

CENTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION

help. hope healing.



Program Services

Therapy Services for Protective Caregivers

Individual and family therapy services are available for the protective caregiver in CPS confirmed cases of abuse and neglect. Therapy services are seen as particularly critical in cases where the protective caregiver is ambivalent in their support of their child. Providing therapeutic support and intervention can assist the protective caregiver in working through recent crises and ambivalence towards more productive problem solving and consistent emotional support of their children.

Therapy Services for Children and Adolescents

Individual and family therapy services are available for children and adolescents who have experienced trauma through confirmed cases of abuse or have been witness to a violent crime. Traumatic experiences can have debilitating effects on the victim without appropriate therapeutic intervention and support. The client is assisted in addressing the traumatic experience in efforts to understand how the event has impacted their emotions, thoughts and behaviors, as well as their relationships with others. The client is assisted in examining ways to manage their emotions and behaviors in a constructive manner and to decrease self-defeating behaviors.

Reunification Services

As children prepare to go back into their parent's home, there often are many emotions and questions each family member experiences in anticipation of reunification. Short-term individual and family therapy services, and in-home case management services are available for CPS clients to address reunification issues. Services can occur before or after reunification has taken place. The family will be provided with referrals to out-patient therapists for ongoing family therapy.

Termination Services

When the decision has been made to relinquish parental rights, it is particularly important to allow for closure as much as possible for the child and parent, as well as siblings, if they're involved. CPS staff may refer their clients for this service which occurs in one session. In situations where a client is experiencing significant emotional distress, additional individual therapy services for the client can be provided.

Emergency Clinical Evaluations

Center clinical staff are available to provide clinical assessment of clients that may be at risk for suicidal or homicidal behaviors. The evaluation is done by assessing current risk factors and stressors, emotional functioning, and current behaviors and ideations. Depending on emergency intervention and transportation of the client, the clinical staff member will provide the client with information on accessing appropriate psychiatric follow-up.

Family Assessment

Sometimes when working with complex family issues, it's difficult to identify the source of a problem a family is experiencing. Understanding the dynamics within the family system that are contributing to an issue is a key component of problem solving and resolution. The Center's clinical staff is available to take referrals from the CPT members to do a family assessment which encompasses a mental status exam, psychosocial history, assessment of current level of functioning, problem identification and clinical recommendations. The goal of the family assessment is to provide the CPT members with information and clinical insight into what problems or barriers are contributing to the family's difficulties in functioning and what can be done to address these issues in an effective manner.

Case Management

Intensive case management services are available for families that have complex needs including severe neglect, over discipline, medically-involved children or children in need of developmental assessments. Referrals are taken from the CPT members and other community professionals. To access this resource, contact the Center's lead child advocate or any member of the program staff.

Court School

Court School is a relaxed introduction to being a witness in a trial. Information is provided for young children, teens, and caregivers who may be testifying in court. It is an opportunity for them to learn about the court system, how to conduct themselves during the trial, and the different roles of the courtroom participants. Individual cases are not discussed. Court School is held in an actual courtroom and is led by Center staff in cooperation with attorneys from the Travis County District Attorney's Office. Children learn about and practice appropriate courtroom behavior and participate in a mock trial.

Program Staff

The Center for Child Protection's staff members are trained professionals. Licensed staff hold Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC/LPC-I), or Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) and/or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) credentials. Interns from area universities participate in provision of services under the supervision both of university staff and the Center's licensed staff. The Center maintains a staff of trained volunteers who assist in the provision of Center program services under the supervision of Center staff. The Center for Child Protection provides all services at no charge to the client and most services are provided in English and Spanish.

The Child Protection Team is a private/public partnership with the Austin Police Department, Austin Independent School District Police Department, Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas, Texas Department of Family & Protective Services, Travis County District Attorney's Office, Travis County Sheriff's Office, and the police departments of Bee Cave, Cedar Park, Lago Vista, Lakeway, Leander, Manor, Mustang Ridge, Pflugerville, Rollingwood, Sunset Valley and Westlake Hills.

Group Support

Protective Parenting and Support Group

Parents who become involved with the authorities as a result of abuse, neglect, risk, or protectiveness issues are often overwhelmed not only with the system, but also the current or previous family of origin dynamics that are often barriers to healthy individual and family functioning. This group is designed to address issues related to trauma and protectiveness through both education and psychotherapy. Depending on the issues a family is addressing, they may be referred to a general Protective Parenting Group or a Protective Parenting Group with a focus on sexual abuse, substance abuse, or family violence. Families must call to pre-register. Child care is provided.

Children's Play Therapy Group

The Children's Support Group is designed to provide children ages 7-12 with support through both psychoeducational and psychotherapeutic group processes. Provided with support, a child can develop skills in problem-solving and coping, and improve self-esteem and feelings of competency as they work through troublesome thoughts and emotions. Pre-registration is required.

Parent Education Class

The parent education class is designed to assist parents in developing the skills and tools necessary to feel more successful as a parent. Topics addressed include child development, effective parenting, communication skills, and the creation of a healthy and safe home environment. The Center also offers a Single Parent Support Group. Families must call to pre-register. Child care is provided.

Where to Call for Help

Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency	911
Texas 211 Resource Center	211
MHMR Hotline to Help	(512) 472-4357
Child/Elder Abuse Hotline	(800) 252-5400
TCSO/APD Child Abuse Unit	(512) 974-6880
APD Mental Health Deputy	911/311
TCSO Mental Health Deputy	(512) 854-3445
Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Hotline	(512) 267-7233
Texas Poison Control Center	(800) 764-7661
Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)	(800) 942-4968
Texas Safe Riders	(800) 252-8255



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a children's advocacy center