



# Texas Juvenile Justice Department

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## **Texas Juvenile Justice Department Awards \$1.3 Million in Prevention Grants**

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) has awarded grants totaling \$1.3 million to 24 counties as part of the agency's Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative. This demonstration grant funding is provided for programs and services across Texas that prevent or intervene in at-risk juvenile behaviors leading to delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school, or referral to the juvenile justice system.

In late January, the TJJD Board approved the investment of \$1.5 million in prevention efforts for the second half of Fiscal Year 2012. This grant initiative is a significant portion of that investment intended to enrich services that help youth and families across the state access community-based services, supports, and resources. TJJD received 33 proposals from local probation departments.

Examples of services funded under these grants include school-based truancy intervention officers, counseling services, parent mentors, parenting classes, bullying prevention, afterschool programs, and a canine program in which at-risk youth will be paired with dogs from local animal shelters and taught how to train and care for them.

"The TJJD Board is committed to investing in community prevention programs that will keep our youth from ever entering the juvenile justice system," said Cherie Townsend, executive director of the newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department. "This grant initiative is a significant investment signaling our intent to support efforts to help youth and families across Texas gain access to community-based services, supports, and resources. I am impressed with the creative strategies for engaging communities and families that have the potential to help youth become responsible, caring, and confident citizens."

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department was created on Dec. 1, 2011 to assume the duties and responsibilities of the former Texas Youth Commission and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Those agencies were abolished in an effort to create a more streamlined and comprehensive approach to juvenile justice issues in Texas, including an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. The TJJD currently provides support to 165 juvenile probation departments statewide and operates six secure correctional facilities and nine halfway houses throughout Texas.

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*For more information, contact Jim Hurley at (512) 424-6016.*

