

## Maintain full funding for Services to At-Risk Youth (“STAR”) program!

**STAR (Strategy C.1.1.) started at \$13,699,728/year in both HB1 and SB1; a 34.8% cut (current funding is \$21,000,862/year). Conference Committee approved funding at the HB1 level, restored to \$18,283,303 FY 2012, \$18,283,304 FY13; a reduction of 12.94% compared to current.**

The Services To At-Risk Youth (STAR) program was developed in 1983 to help local communities serve youth who often fall between the cracks of other service delivery systems. **The purpose of STAR is to prevent child abuse, truancy and delinquent behaviors** by helping young people and their families resolve conflict, build on their strengths, and achieve healthy goals. Services are designed to intervene at the front end, often in crisis situations such as when a child runs away, to prevent problems from escalating further resulting in intervention by Child Protective Services or juvenile justice systems.

### How STAR works:

- ★ The PEI Division at DFPS contracts with local agencies to provide STAR services. Contracts are competitively procured and all contractors are rigorously monitored by DFPS.
- ★ STAR services are available at no cost to youth ages 0-17 and their families in all 254 TX counties.
- ★ STAR services include 24-hour crisis intervention, counseling for youth and their families, emergency shelter if needed, coping skills education, parenting classes, and more.



- ★ The average cost of serving a youth and family through STAR is under \$700.
- ★ Youth and their families may self-refer to the STAR program, they may be referred by government systems such as the judicial system, law enforcement agencies or Statewide Intake (at CPS), or they may be referred by school personnel or other members of their communities.
- ★ Since STAR is a crisis intervention program, there is not a wait list to receive services. Children and families in crisis receive immediate help.
- ★ In addition, all STAR contractors must allocate contract funds to increase public awareness about preventing child abuse and neglect.

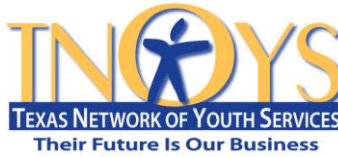
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### **STAR “snapshot” from FY 2009:**

- ★ 29,406 Texas youth and their families received STAR services in FY 2009.
- ★ Nearly one quarter of referrals were court orders.
- ★ More than 20% of referrals were made by schools.
- ★ More than 2,100 referrals were made by juvenile probation
- ★ More than 1,100 referrals were made by Child Protective Services
- ★ Additional referrals were made by service provider agencies, law enforcement, and MHMR.
- ★ Family conflict was the “presenting problem” in nearly 60% of cases.
- ★ Truancy and misdemeanor offenses were also frequent “presenting problems.”

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(Fact Sheet revised May 2011)



**Evidence that the STAR program works:**

- ★ The strength-based, client-centered methods used by the STAR program are resoundingly supported by research on therapeutic effectiveness and are consistent with approaches demonstrated to prevent child maltreatment and delinquency.
- ★ STAR's **track record** illustrates that the program works. At 90 day follow up on all youth served in FY 2009:
  - o 88.2% with a family conflict reported that the situation had improved
  - o 96% who had been delinquent reported no further offenses since receiving services
  - o 81.1% who had run away did not run away again, and
  - o 83.6% who had previously been truant reported no further truancy

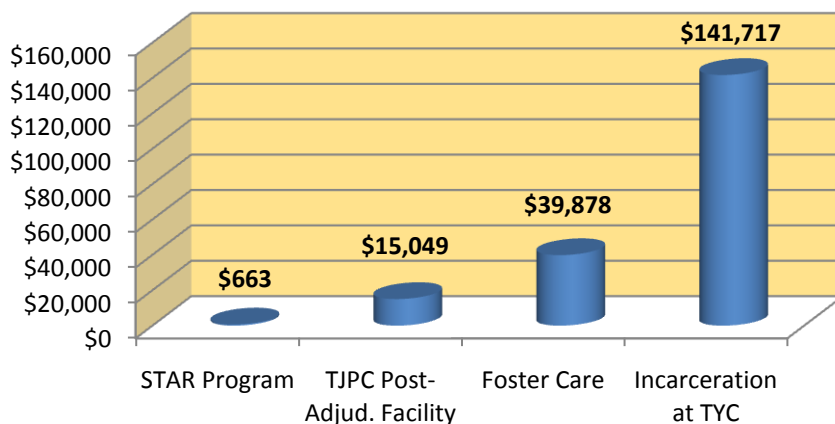
At 90 day follow up on all children/youth who completed the program:

- o 97.2% with a family conflict reported that the situation had improved
- o 98.6% who had been delinquent reported no further offenses since receiving services
- o 93.8% who had run away did not run away again, and
- o 87.8% who had previously been truant reported no further truancy
- ★ A Criminal Justice Policy Council study conducted in 2003 concluded that 83% of STAR clients with prior juvenile justice history had no referral to the juvenile justice system one year following program exit.

**Evidence that the STAR program pays off:**

- ★ The average cost of serving a youth and their family through STAR is less than \$700.
- ★ STAR can serve more than 193 youth for the price of serving one youth in TYC.
- ★ STAR can serve more than 56 youth for the price of serving one youth in foster care.
- ★ The emotional costs of serving a youth and his or her family through STAR are obviously miniscule compared to the emotional costs of serving the youth and his or her family through the foster care or justice systems.

**Comparative Costs per Youth Served**



Sources: **STAR costs** –DFPS Data Book for FY09: total STAR expenditures / # of youth served; **TJPC costs** for post-adjudication residential placement - 2009 LBB Uniform Costs Report (using FY08 data): Cost per youth per day for a post-adjudication facility \* avg. length of stay; **Foster Care costs** – DFPS External Relations Office: cost per day per child removed from home \* avg. time in out-of-home care in FY08; **TYC costs** - TYC website: cost of assessment + cost at regular institution \* avq. # of days

**Please maintain full funding for the STAR program and other vital programs managed by the PEI Division at DFPS!!!**