

# Community Services Report#

---

Presented by Melissa Opheim, Vice President for Community Services  
Commissioners Meeting 2011

## **Outreach: What it Means**

Ministering to children and families to strengthen families; building networks of support and helping bring hope to those struggling with the challenges of parenting, family crisis, poverty, abuse, neglect, and incarceration.

## **The Need in Texas:**

- Texas child population is **6.5 million**.
- **288,000** alleged victims of child abuse/neglect
- **66,897** confirmed victims of child abuse (yearly 2010)
- **16,347** removed from their homes due to abuse/neglect

## **National Statistics, in Real Time:**

- Every **11 seconds** a child is reported abused/neglected
- Every **5 minutes** a child is arrested for a violent crime
- Every **2 hours** a child dies as a victim of homicide

***MCH has 12 outreach locations, 11 in Texas and 1 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, representing 13 cities.***

## **MCH's Philosophy of Care:**

Our programs are developed around evidence-based research about intervention strategies to help promote healthy families, and prevent and/or support families and children who have experienced family crisis, abuse/neglect, separation and other forms of trauma.

## **MCH Foster Care Program:**

Typical questions about foster care:

Q: What is the typical age of a foster care child?

A: The average age of our foster children is five.

Q: What is the number of foster homes?

A: MCH currently has 114 foster homes.

Q: What is the number of foster children?

A: MCH currently serves 147 foster children.

Q: What are reasons for referral?

A: Underemployment, unemployment, incarceration, abuse/neglect findings, at risk of state involvement and removal of children, health issues, and other issues like family conflict, loss of housing, divorce, family violence.

# Community Services Report#

---

Eligibility criteria for children:

- ages 0-17
- Basic to moderate levels of behavior, not actively homicidal, suicidal, delusional, threat to self or others, not actively using drugs/alcohol, etc.
- Eligible for attendance in public school if school age

## **Need for foster care growth and foster parents**

We are looking for families who are:

- generally between the ages of 25-65,
- actively involved in their church and community,
- financially independent,
- stable with healthy relationships and family support for fostering,
- flexible,
- and have good communication skills and healthy relationship/attachment styles.

## **Expected outcomes of placement:**

Family reunification or discharge to a permanent home identified at or during placement

Safe and stable at 90 days post discharge

## **Partnership In Parenting (PIP)/Grandparents As Parents Program (GAPP):**

Prevention programs have been developed to help meet the growing demands on families who struggle with raising children in challenging times.

Our goal is to partner with families during difficult times to find solutions together for strengthening their family and reducing risk factors to their health, safety and well-being.

Risk factors include:

- Family isolation
- Exposure to abuse/neglect situations, unsafe day care or after-school care
- Developmental delays and learning disabilities
- Malnutrition or inability to meet basic needs
- Depression/aggression and failure in school

GAPP: Grandparents raising their grandchildren can be physically, emotionally, and financially challenging. The programs offer the following support services to families:

- Parenting
- Budgeting
- Support Groups
- Individualized case management
- Advocacy and Referrals
- Material needs

# Community Services Report#

---

*MCH reaches about 400 families monthly on average.*

## **Ways you can help. . .**

- Get to know the MCH staff and programs in your area.
- Pray for MCH workers and leadership.
- Promote connections for MCH in service location areas with churches who may be interested in the Home's services.
- Help MCH create an awareness of its services within the community.
- Help MCH recruit foster families.
- Sponsor special opportunities throughout the year to bless those MCH serves.