



Legislative Priorities 2009

PREVENTION:

1. **Increase funding for prevention and early intervention services by 10 percent.**
 - 1.1. **Increase funding for the STAR program by 10 percent, or \$4.2 million GR**
 - 1.2. **Increase funding for the CYD program by 10 percent, or \$2 million GR**
2. **Strengthen the research basis for prevention programs to promote effectiveness and return on investment (ROI).**
 - 1.1. **Dedicate NEW funding to the outcome evaluation of state-funded prevention programs that have not been evaluated.**
 - 1.2. **Dedicate funding for increased training and technical assistance to promote and support increased use of research-based practices and programs.**
3. Ensure that Texas schools provide a safe learning environment free from bullying and harassment for all students.
4. Provide positive, structured activities to all Texas youth during non-school hours within their local communities.
5. Reduce teen pregnancy by supporting youth development programs and providing Texas youth with accurate and comprehensive sexual education in our schools.

CHILD WELFARE:

6. **Increase the residential child care reimbursement rate for all provider types to: make rates whole at 100% of allowable costs, fund the cost of inflation, and fund the cost of new licensing standards.**
7. **Invest in improved transitional services for youth aging out of foster care by allocating state funds to match community funds for local youth transition centers and by developing an array of supportive housing options for youth in transition.**
8. Provide systems of wraparound funding and remove barriers to integrated funding at state and local levels.
9. Design and invest in a technology integration system for more effective data sharing between public and private providers, law enforcement, judges, courts, state agencies and other key system stakeholders to minimize duplication of services, provide equal access to case information and promote cooperation and efficiencies among stakeholders.

JUVENILE JUSTICE:

10. Move towards small, regionalized county and state juvenile facilities that promote rehabilitation in a non-violent environment.
11. Improve juvenile justice interventions at the county and state level by using wraparound services and community-based treatments that have a positive effect on youth both before and after system involvement.
12. Decrease public school practices that funnel students into the juvenile justice system.
13. Improve funding for quality mental health services and services for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the juvenile justice system.

MENTAL HEALTH:

14. Support increased public funding for children's mental health services.

HEALTH:

15. Clear the bureaucratic hurdles that keep eligible children from receiving health coverage.
16. Provide all children access to health insurance by addressing the challenges of families without health insurance options.
17. Require daily physical education for children in grades K-12 and daily recess in younger grades.

CROSS-AGENCY:

- 18. Establish a Legislative Youth Advisory Council to engage young Texans in the policymaking process and facilitate communication between young Texans and members of the legislature regarding policy issues and proposed legislation affecting youth.**
- 19. Require all legislation that affects children and family programs to be accompanied by a Child Impact Statement that would include the number of children impacted and the nature of the impact.**
20. Coordinate an interagency strategic plan on children's issues through the Health and Human Services Commission Office of Program Coordination for Children and Youth to elevate coordination of and accountability for children's issues across health, human services, juvenile justice, education, and other child-serving agencies.

