



# Harris County Juvenile Probation Department

*Helping one child at a time.*

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**SEYMOUR COX, JR.**  
**1909-1993**

kids." He befriended the friendless, championed the neglected and loved the lonely. Seymour's caseload was the most challenging of all—children with serious mental, emotional and physical problems. Some had special medical needs; others had never known a stable home or eaten regular meals. Seymour was a true friend to all of these children; each was unique, each was special and each was worthy of all his efforts.

He was also a master at finding people and resources to help, to heal, to teach and to inspire. He built a personal network of benefactors across the state to help children. Everyone in the world of juvenile justice and rehabilitation knew, loved and never denied Seymour.

Sadly, but, proudly, we dedicate our annual report to Seymour Cox, an incredible man who found children in chaos, brought order to their lives and gave them a chance at success.

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## **TO THE CITIZENS OF HARRIS COUNTY**

Juvenile crime continued to be one of the most important issues in Harris County last year. We had hoped for a decline in the referrals to the Juvenile Probation Department, but, sadly, the numbers escalated. Dramatically pointing out contrasts in juvenile crime over the years, we found that two children were charged with murder in 1975, but 17 years later in 1992, there were 62!

Guns, gangs and drugs made headlines in Houston and Harris County last year and we were shocked to read about more children involved in crimes that were formerly relegated to adult courts. The department handled a staggering number of cases and provided services to more than 26,000 youths and their families.

Thankfully, there was some good news in the juvenile crime arena. New sources of funding from both the local community and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission opened promising doors for programming and rehabilitation. Department staff worked even harder, and dedicated volunteers stepped in to help in many areas of the department. Although the department encountered more children at risk, many took advantage of counseling, tutoring and positive alternatives. We are convinced that our continued commitment to the reduction of juvenile crime will make a difference.

*Jon Lindsay*  
Harris County Judge  
Chairman, Harris County  
Juvenile Board

## **MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Referrals to the department broke records in 1992, reaching the highest levels ever recorded for juvenile referrals in Harris County. Tough issues came before the members of the Juvenile Board and the Advisory Committee on an almost daily basis. As case loads grew for probation staff, a very different record and a very encouraging one was set as support from both the local community and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission increased. Foundations, agencies and individuals funded grants for education, counseling and other innovative programs designed to mold productive citizens from children at risk.

New programs emerged to divert many children from further involvement in the juvenile justice system by providing new alternatives and practical solutions. Our volunteers continued to be life-savers in many areas of the department.

The death of veteran probation officer and dear friend, Seymour Cox, brought us together in sadness. As we grieved his loss, we all made personal decisions to work harder to help children and families find answers to the problems they face. We dedicate our report this year to Seymour Cox, an uncommon man with a very big heart who made children his priority.

*Teresa V. Ramirez*  
Executive Director  
Chief Juvenile  
Probation Officer

## **HELPING ONE CHILD AT A TIME**

Juvenile crime continued to rise last year. Children committed more serious offenses than ever before, while judges, probation officers, parents and the public searched for answers to tough questions. Why was there more violence in juvenile crime? What more could be done to stop the dreadful trend?

Some children who are born into poverty grow up without decent housing, medical care or even enough food. Over 1,500 children in the Houston area have no home at all. Many are both emotionally and physically scarred by abuse and neglect. The lives of some have been twisted by parents who are slaves to drugs or alcohol. Other parents must work long hours at their jobs leaving families alone in crime-ridden neighborhoods.



Unfortunately, many of the children who experienced hardships as infants are found to have other commonalities—bad judgment and poor decision-making skills. As a result, last year, more and more children, cheated out of childhood, crowded courtrooms.

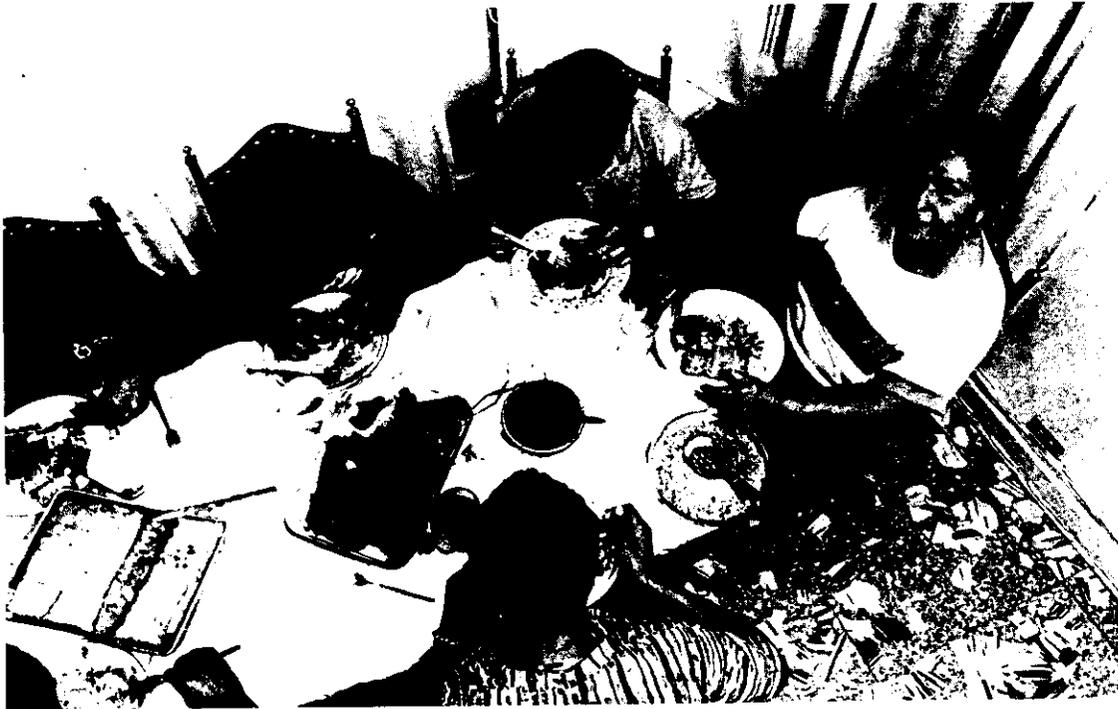


Marian Wright Edelman, founder of The Children's Defense Fund, wrote, "The mounting crisis of our children and families is a rebuke to everything America professes to be ... the place to begin is with ourselves."

The people of Harris County have made more than a beginning. The crisis that children and families face today is often on the front pages of the newspapers. Last year, more local community resources and state funds than ever before were made available to the Juvenile Probation Department for programs to improve children's lives and chances.

It's no secret that if children are to succeed, they need healthy starts, stable homes and sunny days. They must have good role models around them, tutors and teachers to help them, and friends and families to love them. Harris County has more than enough people to fill the voids in children's lives.

Thankfully, many are already totally involved with their own families, churches and neighborhoods.



But efforts must be increased. Children denied childhoods need to catch up on the support, stability and love they missed. As a dedicated probation officer, Seymour Cox first looked at a child's background before developing a strategy to solve the problem. And once he set to work, his most effective

partnerships and greatest resources were people, many of them in Harris County. Seymour's legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of many. He proved over and over again what we all know: with the help of good people, even the most troubled children can be helped—*one child at a time*.



## **HARRIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT**

The Harris County Commissioners' Court is a five-member elected body responsible for the general administration of county business. As a county agency, the Juvenile Probation Department receives most of its annual budget from the Commissioners' Court. In 1992, \$21,516,821 was allocated for staff salaries, direct client services, private placements, residential services and general operating expenses.

The Commissioners' Court also determines county personnel regulations and sets operational guidelines followed by the department.

Commissioners' Court support enables our department to provide services to thousands of troubled youth and their families in the community each year.

*Jon Lindsay*  
Harris County Judge

*El Franco Lee*  
Commissioner Precinct One

*Jim Fonteno*  
Commissioner Precinct Two

*Steve Radack*  
Commissioner Precinct Three

*Jerry Eversole*  
Commissioner Precinct Four

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## **HARRIS COUNTY JUVENILE BOARD**

The Harris County Juvenile Board is the governing body of the Juvenile Probation Department. As mandated by state statute, the Juvenile Board monitors all of the department's programs, institutional services and residential placement facilities. The board also sets administrative policies and approves the department's annual budget prior to submission to the Commissioners' Court.

During 1992, the Juvenile Board was faced with problems brought about by increasing numbers of children handled by the Probation Department. At their direction, sources of funding and new programs were approved to assist children and families in crisis.

*Judge Jon Lindsay*  
County Judge  
Chairman

*Judge Robert L. Lowry*  
313th District Court  
Vice Chairman  
Program Committee  
Personnel Committee  
Tri-Board Committee

*Judge Robert B. Baum*  
314th District Court  
Board Secretary  
Program Committee  
Tri-Board Committee  
Budget and Finance Committee

*Judge Eric Andell*  
315th District Court  
Program Committee

*Judge Mary Bacon*  
338th District Court  
Buildings and Grounds Committee

*Judge Bill Elliott*  
311th District Court

*Judge Sharolyn Wood*  
127th District Court

## **JUVENILE BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Advisory Committee provides invaluable citizen participation in the juvenile justice system, making recommendations and providing consultation whenever called upon.

*Joe Bart,*  
Attorney  
Chairman

*Shirley C. Hunter,*  
Attorney

*Frances Merritt,*  
Attorney

*Pat Day,*  
Attorney

*W. Randolph Bates,*  
Attorney

*Alice O'Neill,*  
Psychotherapist

**HARRIS COUNTY  
JUVENILE PROBATION  
DEPARTMENT**

*Highlights for 1992*

Numbers of referrals continued to make news in 1992. Offenses involving crimes toward people increased while the numbers of auto thefts and felony drug referrals went down. In an effort to prevent high-risk offenders from becoming further involved with the juvenile justice system, the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC), awarded over two million dollars to Harris County enabling the development of the Serious Offender Supervision (SOS) program. Daily supervision and innovative programs were aimed at helping children learn to problem solve in their own communities and cope with the challenges which place them at risk. The grant provided for electronic monitoring to be used

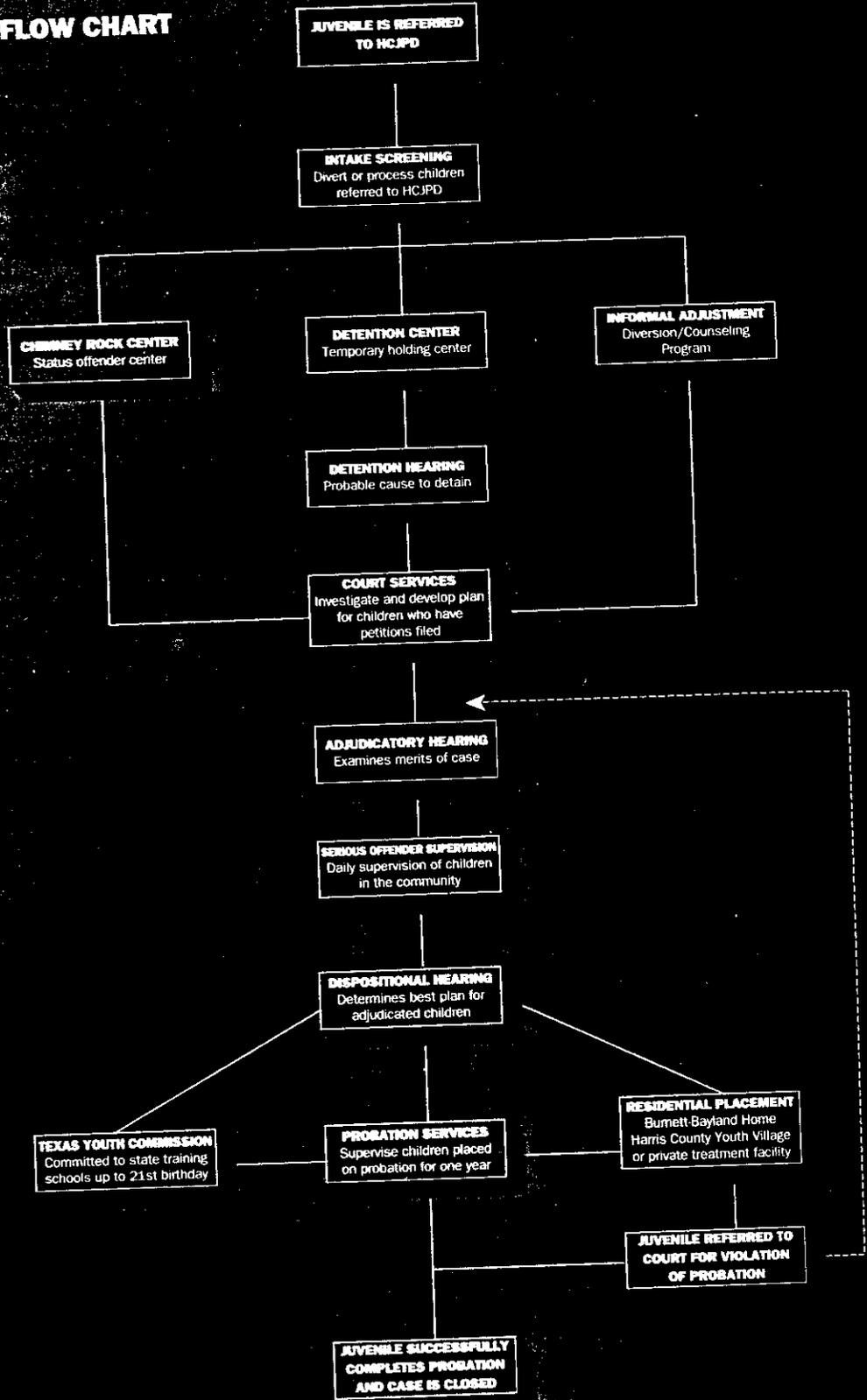


during assessment periods.

An application was made for a federal grant to allow the purchase of 50 computers for probation officers in 1993. Funding from TJPC's innovative program grants and from the local United Way brought the development of the Wings program to be implemented in 1993, to help keep children on probation in school and increase their opportunities to succeed. The Brown Foundation provided \$261,952 to start an on-campus school in 1993 at Burnett-Bayland Home staffed by Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers.

Following a comprehensive reaccreditation audit of the Detention Center, the American Correctional Association congratulated the department for 100 percent compliance with their standards.

# CASE FLOW CHART



## **INTAKE COURT SERVICES DIVISION**

### ***Intake Screening***

Harris County law enforcement officers may take a child to one of two intake units of the Juvenile Probation Department.

Intake Screening is responsible for assessing immediate circumstances and deciding where the child will stay prior to a court hearing. Two 24-hour intake units, one located in the Juvenile Detention Center and the other at Chimney Rock Center, receive and review incoming cases.

Chimney Rock Center, a children's shelter and crisis facility, is jointly operated by the Juvenile Probation Department, Children's Protective Services and Mental Health/Mental Retardation Authority. Several other agencies provide services from the center.

Last year, probation intake staff at Chimney Rock Center provided screening, assessment, crisis intervention, counseling and needed services to 3,248 referrals involving status offenses (such as truancy, runaway and curfew violations) and Class C

misdemeanors (such as alcohol violations). All other cases were reviewed at detention intake.

When a child is thought to present a threat to the community or himself, or is thought likely to abscond before going to court, he will be held in detention. To prevent unnecessary detention, the in-custody diversion program concentrates on sending children home when appropriate and often provides transportation. Last year, this unit diverted 648 children from needless detention.

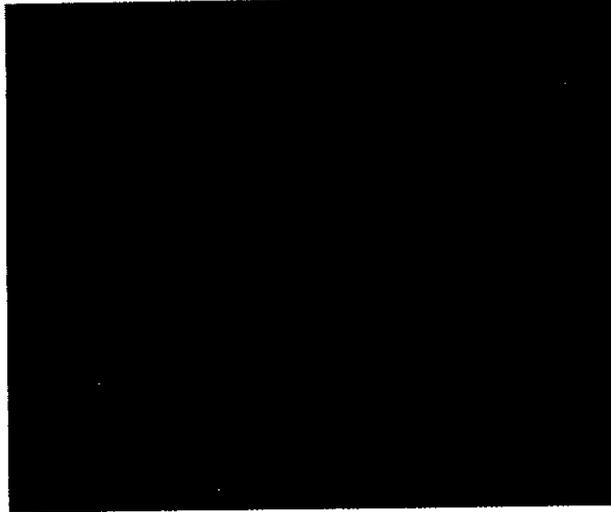
The population cap set by the Juvenile Board in

1991 to avoid overcrowding in detention is an important consideration in the decision-making process. Since more crimes are being committed by juveniles who might pose a threat to themselves or to the community if released, those held in detention appear to be a more dan-

gerous population than in previous years.

Intake also provides monthly workshops on drug and alcohol abuse and other topics and refers youths and families to other agencies for assistance.

### **NUMBER OF REFERRALS BY MONTH, 1992**



### **Court Services**

Once the District Attorney's office has filed a petition, the court services staff prepares a comprehensive profile of the child and the case. This detailed report aids the judge in determining a suitable disposition by including specifics on the offense, the child's physical and emotional status, and school and family circumstances.

Three judges and three associate judges hear delinquency cases in three Harris County juvenile courts.

### **COURT ACTIVITY, 1992**

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Disposition</i>                  |              |
| Certified to Criminal Court         | 41           |
| Committed to Texas Youth Commission | 444          |
| Dismissed                           | 46           |
| Early Termination of Probation      | 29           |
| Incentive Completed                 | 107          |
| Informal Adjustment                 | 201          |
| Mental Health                       | 3            |
| Non-Suit                            | 659          |
| Passed                              | 356          |
| Passed-Writ Issued                  | 222          |
| Probation                           | 2,200        |
| Probation/Restitution               | 303          |
| Other                               | 660          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>5,271</b> |

### *Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County Children's Forensic Unit*

### **EVALUATIONS FOR 1992**

|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Psychologicals           | 981          |
| Psychiatric              | 362          |
| Family Evaluations       | 102          |
| <b>Total Evaluations</b> | <b>1,445</b> |

They are the 313th District Court, presided over by Judge Robert Lowry and Associate Judge Ramona John; the 314th, presided over by Judge Robert Baum and Associate Judge Mary Craft; and the 315th, presided over by Judge Eric Andell and Associate Judge David Longoria. If found to be delinquent or a child in need of supervision (CHINS), the child may be allowed to live at home under stringent rules of probation or be placed in a residential facility.

### REFERRAL SOURCE, 1992

|                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Baytown Police Department          | 662           |
| Constable's Office                 | 1,216         |
| Harris County Sheriff's Department | 2,979         |
| Houston Police Department          | 18,072        |
| Juvenile Probation Officers        | 479           |
| Pasadena Police Department         | 1,268         |
| Schools                            | 2,223         |
| Other                              | 2,322         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>29,221</b> |

### TYPES OF REFERRAL

|            |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| [REDACTED] |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--|

### REFERRALS BY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ETHNICITY, 1992

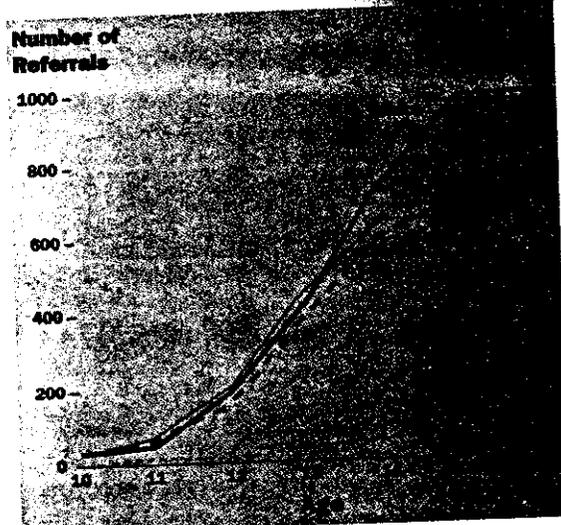
|             | Black | Hispanic | White | Other | Total  |                   | Black        | Hispanic     | White        | Other      | Total         |
|-------------|-------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Aldine      | 642   | 407      | 430   | 78    | 1,557  |                   |              |              |              |            |               |
| Alief       | 455   | 293      | 342   | 88    | 1,178  | North Forest      | 477          | 41           | 32           | 0          | 550           |
| Channelview | 9     | 22       | 81    | 1     | 113    | Pasadena          | 142          | 868          | 991          | 45         | 2,046         |
| Clear Creek | 37    | 26       | 363   | 14    | 440    | Sheldon           | 17           | 9            | 80           | 0          | 106           |
| Crosby      | 27    | 12       | 61    | 0     | 100    | Spring            | 112          | 66           | 326          | 8          | 512           |
| Cypress     | 114   | 161      | 610   | 60    | 945    | Spring Branch     | 227          | 614          | 462          | 44         | 1,347         |
| Deer Park   | 4     | 53       | 286   | 3     | 346    | Tomball           | 7            | 0            | 68           | 0          | 75            |
| Galena Park | 88    | 174      | 212   | 4     | 478    | Stallford         | 2            | 5            | 23           | 1          | 31            |
| Goose Creek | 134   | 241      | 310   | 1     | 686    | Waller            | 4            | 1            | 9            | 0          | 14            |
| Houston     | 5,743 | 5,104    | 1,159 | 82    | 12,088 | Pearland          | 1            | 9            | 9            | 0          | 19            |
| Hullman     | 9     | 1        | 18    | 0     | 28     | Private/Parochial | 69           | 96           | 236          | 4          | 405           |
| Humble      | 50    | 17       | 432   | 7     | 506    | Out of County     | 279          | 185          | 305          | 33         | 892           |
| Katy        | 34    | 52       | 252   | 3     | 341    | Not Available     |              |              |              |            | 3,444         |
| Klein       | 128   | 81       | 484   | 22    | 712    | <b>Total</b>      | <b>8,847</b> | <b>8,558</b> | <b>7,873</b> | <b>499</b> | <b>29,221</b> |
| La Porte    | 36    | 20       | 205   | 1     | 262    |                   |              |              |              |            |               |

### MOST SERIOUS OFFENSE PER REFERRAL, 1990, 1991, 1992

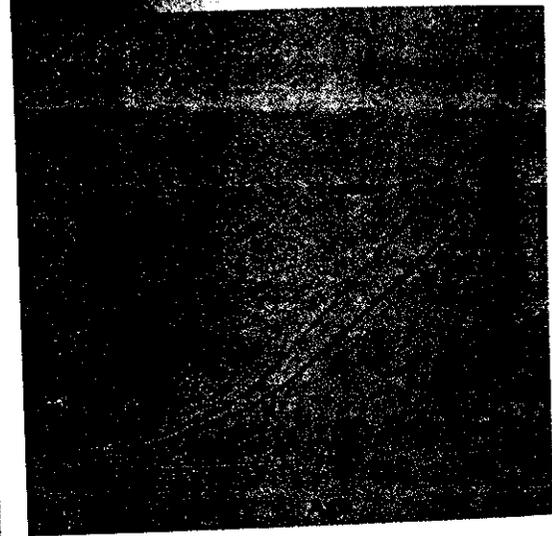
|                | 1990  | 1991  | 1992  |                        | 1990          | 1991          | 1992          |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Murder         | 32    | 57    | 62    | Inhalants              | 40            | 58            | 59            |
| Arson          | 75    | 75    | 89    | Alcohol Misd C         | 10            | 25            | 15            |
| Assault        |       |       |       | Other                  |               |               |               |
| Felony         | 336   | 389   | 560   | Felony                 | 602           | 738           | 828           |
| Misd A/B       | 187   | 203   | 321   | Misd A/B               | 2,746         | 3,182         | 3,741         |
| Misd C         | 1,000 | 1,192 | 1,961 | Disorderly Conduct     | 261           | 304           | 379           |
| Sexual Assault | 152   | 160   | 211   | City Ordinance         | 299           | 275           | 3435          |
| Robbery        | 374   | 541   | 592   | Violation of Probation | 230           | 249           | 222           |
| Burglary       | 1,642 | 1,994 | 1,968 | Runaway* (CHINS)       | 4,288         | 5,563         | 6,700         |
| Theft          |       |       |       | Other* (CHINS) Offense | 788           | 640           | 404           |
| Felony         | 159   | 164   | 213   | TYC Runaways           | 237           | 213           | 276           |
| Misd A/B       | 1,810 | 2,049 | 2,239 | Administrative Actions | 952           | 1,255         | 1,292         |
| Misd C         | 1,184 | 1,046 | 904   |                        |               |               |               |
| Auto Theft     | 714   | 894   | 654   |                        |               |               |               |
| Joyriding      | 857   | 918   | 796   | <b>Total</b>           | <b>20,296</b> | <b>23,480</b> | <b>29,221</b> |
| Drugs          |       |       |       |                        |               |               |               |
| Felony         | 584   | 732   | 647   |                        |               |               |               |
| Misd A/B       | 212   | 185   | 313   |                        |               |               |               |
| Misd C         | 525   | 379   | 340   |                        |               |               |               |

\*Children in need of supervision (status offenses)

### REFERRALS FOR FEMALE BY ETHNICITY AND AGE



### REFERRALS FOR MALES, 1992 BY ETHNICITY AND AGE



### *Placement Services*

When it appears a child must be removed from his home, the Placement Services staff prepares a

list of suitable residential institutions for the Judge's review. From a list of approved facilities, they recommend those which best meet the child's specific needs.

### **PLACEMENT STATISTICS, 1992**

| <i>Residential Treatment Centers</i>            |    |
|---|----|
| AAMA - Casa Phoenix                             | 8  |
| Child & Adolescent Development Center           | 1  |
| Crittendon Home                                 | 6  |
| DePelchin/Cullen Bayou                          | 1  |
| Five Oaks                                       | 3  |
| Gulf Coast Trades Center                        | 49 |
| Hope Center Wilderness Camp                     | 5  |
| Houston Achievement Place                       | 2  |
| Houston Recovery Center                         | 2  |
| Mary Lee School                                 | 9  |
| Meadowbriar                                     | 1  |
| Mentors, Inc.                                   | 2  |
| Northwest Villa                                 | 1  |
| Odyssey Harbor                                  | 1  |
| Odyssey House                                   | 5  |
| Progressive Adolescent Learning Services (PALS) | 9  |
| Renton Renaissance                              | 3  |
| Residential Treatment Center of the Meadows     | 1  |
| Shadowood                                       | 9  |
| Tejas Home for Youth                            | 4  |
| Three Bar D Boys Ranch                          | 5  |
| Unity Children's Home                           | 3  |
| Vernon Drug Center                              | 23 |

**Total Numbers of Placed Youth** 153\*

\*This does not include the Harris County Youth Village nor Burnett Bayland Home.

## INSTITUTIONS DIVISION

Three institutions are operated by the Probation Department: Burnett-Bayland Home, a residential facility with a community-based program; Harris County Youth Village, with a complete on-campus program and the Juvenile Detention Center where children remain until court hearings are held.

### *Juvenile Detention Center*

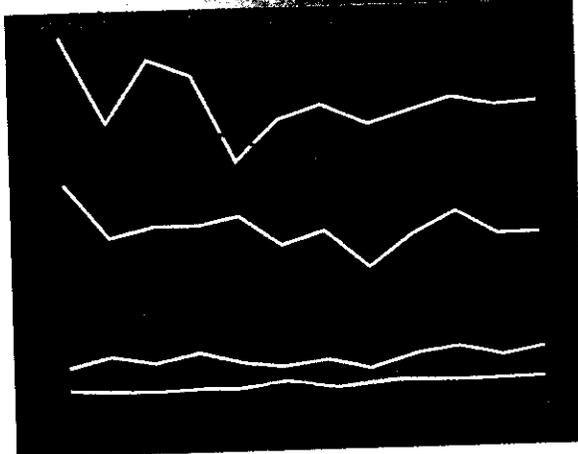
The Juvenile Detention Center is a secure, temporary residential facility for children requiring a restricted environment while they await court action.

The center features 145 private sleeping rooms, 26 multi-purpose activity rooms, three gymnasiums, three outdoor playground areas, visitation and counseling areas, facilities for medical, dental,

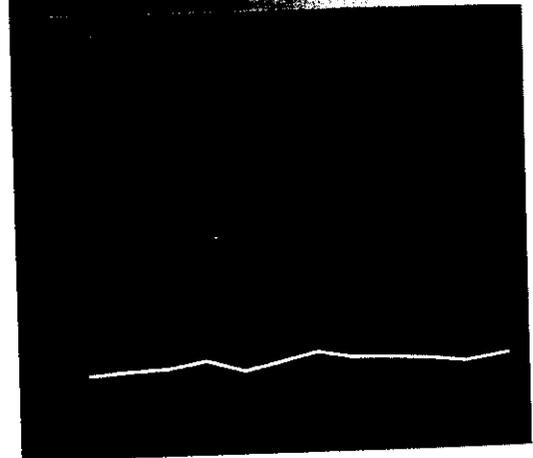
psychological and social services, a separate intake section and a courtroom. Technologically advanced monitoring systems and innovative architectural designs provide security and safety without bars. Following a reaccreditation audit by the American Correctional Association in June, the Detention Center was found to be in 100 percent compliance with all 416 standards.

During their stay, children undergo physical and psychological assessments, short-term therapy and crisis intervention. Recreation specialists provide daily physical education activities. Highly trained staff and volunteers work with the children, promoting feelings of self-worth, establishing trust and teaching them to relate to others through structured unit activities.

**ADMISSIONS TO DETENTION BY MONTH AND AGE, 1992**



**ADMISSIONS TO DETENTION BY MONTH AND SEX, 1992**



The Houston Independent School District provides a complete educational program. The program focuses on remedial reading, language and math skills in which these children are generally deficient.

Volunteers and other agencies provide additional services including health awareness, self-esteem workshops, tutoring, individual visitation and social activities.

Last year, 6,632 children were held in detention. Their offenses were of a much more serious and violent nature than ever before and required closer supervision by the staff. Although the population cap set by the Juvenile Board resulted in a lower number of children held in detention at any one time, the severity of their offenses was much greater than ever before.

**OFFENSE PER ADMISSION TO DETENTION, 1990, 1991, 1992**

|                | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 |                               | 1990         | 1991         | 1992         |
|----------------|------|------|------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Murder         | 32   | 56   | 69   | <b>Drugs</b>                  |              |              |              |
| Arson          | 30   | 31   | 21   | Felony                        | 469          | 589          | 529          |
| Assault        |      |      |      | Misd A/B                      | 96           | 75           | 74           |
| Felony         | 225  | 251  | 291  | Misd C                        | 66           | 59           | 46           |
| Misd A/B       | 72   | 68   | 97   | <b>Inhalants</b>              | 12           | 29           | 23           |
| Misd C         | 93   | 71   | 59   | <b>Alcohol Misd C</b>         | 1            | 11           | 3            |
| Sexual Assault | 64   | 61   | 95   | <b>Other</b>                  |              |              |              |
| Robbery        | 245  | 446  | 490  | Felony                        | 243          | 328          | 260          |
| Burglary       | 793  | 962  | 849  | Misd A/B                      | 1,033        | 1,222        | 1,167        |
| Theft          |      |      |      | <b>Disorderly Conduct</b>     | 143          | 186          | 215          |
| Felony         | 75   | 94   | 75   | <b>City Ordinance</b>         | 48           | 44           | 150          |
| Misd A/B       | 481  | 541  | 481  | <b>Violation of Probation</b> | 41           | 118          | 71           |
| Misd C         | 42   | 40   | 26   | <b>Runaway (CHINS*)</b>       | 321          | 260          | 217          |
| Auto Theft     | 462  | 575  | 421  | <b>Other (CHINS)</b>          | 24           | 20           | 7            |
| Joyriding      | 595  | 614  | 492  | <b>TYC Runaways</b>           | 206          | 170          | 217          |
|                |      |      |      | <b>Administrative Actions</b> | 264          | 274          | 187          |
|                |      |      |      | <b>Total</b>                  | <b>6,176</b> | <b>7,195</b> | <b>6,632</b> |

(\* Children in need of supervision status offenses)

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### ***Burnett-Bayland Home***

Delinquent boys who do not require secure confinement, or those who are making a transition from the more restricted Youth Village to community life, may be placed by the court at Burnett-Bayland Home for up to one year. In 1992, 143 boys lived at Burnett-Bayland. The average length of residence was 4.1 months. The children live in home-like cottages on the 40-acre park campus. They attend local public schools and may participate in extracurricular activities off campus.

Family involvement is viewed as essential. Parents participate in regular educational meetings and other activities to prepare them for their child's transition back to home life. Family visitation is encouraged and children often enjoy weekends at home.

Civic organizations and citizen volunteers enhance the program with tutoring, counseling, education and recreation.

The Rotary Club of Houston continued its generous support by funding the resurfacing of the outdoor tennis and basketball courts. The annual Christmas party provided by Rotary Club members was an outstanding evening for all the children, staff and visitors.

### ***Harris County Youth Village***

The Youth Village is a more restricted facility located in the Clear Lake area. The lake-front campus provides a spacious setting for delinquent

children in need of a more secure environment. Boys and girls are placed at the Youth Village for as long as one year by court order. In 1992, 277 children stayed an average of five months. The program includes therapeutic, recreational, medical and drug counseling services.

The Houston Independent School District operates an accredited school on campus with a full academic and vocational curriculum, including athletics, guidance and remedial education. With a small student-to-teacher ratio and an accelerated teaching pace, many children overcome major scholastic deficiencies during their stay at the Youth Village.

In addition to academic, computer and vocational instruction, children are taught important practical skills such as job hunting, responsible budgeting, household management, parenting and coping skills. Community corrections funding from the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission provided for the expansion of services to accommodate an additional 20 children at the Youth Village.

Support from nearby communities is very important to the Youth Village. Residents of Taylor Lake Village hosted an open house in October to acquaint neighbors with the programs for youth. Earlier in the year, Mr. Chris Christman, a 32-year volunteer with the Boy Scouts at the Youth Village, was honored by the Commissioner's Court for his long and valuable service.

**PROBATION FIELD SERVICES DIVISION**

Most children who go through the court system are not placed in a residential facility but remain at home under probation supervision for up to one year. Probation supervision and rehabilitative services for children and their families are provided by the Field Services Division from ten offices conveniently located throughout Harris County.

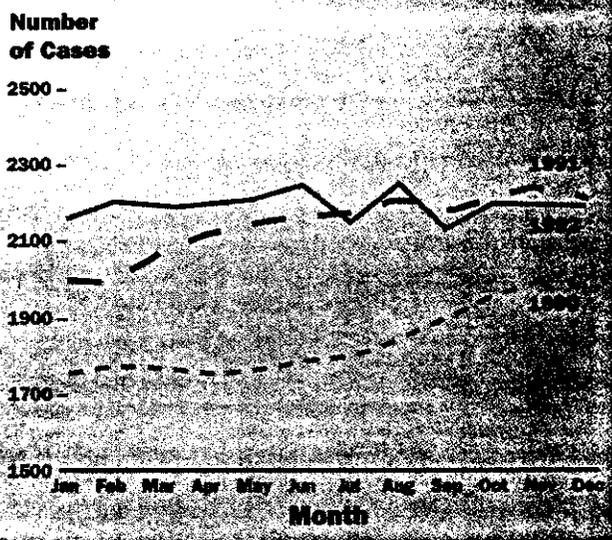
When a child has been declared delinquent and is placed on probation, the court sets rules of probation for the child. General rules include reporting change of address, attending school or holding a job, not leaving the county without the probation officer's permission, curfew hours, restrictions on motor vehicle use and submitting to drug testing upon

request. In addition, special rules may be imposed requiring the child to attend counseling or educational programs, or to pay monetary and/or community service restitution.

In 1992, probation officers faced increasing challenges as more young probationers were involved in serious crimes. With more young people in trouble, some probation officers carried case loads of almost 80, nearly double that of a few years ago. Although the additional officers employed by the department relieved some of the burden,

each officer was challenged to provide supervision to more and more children from dysfunctional families with problems ranging from alcohol and drug abuse to violence and neglect. Over 2,000 children were on probation each month in 1992.

**PROBATION CASE LOAD, 1990, 1991, 1992**



**Field Services Programs  
for 1992**

|                                 |  |                                     |   |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Art Program</b>              | Youths learn to express themselves through visual arts and creative writing.   | <b>Prohibited Weapons Workshops</b> | Houston Police Department workshops which teach consequences of possession of illegal weapons.  |
| <b>Drug Free Youth Program</b>  | Certified alcohol and drug abuse counselors are stationed in all satellite offices by the Houston Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. They provide an assortment of interventions to children with substance abuse problems. | <b>Restitution</b>                  | Community service work sponsored by the American Red Cross.   |
| <b>Educational Workshops</b>    | Workshops for youths and families on various topics.   | <b>R.O.P.E.S.</b>                   | (Reality Oriented Physical Experiences) Problem-solving experiences through physical tasks in a group setting.                              |
| <b>Incentive Program</b>        | A voluntary program that may shorten the probationary period.  | <b>T.D.C.J. Outreach Program</b>    | Youths visit the Institutional Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in Sugar Land to learn realities of prison life.        |
| <b>L.A.W.</b>                   | Legal Awareness Workshops presented by judges and attorneys.   | <b>Therapeutic Counseling</b>       | Professional, certified therapists provide counseling to probationers and their families.   |
| <b>MADD Victim Impact Panel</b> | Mothers Against Drunk Driving workshops for probationers and families intended to show the real consequences of drinking and driving.  | <b>Vision Care</b>                  | University of Houston, School of Optometry screens and examines youths, providing glasses and treatment.                                    |
| <b>Mentor Program</b>           | Prominent community leaders and professionals provide positive role models for children on probation.  | <b>Y.E.E.S.</b>                     | (Youth Education and Employment Services) Children on probation receive tutorial, remedial, pre-employment training and G.E.D. preparation. |
| <b>Parent Training</b>          | Workshops in which parents are taught parenting skills.  |                                     |   |
| <b>Peer Pressure Workshops</b>  | Workshops presented by the Houston Police Department on positive and negative effects of peer pressure.  |                                     |   |

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### ***Informal Adjustment***

In some cases, the court or the Legal Screening Unit defers a child from the court system into the Informal Adjustment program. Generally, this is a younger, non-violent offender who may be offered the option of voluntary participation. In 1992, 694 children participated in the Informal Adjustment program.

Informal Adjustment guides children through six months of specialized programs, intensive counseling and supervision aimed at diverting them from the juvenile justice system.

Drug-dependent children may participate in therapy and education. Other services include parent-training workshops, AIDS education and peer pressure programs designed to teach children to act responsibly. Upon successful completion of Informal Adjustment, the child's case is dismissed and juvenile adjudication is avoided.

### ***Serious Offender Supervision***

The Serious Offender Supervision (SOS) program

is intended to divert high-risk youth from the state institutions of the Texas Youth Commission while redirecting their lives through a program of close supervision and rehabilitation.

Made possible by a grant from the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, SOS is a pilot program administered by probation practitioners and human service professionals who work with trained volunteers and student interns as well as community and civic groups. Each SOS participant must have a home, adequate supervision by parents or significant adults, and he or she must agree in court to abide by the terms of an SOS contract on a voluntary basis. After placement in the program by the juvenile courts, each child is contacted daily by his or her probation officer.

An extremely successful component of SOS which demonstrates the flexibility and creativity of the program is "Super Saturday," regular weekly workshops for children, their parents, tutors, counselors and other service providers.

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION**

The Administrative Services Division oversees data control, research, computer support, personnel and legal screening services.

### ***Data Control Systems***

As children move through the justice system, the Data Control Systems Unit keeps the master file on each case, maintaining the department's automated juvenile tracking system and entering the initial information about the juvenile's demographic information and alleged offense. From this point, staff throughout the agency update case information to keep records current and complete.

### ***Research, Planning and Evaluation***

The Research, Planning and Evaluation Unit maintains and analyzes data to ensure responsiveness to the needs of juveniles referred to the department. This information is used to monitor trends, develop special programs and services, and identify staff and funding needs.

In addition, this unit reviews and reports on research inquiries from other agencies to ensure a functional coordination of services throughout the community.

### ***Computer Support Services***

Computer Support Services is responsible for all personal computers used throughout the department. Personal computer applications are designed, programmed and maintained by the Computer Support staff. The Computer Support staff maintains the Novell network which has high speed data links to all field locations and provides access to the mainframe computer located downtown. This wide area network connects 69 personal computers from all units within the department.

Computer Support staff provides maintenance for all personal computers and associated equipment within the department as well as providing user training on personal computer applications and various commercial software packages.

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### ***Personnel***

The Personnel Unit provides staffing for the department and ensures that county hiring guidelines are followed throughout the agency. This unit posts available positions, processes employment applications and supervises screening and hiring. The Personnel Unit also maintains employment records for all department staff. At the end of 1992, the department employed 574 persons.

### ***Legal Screening***

The attorneys of the Legal Screening Unit review all incoming felony and some misdemeanor cases to determine if legal grounds exist to file a delinquency petition. If legal grounds do not exist, the child in custody is released to a parent or guardian. By law, children who are detained receive a detention hearing within two working days of admission and every ten days thereafter until released. Attorneys from the Legal Screening Unit represent the District Attorney's Office in these hearings and must show due cause for detaining the child.

Through periodic training workshops and consultation, Legal Screening provides training to new agency employees and volunteers, updating them on any changes in juvenile law. This unit also

answers inquiries from police officers or complainants and helps to increase community awareness of juvenile issues through public speaking engagements.

### **ANCILLARY SERVICES**

Several agency units report directly to the Executive Director and provide services to the family courts or to other areas of the department.

#### ***Family Court Services***

Although administered by the Juvenile Probation Department, Family Court Services handles cases of adoption and disputed child custody rather than delinquency cases.

Family Court officers investigate cases and prepare comprehensive social histories through home visits, interviews with relatives, neighbors, employers, law enforcement and school officials and other relevant sources. This history aids the judge in determining whether to grant adoption or determine custody. In 1992, this unit researched 575 child custody cases and 842 adoption cases for twelve district courts which hear such cases.

A child who cannot stay in his home during the family court investigation is temporarily placed in a residential facility. Such arrangements are made by the Family Court Services staff.

**Budget and Supportive Services**

The Budget Unit oversees the department's fiscal operations including preparation and management of the annual budget, and regulating receipts and expenditures.

In 1992, the department operated with a combined budget of \$23,739,666. The funds were received

from four primary sources: Harris County Commissioners' Court, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, the Criminal Justice Division of the

**1992 BUDGET**

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Harris County Commissioners' Court             | \$21,516,821        |
| Texas Probation Commission                     |                     |
| State Aid to Counties                          | 1,324,389           |
| Intensive Supervision Grant                    | 290,534             |
| Diversionary Placement Grant                   | 30,795              |
| Criminal Justice Division of Governor's Office |                     |
| Purchase of Services Grant                     | 400,624             |
| Juvenile Justice Information Grant             | 27,253              |
| Other Funding Sources                          |                     |
| Brown Foundation (Serious Offender Counseling) | 50,000              |
| Brown Foundation (Pen Power Program)           | 50,000              |
| Junior League of Houston, Inc.                 | 9,250               |
| MHMRA of Harris County (Family Preservation)   | 40,000              |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>\$23,739,666</b> |

Governor's Office and private sources.

The Supportive Services Unit handles payroll, insurance benefits, staff identification, office inventories, general supplies, mail and courier services and the print shop. Building and grounds maintenance are also provided by Supportive Services. This year, adult probationers in a commu-

nity restitution program assisted with grounds maintenance.

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### ***Training and Staff Development***

The Training and Staff Development Unit provides in-service training to enhance staff skills and meet the state training standards for probation officers. To maintain state certification, probation officers are required to attend 40 hours of accredited training per year.

The Training Unit researches and coordinates training programs for child care workers, secretaries, computer personnel, administrative staff and all probation officers.

Training topics included cultural diversity, gang activity, family values, incest, juvenile sex offenders and predictors of violence in youth. In 1992, over 346 workshops provided 3,226 hours of training.

### ***Volunteers***

In 1992, volunteers donated their time and invaluable talents. Carefully screened and trained, these volunteers enabled the department to provide

highly specialized, personal attention to children.

Two organizations recruit, train and coordinate many of the department's volunteers. Juvenile Court Volunteers, Inc., a United Way agency, provides mentoring, tutoring, educational workshops and recreational activities. Court Volunteers also bring companionship to detained children through visitation and special events. In 1992, the 236 Juvenile Court Volunteers donated 23,676 hours of service valued at \$10.80 per hour, or nearly \$256,000!

Junior League of Houston volunteers worked 3,923 hours with children and families in 1992. The value of their services is estimated at almost \$50,000. The 83 volunteers provided their skills and support to programs and services such as individual counseling, intake counseling, parent education, educational/vocational counseling, tutoring and drug counseling.

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Many other private citizens and members of civic and church organizations volunteered over 6,250 hours to Harris County children and families in our juvenile justice system this year.

These volunteer programs integrate the community with the agency—a partnership which enables the department to meet mutual goals of providing quality services to redirect the lives of many youths in Harris County.

### ***Student Interns***

Sixty-two students participated in the department's student intern program in 1992. Nineteen of these were from the University of Houston's Graduate School of Social Work; the others attended various other local and state colleges and universities. They worked throughout the agency in a variety of positions, receiving training and experience in juvenile corrections. Interns provided 13,516 hours of service to 3,566 children and their families.

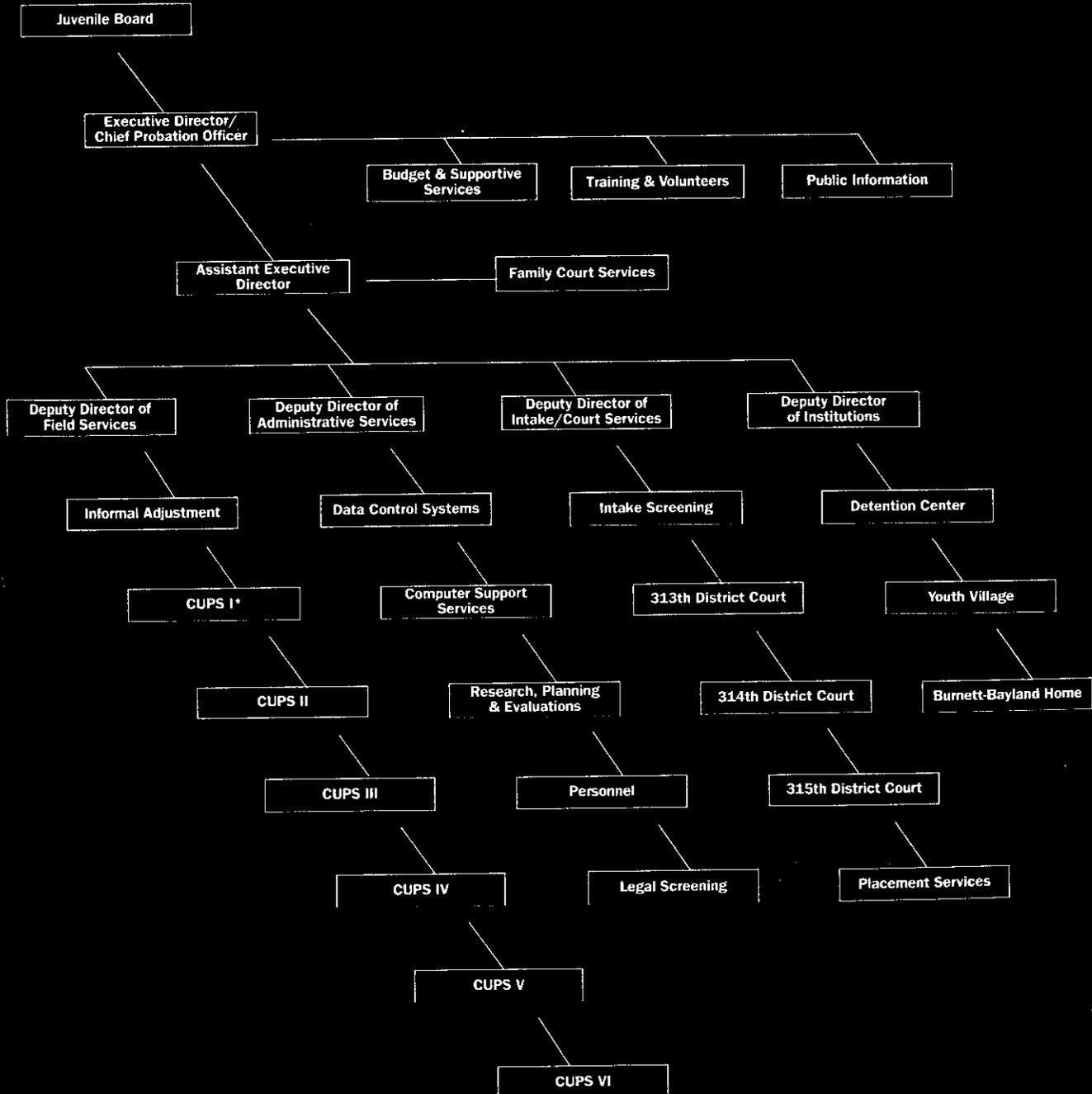
### ***Public Information Office***

The Public Information Office is responsible for providing meaningful and accurate information to the news media, other agencies, public officials, academic institutions and interested citizens.

The office provides 24-hour, immediate response to media inquiries, maintains video and news clipping reference files, produces the annual report and other publications; briefs administration on developing news situations; and works to maximize public and media access to the juvenile justice system within legal constraints.

The goals of the Public Information Office are to increase public understanding of juvenile corrections and to build community support for the agency's mission. This office also coordinates agency arts programs acting as the interface with arts organizations and artists, and providing public exhibitions and performances of the children's works.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



\* CUPS / Community Unit Probation Services

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## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART, 1992

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Administrative Staff<br><i>Teresa V. Ramirez</i>  | Executive Director, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer   |
| Administrative Services<br><i>Harvey Hetzel</i><br><i>Kay Hayes</i><br><i>Frank Dear</i><br><i>Phyllis Kisor</i><br><i>Charles Phipps</i><br><i>Rick Valadez</i>  | Deputy Director, Administrative Services<br>Administrator, Data Control Systems<br>Administrator, Computer Support Services<br>Administrator, Research, Planning and Evaluation<br>Supervisor, Personnel<br>Senior Attorney, Legal Screening   |
| Intake Court Services<br><i>Bernard Hunter</i><br><i>Bob Husbands</i><br><i>Pat Wade</i><br><i>Alice Sweeney-Herd</i><br><i>Joe Hardy</i><br><i>Debbie Williams</i>   | Deputy Director, Intake Court Services<br>Administrator, Intake Screening<br>Administrator, 313th District Court<br>Administrator, 314th District Court<br>Administrator, 315th District Court<br>Administrator, Placement Services  |
| Field Services<br><i>Elmer Bailey, Jr.</i><br><i>Beth Perez</i>   | Deputy Director, Field Services<br>Administrator, Field Services   |
| Supervisors of Community Unit<br>Probation Services (CUPS):<br><i>Walter Jackson</i><br><i>Terry Snow</i><br><i>M. Julia Ramirez</i><br><i>Cheryl Keating</i><br><i>Charlie Faires</i><br><i>Mike Beck</i><br><i>Linda Crocker</i>                  | CUPS I<br>CUPS II<br>CUPS III<br>CUPS IV<br>CUPS V<br>CUPS VI (Serious Offender Supervision)<br>Informal Adjustment  |
| Institutional Services<br><i>John A. Peters</i><br><i>James K. Martins</i><br><i>Ronald Niksich</i><br><i>Larry Smith</i>   | Deputy Director, Institutions<br>Superintendent, Detention Center<br>Superintendent, Youth Village<br>Superintendent, Burnett-Bayland Home   |
| Ancillary Services<br><i>Joseph H. Funches</i><br><i>Mary Craft</i><br><i>Ramona John</i><br><i>David Longoria</i><br><i>Jo Ann Jones</i><br><i>Carole H. Allen</i><br><i>Veronica Morgan-Price</i><br><i>Betty Cossey</i><br><i>John W. Sukols</i> | Court Systems Manager<br>Associate Judge<br>Associate Judge<br>Associate Judge<br>Administrator, Training and Volunteers<br>Public Information Officer<br>Juvenile Court Referee/Associate Judge<br>Director, Family Court Services<br>Administrator, Budget and Supportive Services |

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