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RAINS COUNTY COMMUNITY PLANNING 2007

The Rains County Community Planning Task Force in April 2007 and includes representatives from Rains County Sheriff's Office, Rains County Attorney's Office, Emory Policed Department, Point Police Department, Rains County Judge's Office, and East Texas Crisis Center.

The strategies developed by this task force will target and address a variety of specific problems and concerns throughout the country. The county's services, agencies, and organizations involved appear to be fragmented. However, the goal of this plan is to unify a cohesive force to address specific concerns.

VISION

We envision a county where a comprehensive and consolidated community effort will ensure that our citizens have access to comprehensive services.

MISSION

The Rains County Community Planning Task Force is committed to the delivery of comprehensive services by public, private and non-profit agencies and organizations. These services are to ensure public safety, assist victims of crime, encourage offenders in becoming law-abiding citizens, and create a drug-free environment for the community.

AREA

The Rains County Community Plan includes three incorporated towns; Emory, Point, and East Tawakoni and one Independent School District.

GAPS IN SERVICES & PROBLEM AREAS

The problems to be addressed under this plan include:

1. The availability of mental health services
2. Increase in family violence, including abused and neglected youth and re-victimization through criminal justice and judicial systems.
3. Substance Abuse and Drug Trafficking
4. Cultural/Linguistic Barriers
5. Delivery of Victim Services
6. Services for expelled, dropped out, and suspended youth.

Mental Health Services – Services for mental health/ mental retardation are non-existent in this community. The agencies that work with these individuals spend many hours transporting clients and locating appropriate agencies to help them.

Family Violence – Service to victims of family violence has increased dramatically in the past five years. Clients served has increased by over ----%. Rains County has one of the highest per capita rate of domestic violence homicides in Texas over the past 7 years. Many victims never seek assistance of law enforcement or crisis intervention services. Children of these clients are the indirect victims of spouse/partner abuse. Their children often become the juvenile offenders as their chances for suicide, substance abuse, sexual abuse, and family violence increases tremendously over the general population of teens.

Substance Abuse & Drug Trafficking – Law enforcement agencies in the county receive numerous complaints daily regarding illegal substance sale/abuse. With approximately 700 students in one school district, drugs are flowing into our streets and school at an alarming rate.

Cultural/Linguistic Barriers – The Hispanic population has increased considerable in the county during the past twenty years, due mostly migrant farm worker. This has created a myriad of problems for social services, criminal justice system, and the school districts. Linguistic barriers alone prevent working with parents to improve parenting skills, hinder education efforts and continuity for students, complicate the criminal justice process, and often prohibit this minority population from seeking assistance. Bi-lingual services are fragmented by a handful of individual agencies with minimal cooperation, limiting comprehensive assistance. Cultural differences and prejudice create social isolationism, increasing chances of minority involvement in alcohol/substance abuse, homelessness, and child neglect.

Expelled, dropped out, and suspended youth – It has been recognized that the growth in the county has brought growth into the schools. The agencies that assist these youths are

stretched beyond its means with one School Resource Officer to assist Rains ISD. Some of the children in school are experiencing problems which result in being expelled, dropping out and or being suspended.

RESOURCES

Current resources within the community that addresses these problems include:

- Rains County County/District Attorney's Office
- Rains County Sheriff's Office
- Emory Police Department
- Point Police Department
- East Tawakoni Police Department
- The East Texas Crisis Center
- Juvenile Probation Department
- Adult Probation Department

PARTIES INVOLVED IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The following people developed and approved this plan and agree that the requested applications for funding are the most effective way (s) to address the problem.

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