boys and girls. Individuals must be considered as well as the act which has brought them into court, emphasis being placed on the best interests of the children and the protection of the state.

There are those who believe, with some justification, that this whole question of juvenile delinquency can be controlled by taking a few shortcuts: reduce the juvenile age (two Bills were introduced at the recent session of the Legislature proposing to reduce the juvenile age to 14) and send more young offenders to prison; punish parents who contribute to the dependency or delinquency of children; be tough on the juvenile offenders; prescribe definite and arbitrary punishment and, by so doing, teach them a lesson. Experience has proven, however, that such procedure will not solve the problem but may be a dangerous and cruel way to deal with the individual boy or girl as well as other members of the family.

Ninety-five per cent or more of the boys and girls before our Juvenile Courts plead guilty to the offenses with which they are charged. Children are admittedly neglected and dependent, without proper parental care. It is rare, indeed, when a child or his parents

before the Juvenile Court is represented by legal counsel. Not one case in 500 is tried before a jury. Probation officers, social and welfare agency workers and the state's attorney are, therefore, in the position of representing the individual as well as the state.

Constitutional rights must be respected and legal procedure followed. This gives the Juvenile Court unusual responsibility which necessitates a thorough understanding of the causes or problems that bring children before the court. This is not too difficult as a rule, but the real question is to know what can or should be done to provide legally and adequately for them. How can they be protected, properly guided and saved from further delinquency and possible adult crime, and at the same time safeguard the public welfare?

These questions cannot be answered by merely handing out legal doses of justice. Not more than twenty per cent of all children before our Juvenile Court are repeaters. This percentage could be further reduced if our cases were better diagnosed and the court had adequate local facilities and/or better state resources to properly treat and rehabilitate many of the children long recognized as problems in schools and known for years to social and welfare agencies. The big gap continues to be between what we *know* about juvenile delinquency and dependency and what facilities are available to meet even the minimum needs of many court wards.

The Juvenile Board and Commissioners' Court of Harris County are deeply concerned and mindful of their responsibility in dealing with the whole question of juvenile delinquency and protective care for dependent children. Our Probation Department has been enlarged and strengthened. Foster home care for dependent and delinquent children is being re-emphasized. The monthly rate of board has been increased. Constant effort is being made to secure better homes and to give closer supervision for these children and boys and girls being placed on probation by the Court and being paroled from our institutions.

State resources, both public and private, are constantly being sought in planning constructively for children who must be removed



from their own parents or relatives. Parental rights are often terminated, even for older children, when it is shown that parents have willfully neglected and repeatedly mistreated them. This gives opportunity to provide permanent care for some children in free homes or adoptive homes. For many of them this is the only real security they have ever known.

The most recent progress made is the definite and constructive planning for an administration building for the Probation Department and modern facilities for detention of boys and girls charged with delinquency pending investigation and hearing before the court.

There is hope that recent legislation will improve our local program and greatly improve services for children on a state level. Effective September 1, 1957, the Texas Youth Council consisting of a Board of three, selected by the Governor, will appoint an Executive



Director to be in charge of our state training schools and homes for children. This is an opportunity to strengthen and better coordinate these programs. Better facilities will undoubtedly be provided for the care of delinquent boys. It might be that a new institution, separate and apart from the school at Gatesville, will be built for younger boys, and doors of other state homes opened a little wider for neglected and dependent children, particularly Negro children (a group the state has completely ignored), Latin-American children, and boys and girls who are too easily thought of as being retarded. It is planned that foster home care will also be provided for some

children who are accepted as wards of the state.

How important it is for our agencies, both public and private, to take another look at their intake policies and to extend services of our institutions, provide foster home care, and consider carefully children who might be placed on a permanent basis in free or adoptive homes. The reorganization of this part of our state program could be the most important and constructive move that has been made

in the interest of children lacking parental care since the Juvenile Court Act was approved by the State of Texas.

The Legislature has also authorized the appointment of a Referee for the Juvenile Court of Harris County, the first for a Juvenile Court in Texas. There is every reason to believe that with a Referee working under the direction of the court valuable time of workers will be saved and community agencies given an opportunity to bring more cases before the court, which many believe is important from the standpoint of the child and often his parents as well.

The importance of religion, the place of the church, and the responsibility of the family in strengthening moral and spiritual values in our community cannot be over-emphasized. True Christian values must be stressed—love, kindness, patience, repentance, and forgiveness. Real progress is being made at this point.

The full time services of a young minister have been made available to the Court of Domestic Relations and other community agencies by a Christian layman and his wife, the total expenses of the program being underwritten for two years. The Union Baptist Association also has a Baptist minister giving full time to this service. These two ministers are making a sincere effort to assist in extending the services of all of our churches far beyond their own sanctuaries.



Churches are being drawn closer to the causes of neglect, dependency, juvenile delinquency, adult crime, and evil forces in our community that lower the moral standards of individuals and weaken and often destroy our homes. Ministers and laymen are being encouraged to work more closely with our law enforcement agencies. For this resource we are deeply grateful.

Juvenile delinquency will continue to be a distressing question, and social and welfare problems will be with us until the end of time, but there is much we can do to prevent, control, and correct many destructive forces. This is our opportunity and this is our challenge.

The Child—The Community and The Court

“In the treatment of juvenile delinquency two matters are of paramount importance, namely, the safety, protection, and welfare of the community and the welfare of the individual child concerned. Neither should be lost sight of nor subordinated in our desire to serve the other. When we speak of protecting the child, we do not intend shielding him from responsibility for the consequences of his acts.

“In seeking the welfare of the child in a true sense the court’s work is directed to securing all services available to achieve the healthy development of the child and the greatest opportunity for his becoming a good citizen in the community. One cannot, therefore, and should not, seek to separate the welfare of the community and the welfare of the child or assume that one must be of primary and one of secondary importance. In each case the court’s obligation is to take such action as is in the best interest of the child and of the community.”

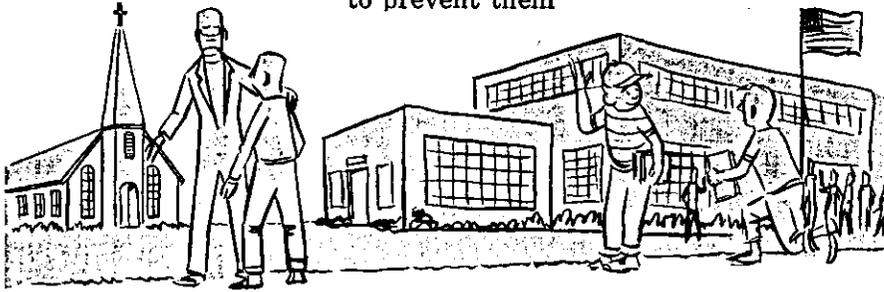
—From the Report on Juvenile Court Administration prepared by the National Conference on Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency (1946).

“Justice does not end its task with the adjudication of delinquency or neglect. The adjudication is but a warning that we must act quickly lest a child lose his opportunity to enjoy the benefits of our society. The Children’s Court can function effectively only if it has adequate facilities available for the care and treatment of the children it has a duty to protect. The price we pay for inadequate child facilities is defeated and unhappy children, adults who are a continuing problem to themselves and to the community, and a sense of injustice and shame for all of us. It is a price that we cannot afford to continue paying.”

—From conclusions of forum held in New York City January, 1953, on “Child Care Facilities Available to the Domestic Relations Court.”

Community Goals Toward Prevention

The best way to deal with Delinquency and Dependency is to prevent them



MORE YOUTH PROGRAMS IN CHURCHES

BETTER SCHOOLS & VOCATIONAL SERVICES



BETTER HOSPITAL & TREATMENT FACILITIES



BETTER HOMES



BETTER COMMUNITY SERVICE TO CHILDREN



MORE COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ACTION

Probation for the Juvenile Offender

What Is It?

Probation is a *method* we use in working with children in trouble. It is not a "gesture of leniency," it is the looking at, the working with, and the planning for an individual whose behavior has brought him, in adolescence, face to face with some of the hard facts of living.

Probation is an *investment* in the child. It is an evidence of our basic belief in the necessity of providing protection for and rehabilitation of adolescents whose acts have been unacceptable but who themselves are good though confused and conflicted.

Probation in its truest sense is *treatment*.

The Purpose

Probation is *prevention*, designed to be used as a positive deterrent against repeated and more serious violations of our laws. It is designed to help, to build up, to prevent.

Through the processes of probation, the child in conflict with the law is individualized. He is an individual with an individual problem. The offense is important for protection of the community. The reasons for the offense are sought for and reckoned with. The adolescent is a part of all that he has known. His particular involvements are dealt with, not in isolation, but in the broad constellation of people and situations that are his world, with the purpose of helping him to make a socially acceptable adjustment in his own way.

The Scope of Service

Probation, through the Juvenile Court and Department, must be seen broadly. It involves community concern as well as individual concern for the needs of all children. It involves using available community services to build up and strengthen economic and security of the individual child and his family. The service involves providing adequate health and medical services for the child and his family; it involves helping the child gain maximum educational benefits; it involves helping the child find and enjoy wholesome recreation and good companions, and, when indicated, to find purposeful job placement.

Probation service provides a study of the present and past offenses, the home and social conditions, the mental, emotional, and physical conditions of the adolescent in trouble. Then, from so knowing and understanding the child, to help him to want to act differently and become more acceptable to himself and to society.

Houston-Harris County—1956

Boys: Age 10-17
Girls: Age 10-18



| | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| Total Referred | 2,575 | 588 |
| Detained | 1,624 | 449 |
| Psychological Tests | 502 | 225 |
| Sent to Court | 647 | 196 |
| Sent to Gainesville | | 27 |
| Sent to Crockett | | 17 |
| Sent to Gatesville | 121 | |
| On Official Probation to Parents or Others | 280 | 77 |
| Pending in Court | 45 | 46 |
| On Parole | 218 | 90 |
| To Other Institutions | 38 | 29 |
| On Unofficial Probation | 382 | 282 |

Service to the Dependent and Neglected Child

The Scope

Our community expresses the philosophy that it is the inherent right of every child to have a proper home and equally proper parental care. Emphasis is always placed on keeping families together and it is also the goal of this department. However, when children are being damaged physically and emotionally through neglect created by acts of their parents, or guardians, it is their legal right to the state's protection.

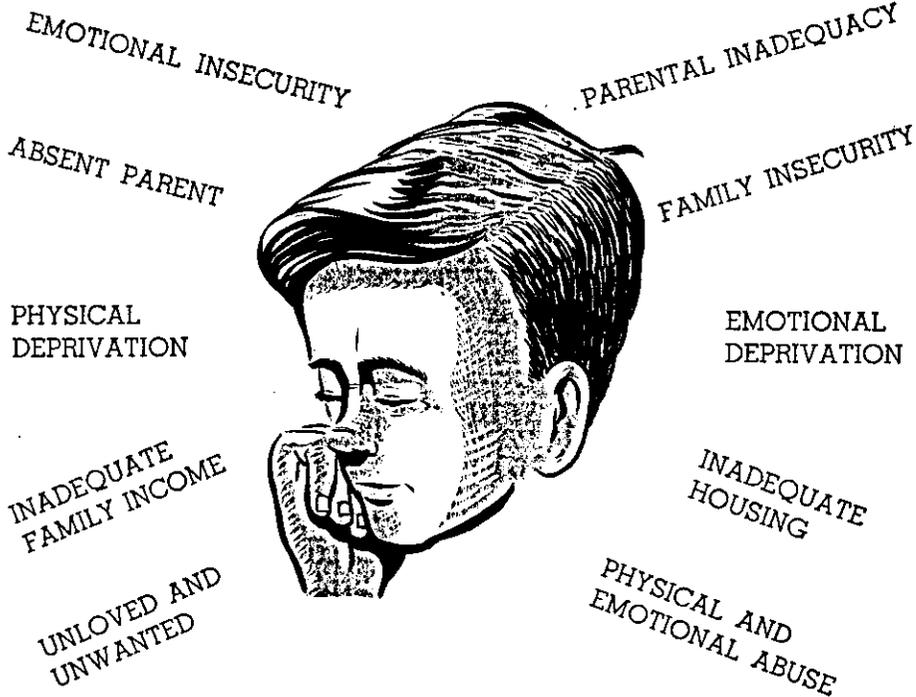
The department's primary responsibility is investigation of these cases initiated on the complaint of some interested party in the community, filing formal petitions, preparation of Court reports, Court appearances and supervision of children under Juvenile Court jurisdiction. In addition to Juvenile Court proceedings and jurisdiction the department has assumed further responsibility to these children in the community. If study and diagnosis reveals that the need of this particular family might be served by a private agency, appropriate referral is made. Also, counseling and guidance through casework service, is effected as limited staff will permit, in an effort to strengthen family units, and help the family to accept and use community resources.

The Need

Service to dependent and neglected children requires community interest and participation. It is every citizen's responsibility—parents, ministers, social workers and individuals from all walks of life. A program *centered toward early recognition* is needed, to identify as early as possible, children with family problems, so that service can be given to the family through the child.

Early diagnosis and treatment is the only sound approach toward the problems of delinquency as well as emotionally disturbed parents. We must conserve positive values, rather than waiting for deterioration of the family unit, and removing the children either temporarily or permanently. Only through this effort will we reduce the ever increasing amount of dependent and neglected children being referred.

The Dilemma of the Dependent and Neglected Child



| | |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| Total Number Children Referred | 1392 |
| Formal Petitions Filed | 372 |
| Petitions Pending | 138 |
| Declared Dependent | 134 |
| Parental Rights Terminated | 55 |
| Placed in Foster Homes | 121 |
| Placed in Institutions | 111 |
| Returned to Parents | 45 |
| Placed in Adoptive Homes | 39 |
| Under Supervision in Own Home | 733 |

Summary Report of Dependency Referrals 1956

| | Cases | Children |
|--|-------|----------|
| Number active January 1, 1956 | 1116 | 1353 |
| Number received during year | 936 | 1392 |
| Number active January 1, 1957 | 901 | 1305 |
| Plan of care for all children active January 1, 1957 | | 1305 |
| In home of own parents or parent | | 733 |
| In home of relative or other than parent | | 280 |
| In boarding home | | 131 |
| In adoptive home | | 29 |
| In Burnett Bayland Home | | 83 |
| In State Institution | | 28 |
| In private institution or church institution | | 21 |

Summary of All Services 1956

| | | |
|--|-----|-------|
| Total Number of All Referrals | | 6,079 |
| Delinquency | | 3,163 |
| Dependency | | 1,392 |
| Custody Investigations | | 113 |
| Adoption Investigations | | 703 |
| Out of Town Inquiries | | 362 |
| Adult T. B. Applications | | 301 |
| State Institutional Applications Completed | | 29 |
| County Institutional Applications | | 16 |
| Total Number of Children Receiving Formal Hearing in Juvenile Court | | 1,348 |
| Delinquency Hearings | | 843 |
| Dependency Hearings | 372 | 505 |

Comparative Report of Offenses

Delinquency:

| Reasons for referral | 1956 Number of | | 1955 Number of | | 1954 Number of | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls |
| All reasons | 2,575 | 588 | 2,400 | 610 | 2,227 | 585 |
| Auto theft | 403 | 7 | 401 | 21 | 322 | 18 |
| Burglary and theft | 795 | 67 | 760 | 13 | 709 | 16 |
| Robbery | 47 | 1 | 69 | 6 | 53 | 3 |
| Bicycle theft | 60 | — | 78 | — | 51 | — |
| Prowling and petty thievery | 316 | 29 | 94 | 97 | 69 | 120 |
| Runaway | 435 | 303 | 314 | 271 | 294 | 252 |
| Malicious mischief | 242 | 15 | 297 | 41 | 280 | 35 |
| Forgery and check swindling | 2 | 9 | 24 | 29 | 17 | 7 |
| Sex offense | 29 | 45 | 61 | 43 | 48 | 42 |
| Narcotics | 15 | 1 | 71 | 20 | 69 | 15 |
| Truancy | 6 | 13 | 14 | 9 | 14 | 11 |
| Traffic offense | 29 | 2 | 30 | 6 | 36 | 2 |
| Injury to person | 22 | 9 | 28 | 11 | 14 | 7 |
| Being ungovernable | 109 | 61 | 68 | 31 | 42 | 50 |
| Aggravated assault | 32 | 9 | 71 | 12 | 67 | 3 |
| Other | 33 | 17 | 20 | — | 132 | 4 |

1956 Referrals by Races

| Delinquency | Anglo American | Latin American | Negro |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Boys | 1,510 | 488 | 577 |
| Girls | 400 | 74 | 114 |

| 1956 SUPPORT DEPARTMENT | |
|--|----------------|
| Active cases, January 1, 1956 | 3,551 |
| New cases opened during year | 1,669 |
| Reopened cases during year | 815 |
| Total children receiving support | 11,047 |
| Total all cases | 6,035 |
| Average number children receiving support each month | 6,434 |
| Total amount collected and disbursed during year | \$2,377,966.50 |
| Cash on hand, December 31, 1956 | None |
| Warrants and receipts issued | 85,499 |
| Total amount collected for children in foster homes and institutions | \$3,672.50 |

SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

The District Courts require that monies for support of minor children be received and disbursed by the Probation Department. Primarily, the Support Department provides a record of payment to the Courts, but also serves the recipient through counselling and planning.

1956 SPECIAL SERVICES

| Workers | SERVICE | Number |
|---------|------------------------------------|--------|
| 2 | Adoption investigations | 703 |
| 1 | Custody investigations | 113 |
| 1 | T-B applications (Adult) | 301 |
| 1/2 | Feebleminded applications accepted | 91 |
| 1/2 | Out of town inquiries | 362 |
| 1 * | Psychological services | |
| | Children tested | 1,480 |
| | Parents tested | 180 |
| | Parents counselled | 200 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

*Plus volunteers

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Probation Department offers a variety of services to children and adults in Harris County which are not specifically probation services: Adoption investigations on all petitions, custody of minor children investigations as required by district courts, and applications to various institutions.

Program Summary 1956

Burnett Bayland Home

for dependent and neglected children

Population as of January 1, 1956

Children placed in 1956

Children released in 1956

Population as of December 31, 1956

| Boys | Girls |
|------|-------|
| 43 | 59 |
| 76 | 68 |
| 79 | 84 |
| 40 | 43 |

Harris County Boys School

for delinquent boys

Population as of January 1, 1956

Number of boys committed

Number of boys released

Population as of December 31, 1956

| |
|----|
| 25 |
| 40 |
| 15 |
| 50 |

Foster Homes

for delinquent, dependent and neglected children

Total number children in foster homes
as of January 1, 1956

Number children in paid foster homes
as of January 1, 1956

Number children in paid foster homes
as of December 31, 1956

Number of children in free foster homes
as of January 1, 1956

Number of children in free foster homes
as of December 31, 1956

Number of foster homes used by Harris County,
both paid and free

| |
|-----|
| 145 |
| 97 |
| 100 |
| 48 |
| 31 |
| 139 |

Home for the Aged

Population as of January 1, 1956

Number persons placed

Number of persons released

Population as of December 31, 1956

| |
|----|
| 48 |
| 16 |
| 17 |
| 47 |

Emergency Care

for dependent and neglected children

Number children placed for emergency care
January 1, through December 31, 1956

White children

Negro children

Average length of emergency care

| |
|---------|
| 231 |
| 181 |
| 50 |
| 14 days |

Progress of the Department through Action of The Juvenile Board and Commissioners Court

Detention:

In May of 1954, the County Psychopathic facility was moved to the County Jail Building, allowing the Detention Home to operate the entire floor, alleviating an undesirable situation. Detention programming was begun and a trained staff was employed. Simultaneously, surveys and preliminary plans were developed for a new detention home. A site for the building was obtained and final architectural plans were near completion at the close of 1956.

Boys Home:

Rehabilitation of the Harris County Boys' Home at Webster, Texas, was begun early in 1954 and the school was opened to Delinquent Boys from ages ten (10) to fourteen (14). The Program consists of Academic, Religious, and Recreational Activities centering on guidance and direction for the individual boy. This facility has enabled the Department and the Court to help more of the younger boys at the early stage of their problem.

Psychologist:

Since July, 1955 the Department has employed a full-time Psychologist who has developed a volunteer program for further testing service to the children handled by the Department. The volunteer workers were secured from Women's Service Clubs, chosen on the basis of their Academic qualifications and experience, orientated and trained individually in test administration. This diagnostic service has assisted the Department and Court greatly in working with the child and family.

Additional Staff:

The Department has experienced growth from forty one (41) total staff in 1953 to sixty four (64) total staff in 1956, and the organization was able to develop additional sections within the Department. Three new casework positions and two secretarial positions were granted in 1956. One supervisory position enabled us to create a Parole Section within the Department in order to supervise the boys returning from Gatesville State School.

The Organization

| | |
|---|---|
| Administration: | Chief Probation Officer Assistant Chief Probation Officer Business Administrator Secretary |
| Support Section: | Supervisor Seven (7) Support Workers |
| Intake Section: | Supervisor Three (3) Caseworkers |
| Dependency Section: | Supervisor Assistant Supervisor Six (6) Caseworkers, Dependency and Neglect Three (3) Caseworkers, Special Services One (1) Caseworker, Foster Homes One (1) Nurse, Foster Homes |
| Delinquent Girls' Section: | Supervisor Five (5) Caseworkers |
| Delinquent Boys' Section: | Supervisor Assistant Supervisor Nine (9) Caseworkers |
| Parole Section: | Supervisor Two (2) Caseworkers |
| Clerical, Files & Reception: | Supervisor Ten (10) Persons |
| Psychological Section: | Psychologist |