



TEXAS CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE COALITION

## Willacy County Juvenile Justice Data Sheet

Under SB 653, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) has been made responsible for partnering with “local county governments, the courts, and communities to promote public safety,”<sup>1</sup> as well as for “producing positive outcomes for youth, families, and communities.”<sup>2</sup> To ensure these mandates are met, stakeholders must familiarize themselves with the information pertinent to their community.

The information included within this data sheet reflects the most recent juvenile data for Willacy County.

### County Overview<sup>3</sup>

- **Youth Population (age 10 to 16):** 2,349
- **Youth Referred to TJJD:**<sup>4</sup> 69
- **Youth Referred with Past Traumatic Experience:** 35 (51%)
- **Youth Referred with Diagnosed Mental Illness:** 23 (33%)
- **Youth Referred but Not Adjudicated:** 48
- **Youth Securely Detained Pre-Adjudication:**<sup>5</sup> 29
- **Average Days from Referral to Disposition:** 170
- **Youth Adjudicated to Probation:** 21
- **Youth Adjudicated to Secure Placement:**<sup>6</sup> Fewer than 5
- **Youth Committed to State Secure Facilities:** 1
- **Youth Certified as Adults:** 0

### Investment in Community Programming

Reducing the number of youth adjudicated to residential facilities can only be achieved if stakeholders strongly invest in “a consistent, county-based continuum of effective interventions, supports, and services.”<sup>7</sup> The programs delineated below are the current services within Willacy County that can be utilized as alternatives to incarceration.

#### Grant X<sup>8</sup> and U<sup>9</sup> Funded Programs:<sup>10</sup>

- Electronic Monitoring Program
- Family Preservation Program

**Total Funding Allocated for Grant U & X programs in Willacy County:** \$11,540

**Additional Programs Run by the County Juvenile Probation Department:**

- Community Service Program
- Intensive Supervision Program
- Why Try Program

**Contracted Programs Provided by the County Juvenile Probation Department:**

- Sex Offender Counseling
- Substance Abuse Counseling

**Additional Youth-Based Programs Provided within the Community:**

- Services to At-Risk Youth

**County-Level Juvenile Facilities<sup>11</sup>**

<b>Darrel B. Hester Juvenile Justice Center<sup>12</sup> (Pre-Adjudication)</b>	
<b>Cost per day per youth<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>\$90.00</b>
<b>Average daily population</b>	<b>47 youths</b>
<b>Average length of stay</b>	<b>19 days</b>
<b>Annual number of youth in seclusions<sup>14</sup></b>	<b>1,201</b>
<b>Annual number of physical restraints used on youth</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Annual number of injuries</b>	<b>19</b>

**Contact Information**

If you have any questions regarding the data provided in this data sheet, please contact Jennifer Carreon at (512) 441-8123, ext. 103, or by email at [jcarreon@TexasCJC.org](mailto:jcarreon@TexasCJC.org).

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Codified at Texas Human Resources Code, Section 201.002(1).

<sup>2</sup> Codified at Texas Human Resources Code, Section 201.002(2).

<sup>3</sup> Data provided to the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition (TCJC) by TJJD, April 2012.

<sup>4</sup> A youth is formally referred to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department if face-to-face contact is made with a designated juvenile office for having engaged in delinquent activity within the Department's jurisdiction.

<sup>5</sup> A pre-adjudication detention center is a secure residential facility (public or private) used for temporary placement of youth who have been accused of committing an offense.

<sup>6</sup> A post-adjudication placement involves a secure residential facility (public or private) where youth are placed after disposition of their case.

<sup>7</sup> Codified at Texas Human Resources Code, Section 201.003(1).

<sup>8</sup> The Intensive Community-Based Program (Grant X) is used by local juvenile probation departments for "enhanced or additional community based programs and services for jailable misdemeanor and felony offenders." In 2011, 8,392 youth were served under Grant X funds; 81% of those youth received treatment via programming. Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, *Annual Report to the Governor and Legislative Budget Board*, December 2011.

<sup>9</sup> The Intensive Community-Based Pilot Program (Grant U) is used by local juvenile probation departments with populations over 335,000 to serve youth with chronic and serious offenses via community-based programming. In 2011, 839 youth across eight counties (Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis) were served by Grant U funding. Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, *Annual Report to the Governor and Legislative Budget Board*, December 2011.

<sup>10</sup> As of September 2011, these grants were consolidated under Grant A along with Grants F, H, Z, L, O, R, V, and Y.

<sup>11</sup> Data provided to TCJC by TJJD, April 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Willacy County does not have a juvenile detention center (pre-adjudication facility) or secure residential placement facility (post-adjudication). Youth who are referred to TJJD from Willacy County are primarily detained (pre-adjudication) in The Darrel B. Hester Juvenile Justice Center, which is Cameron County's pre-adjudication facility. Separately, post-adjudication placements of youth from Willacy County vary by need and proximity to home (e.g., youth in need of sex offender treatment are placed in the Pegasus School).

<sup>13</sup> This number was obtained via TJJD's Facility Registry. This is the only cost made public; it reflects the per-youth expense that another county would pay to place their youth within this facility.

<http://www.tjtd.texas.gov/publications/other/searchfacilityregistry.aspx>.

<sup>14</sup> Inappropriate use of solitary confinement (also known as disciplinary seclusions) and physical restraints (also known as use of force) in juvenile secure facilities create major barriers to successful rehabilitation. These concerns are especially serious for traumatized youth and youth with mental health issues. *See, e.g.*, L.M. Finke "The Use of Seclusion is Not an Evidence-Based Practice" (2001), and G.R. Hodas "Responding to Childhood Trauma: The Promise and Practice of Trauma Informed Care" (2006).