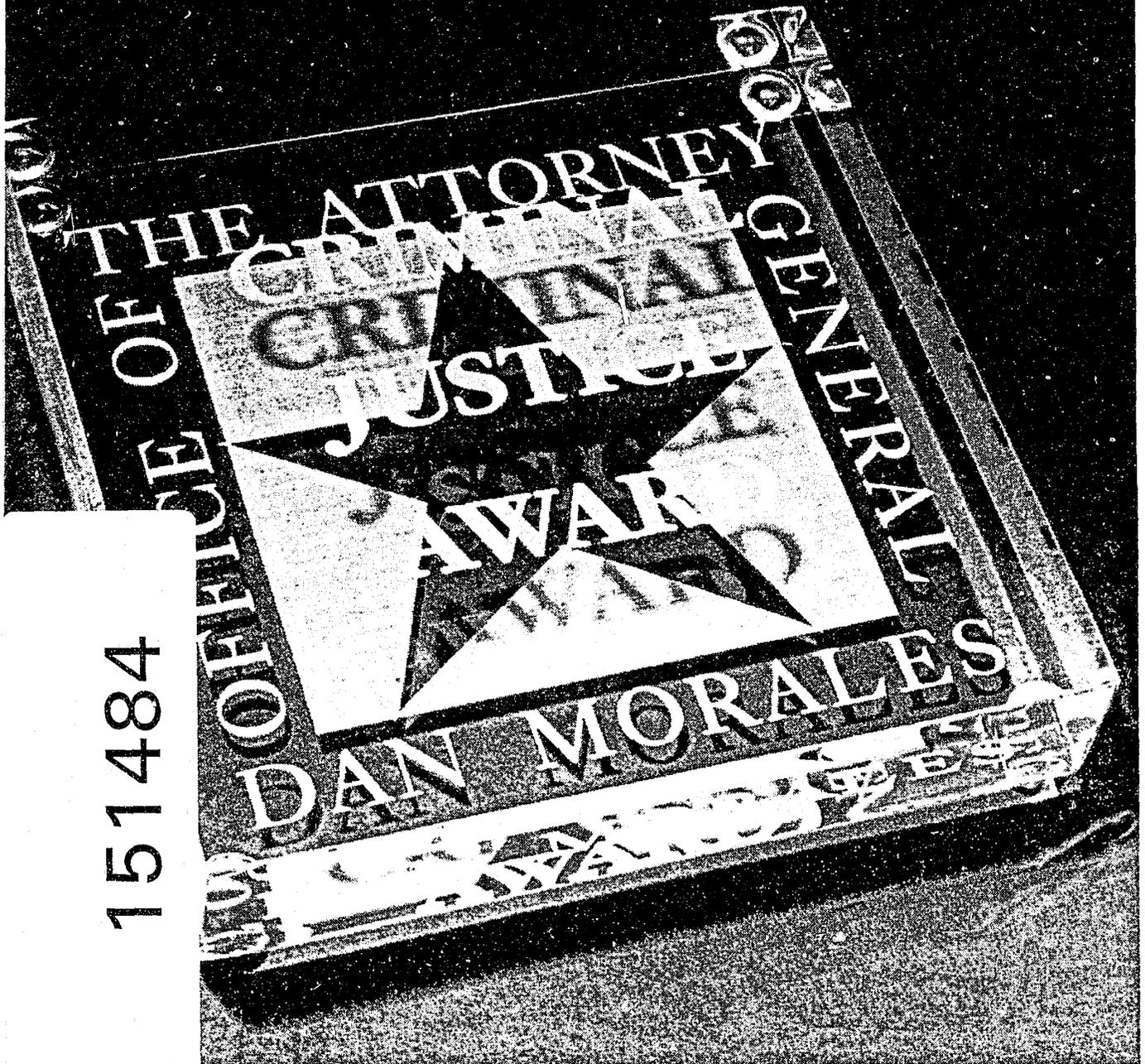


The Texas Attorney General's Model Program Report 1994 Criminal Justice Award Winners

Summer 1994



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NCJRS

Monday, June 15, 1994

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ACQUISITIONS

Dear Concerned Texan:

Every day, all across the state, Texans are providing needed services to crime victims, helping at-risk youth stay on the right side of the law, and turning the lives of youthful offenders towards positive life goals. Today, and even more so in the future, law enforcement efforts depend on a broad array of community resources dedicated to helping at-risk youth and at-risk neighborhoods.

The definition of crime prevention has expanded enormously in recent years. From substance abuse treatment to gang prevention, there are many innovative and effective programs throughout the state. We want to help interested communities learn about the most successful of these programs.

In response to countless calls for information, we have initiated a public recognition campaign and coupled it with this model program report. We want to recognize what works and to get that information practitioners in the field. The truth is that we don't have to "invent" new ways to make our criminal justice system more effective. They already exist. Rather, our challenge is to share information on the successful local programs in community policing, code enforcement, crime watch, juvenile court, and school drop-out prevention programs so others may benefit.

Increasingly, civic leaders and elected officials understand that public safety is not simply a law enforcement problem. It is a community problem. What follows are some of the best community responses that have come to our attention. We want to commend each program included in this report, and encourage others to learn from their example.

Sincerely,



Dan Morales

Attorney General



The Texas Attorney General's Model Program Report 1994 Criminal Justice Award Winners

Table of Contents

151484

Categories

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

Community Policing

Crime Prevention

Criminal Enforcement

Drug Abuse Prevention

Gang Prevention

Juvenile Probation

Neighborhood Action

Neighborhood Crime Watch

Police Officers and Youth

School-based Programs

School-based Alternative Education

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page 6

page 9

page 14

page 18

page 20

page 22

page 24

page 26

page 27

page 29

page 32

Contacts

page 44

Introduction

For many years, the Texas Attorney General has recognized a "Peace Officer of the Year" at its annual Criminal Law Enforcement Conference. While that tradition will continue, a broader focus is needed. Conventional law enforcement is only part of public safety. Rebuilding communities requires dedication, innovation, and commitment by a broad range of sectors and individuals.

Throughout the state, there are new and promising approaches being taken to deal with crime. While it is important to recognize outstanding programs for their achievements, it is even more important to understand why those programs are successful, and then to communicate that information to others so that they may benefit.



Conference participants enjoy the BELIEVE IN ME! program.

While some programs in this report have achieved excellence through conventional approaches, others have used non-conventional techniques. BELIEVE IN ME!, for example, employs dance to teach self-discipline, cooperation, and problem-solving to fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students in East Austin. Programs such as this create positive options for children who might otherwise be drawn into the orbit of neighborhood gangs and juvenile delinquency.

Still other programs, like the Dallas SAFE Team's nuisance abatement initiative, rely upon creative and cooperative use of both resources and laws. The SAFE Team recognizes as its priority the "revitalization" of neighborhoods throughout the city: bringing life back into the community. The revitalization concept encompasses both the elimination of criminal activities and the re-energizing of the surrounding neighborhood.

The final category in this report, school-based alternative education, recognizes the efforts of school districts that have accepted the challenge of holding on to and redirecting the energies of young people who are not able to fit in with the general population of public school students. Many youth who are disruptive and even dangerous in the free flow of the mainstream can become productive and contributing participants in a more structured environment that addresses their individual educational needs.

The Attorney General's Criminal Justice Awards Program is ongoing. The 24 pro-

grams profiled in this report represent a first round of recognitions for programs in 11 categories. Additional categories for which nominations are sought include:

- programs that assist crime victims.
- programs that keep the mentally ill out of the criminal justice system.
- programs that prevent child abuse or assist child abuse victims.
- programs that prevent family violence or assist its victims.
- programs that reduce the recidivism rate of former Texas prison inmates.
- in-jail programs that provide education, job skills, or life skills.

Criteria for determining finalists (winners and honorable mentions) include: clear and measurable goals, documented evidence of achieving those goals, community support, cost-effectiveness, innovative use of community resources and/or government resources, and letters of support.

Current winners represent outstanding programs selected from a field of more than 200 nominees. Many more worthwhile programs are eligible for nomination. To recommend a public, non-profit, or private organization, agency, or program for recognition, please contact:

The Office of the Attorney General
Criminal Justice Awards Program
Attention: Holly Breckwoldt [ADM 001]
P.O. Box 12548
Austin, Texas 78711-2548
Telephone: (512) 475-2191

Community Policing

Community policing is a return to the traditional "cop on the beat" who knows the citizens and helps them solve their problems. The most successful programs utilize police officers in non-traditional ways: as community organizers, as dispute mediators, and as links between the community and local social service agencies.

Community policing techniques work. This is evident by the reductions in neighborhood crime rates. While many community policing programs warrant recognition, the Garland Police Department's Neighborhood Service Team and Apartment Managers Group serve as valuable models of what effective police/community partnership can mean to a city.

Award Winners

Neighborhood Service Team—Garland

In 1992, the Garland Neighborhood Service Team was established to build and maintain a cooperative problem-solving partnership between neighborhoods and city government. This was accomplished by placing the problem-solving and decision-making authority in the hands of frontline city employees such as patrolmen and sanitation workers, who, because of their frequent interaction with the residents, are more attuned to the needs and concerns of the community.



City of Garland employees representing the Neighborhood Service Team.

The Neighborhood Service Team is a partnership consisting of 17 city departments. The team's board of coordinators is responsible for providing the services of their respective departments when needed by frontline team members to solve problems. The Neighborhood Service Team operates in a high-crime, five-square-mile area in east central Garland. The city government provides all resources and pays all costs associated with Neighborhood Service Team crime fighting activities. Residents work directly with

team members in identifying ways to solve community problems that range from preventing burglaries to removing graffiti from buildings. The Garland approach is more effective than top-down decision making because it eliminates the red tape associated with a large bureaucracy.

Garland Police Commander Bob Barber relates the following story as an example of the Neighborhood Service Team concept at work. Residents of a predominantly Hispanic apartment complex in Garland were having trouble keeping their neighborhood clean because they could not afford a dumpster. After examining the problem, the Neighborhood Service Team police officer coordinator called the coordinator in the sanitation department and requested the use of a dumpster. The next day, an 18-wheeler delivered a dumpster for the residents to use. Within hours, the residents had filled the dumpster, and for many weeks thereafter the city removed tons of trash from the complex. Consequently, the neighborhood's image and appearance were enhanced significantly.

The Neighborhood Service Team, along with the Garland Independent School District, also succeeded in closing down a drug operation located in an apartment complex near a Garland elementary school. They did this by instituting a "zero-tolerance" zone, using criminal trespass forms,

conducting undercover buys which led to arrests, evicting offenders, and erecting "no stopping, standing, or parking" signs.

According to the Garland Police Department, calls for police assistance in the area decreased 25% from 1992 to 1993 while the rest of the city showed only a 1% decrease. A significant portion of the reduction in calls was attributed to the initiatives of the Neighborhood Service Team. These initiatives included doubling the number of street lights, cleaning up alleys, removing junked vehicles, and closing down crack houses. The theory is that clean neighborhoods deter criminal activity. The program has been so successful that residents from other parts of Garland are demanding their own Neighborhood Service Teams.

Apartment Managers Group—Garland

The Apartment Managers Group is a cooperative effort between apartment managers and the Garland Police Department to prevent crime in apartment complexes. The group was formed in January 1992 when two police officers and a few apartment managers recognized that lack of communication hindered their ability to fight crime in apartment complexes. To overcome this problem, the Apartment Managers Group arranged to meet once a month to discuss problems and ways to address them. The group focuses on the need for effective tenant screening and security and works to eliminate illegal drug activity.

The apartment managers in each neighborhood elect a person to represent them on the Apartment Managers Group's Board of Representatives. Prior to each regular meeting, the board and the local police get together to discuss the concerns and needs of the apartment managers. A special function of the board is to decide which Garland police officers should receive the "Extra Mile Award." The award, which is designed to encourage officers to develop good working relationships with apartment managers and tenants, is given to officers who have made a significant difference for the apartment complexes in their sectors.

The Apartment Managers Group is effective because it has the full support of the Garland Police Department. Police officers sponsor educational workshops aimed at teaching managers how to be more involved in the policing of their own complexes. Workshops have focused on applicant pre-screening, drug awareness, burglary prevention, and vandalism. Tom Squyres, apartment manager of Glenbrook Place Apartments, believes that the educational seminars sponsored by the police department have helped make his property management style more efficient. "I did not know how to handle rowdy residents or pre-screen residents until I attended a workshop conducted by Garland police officers," Squyres notes.

Since the inception of the Apartment Managers Group, illegal drug activity has decreased by 50% in the apartment complexes. A total of six unruly tenants has been evicted. In recognizing the Apartment Managers Group's success, the mayor of Garland proclaimed June 1 as "Apartment Managers Day." The Apartment Managers Group was also recognized by the National League of Cities for innovation in the field of criminal justice programs for 1993.

Honorable Mentions

Community Policing Center/Community Partnership Against Drugs—El Paso

The Ysleta Community Policing Center houses numerous programs in addition to serving as the center for the local community policing effort. The Compadres program combines the efforts of the local housing authority, the city, and the police department. Nine housing complexes are currently working together to eliminate gang violence and drug abuse.

Community Policing Honorable Mentions

Community Policing in Odessa—Odessa

Through this initiative, the 175-officer police force, under the leadership of the Police Chief, Mayor, and City Manager, introduced several new programs designed to reduce crime and improve communications between the police department and the community, especially the city's minority community. A sampling of these programs includes Neighborhood Watch, Citizens Police Academy, and Police Explorers. A year after the program was initiated, Odessa saw an 18.3% drop in serious crime. At the end of 1993, the city experienced another 15.3% drop in serious crime.

Halloween Project—Addison

Reducing disturbance calls and providing the residents with an opportunity to see their officers in a "different light" were the primary objectives of the Halloween Block Party. The event, hosted by the Police Department and supported by local businesses, gives residents a safe environment in which to celebrate Halloween. Calls for service on Halloween night have been reduced 90%, and 900 young people are expected to attend the event this year.

Neighborhood Response Team—Farmers Branch

By focusing on predominately low-income, minority apartment complexes, the Neighborhood Response Team has built a solid rapport with the residents and helped reduce their feelings of isolation. The program has been viewed as very successful in preventing crime, drugs, and gang activities.

Public Housing Officers—Kingsville

In an effort to improve the quality of life for its residents, the Housing Authority and Police Department of Kingsville joined forces. Officers are charged to deter to any drug-related activity and also to serve as a link between the community and existing governmental services. A 50% reduction in the number of calls for service indicates the program's initial success.

Weed and Seed--Fort Worth

The Weed and Seed program seeks to eliminate violent and drug-related crime from targeted high-crime neighborhoods and to provide a safe environment for law-abiding citizens. A volunteer Gang Task Force coordinates the program, with input from over 200 citizens and the active cooperation of many agencies and organizations, including the Fort Worth Police Department, the Fort Worth Independent School District, the Tarrant County District Attorney's Office, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, the YWCA, and many others. A training seminar on gangs and related issues prepared intervention personnel for placement in recreation centers. The program was also instrumental in establishing the Tarrant County Automated Gang Information Network. Serious crimes in target areas have decreased 28%.

Crime Prevention

Ultimately, the most cost-effective criminal justice programs are those that prevent crime from occurring in the first place. The savings from a crime prevention program go beyond calculations in dollars. Their real value is calculated in human terms; that is, in terms of the suffering, fear, injury, and grief that did not occur because a victim was not created.

A wide range of crime prevention programs have proven to be effective. Some work by modifying the environments in which crimes are likely to occur: helping to install street lights in strategic locations, for example. Other programs seek to modify the behavior of potential victims: teaching people to lock their doors and to notify their neighbors when they will be leaving on vacation are two such techniques.

Perhaps the most challenging crime prevention programs to implement are those that address crime at its roots. The causes of crime are as complex and obscure as human nature. We know what some of the factors are that contribute to violent behavior—and they are not easy to address. Child abuse and neglect, family violence, joblessness, and chronic economic disadvantage are just a few of the pervasive conditions that wear away an individual's capacity to function in society.

The winners in this category cover a large part of the spectrum of crime prevention strategies. The Arlington program combines much of the practical side—environmental design and citizen participation—with a proactive involvement with schools and youth. The other two programs address the human side: how can we keep people from committing crimes?

Award Winners

Crime Prevention Unit—Arlington

The Arlington Police Department is committed to developing and perpetuating community crime prevention programs. The Crime Prevention Unit (CPU), consisting of a lieutenant and three patrol-grade officers, is responsible for police/community relations, crime prevention education, and related preschool and elementary school programs. During 1992 and January 1–April 30, 1993, the CPU reported nearly 73,000 citizen contacts. CPU conducted 262 adult programs, 18 intermediate programs, 769 youth programs, and 52 special programs.

The Arlington Police Department has promoted and supported Neighborhood Crime Watch programs since the mid-1970s. This program has been reevaluated on a periodic basis to ensure that it continues to serve the needs of the community. During 1992 there were 171 organized Crime Watch neighborhoods, including ten new Crime Watch areas that organized during the 1992 National Night Out campaign. By spring of 1993 there were approximately 182 Crime Watch areas. These were comprised of both single family and multi-family areas which may include from 15 homes to 500 unit apartment complexes.

Neighborhood Crime Watch Manual and Newsletter

During 1992, the CPU authored a comprehensive Neighborhood Crime Watch manual that focuses on the prevention of burglary and includes information to reduce fear. The book's five chapters are: Neighborhood Crime Watch (philosophy and organization), Public and Police Working Together (identifying suspicious activity, reporting offenses and activities, and how the police department and judicial system handle calls for service/offenses), Residential Security, Other Crime Prevention Programs and Resources, and Helpful Information and Forms.

Crime Prevention Award Winners

The manual has proven a great success. Neighborhood Crime Watch coordinators report that the manual helps answer questions that arise in their neighborhoods. Patrol officers conducting Crime Watch meetings find the manual an invaluable resource in establishing new Crime Watch areas and maintaining existing areas.

The CPU produces a monthly newsletter, the Crime Eye, which is mailed along with area-specific crime statistics to Crime Watch coordinators. In addition to general crime prevention information, the newsletter includes information about suspects in local crimes and articles on city ordinances, safety, and available training and services.

Crime Prevention Training in the Schools

The CPU officers regularly conduct sessions in Arlington's 37 elementary schools. Many changes in society and families have created a need for education beyond the traditional crime prevention programs. To meet this need, the CPU has assumed the responsibility for teaching coping skills, interpersonal skills, and managing diversity. The CPU uses 40 written youth lesson plans.

To gain audience acceptance, CPU officers developed programs directly from MTV and VH1. The Michael Jackson video, "Man in the Mirror," and Mike and the Mechanics' video, "In the Living Years," were the basis for two youth programs. The "Man in the Mirror" program challenges each youth to make a personal decision to be a peaceful person who avoids hate, violence, and prejudice. "In the Living Years" stresses the importance of meaningful family communication through discussion of topics such as listening versus hearing and the generation gap. These have become two of CPU's most requested programs.

CPU officers teach crime prevention from the perspective of moral responsibility. They combine traditional information with life skills that stress personal accountability and consequences. Many youngsters are not learning these values and concepts from their families and those students who are taught these values at home are often bombarded by conflicting messages from peers, television, and other outside sources.

Citizens Police Academy and Other Activities

Many CPU-community alliances are formed during the Citizens Police Academy. Arlington was one of the leaders in developing this concept. There is a long waiting list of citizens wanting to participate in the program. Over 420 citizens have graduated from the Citizens Police Academy since its inception. Many graduates join the Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association. This non-profit organization routinely volunteers to staff crime prevention activities. The CPU officers act as advisors to the Alumni Association.

Though the CPU has only three officers and a supervisor, it continues to provide traditional crime prevention programs including: Operation Identification, Block Parent, Safety Town (traffic, bicycle and walking safety for 5-6 year olds), Neighborhood Crime Watch, Business Crime Watch, commercial and residential security surveys, insurance premium reduction surveys, adult and youth programming, media contact, October Crime Prevention month, and National Night Out. In addition, the CPU meets routinely with an area Hotel Security Committee, provides McGruff hand puppet training to teens involved with the Welcome House project, serves on the board of the Tarrant Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, serves on the Southeast Arlington Community Action Team, and teaches PTA volunteers who conduct Child Assault Prevention programs in elementary school crisis intervention.

Targeting High Incidence Areas

An annual evaluation of the CPU for 1991 showed a need to target programming in "high-incident" areas. With the assistance of the Crime Analysis Unit, the CPU found that over half of all

Crime Prevention Award Winners

calls for service made to the police came from 15 of the city's 75 grids. This finding prompted the CPU to set a goal of conducting 25% of all programs in the "high incident" areas. In 1992, the CPU exceeded the target, conducting 46% of all programs in these areas. How was CPU able to surpass its goal? Because of the large volume of citizens' requests for CPU services. Once residents began to attend programs, they embraced the concepts and wanted more information. Among the programs CPU conducted were: shoplifting and robbery prevention, commercial security surveys, Neighborhood and Apartment Crime Watch programs, and youth education programs.

The CPU has developed a strong working relationship with Arlington's code enforcement and fire prevention units. Through Code Enforcement, citizens are learning to use existing laws to deal with quality-of-life issues. Cleaning up abandoned vehicles and addressing health violations and rodent/pest problems have been effective in reducing crime rates. The CPU developed and completed the city crime prevention ordinance for multi-family housing. The ordinance specifies high-security hardware, minimum lighting standards, and minimum address identification in multi-family housing.

The Arlington Police Crime Prevention Unit continues a tradition of excellence in public service, taking positive steps to control crime and fear of crime. The Crime Prevention Unit's involvement in Crime Watch and community-based projects demonstrates a commitment to excellence that Arlington citizens expect.

Hot Rods—Midlothian

Programs that seek to keep youth out of trouble have to offer more than good advice and wholesome activity. They have to offer excitement and fun. Kids on the street are used to feeling the adrenaline that flows with risk and fast action. One way or another, they will seek out excitement and find it.

In Midlothian, what kids find is the Midlothian Heat race car, on display at car shows, parades, and other youth-oriented public events. The car is a white 1984 Monte Carlo SS, transformed into a police drag-racing car. Teens come up to look over the car and talk to the driver about cars, racing, and speed. Then slowly it dawns on them: they're talking to a COP! Not some guy in the blue uniform giving out traffic tickets, but a real human, someone who shares their interests.

Midlothian Heat is part of a program sponsored by a non-profit corporation, North Texas Beat the Heat, Inc.—Racing for Education. Police officers and high school youths participate in racing team challenges at various drag strips around the country. The drivers of the race cars are public safety officers, policemen, deputy sheriffs, etc. Rather than being chased by a cop on the street and getting pulled over, these teens get to chase a cop on the drag strip.

John McCollum, a Midlothian Police Officer who says he is "IN HOT PURSUIT OF A DRUG-FREE AMERICA," started the city's program. His work picks up where DARE's leaves off. The teens in the community talk to Officer McCollum about cars, engines—whatever they want to discuss. He passes out literature and they talk about such things as: staying away from alcohol and other drugs; how driving under the influence is stupid; how you cannot drive a race car if you are drunk or drugged; and the much greater high you can get from the kind of speed you find on the track.

The public really enjoys watching the cop cars race. The parents and grandparents of the teens are impressed and enthusiastic about the program. The families of the officers are also involved; their wives and children often attend the events. Hot Rods is a real public relations tool for the Midlothian police. The key is, the youth who get involved know John McCollum as a person, not just 'That Cop' or 'The Man.'

Crime Prevention Award Winners

When the car is on display at events in surrounding communities, the officers tell kids if they feel the need for speed they should come drag race at the safety-controlled environment of the race track rather than on the streets. Midlothian Heat challenges teens to "BEAT THE HEAT."

Among the many events where Midlothian Heat displayed last year was the annual Boy Scout Jamboree at Las Colinas in Irving, Texas. More than 30,000 scouts were on hand to see the cars and discuss the program with participating police officers. The kids and the police alike enjoyed the opportunity.

The last race of the season, held in November in Las Vegas, draws cop race cars from all over the United States. Teams participate in the "Super Cop Challenge" to determine who has the fastest cop car in the country. The event gives teams a chance to discuss their programs and to exchange ideas about ways to reach the youth.

This event has been highlighted on NHRA Today on ESPN. John McCollum has competed in the challenge with the Midlothian Heat car the past two years. The Midlothian Heat car has been pictured in such magazines as Car Craft, Automotive News, and even in a German magazine published for car enthusiasts. Midlothian cops and kids continue to be in "HOT PURSUIT OF A DRUG-FREE AMERICA."

Positive Production—Jefferson County

Positive Production was conceived and developed in 1993 by two correctional officers employed by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. These two officers have an extensive background in dealing with criminal attitudes and behavior. The concept has generated much energy and excitement, as changes in the mental attitude of criminal offenders are visible on a daily basis. The founders of the program believe it changes the way many multiple offenders think of themselves and society.

Inmates are responsible for supporting the program in the following manner. The inmate commissary fund helps pay for classroom supplies for Level I and II classes. When inmates reach Level III and begin Positive Production craft building, they begin earning a weekly salary. They must first use their earnings to reimburse the commissary fund for the cost of the classroom materials used in Levels I and II. Once they have repaid the fund for the materials, 20% of their salary is deducted for living expenses and program costs. The remaining 80% goes to the inmates' families. By using volunteers from local school districts and interns from Lamar University's Criminal Justice Department, the program avoids the cost of instructors. The Positive Production program offers inmates the opportunity to change—at no cost to the Jefferson County taxpayer.

Because the program is so new, objective measurements of its success are limited. However, there are many indications that Positive Production is making a significant difference in the lives of county jail inmates and their families. There has been a dramatic change in the jail's atmosphere. Interpersonal relationships between inmates have become more relaxed; there is less tension and feelings of hopelessness have diminished. Relationships between the officers and the inmates have become extremely open and forthright; more akin to employer-employee relations.

Two members of Positive Production's Level II who were released on bond have shown their commitment to completing the program by voluntarily returning two days each week for class. One member of Positive Production's Level III has been hired by Szabo Food Service to be a supervisor in the Food Service Operation of the jail. This member was hired as a direct result of his participation and progress in the program.

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**Crime
Prevention
Award Winners**

The measure of long-term success for Positive Production will be an expected decrease in the rate of recidivism in Jefferson County. Corrections staff expect the program to lead to a reduction in the crime rate because of the improved mental outlook of the multiple offender. It is hoped that successful program members will gain employment and become productive citizens and taxpayers in the county.

The neighboring Orange County Sheriff's Department has requested assistance in initiating Positive Production in their new low-risk facility. Jefferson County reports that other law enforcement agencies as well as the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have inquired about the program. The concept can be adapted for any correctional institution that has an interest in returning ex-offenders to society as productive members. Positive Production founders are available as consultants to assist in the development or establishment of the program.

Criminal Enforcement

Two of the programs highlighted in this section are traditional in their strategy: they reduce crime through the presence of uniformed officers using proven techniques of crime analysis and field investigation. The third winner represents a newer trend: code enforcement. All three pay handsome dividends, not only in terms of public safety, but also in dollars saved, assets seized, and even fines collected.

Award Winners

Hot Spot-Narcotics Enforcement Team—Harris County

The concept is simple: saturate a target area with uniformed deputies in marked patrol units and vigorously enforce all available laws. The target area becomes untenable for street sale of narcotics. Target areas are determined by the amount of visible drug trafficking, reports from the affected patrol district, information from neighborhood sources, and intelligence from the Harris County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement sources. When in the target area, Hot Spot Units take all calls dispatched for that area except traffic accidents.

Hot Spot-NET personnel have made almost 15,000 arrests and cleared 3,765 warrants. They have worked with patrol districts in targeted areas all over Harris County and also with the following special units: Youth Gang Intervention Unit, Harris County Organized Crime Unit, Narcotics, Vice, Special Thefts, and the Criminal Warrant Division. Hot Spot personnel have also worked on joint operations with at least a dozen other state, local, and federal agencies. These cooperative efforts have been focused on the connection between youth gangs and narcotics.

The Hot Spot-NET program has benefited both the citizens of Harris County and the Sheriff's Department. Residents within the target areas witness the "cleaning up" of narcotic "Hot Spots" in their neighborhoods. This gives them a feeling of greater safety, which in turn provides them with the initiative to reclaim their streets. The Sheriff's Department gains valuable intelligence from both citizens and arrestees. The Hot Spot Unit has turned up information on crack houses, gang membership, wanted individuals, and other concerns to law enforcement agencies in the area.

Funding

The Hot Spot-Narcotics Enforcement program came into being in 1991, when the Harris County Sheriff's Department applied for and received about \$325,000 in federal funding. The grant was part of the National High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program, established by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to assist state and local agencies in the overall drug enforcement effort. The funds received by the Harris County Sheriff's Department were used to pay for 30 deputies, four sergeants, a lieutenant, a captain, and a clerk.

In FY 1992, Hot Spot-Net received additional federal funding and the department was able to purchase vehicles and equipment for the 36 patrol positions. Federal dollars were continued for FY 1993, and are anticipated for 1994. However, to ensure that manpower reductions do not occur, alternate alternative sources of money are being sought.

Results

The saturation of high-crime areas with Hot Spot-NET personnel has reduced the level of violence in these areas. In one area, the number of murders decreased by a remarkable 28%. Armed robberies also have declined. The program brings in revenue while preventing crime: Hot Spot-NET personnel have seized over \$1.5 million in cash, property, and vehicles. In addition, the unit

has issued over 15,000 traffic citations at an average of \$40 per citation, to generate an additional \$615,000 for Harris County coffers.

Regular districts are responsible for larger geographical areas with limited personnel, and do not have the flexibility that Hot Spot operations enjoy. A comparison of per-deputy statistics for regular districts versus Hot Spot demonstrate the effectiveness of saturation patrol in the fight against narcotic crimes. In the future, Hot Spot-NET plans to work with school districts to increase pressure on youth gangs, a new initiative that will complement efforts to control the adult narcotics industry.

Support Abatement Forfeiture Enforcement (SAFE) Team—Dallas

The SAFE Team was created to address crime problems in 200 abandoned, dilapidated, and sub-standard housing sites, where drug dealing, assaults, and murders were terrorizing the residents of surrounding neighborhoods. Nearby homeowners were being forced to move away or take extraordinary precautions, such as sleeping on the floor at night to prevent being hit by random gun fire.

The target sites fell into the jurisdictions of several city departments, none knew what the others were doing in their areas of responsibility. This lack of coordination usually resulted in poor or nonexistent code enforcement. The SAFE Team, which was formed within the Dallas Police Department by the City of Dallas, introduced a new level of cooperation between the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department, the Fire Department, and the Health and Human Services Department.

Although its primary objective is to reduce drug dealing, prostitution, gambling, and other illegal activities, the SAFE Team emphasizes code compliance. Properties which are allowed to be "run-down" are more likely to be used for criminal activities than those properties that are kept up to standard. The SAFE Team takes advantage of a number of different legal remedies:

- Nuisance abatement;
- State and federal provisions for asset forfeiture;
- Texas Local Government Code;
- Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code; and
- Dallas City Code.

The SAFE Team uses these laws to motivate or, when necessary, to compel the owners of problem sites to clean up and restore their properties.

Support

The "S" in "SAFE" refers to the team's policy of first seeking voluntary compliance ("Self-Abatement") from the owner of a targeted property. Frequently, it is enough for the SAFE Team to educate the owners as to their responsibilities under the law. The owners are often then quite willing to cooperate in seeing that criminal activity and code violation activities are eliminated from their properties.

All parties work together, combining available resources to rehabilitate and revitalize the property. The net result is that everyone benefits: the city sees a reduction of criminal activity and more properties being brought into compliance with code requirements; the site owners channel their resources into the improvement of their own properties; and tenants and neighbors have safer, cleaner places in which to live and work.

Criminal Enforcement Award Winners

Abatement

In cases in which owners are personally involved in the criminal activity occurring on the property, or in which owners are unwilling to cooperate with the SAFE Team to eliminate criminal activity and code violations, the SAFE Team seeks court-ordered abatement of the nuisance activity. The Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code provides authority to bring nuisance suits in order to close places where certain illegal activities occur. The SAFE Team can seek relief in several forms:

- a temporary restraining order to force the immediate discontinuance of the use of the property for illegal purposes; and/or
- a temporary injunction, pending the final judgment of the court with respect to the abatement of the nuisance and closure of the property; and
- a permanent injunction ordering abatement of the nuisance and closure of the property for a year unless the defendant posts the \$10,000 bond mandated by the statute.

The Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code also provides authority for the abatement of public nuisances where certain violations of gambling, prostitution, obscenity, bullfighting, or controlled substances laws occur.

Forfeiture

The SAFE Team can seek forfeiture of real or personal property that has been used either in the commission of a felony or obtained with the proceeds of a felony. The team prepares the forfeiture case for presentation to either the district attorney (in state forfeiture cases) or the United States Attorney (in federal forfeiture cases). By statute, the City Attorney is not authorized to file either state or federal forfeiture cases. The City Attorney reviews the investigative file of the seizure/forfeiture case, and then forwards the case to the appropriate authority.

State forfeiture cases are forwarded to the district attorney for review as to whether the property is in fact contraband as defined by Article 59 of the Code of Criminal procedure. Federal forfeiture cases are forwarded to the United States Attorney's Office.

Enforcement

Statutes the SAFE Team may use as the basis for enforcement include the following:

- Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Common and Public Nuisance.
- Local Government Code, Enforcement of Municipal Ordinances, which allows municipalities to bring civil actions for the enforcement of ordinances.
- The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code, which provides for the abatement of common nuisance activities and seizure of certain properties used in violation of the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code.

Impressive Results and Cost Recovery

The SAFE Team is a collaboration between the City of Dallas, the Dallas Police Department, City Attorney's Office, Housing & Neighborhood Services Department (Code Enforcement Section), and Fire Department. These departments provided a \$1.5 million budget to establish the SAFE program. To date, the team has achieved cooperative abatements from 98% of the property owners contacted. In addition, 13 properties were seized for housing criminal activities.

The success and popularity of the program has resulted in over 650 additional requests from communities for assistance with problem sites in their neighborhoods. The SAFE Team has completed 244 investigations. "Before" and "after" evaluations of investigated properties consistently show a decrease in demand for city services, usually of around 50%. The savings in city services, plus revenues from the sale of forfeited properties, are projected to exceed \$1.6 million during the first year of the SAFE Team's operation. If those results come through, the team will have more than recouped its cost.

The Violent Crimes Task Force—San Antonio

The Violent Crimes Task Force was created on June 4, 1993. It is comprised of 102 officers who closely monitor, track, and investigate drive-by shootings. The goal of the program is to reduce the incidence of violent crime. The Task Force has focused primarily on drive-by shootings because these offenses can result in murders, attempted murders, aggravated assaults, and/or damages to property. In addition, drive-by shootings have an adverse impact on the quality of life in the community.

The San Antonio Violent Crimes Task Force is active from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m., seven days a week. Information is compiled and disseminated to Task Force officers, who then attempt to reduce the number of drive-by shootings by using several strategies. Specific objectives are:

- confiscate, seize, and remove as many weapons from the street as possible.
- confiscate, seize, and remove as many rounds of ammunition from the street as possible.
- confront and identify as many gang members as possible.
- establish high visibility of uniformed officers in those areas where the incidence of violent crime seems to be the highest.

In its first night of operation, the Task Force arrested four gang members and confiscated 10 assault rifles and almost 1,000 rounds of ammunition. In addition, a drive-by shooting was prevented.

Over the course of 60 days of operation, the Violent Crimes Task Force has prevented numerous drive-by shootings, made over 400 felony arrests, confiscated 120 weapons and 4,000 rounds of ammunition, and made almost 4,000 misdemeanor arrests. Uniformed officers have made almost 2,500 field contacts involving gang members.

The Uniform Crime Report statistics for January through July 1993 show a 9.27% decrease in violent crime when compared to the same period in the previous year. Statistics also show a 23% decrease in drive-by shootings when compared to the 60-day period prior to the creation of the Violent Crimes Task Force.

Drug Abuse Prevention

"There are more deaths, illnesses, and disabilities from substance abuse than from any other preventable health condition. Of the two million U.S. deaths each year, more than one in four is attributable to alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug use. Many of these deaths and other losses could be reduced—if not eliminated—by changing people's habits." (Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem)

Drug abuse can destroy families, homes, and communities. Innovative drug prevention programs such as the San Benito Drug Elimination Program are needed to educate our communities about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

Award Winner

Drug Elimination Program 1993—San Benito

"The San Benito Housing Authority has an outstanding program that has grown beyond the activities outlined in their original application. Activities are on schedule and in compliance with the Public Housing Drug Elimination Program guidelines." (Monitoring Report: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, San Antonio regional office)



**Representatives of
the San Benito
Housing Authority
Drug Elimination
Program**

The city of San Benito is located 19 miles northwest of Brownsville. San Benito's population of 23,000 lives only seven miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border in an area that the Immigration and Naturalization Service's Border Patrol describes as "one of the most active drug-crossing sections of the United States-Mexico border." Cameron County, where San Benito is located, has been designated as a "high intensity drug-trafficking area."

The Housing Authority of the City of San Benito created the Drug Elimination Program in December 1992. The program is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It focuses on reducing drug use among the children of the 320 families living in the city's five public housing projects. The strategy is simple: promote drug awareness through educational forums and involve kids in recreational activities.

Among the problems evident in many of the housing projects are kids using marijuana and sniffing glue and paint. The same kids are also getting in trouble at school, dropping out, and getting expelled.

The Drug Elimination Program launched two campaigns—"Say No to Drugs" and "Drug Free"—specifically aimed at the younger resident population. Youngsters were given at least two drug education presentations per month in addition to weekly presentations on self-esteem. In June, the program hosted a valleywide "Drug Free" rally, which included all the public housing authorities of the Rio Grande Valley. More than 700 children attended the function.

Drug Abuse Prevention Award Winner

The program, which was developed in cooperation with the local school district, has been instrumental in providing academic support for the youth of the housing projects. Remedial and tutorial classes are available to any resident youth who needs assistance. On average, 30 youngsters attend each session. State-of-the-art computers are available, which students use to complement their work in math, language, and writing classes. Demand for the tutorial classes has been so great that additional computers were purchased. Students' grades have shown significant improvement thanks to this aspect of the Drug Elimination Program.

A HUD review indicated that the campaigns and rallies had met and "exceeded" HUD goals and objectives in the area of promoting drug awareness. The Drug Elimination Program, which HUD calls "model" and "exemplary," succeeded in involving 55% of the children in the housing projects in recreational and other sporting activities. Program staff take kids swimming and lead outings to various points of interest. Boy and Girl Scout troops were formed and an average of 90 children attended each scouting event. Children participated in seasonally organized sports such as basketball, softball, and volleyball. Competitions were held through the Boys/Girls Club and the area Housing Authority.

Victor Trevino, executive director of the Drug Elimination Program says, "By including children in extracurricular activities the students are not tempted by bad influences such as drug use or dealing."

Honorable Mentions

San Antonio YMCA Drug Education and Prevention—San Antonio

The area served by the Alamo YMCA is a recognized high drug trafficking area. Although the program's primary focus is drug abuse prevention, it also works to build self-esteem, self-confidence, and decision making and communication skills among area youth through leadership groups of 25 to 30 young people. The program has collaborative working agreements with the Palmer Drug Abuse Program, Communities Organized Against Drugs, Ella Austin Community Center, and other agencies. The program was awarded the 1992 Star of Texas award.

Kleberg County Substance Abuse Counseling Services—Kingsville

Public housing neighborhoods are the sites for substance abuse counseling in this innovative program. Teamwork, tutoring in school subjects, and job development have resulted in better school attendance and higher retention rates.

Life Alternatives Counseling Center—Texarkana

The Center is centrally located in the Texarkana Texas Housing Authority sector for the low/no-income population. The Center is staffed by volunteers and interns from Texarkana College, and provides intervention and prevention services for substance abuse. In addition, LACC offers a wide array of referral services. The goals of the structured program are to improve general physical well-being, increase understanding of the recovery process, identify and reduce emotional and behavioral obstacles to recovery, and improve self-esteem. The Center serves over 100 clients a month and hosts a wide variety of alcohol and drug -related meetings, including Adult Children of Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous.

Gang Prevention

Programs that offer alternatives to gangs must find socially acceptable ways to meet the same needs that gangs meet: a sense of belonging, emotional support, physical safety, a sense of purpose, and a structure for discipline.

The Youth Initiatives Program, operated by the city of San Antonio, combines effective strategies to reduce crime among youth with positive alternatives such as extracurricular activities to youth who otherwise might find their way into trouble.

Award Winner

Youth Initiatives—San Antonio

In March of 1992, the San Antonio city manager created a Youth Initiatives Program to coordinate the youth activities offered by 10 city departments. Youth Initiatives provides alternatives to gang involvement and other anti-social activities. It coordinates community youth programs involving the health department, library, parks and recreation, and the police.



**Representatives of
the San Antonio
Youth Initiatives
Program**

In terms of traditional law enforcement measures, in 1991 the City of San Antonio adopted a Youth Curfew Ordinance. The ordinance is in effect between midnight and 6:00 a.m. and applies to youth under age 17. City staff believe that the curfew "has played a significant role in reducing citywide crime and juvenile victimization," and they have the statistics to back up their claims. The number of juvenile victims of crime during curfew hours decreased by 77%, and juvenile arrests during curfew hours decreased by 7%.

In the fall of 1993, the city was considering two additional ordinances: one to curb truancy and

another to curb gang-related graffiti. The Greater San Antonio Crime Prevention Commission cited a report predicting 36% of all ninth graders in Bexar County public schools (San Antonio) would fail to graduate. Poor attendance often signals that the student is at risk of eventually dropping out of school.

Gang experts understand that graffiti is often the first and most easily recognized indication of gang presence in a community. Requiring business owners to clean graffiti on their property, and requiring youth arrested for graffiti violations to clean graffiti across the community are positive steps that, if taken early, stem the growth of gangs.

However, ordinances that impose curfews, closely monitor truancy, limit graffiti, or outlaw juvenile possession of firearms, cannot by themselves end juvenile crime and gang violence in our cities and towns. Ultimately, what we do for children and youth is more important than what we do to them.

Youth Initiatives established a partnership involving the Arts and Cultural Affairs Department, the San Antonio Independent School District, San Antonio Housing Authority, Avance, and Community Initiatives. This coalition implemented art programs focusing on delinquency preven-

Gang Prevention Award Winner

tion and esteem-building. Innovative arts curricula and local artists help convey anti-drug and anti-gang themes.

The scope of the program is impressive. City employees are serving as volunteer mentors to elementary school students. Another program allowing middle school students to remain on campus until 7:00 p.m. was in such demand that it was quickly expanded. San Antonio received \$8.7 million federal dollars for summer youth employment programs and used that money to employ more than 5,000 students.

Finally, the city developed a communitywide effort uniting the public and private sectors to provide positive activities and services for youth. In the first summer the program was offered, approximately 50,000 young people, ages 6-19, signed up to participate, causing the city to offer the program year round. Activities include trips to art museums, the circus, visits to the city council, bowling parties, punt-pass-kick competitions, visits to Sea World, and much more.

The success of Youth Initiatives is evident not only in the diverse types of activities now available to youth in San Antonio, but also by the number of young people taking advantage of the positive opportunities. San Antonio police statistics speak for themselves. The program reports that total crime was down by 7% in 1992 and juvenile crime was down 13%. In 1993, total crime decreased by almost 10%, while the number of juvenile victims of crime went down by an impressive 53%.

The Youth Initiatives program reached 241,026 youth through its activities in 1993. Not surprisingly, the program has received several awards and commendations. In 1992 it received the U.S. Conference of Mayors Award for "Most Innovative Youth Program." In 1993 it received the Texas Coalition for Juvenile Justice's "Advocate for Children Award."

San Antonio City Manager Alexander E. Briseno believes that "Every city should be as concerned about the needs of their young citizens as about providing safety, economic vitality, and maintaining basic services." But the responsibility for our children does not rest primarily upon the government. As Mr. Briseno said, "Next time a child approaches you, give him your attention, say something positive, or just listen. Show that you care."

Honorable Mentions

Gang Unit—Laredo

The Laredo Police Department's gang unit has opened lines of communication between gangs, school administrators, and parents. Several youths have also found employment in the local business community. On November 24, 1993, the Laredo West Side Peace Agreement was signed to end school violence and promote peace.

Juvenile Crime and Gang Violence Reduction Program—Mission

With no outside funding, the program reduced juvenile criminal activity 126% from 1992 to 1993. This was accomplished through education, counseling, and enforcement operations within both the high school and junior high schools. Two officers are assigned full-time.

Neighborhood Youth Outreach for At-risk Youth—El Paso

Recreational opportunities help reduce/prevent the recruitment of youth (age 7 to 16) into local gangs. The program is a partnership consisting of many organizations, including schools, local government, businesses, and service organizations. Last year 1,533 children participated.

Juvenile Probation

Critics contend that the juvenile justice system is ineffective. They argue that our usual ways of dealing with youthful offenders do little to encourage them to return to society as productive citizens. The City of Houston's Teen Court is working to change the perception—and the reality—of a system that does not work. Teen Court gives troubled youth a chance to work for the community rather than against it.

Award Winner

Teen Court/Teenage Community Alternative Program—Houston

In an effort to counteract the negative influences of peer pressure, poverty, and drugs, the City of Houston municipal courts created a teen court. Its mission is to reach teens and pre-teens at a turning point in their lives, when direction, support, and guidance are particularly needed. Through parental involvement, workshops, referral to community services, and alternative sentencing, the court strives to positively influence the lives of first-time offenders.

Teen Court has a strong truancy-prevention focus. Statistics show that juveniles who finish high school are less likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. The court hears cases of juveniles charged with Class C misdemeanors such as theft, trespassing, and disorderly conduct, but the most common charge by far is violation of the Houston curfew ordinance.

Juveniles appear in court in the company of their parents or guardians. The judge and the court staff, who are knowledgeable about community resources, direct the young offenders and their families to appropriate youth and family services.

The court also offers a peer-pressure and substance-abuse workshop with DARE officers from the Houston Police Department. During the workshops, teens learn to understand and resist negative influences. They also gain positive relationships with appropriate role models, as officers take the time to counsel youth about the decisions they make about crime and drugs.

The Teenage Community Alternative Program (TCAP) was implemented as an alternative sentencing initiative wherein juveniles from Teen Court would be assigned to perform community service in lieu of paying fines. The number of hours of service to be performed by each youth depends on the amount of the fine and the violation itself. The program operates in conjunction with the city of Houston Parks Department and the Houston Fire Department. Typically, juvenile community service entails working on clean-up projects in city parks or assisting firefighters at designated fire stations.

Through June 1993, approximately 1,401 juveniles have been assigned to TCAP. The Houston Teen Court and Teenage Community Alternative Program are working to instill in young offenders a respect for law and a sense of responsibility for unlawful behavior.

Honorable Mentions

Hidalgo County Juvenile Court Conference Committee—Edinburg

Local citizens are trained to divert offending youth back to their community neighborhoods. Volunteer Conference Committees meet with the youth and their family to work through the problems. Recidivism for program participants is 20%, and over 95,000 hours have been donated.

Austin/Travis County Youth Services, Inc.—Austin

ATCYS has provided counseling, advocacy, and support services to youth and families in high-risk neighborhoods in the Travis County area for more than ten years. ATCYS has implemented youth programs in public housing which have helped to increase the number of youth graduating from high school, and decrease the number of youth becoming involved in juvenile crime.

**Juvenile
Probation
Honorable
Mentions**

Neighborhood Action

Residents in many communities are not waiting for state and federal agencies to come in and "fix" their problems for them. Community leaders, youth workers, local administrators, and committed volunteers are combining their talents to fight crime in their neighborhoods and provide needed services. "Grass roots" programs demonstrate on a daily basis that local government can enhance its effectiveness by empowering the people it serves.

The key idea is cooperation. Organizations in the Neighborhood Action category encourage full community participation. The partnership between community-based organizations and residents is what makes the Neighborhood Action winner, San Antonio Fighting Back, a model program.

Award Winner

San Antonio Fighting Back—San Antonio

San Antonio Fighting Back is committed to long-term community improvement through comprehensive action. Fighting Back works to prevent crime, violence, and drug abuse by facilitating the delivery of social services and promoting community policing initiatives. Community empowerment is fundamental to the program.



Members of San Antonio Fighting Back

Fighting Back provides training designed to mobilize and involve residents in every aspect of its operations. The organization has found that increased community involvement insures that programs and strategies are culturally relevant and appropriate. The community's sense of ownership generates long-term support.

San Antonio Fighting Back serves a diverse group of people who reside in the east and southeast sectors of the city. The target area is a mixture of residential and industrial areas. It includes large areas of below standard housing and blighted commercial zones. An estimated 29-34% of the target population lives on an

income at or below the poverty level. Unemployment is a serious problem due to a lack of jobs and the low educational attainment levels of the work force. It is conservatively estimated that 25% of the adult population is illiterate, and that the school dropout rate is 39%.

San Antonio Fighting Back operates out of three neighborhood resource centers where training, coordination, support, resource development, economic development, and technical assistance for community activities are provided. The resource centers also offer "one-stop" access to several health and human service agencies.

Teams consisting of service providers, neighborhood networkers, and community volunteers coordinate services provided at the resource centers. From the point of view of residents, services are holistic, convenient, and culturally relevant. The resource centers, and the agencies that operate through them, are heavily used as a result.

San Antonio Fighting Back offers technical assistance to individuals and groups who want to form neighborhood associations, Neighborhood Crime Watch programs, or other community organiza-

**Neighborhood
Action
Award Winner**

tions that benefit residents. Through the efforts of San Antonio Fighting Back, 30 new community/neighborhood coalitions and associations have been established. Approximately 320,000 people participated in one or more community events from 1992-1993. In addition, 650 community volunteers participated in a neighborhood clean-up that resulted in the collection of more than 200 tons of trash.

Honorable Mentions

Adopt-a-Neighborhood—Sonora

This program works cooperatively to improve the Sonora community by strengthening its individual neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are encouraged to form groups and take an active role in addressing their problems. One particular success has been the reclamation of Liberty Park, where church fairs and weddings once again take place after years of neglect.

AVANCE Program and Restoration Program, St. Matthew's Cathedral—Dallas

The program provides a bilingual education for at-risk youth. The target population is adjudicated delinquent Hispanic youth or youth under the jurisdiction of the Dallas County Juvenile Department.

SHAPE Community Center, Inc.—Houston

By empowering children and adults of African descent through programs and activities, SHAPE intends to improve their quality of life. Programs such as Pump Up the Power and the Parent Awareness Network have been designed for both children and adults.

Texas South Baseball, Inc.—McAllen

The Texas South Baseball league was organized to provide underprivileged youth of South McAllen with an opportunity to play baseball. Until the league was formed, the majority of boys in the area could not compete in a baseball program because they lacked transportation to and from the playing sites.

Neighborhood Crime Watch

In many cities residents are terrorized by crime. However, some citizens refuse to live in fear. These people have enlisted the help of local police and have energized their communities. The Lufkinland Crime Watch program is an excellent example of a citizen-initiated crime watch program. Its success in reducing crime in Lufkinland has helped residents feel safe on their streets again.

Award Winner

Lufkinland Crime Watch Program—Lufkin

The Lufkinland Crime Watch Program was formed in 1992 when several people in east Lufkin decided to combine their efforts in fighting crime. The group meets twice a month to plan and discuss strategies for crime prevention.

Carolyn Howard, assistant secretary for the program, describes the problems of her community before the crime watch was organized: "Several homes were broken into and our local school was broken into repeatedly. People were afraid to drive down certain streets because drug dealers would accost them. There was a lot of illegal dumping of trash and run-down houses also in our community."

Reverend N.C. Simmons, Lufkinland Crime Watch president and pastor of Mt. Beulah Baptist Church, found that organizing the group of approximately 10–15 people was not a simple task because many residents did not want to get involved with identifying criminals.

"Many people just do not want to get involved because they are afraid for their lives. In the beginning, the criminals tried to intimidate us by breaking the windows of the church where we met. The tactics failed and only served to make the group more determined to get rid of this nonsense."

The Lufkinland Crime Watch group, in cooperation with the Lufkin Police Department, has been successful in boarding up or renovating abandoned houses that were once havens for drug addicts. They also cleaned up a local cemetery that had been vandalized by neighborhood youth. Reverend Simmons credits the success of the program to citizens working together with city leaders and the local police.

Police Officers and Youth

Traditionally, law enforcement has addressed crime in the minority community by focusing on the number of cases investigated and the number of arrests made. Prevention has been a matter of targeting the criminal hard-core and educating citizens in self-protection. This kind of vigorous enforcement has created strained relations between police officers and the residents they are trying to protect. All too often, children in these same communities grow up with the idea that a police officer is a uniform that will take them to jail if they do something wrong.

Police officers can and should be role models for children, not objects of fear. The Fort Worth Police Department's KIDS CODE BLUE is one of a number of programs that promote positive relationships between law enforcement and children. KIDS CODE BLUE aims at both reducing the level of crime in minority communities and diverting children in the community away from the criminal lifestyle. The program is commendable for its commitment to long-term positive investment in children, as opposed to short-term enforcement results.

Award Winner

KIDS CODE BLUE—Fort Worth

KIDS CODE BLUE targets children ages 5–12. Uniformed police officers, with the help of civilian coordinators, provide after-school activities in apartment communities. Police officers serve as mentors and teachers. Each daily lesson is designed to develop a long-term understanding between future adult citizens and the police officers of their community. Lessons are often in story format and show alternatives to the criminal lifestyle to which many children are exposed every day. An associated school-based program called the Freedom League provides similar guidance, along with recreation and academic support, for older children, ages 12 to 17.

According to Chantal Gavaldon, the Code Blue coordinator, "The programs are based on the idea that violence among youth, be it in schools, homes, or streets, is often the long-term result of children and youth lacking in various areas of support. With the transition toward more single-parent homes, parents needing to work, and economic difficulties, problems often surface with youth, especially in school settings."

KIDS CODE BLUE was first instituted in the Ripley Arnold Housing Apartments, a public housing complex located on the northern edge of downtown Fort Worth. The complex consists of 29 units and in the community there are 61 female heads of household and a population of 316 children, ages 6–17. The community is bordered on three sides by the central business district and has a large parking lot on the fourth side which serves downtown office workers and mall shoppers. The area was plagued by a high incidence of drug-related crime aggravated by the constant presence of many homeless transients who wander daily through the community.

KIDS CODE BLUE has produced visible changes in the behavior and attitudes of the participating children. As many as 60 children have attended the twice-weekly sessions taught by community



Representatives of
KIDS CODE BLUE

Police Officers and Youth Award Winner

volunteers. The program has been expanded to two other public housing complexes, as well as to a predominately Hispanic apartment complex on the city's north side.

According to Fort Worth Police Lieutenant Burbank, "KIDS CODE BLUE will not produce the immediate, dramatic drop in the crime rate that police departments are used to reporting following the implementation of new programs and initiatives. Rather, this program represents the most difficult direction for result-oriented society to attempt. We are convinced that a long-term commitment to this type of initiative will serve to turn a significant number of our future adults away from the criminal lifestyle and toward a functional, productive future. By staying the course and working every day toward this end, we demonstrate to our economically disadvantaged communities our commitment to serve and protect them in roles far beyond yesterday's emphasis on reaction to crime."

Honorable Mentions

Lockhart Police Department Youth Services Project—Lockhart

Using a five-year plan, the Lockhart Police Department gave needed attention to the problem of juvenile crime. By the third year of the program, crimes had decreased and continue to do so; May 1992 had zero juvenile referrals. The officer in charge spearheaded the formation of the Lockhart Athletic Club and teaches civics classes in both middle and high school.

Corpus Christi Police Department Juvenile Enforcement Team and Students Achieving Responsibilities (JET)—Corpus Christi

JET is a highly visible team dedicated to reducing gang activity by developing personal contacts and gathering intelligence. The STAR Program seeks to reduce school misconduct by teaming policing officers with at-risk youth. Both JET and STAR have been very successful; no gang-related homicides have occurred since JET's inception and grades have gone up while visits to the principal's office have gone down for STAR students.

School-based Programs

Now more than ever before, schools are having to take a broad view of their responsibility to educate and form young people. It is no longer possible for teachers and administrators to concentrate solely on academic instruction. Today, children often need emotional support, guidance, and protection, as well. Many schools therefore incorporate support programs for children in their daily operations.

From the perspective of law enforcement, schools provide a natural setting for early and proactive crime prevention. By working with the schools, police officers can help educate children about social responsibility and build positive attitudes and relationships with them. Officers Mentoring Students is a school-based program that gives police an opportunity to steer children in positive directions, while giving children the close, one-on-one adult attention they need. A second winner in this category, BELIEVE IN ME!, uses dance to help 10- to 14-year old children develop self-discipline and self-confidence.

Award Winners

Officers Mentoring Students—Dallas, Texas

The Dallas Police Department's Officers Mentoring Students Program was started in 1990 to foster positive relationships between police officers and young students at the Frederick Douglass School. The Frederick Douglass School is located in a southeast Dallas neighborhood where gangs, drugs, and poverty are rampant. Students that attend Frederick Douglass School are 82% African-American and 18% Hispanic.

The Officers Mentoring Students Program started with two members of the Southeast Substation of the Dallas Police Department speaking with third graders on a weekly basis. Children were allowed to ask questions, give input, and tell of their fears and apprehensions. Deputy Chief Willie Taylor and Sergeant Preston Gilstrap initiated the program. Deputy Chief Jill Muncy replaced Willie Taylor after the first two years.

Patricia Mays, principal of Frederick Douglass School explains: "Many of the 4-year olds and 5-year olds were afraid to death of the gunshots at their apartment complexes. My children can't learn if they are afraid. So I asked the police to help, but the children were more afraid of the officers than they were of the gunshots." The officers eased the kids fears by appearing in assemblies with films and puppets. They also brought a robot that told the children about safety each semester.

"Our emphasis has been early childhood intervention that will encourage children to become more responsible citizens," notes Ms. Mays.

Officers Mentoring Students has been successful in improving relationships with the children's families. The officers meet with parent groups and sponsor a student Career Day at their police substation. Other activities have included a workshop with the school faculty, a helicopter trip for students, and films for students.



Mentors from the Dallas Police Department and students from Fredrick Douglass School

School-based Programs Award Winners

Officers have provided security for night programs, and they maintain regular communications with school administrators so as to remain aware of the pulse of the community. Recently, the officers donated \$300 to purchase school uniforms for several students.

As a result of the officers' involvement, vandalism and theft have been reduced. Since the officers' involvement began three years ago, no cars have been reported stolen.

BELIEVE IN ME!—Austin

BELIEVE IN ME! is modeled after an approach created by Jacques d'Amboise, a former principal dancer of the New York City Ballet. For the last 16 years, Mr. d'Amboise has worked with "street kids" in the same tough neighborhoods where he grew up. His efforts grew into the renowned National Dance Institute, a program that has provided focus and self-esteem to more than 27,000 children.

BELIEVE IN ME! is a non-profit organization governed by a volunteer board of directors. In 1991, Austin Independent School District (AISD) approved BELIEVE IN ME! as part of its curriculum. Six pilot elementary schools were selected. Each school provided an in-school coordinator, space, classroom time, and a piano for weekly classes. Students auditioned for the program in February of 1992. By May, 168 student performers were dazzling standing-room-only audiences at an area high school.



Student participants in the BELIEVE IN ME! program

A minimum of 80% of students participating in BELIEVE IN ME! are considered at-risk, or likely to drop out because of one or more of the following: low academic achievement, poor attendance, limited English proficiency, poverty, living in a single parent family, and/or being home alone more than three hours daily.

In its second year, BELIEVE IN ME! expanded to 300 students and 10 participating schools. The program considers its dance instructors to

be their key to success. These instructors are charged with managing children and creating individual success through ensemble performance.

BELIEVE IN ME! is working with the AISD and the Hogg Foundation to develop effective evaluation tools. First year statistics show that BELIEVE IN ME! students had better school attendance (96.8%) than the AISD average (96.0%).

BELIEVE IN ME! addresses the underlying causes of school drop-out, street violence, and gang involvement. Through the program, students learn that hard work and discipline are prerequisites for success. Student dancers have their energies channeled in creative and expressive directions. They learn teamwork, skills, and self-confidence. As one school principal (Cornell Jones) said about the kids in BELIEVE IN ME!: "Now they're willing to take on difficult problems. Before, they wanted somebody else to solve a problem."

Honorable Mention

Cesar Chavez Academy—El Paso

The county-wide alternative high school for the Ysleta Independent School District, Cesar Chavez Academy teaches youth expelled from other schools. Included in their schedule is one hour for daily building maintenance and monthly participation in a community service project. Students have received numerous awards.

School-based Programs Honorable Mention

School-based Alternative Education

As juvenile violence has risen dramatically in this country in recent years, it has spilled over into our schools. In an effort to protect students and teachers, some administrators choose to remove disruptive students—temporarily or even permanently—from the mainstream school population. Often, expulsion is seen as the simplest and most effective all-purpose solution to the complex and frightening problems posed by students who repeatedly violate district policies, get involved in fights or, worse yet, bring weapons into the school environment.

While it is entirely understandable that parents, administrators, teachers and students should wish to be rid of individuals whose conduct is dangerous or disruptive, it is important not to lose sight of the long-term policy implications of discipline by expulsion. A student who is expelled for bringing a gun to school becomes a youth roaming freely on the streets with a gun. The danger and the problem have simply been shifted to another scene.

Recognizing this, a number of school districts around the state have instituted alternative education programs for disruptive youth. By offering a specialized and separate curriculum to students who cannot function harmoniously in the mainstream, these districts preserve the safety and focus of the general school population while addressing the issue of disruptive youth in a more structured setting.

The alternative education programs recognized in this round of awards are based in or closely associated with public school districts. The winners are characterized by the following:

- The schools have a clear definition of success for their students and a high success rate. Failure is not accepted. Students are encouraged to succeed and told they can succeed.
- Discipline is consistent. The students know that the rules and the consequences of their actions are the same for each student. There are very low rates of violence and few disciplinary referrals.
- The schools offer accredited academic support. Faculty relies upon hands-on teaching, group learning, and group discussions. There is a low student-teacher ratio. Generally, there are no more than 15 students per teacher in a classroom.
- Additional self-help and behavior modification courses are offered to assist the student in understanding alternative means for expressing emotion and making decisions. Examples of behavior modification courses are "conflict mediation," "controlling your anger," "how to take no for an answer," and parenting skills.
- Social services are provided for students (for example, on-site day care, tutoring, opportunities for community service, and job placement centers).
- Parents are involved in their children's education and can participate in a variety of programs.
- Schools attempt to maintain contact with students who leave the school to go back to a regular school or who graduate. They offer counseling for students who need help with the transition.
- Principals and faculty have an optimistic outlook for the future of their school and their students. Many principals have a long list of programs they would like to see started at their school.

Some alternative education programs in the past earned negative images by simply warehousing difficult students in a separate facility or area. Today, a solid body of evidence shows that, when correctly structured and conscientiously implemented, an alternative curriculum can be extremely successful in recapturing students who might otherwise be chronic disciplinary problems, disruptive, dangerous, and ultimately lost to crime and truancy.

Award Winners

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

Butz Learning Progressive Center – Fort Stockton

The Butz Learning Progressive Center (Butz LPC) was initiated in 1986 by the Fort Stockton Independent School District, with the help of the district school superintendent and a committee of educators, counselors, parents and community leaders. The LPC assists students in obtaining GEDs or high school diplomas, in passing state exit exams, or in improving math and English skills.

In 1986, Fort Stockton's drop out rate was 6.9% in a district made up of 72% minority and 52% economically disadvantaged. The district drop out rate is now less than 0.3%, well below the state recommendations. Butz LPC serves as an umbrella for the most at risk high school students. Since the program's inception, 524 at-risk youths, many from minority and low-income groups, have been served through innovative teaching programs; 217 Butz LPC students have earned high school diplomas, 153 have earned their GEDs, and 284 have passed previously failed state exit tests.

At-risk students are typically referred into the learning center program by high school counselors. Students come to Butz for many reasons, which include failure to master state exit tests, credit deficiency, lack of attendance, drop out, discipline problems, health problems, etc. Highest priority goes to junior and senior students who have failed the state exit test. The program serves a number of youth on probation also.

Scheduling is arranged to give students "back-to-back" English and math classes. Students who have failed the exit test spend one semester in the program, and are helped to achieve grade gains and to pass their state exit test and/or complete competency-based classes. Students not only receive educational assistance, but when appropriate, are given counseling for teen pregnancy and substance abuse. If students need additional support to conquer personal problems, they are referred to appropriate persons.

The Butz LPC has been widely recognized throughout the community for its efforts. The local newspapers and other media have regularly featured news items on student "success stories" to encourage other students to participate. Those who earn GEDs have their photograph in the local paper along with the high school graduates. Parents are invited to bring in students with special needs and ask for assistance, and many parents of LPC students are motivated to attend adult education classes to earn their GEDs. Teachers in the regular curriculum, as well as law enforcement officers and other agency representatives working with youth, have been educated about the goals and objectives of the program and refer students to the LPC.

The program has been awarded the Secretary of Education's Initiative for Assisting Disadvantaged Children in 1989, U.S. BASICS Distinguished Achievement Award in 1988, National Organization of Student Assistance Programs & Professionals (NOSAPP) in 1991. The lead teacher has been named CCP Teacher of the Year in 1988 and has received the Golden Apple Award from the Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission in 1993.

Successful students leave messages on a bulletin board for those students who come after them. Comments from these letters say it all:

"I finally passed the state exit test. It was hard, but it's bound to get tougher. I guess it's the way life is — a big challenge."

"Don't give up. You have to have patience because sometimes you do get frustrated."

"There was a time when I didn't think I could pass, but I set my mind on it, and I did it."

"This class helped me get a diploma and enter the U.S. Navy. Try hard."

"There's nothing out there for us dropouts. Stay in school."

**School-based
Alternative
Education
Award Winners**

"My dream was to get a high school diploma and now that I know I'm going to get one, I'm happy and proud of myself."
"Finally my life is on the right track."

The Carver Learning Center - San Angelo

The Carver Learning Center began operations on August 18, 1993, with 23 students enrolled. Enrollment has grown to 45 and has capacity for 100 students.

The goal of the Carver Learning Center is to provide a safe educational environment in which students who are academically behind and exhibit behavior problems can achieve academic success and develop the social skills necessary to continue that progress after they return to their home campuses. Accelerated learning through computerized and individualized curricula and behavior modification skills are implemented in order to meet this goal.

The target population of the Carver Learning Center is students of the San Angelo Independent School District who are in grades 7-12 and whose twenty-first birthday is after September 1, 1993. In order to be considered for placement at the Carver Learning Center, students must meet criteria which include academic performance of at least one year below grade level and a history of behavior problems.

The students participate in an individualized instructional setting providing each student the opportunity to learn skills and accelerate their education. This acceleration allows the students to return to their home campuses at the same educational level as their peers.

Safety concerns are addressed in several ways. Students are searched by metal detectors as they enter the building. Students are not allowed to drive their vehicles to school. Once inside the building, safety concerns are enhanced by small classes and flexible individualized scheduling. A class limit of 10 students is presently imposed in each of the five classrooms. Flexible scheduling allows students to choose their classes and make decisions during the day which provide the safest environment to meet their learning needs.

The Carver staff consists of a campus administrator, seven teachers, a school counselor, a social worker, substance abuse staff, four instructional aides, a clerical specialist, three food service providers, and a full-time custodian on a campus separate from others of SAISD.

Students from the four junior high and two high schools in SAISD are considered for placement. All students attain credit for work by demonstrating mastery of the essential elements as prescribed in Texas State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum.

The staff conducts daily advisory groups to facilitate student interaction. The staff counselor and other professional counselors provide intensive individual and group counseling on an ongoing basis. The social worker provides counseling, life skills education, and assistance to families in order to take advantage of community services. The substance abuse counselors provide drug education and support groups on a weekly basis. The juvenile justice system has placed a probation officer on site to work with these students and their families.

Students are assigned to Carver for a period of time not less than the remainder of the current semester. Students exit the program based on individualized guidelines established by a placement committee upon entry. One goal of the program is for each student to attain the skills needed to return to their home campus and successfully complete the requirements for their diplomas or earn the G.E.D. Students who return to their home campuses are assisted by a transition team to reduce the opportunity for difficulties of lack of success.

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

The Carver Learning Center's expected outcome is that at least 95% of the students enrolled will successfully complete their high school diplomas or receive the G.E.D. Early results have been encouraging. Students are adjusting to the new way of learning to which they have been exposed. Some students are even flourishing. Attendance has averaged 77%. Ten students have already achieved academic success by earning half-credits toward graduation. Each half-credit represents an entire semester's work in a traditional school setting. Many challenges lie ahead. The staff at the Carver Learning Center are excited about providing this educational opportunity for this type of student.

Clear View Alternative High School—League City

Clear View High School was developed five years ago amid concern about the increasing student dropout rate. It is one of four high schools in the Clear Creek Independent School District and accepts students only by an application, essay, and interview procedure. Teachers and staff focus on determining the learning style of each student and then guiding them in the appropriate direction. Group learning and peer instruction are very common. In fact, a traditional teacher-lecture method is rarely, if ever, used.

The typical student at Clear View High School has dropped out or is at risk of dropping out. These are students who cannot succeed in traditional school because of family problems, alcohol/drug abuse, emotional trauma, pregnancy, or reading deficits. Most are several grades below their grade level assignment.

The school offers the same classes and electives as other high schools and even has honors classes. The student-teacher ratio is 1 to 10. Rules are made clear from the beginning. Students must follow district policies plus stricter dress codes. Since there is a waiting list, students who do not follow rules are dismissed.

Support groups address self-esteem, anger management, stress, and living on one's own. There is a mentor period every day, during which students meet in a small groups with a faculty member. Students have immediate access to a counselor, and parenting skills classes are offered for teen parents. Contracted day care services are also available and free to teen parents.

Parents of students are required to participate in a support group, which meets once a month and is often addressed by speakers discussing relevant topics. Parents volunteer as aides and tutors, and they plan student functions. Volunteer programs with the Junior Rotary service are available for students.

Through an "open entry/open exit" program, students can work at their own pace between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to earn graduation credit. A summer school evening program is available for students to continue earning graduation credits. Students can take TAAS enrichment-intensive study classes.

The vocational intern program is designed to place students in jobs of interest, and there is a career technology work-study program. A representative from the Texas Employment Commission maintains an office on campus.

Clear View High School measures success by the number of students earning high school diplomas. Ninety-five percent do so. The daily attendance rate at Clear View High School is 93%. Through an informal tracking system, the school is developing a database from which more detailed student outcome measures will be available in the future.

Well on my third day of school they asked me "What do you think?" and personally I think it's great. It's really strange and foreign to me to say, "I had a good day at school," and even harder to say, "I might have even had fun," but after school I find myself saying these things! The teachers have all been extremely kind and seem like they really care. Not like in school (or regular school) where they "care," but here it's like a friend cares. The work finally seems like it's created for me and if I wasn't here I have no idea where I'd be.



A Clear View student volunteers at a local elementary school.

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

Clear View High School is growing rapidly, but school directors want to maintain a feeling of smallness (less than 250 students). They would like to introduce foreign languages and vocational courses and expand their partnerships with businesses.

Gateway School—Bastrop

Gateway School serves students in grades 6-12 whose disruptive behavior on traditional campuses hinders learning. These students, who would have been expelled in the past, are placed in the alternative school based on recommendations from the principal and school superintendent, following a court-like proceeding in the school district. Some students are directly placed by juvenile court judges.

Beginning here at Gateway was the most fearful thing I'd ever expected to happen to me. I never thought I could get sent over here because there were other people that had done worse than me... When I first got here I thought oh no all the teachers look mean and really hard on the students.

Going into class proved what I thought was wrong. I went into the class of people who I thought were really bad kids and saw they'd changed since the last time I'd seen them in school. They all had high grades and I thought, well I could never do like they have. In the short time I was here my daily grades did improve.

Well, I knew I had to return the next school year, so I learned to live with the mistake I had made to get myself here. At the beginning of this year I thought I would still make my low grades and fail a class. Well, we are only two weeks into the school year and I think all my grades are A's and B's. My intentions are to pass with high grades and at second semester return to high school and do the same.

At Gateway they teach you your mistake and how to do things without making those mistakes to get you in trouble. They also help you in areas where you need it and are always there when you need them.

Core classes of math, science, English, and social studies are available. Art and photojournalism are offered as electives. Students' schedules include English twice a day, math twice a day, reading, science, social studies, art, and recreation. The student-to-teacher ratio is 1 to 6.

Students are usually males who are overage for their grades and perform poorly academically. Most students come from dysfunctional families. Approximately half of the students are in the legal system, but the level of violence in the school is low. Since the school opened in 1991, there have been seven fights and no weapons have ever been discovered on campus.

The campus is isolated, quiet, and distraction-free. The environment is highly structured. Rules are posted: students are expected to show respect in their interactions with peers. There is no in-school suspension; although Gateway is more strict than regular schools, fewer students are expelled.

Students carry "walk around" cards from class to class. Comments from teachers are written on the cards and students are rewarded for good behavior at the end of each week. Rewards are trips to the boat docks on Fridays and lunches at a local restaurant on Mondays.

Life Management Skills are taught to the middle school, and Individual and Family Living is taught to the high school. A full-time counselor works with small groups and individuals. In addition, a counselor from the Family Crisis Center is present on campus.

Motivational speakers visit from UT, the San Antonio Spurs, and Gatesville prison. Members of the community, including judges, lawyers, and business persons, also give speeches. Parenting classes are offered for parents, along with lectures on family crisis, drug/alcohol abuse, and juvenile crime.

Behavior and Academic Compliance plans have been specially developed for each student. Students can "earn the right to work" and make \$3.20/hour; they have worked at Bastrop State Park, Family Crisis Center, Pink Santa, and for the Chamber of Commerce. Students can also participate in community projects. Through the PALS program, the students mentor elementary school students. Gateway students also visit nursing homes and work on beautification projects. Currently they are landscaping the school's new track.

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

A school-community center is open on Saturdays. Students go on field trips to the Memorial Museum at UT Austin, the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio, Concordia College in Austin, and Bergstrom Air Force Base. A student wellness and nutrition program is in place, which features step aerobics, football, volleyball, softball, horseshoes, and classroom learning. The school is building a track for the wellness and nutrition program activities.

Success is measured by attendance and grade improvement. Another sign of success is a return to the home campus. Attendance is now at 90%. After a student leaves the school, Gateway teachers meet with him or her once a month for one semester to check on their progress. The recidivism rate is low. Of 208 students enrolled last year, only 14 students who were returned to home school (their regular elementary or high school) had to go back to Gateway, and only 2 students have been returned twice.

Gateway school would like to expand their vocational program to include horticulture, trade school, and apprenticeships, and they would like to maintain a campus barn, with animals. Job placement skills will soon be added to the curriculum.

Harlandale Alternative Center—Harlandale

The Harlandale Alternative Center is a successful partnership between an educational facility and a neuropsychiatric hospital. The center addresses the needs of at-risk students who have been removed from their regular school campuses as a result of drugs, truancy, and disruptive behavior.

The campus was originally established in 1963 as a vocational school. Academic classes were added in 1966, and in 1968 the school was officially designated as a special educational campus. After the mentally retarded and learning disabled population was mainstreamed in 1985, the facility became Harlandale Alternative Center. Today, the center provides secondary education for emotionally disturbed students while helping them to develop and establish life-long competency and self-control.

The Harlandale Alternative Center is dedicated to helping each student develop a positive self-image and realize his or her maximum potential. The academic program is structured to provide successful experiences. Currently, the school has five vocational shops, which allow students from Harlandale and McCollum High Schools to learn about business offices, building maintenance, food service, painting, and institutional maintenance. In addition, the curriculum focuses on problem-solving skills, self-esteem, and social skills.

The Harlandale Alternative Center uses a level system to encourage gradual internal changes. Each student begins on a basic level of responsibility students should display in the classroom. Expectations under this level include knowing and adhering to basic school rules, and attending scheduled classes and activities.

Students receive frequent feedback from the teacher and the mental health worker assigned to the classroom. Students earn points and progress to higher levels by showing that they are actively and willingly engaged in the academic curriculum, by accepting feedback from peers and staff when it is given constructively, and by addressing provocation by others appropriately.



Students participate in the "ropes" course, which is designed to develop self-esteem and teamwork.

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

By progressing through the level system, students earn privileges. These privileges may be lost if a student regresses. Eventually, at the highest level of responsibility, a student takes initiative to work on his/her problems, is consistent in taking responsibility for his/her actions, actively seeks to problem solve with the group, and seeks feedback from peers and staff.

The ability to function independently is the common goal for the student and the Harlandale Alternative Center. At Harlandale, students find the educational environment they need to develop positive attitudes and the motivation to become good citizens and self-sufficient members of society.

Horizons Alternative School and Middle Level Learning Center—Fort Worth

The schools are designed to meet the academic, social, and behavioral needs of students who, through severe or repeated violations of district Code of Conduct policies, have been removed from their home schools. Horizons Alternative Middle School serves students from half of the geographically disparate middle schools. The Middle Level Learning Center serves students from the other half.

Students generally have been expelled for violating district policy. They are students at high risk of dropping out. Some students have been recommended by concerned parents, school officials, or other professionals for placement in the school.

A pre-enrollment interview with parents and students is required. During the interview, expectations are outlined. Parent University is a primary support and education opportunity for parents. The parents design meetings, invite guest speakers to discuss relevant topics, and share concerns about their children.

The core curriculum focuses on thinking skills and takes into account individual needs and learning styles. Course mastery is established at +80%. The school is year-round and divided into six-week blocks with two-week intersessions. During the intersessions, new students are given orientation and current students are given activities in which to participate.

Core classes of math, science, social studies, and English are available. Electives such as shop and computer literacy are offered. The student-teacher ratio is 1 to 9. A full-time social worker has an office at each campus.

There is an established point and rewards level system. Students earn one point for satisfactory performance of each of five rules of conduct during class. Students can earn up to 250 points per week. Levels are Level III (240-250), Level II (230-239), and Level I (<239).

Students who reach Level III status receive certificates every Monday for the previous week's achievements. Recognized students are allowed to go to the "points store" to receive a prize or to spend time in the game room. Prizes are donated by various companies.

The staff works on the prevention approach, which entails preempting disruptive behaviors before they appear or become habitual. Clear-cut expectations are outlined in the student handbook and discussed with the student prior to entry. The rules and expectations are on the wall of each classroom. If students violate the rules, the consequences can be anything from being reminded about the rules to having the police called to the school.

Each student is assigned to an advisor. Students and advisors work together in groups to develop specific behavioral and social skills goals. Programs address self-defense, substance abuse, sexuality, employment, problem solving, and peer relationships. UT Arlington's School of Social Work pro-

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

vides interns to work with the students. United Way's "Truce" program works with gang-prone kids.

The students participate in community service projects such as the Food Bank of Tarrant County. There are athletic intramurals, such as boys' and girls' softball, badminton, croquet, golf, Ping-Pong, and "birdie" tournaments. Sometimes there is intercampus competition between the alternative schools.

Paving the Way is a series of programs and activities that encourages higher education opportunities for students. Equity 2000 Saturday Math Academies is a series of learning opportunities in which students and parents pursue math concepts. Because We Care Family Retreat is a weekend family retreat with the alternative school staff that focuses on family life, problem solving, and fun.

Success is measured by successful re-entry to mainstream school and eventual high school graduation. Recidivism is less than 20%. There has been a dramatic decrease in violence since the current program was implemented in 1988. The percentage of students expelled from the alternative schools has dropped from 40% to 1%. The schools have fewer fights than mainstream schools.

Students and parents are encouraged to contact a member of the Student Support Services team if they need any help or encouragement. A re-enrollment meeting can be initiated with the parents, the student, the Student Support Services team, and a school representative from the home school. The alternative school's counselors may contact the home school's counselors for up to one year after re-enrollment. Information about the student's improvement is shared with the home school.

A full-service system that will provide academic training for the whole family is planned. There is currently a five-year plan to build a new school. The school will have a dropout recovery program, a storefront, a clinic to serve the community, and a job training facility by General Motors.

Hurst-Eules-Bedford Challenge Center—Eules

Students at the Challenge Center have typically been expelled for persistent misbehavior and violation of district policy. Expelled students apply to the Challenge Center so they can remain in the same grade level when they return to school. Currently, the Center is a self-contained classroom in the KEYS Learning Center (an alternative high school, profiled next). Though housed within KEYS, the Center operates independently.

The Challenge Center offers individualized, self-paced classes for the students. Tutoring is provided by the teachers from the KEYS Learning Center. Core classes are taught and electives are not available. Student population is variable to time of school year; however, the student-teacher ratio is roughly 1 teacher to 5 students.

The school has a very structured and strict environment. Students are not eligible for due process rights since they were expelled. If students do not obey rules, they are dropped from the program. The students are generally less violent in the alternative setting than they were in their home schools.

There are student group counseling sessions during the day. Evening counseling sessions with parents (one evening per week) are required. Behavior modification classes are provided for emotionally disturbed students.

Success is measured by a student's advancement to the next grade level and by improvement in attendance rates. Counselors keep in touch with the home school counselors; informing them of good and bad happenings. Conferences are required to help students with the transition to regular campuses.

The Challenge center staff would like to have at least one teacher for each of the four core sub-

**School-based
Alternative
Education
Award Winners**

jects. They would also like to see a higher percentage of expelled students applying. They are planning to step up recruitment efforts in the future.

Lamar Guidance Center—Rosenburg

Lamar Guidance Center is an alternative learning center that addresses the unique needs of at-risk students in grades 7-12 in the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District. The curriculum is individualized with targeted teaching strategies and parental and interagency involvement.

Students are placed in the Guidance Center in one of three ways:

- Alternative to Expulsion
- High-Risk for Drop-Out
- Severely Emotionally Disturbed.

They are assigned from 6 months to 1 year. Their return to home campus is subject to the principal's review, and students are sent back only when they are ready. Most students do eventually work their way back to the home school. Students who feel they are not ready to return to their home schools can stay.

Tutoring is offered to all students. The student-teacher ratio is 1 to 8. Core classes of math, science, English, and social studies are available, and special education classes are also available for qualified students. Electives such as art, Spanish, and computer courses are offered to those who are interested.

There are vocational classes such as home economics, food production, mechanics, farming and ranching, agriculture, and construction. Students can take one elective at Lamar High School that is not offered at Lamar Guidance (i.e., cosmetology, calculus, ROTC, etc.). Teen parenting skills classes are offered. A Parent Advisory Committee publishes a monthly newsletter.

Boys Town Social Skills Motivational Program has been implemented. There are seven basic social skills. The three most critical skills are "how to follow instructions," "how to accept 'no' for an answer," and "how to accept positive criticism." Every campus employee, from the principal to the custodian, utilizes the components of the Boys Town Program to manage student behavior.

Daily point sheets go home to parents containing the positives and negatives for the day. A level system (desire, effort, and success) lets students earn privileges and acquire items from a menu of options. Students earn computer bucks according to their progress at the computer and then spend their 'money' at the school store.

After six weeks, the students are subject to review to note their readjustment. The teachers keep an eye out for the special education students to see how they are doing.

Lamar Guidance has established a working relationship with the Juvenile Substance Abuse Advisory Council, Judge Gary Geick, the Fort Bend Truancy Project, Riceland Regional Council (crisis intervention), and the Rosenberg Police Department.

Security measures are tight: there is access to district security and metal detectors when needed. In 1992-93, there were eight fights on campus. This is significantly fewer fights than what is experienced by other principals in Lamar CISD.

One measure of success is improvement in student attendance. The attendance rate last semester was 87%. Lamar has reduced the dropout rate to less than 1%. For 1992-93, there was one

dropout, giving the campus a .6% annual dropout rate. Another measure of success is a return to home campus. The return rate to home campus is 85% per year.

Lamar Guidance would like to enact year-round school. The faculty would like to divide the day into modules of time and move away from the traditional electives. Lamar Guidance would also eventually like to offer an intensive counseling program with full-time psychiatrists and social workers.

Lena Pope School—Fort Worth

The Lena Pope School provides educational services for severely emotionally disturbed youths. The goal is to develop the social skills of the students to enable them to return to the mainstream of education and society. The students are in a residential facility with 24-hour supervision. The school has been operating for a decade.

Typical students are abused, neglected, and delinquent youth from all over Texas. They have been placed in residential treatment by the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, Juvenile Probation, or the Texas Youth Commission. Many students exhibit bizarre behavior and have severe emotional problems.

Because almost all of the students have been removed from their homes, the school has group home parents. Eight teens are assigned to each married couple and aide. These adults become involved in all aspects of the students' lives. There are eight group homes for 65 teens.

The program is based on the use of Social Skills in the School, developed by Boys Town National Training Center. It works on social skills ranging from "Following Instructions" to "How to Have a Conversation." The program uses a pro-social motivation system, and rewards range from a token economy to student council.

Lena Pope provides a modified curriculum with all the essential elements. The student-teacher ratio is 1 teacher to 8 students. Individual and group counseling are available for all students. The faculty and staff expect certain behavior, but there are no expulsions and the environment is not a punitive one.

Aggression rates have dropped from three violent episodes per week to two episodes per year since the Boys Town program was implemented last year. No students have been removed from the school for violence. There is a three-level merit system; the students must have 20 hours of community service to go to the regular campus.

Success is when a student moves on to a less restrictive school environment (special education at regular school). Sixty to seventy percent of the students succeed in doing this. Once students leave, their social behavior at high school is monitored, and contact is maintained with group home parents.

In the future, the Lena Pope School staff would like to enlarge the school building and open up the program to students who do not come from the state hospital.

Honorable Mention

KEYS Learning Center—Eules

The KEYS (Keeping Eligible Youth in School) Learning Center was developed in 1987 in response to the increasing dropout rate in the Hurst-Eules-Bedford district. Individualized instruction is presented on a self-paced, mastery basis. Vocational development is emphasized and flexible schedules are provided for students who want to work.

Typical students are teen parents, drug/alcohol addicts, abused children, or have health problems. Some are homeless or must work to help support the family.

**School-based
Alternative
Education
Honorable
Mentions**

Post Expulsion Placement Class (PEPC)—Denton

The Post Expulsion Placement Class provides students who have been expelled from school with an opportunity to avoid academic regression and complete academic course credits. Typical students have been expelled by due process. They are consistent offenders, and some are involved in juvenile court. Academic instruction is individualized, self-paced, and mastery-based for students in grades 7–12. The traditional core classes of math, science, English, and social studies are taught. There is a special program for runaways who do not reside in Denton county. Tutoring is provided before they are sent home, and they stay in a special ward for runaways.

Postscript on Alternative Education

A New Resolution for Texas

An alternative education campus may serve one or more of the following student populations: students with severe discipline problems, expelled students, adjudicated students, student in at-risk situations, recovered dropouts, pregnant or parenting students, hospitalized students, or students with disabilities who receive specialized programs within a separate campus setting. These programs may serve as a springboard for revitalizing the regular education program of a district due to the need for implementing strategies for students who have traditionally not been successful in the regular school program. Many of the alternative programs use a diagnostic approach that pinpoints the strengths and weaknesses of a student and allows the student to proceed at his/her own rate. The teacher is a facilitator of learning and often employs a variety of multi-media, such as videos, audio-cassette tapes, and newspapers. Computer-assisted instruction is frequently employed in these programs.

Alternative education programs may be operated by a single school district, by a cooperative of several districts, or by a non-profit or for-profit organization that has entered into a contract with a school district to provide for the education of students at risk of dropping out of school or who have already dropped out. In the latter instance, the State Board of Education has adopted rules that govern community-based alternative education programs, Texas Administrative Code 89.42.

On April 7, 1994, Carolyn H. Crawford, Chairman of the State Board of Education and Jane Wetzel, Chairman of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board signed a resolution that affirms the need for high quality alternative education in Texas. This cooperative commitment, between those who educate youth and those responsible for their rehabilitation, is an important step in the right direction. We must not only curtail and prevent violence in our schools and on our streets, we must also make every effort to keep our youth in school long enough to acquire the social and intellectual skills they need to be positive, self-sufficient, contributing members of our society.

The Office of the Attorney General wishes to acknowledge the kind assistance of Dr. Sylvia Garcia, Director of School Safety and Violence Prevention for the Texas Education Agency.

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education and The Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board recognize that all students should be educated; and

WHEREAS, An education is critical to students having the knowledge and skills necessary to make responsible choices; and

WHEREAS, An education assists students in becoming productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, In the interest of all students' health, safety, general welfare, and the opportunity to benefit from an education, expulsion at times is necessary; and

WHEREAS, Expulsion is a deterrent to students receiving an education and may increase students' vulnerability of becoming involved in juvenile crime; and

WHEREAS, The State Board of Education and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board recognize that the community as a whole must accept and share the responsibility for meeting the needs of expelled youth; and

WHEREAS, Alternative educational programs may foster student success through non-traditional approaches; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board advocate for the creation of alternative educational programs for students that have been expelled from school; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board request the 74th Texas Legislature to appropriate adequate funding for alternative educational programs for expelled students; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That any funds available for alternative educational programs for expelled students be allocated on the basis of documented broad community support, multi-district collaborative efforts, and commitments from other appropriate public agencies to share responsibility for needed services.

[Signed by Carolyn H. Crawford, Chairman, State Board of Education and Jane Wetzel, Chairman, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission Board on the 7th day of April, 1994, in Austin, Texas.]

Contacts

The programs described in this report represent only a few of the innovative initiatives at work in our state. Efforts such as these, whether they come from community organizations, law enforcement, or schools, offer our best hope for addressing the complex challenges of crime prevention and neighborhood reclamation.

The purpose of this report is twofold. The recognition is intended to help build support for these worthwhile programs from their communities as well as from agencies and potential funding sources. The program descriptions, along with the contact listings below, are intended as a reference for schools, police departments, and citizens who are looking for useful and cost-effective ideas to implement in their own neighborhoods.

Community Policing Award Winners

Neighborhood Service Team and Apartment Managers Group—Garland
Chief Terry Hensley; (214) 205-2010

Honorable Mention

Community Policing Center/Community Partnership Against Drugs—El Paso
Chief John Scagno; (915) 564-7310

Community Policing in Odessa—Odessa
Chief James Jenkins; (915) 335-3335

Halloween Project—Addison
James McLaughlin, Jr.; (214) 450-7100

Neighborhood Response Team—Farmers Branch
J.R. Fawcett, Chief of Police; (214) 484-3620 ext. 304

Public Housing Officers—Kingsville
Chief Felipe Garza, Kingsville Police Department; (512) 592-4311

Weed and Seed—Fort Worth
Chief Thomas Windham; (817) 877-8385

Crime Prevention Award Winners

Community Affairs Crime Prevention Unit—Arlington
Lt. A. J. Key; (817) 459-5779

Hot Rods—Midlothian
Midlothian Police Department
John McCollum; (214) 775-3481

Positive Production—Jefferson County
Gary Saurage; (409) 726-2500

Criminal Enforcement Award Winners

Hot Spot-Narcotics Enforcement Team—Harris County
Lt. Johnny Freeze; (713) 755-7347

Support Abatement Forfeiture Enforcement (SAFE) Team—Dallas
Sergeant Ray Ball, Dallas Police Department; (214) 670-5598

The Violent Crimes Task Force—San Antonio
Captain Gilbert Sandoval; (210) 299-7620

Drug Abuse Prevention Award Winner

Drug Elimination Program 1993—San Benito
Victor Trevino, Executive Director; (210) 399-7501

Honorable Mention

San Antonio YMCA Drug Education and Prevention—San Antonio
Beth Taylor, SAID counselor; (210) 224-5209

Kleberg County Substance Abuse Counseling Services—Kingsville
Ben Figueroa, Director; (512) 595-8577

Life Alternatives Counseling Center—Texarkana
Regina Kimble, CI, CEO; (903) 793-0063

Gang Prevention Award Winner

Youth Initiatives—San Antonio
Sergio G. Soto, manager; (210) 299-7196

Honorable Mention

Gang Unit—Laredo
J.L. Martinez; (915) 726-2800

Juvenile Crime and Gang Violence Reduction Program—Mission
Patrick Dalager, Chief of Police; (210) 580-8626

Neighborhood Youth Outreach for At-risk Youth—El Paso
Mike Alferéz; (915) 544-9993

Juvenile Probation Award Winner

Teen Court: City of Houston Municipal Court—Houston
Judge Sylvia Garcia; (713) 247-8741

Honorable Mention

Hidalgo County Juvenile Court Conference Committee—Edinburg
Israel "Buddy" Silva; (210) 381-8600

Austin/Travis County Youth Services, Inc.—Austin
Mona Gonzalez, Executive Director; (512) 440-1111

Neighborhood Action Award Winner

San Antonio Fighting Back of the United Way—San Antonio
Beverly Watts Davis, Executive Director; (210) 533-6592

Honorable Mention

Adopt-a-Neighborhood—Sonora
John L. Pape, City Manager; (915) 387-2558

AVANCE Program and Restoration Program, St. Matthews Cathedral—Dallas
Juan Cordero, Executive Director of AVANCE; (214) 821-5837
Charles Gully, Executive Director of Restoration; (214) 637-7931

SHAPE Community Center, Inc.—Houston
Deloyd Parker; (713) 521-0629

Texas South Baseball, Inc.—McAllen
Tony Aguirre; (210) 686-0246

Neighborhood Crime Watch Award Winner

Lufkinland Crime Watch Program—Lufkin
Reverend N.C. Simmons, President; (409) 632-5232

Police Officers and Youth Award Winner

KIDS Code Blue—Fort Worth
Ralph Mendoza, Deputy Chief; (817) 877-8022

Honorable Mention

Juvenile Enforcement Team and Students Achieving Responsibilities—Corpus Christi
H.C. Garret, Chief of Police, JET; (512) 886-2604
Commander L.A. Villagomez, STAR; (512) 887-2767

Lockhart Police Department Youth Services Project—Lockhart
Mark Hinnenkemp, Chief of Police and Public Safety Director; (512) 398-4401

School-based Program Award Winners

Officers Mentoring Students—Dallas
Patricia Mays, Principal; (214) 309-7180

BELIEVE IN ME! Program—Austin
Susan Overby; (512) 345-3357

Honorable Mention

Cesar Chavez Academy—El Paso
Lilia Limon, Principal; (915) 549-3818

School-based Alternative Education Award Winners

Butz Learning Progressive Center
400 South Young Street
Fort Stockton, TX 79735
Faye Johnson; (915) 336-7504

The Carver Learning Center
301 West 9th Street
San Angelo, TX 76901
Robin Ryan; (915) 659-3648

Clear View High School
400 South Kansas
League City, TX 77573
Sue Kevan, Principal (713) 332-9637

Middle Level Learning Center
3813 Valentine Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76107

Horizons Alternative School
2749 Putnam Street
Fort Worth, TX 76112
Steve Gay, Principal (for both campuses) (817) 377-7350 or (817) 496-7641

Gateway School
105 Loop 150 West, Suite J
Bastrop, TX 78602-3717
Jan Clay, Principal (512) 321-2339

Harlandale Alternative Center
1115 96th Street
San Antonio, TX 782145
Daniel Aguilar, Principal (210) 921-4492

Hurst-Euless-Bedford Challenge Center
1100 Raider Drive, Suite 100
Euless, TX
Dr. Ted Gillum (817) 283-4461

Lamar Guidance Center
930 E. Stadium Drive
Rosenburg, TX 77471
W.A. Balderach, Principal (713) 341-3260

Lena Pope School
4701 West Rosedale
Fort Worth, TX 76107
Carolyn Jones, Director (817) 731-4294 ext 262

Honorable Mention

KEYS Learning Center
1100 Raider Drive, Suite 100
Euless, Texas 76040
Betty Duncan-Coon, Principal (817) 354-3581

Post Expulsion Placement Class (P.E.P.C.)
Fred Moore Learning Center
815 Cross Timbers
Denton, TX 76201
Wade Lillie, Principal (817) 381-1806