

# Freestone County Community Plan 2023

## **What Is a Community Plan?**

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The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office (CJD) requires that each county in Texas have a Criminal Justice Community Plan in order to identify gaps in services regarding criminal justice issues.

This document reflects the efforts of Freestone County community agencies concerned with assuring that any gaps in services are addressed to the benefit of the entire county. The names of those involved in the process of developing this plan are listed in the following pages, under "Community Planning Team."

Though the final draft of this plan was completed in September 2023, this is a work in progress. As new criminal justice goals are identified, the constituency of the planning team and priorities in the plan are subject to change. Such updates may be reported to the Freestone County Community Planning Coordinator throughout the year and the plan amended accordingly.

If you are reading this plan and have not been involved in its development, you are invited to join in this ongoing effort. Any questions you may have may be addressed to the Criminal Justice Program of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments. Contact information is provided on page 33.

The Freestone County Commissioners Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for the development and implementation of the Freestone County Community Plan. Additionally, the regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) and the Heart of Texas Council of Governments' Governing Board (Executive Committee) invite grant applications from county departments, as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in the Community Plan.

## **Areas Represented**

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### **Incorporated Communities**

Fairfield	Wortham	Teague
Streetman	Oakwood	

### **School Districts**

Dew ISD	Teague ISD
Fairfield ISD	Wortham ISD

### **Brief Description and History of Freestone County**

Freestone County is comprised of a land area of 885.2 square miles or 556,528 acres. Freestone County is listed amongst the top ten counties in beef cattle numbers. Our growing season averages 263 days a year. Freestone County is characterized as hot, humid summers and moderate winters. Rainfall is distributed throughout the year with peak accumulations in the spring and fall seasons. Ag commodities that dominated sales are beef cattle, hay, fruits, timber, and hunting leases. Current market trends and weather patterns complicate production. Beef cattle and hay production continue to dominate all other agriculture enterprises in the area.

Absentee landowners continue to buy pasture and range land for alternative/recreational land usage or for beef/hay production. A large percentage of these absentee landowners have limited knowledge pertaining to agriculture. There is a definite need and priority amongst all the landowners to preserve traditional agricultural land usage and educate all concerned parties with new technology, management practices, marketing options, and remain as a source of technical information. With the current high price paid for beef cattle, there is added interest and money being spent on the development and improvement of forage and beef cattle. Freestone County is home to over 60,000 beef cows.

## **Community Planning Team**

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The Community Planning Coordinator for Freestone County, Lana is the Criminal Justice Planner for the Heart of Texas Council of Governments.

In developing this Community Plan, members of the team worked together to provide updates and changes to the previous plan. Many members serve in multiple capacities and address several categories.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Linda Grant	Freestone County Judge
Samantha Dietzler	Family Abuse Center
Aleigh Ascherl	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
Jeremy Shipley	Freestone County SO
Brain Evans	Freestone County DA
Elizabeth Timmons	Behavioral Health Services
Harold Markham	Fairfield Police Department

## **Identification of Community Problems**

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### **Health and Community Needs and Issues**

Freestone County is a medically underserved, rural setting, approximately 1.5 hours from any major city. The population is 19,048 with 70.8% Caucasian, 18.6% African American, and 9.9% Hispanic/Latino. The per capita personal income is \$22,468. The largest employer is state and local governments. Over 41% are unmarried mothers of which 7.5% are adolescent mothers. 25% of individuals 0 – 64 years have no health insurance.

Freestone County residents are concerned about challenges facing families and preparing youth for the challenges of the 21st Century. High-quality programs that address the needs of Freestone County youth and adults are needed. Priority areas include programming focused on improving the health, nutrition, financial literacy, and life skills of Freestone County youth and adults.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 23.9 percent of Texas youth live in poverty, compared to the national average of 18.3 percent. In Freestone County, almost 23% of the children under 17 live below poverty level.

### **General Public Safety Needs and Issues**

Crime is a complex and multifaceted problem, and crime control requires the constant and coordinated efforts of a wide range of public and private agencies. Countywide criminal justice planning is an essential precursor to the effective coordination of all varieties of crime amelioration activities in the county. The agencies that compose the Freestone County criminal justice system jointly strive to enforce lawful standards of conduct, protect individuals and communities, assist victims, improve institutional capabilities, and engage the community and its citizens in crime prevention while preserving individual civil liberties and protecting basic human rights.

It is necessary to strive toward these goals by helping to facilitate the collaboration of community groups, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, and correctional agencies throughout the County. A broad approach to defining the crime problem and designing methods for its control has been identified as a priority. Issues related to crime have been studied and analyzed on a continuum from the overall social environment to post-crime responses, including community structure and dynamics, crime prevention, early intervention, and various types of criminal and juvenile justice agency responses. Within these parameters, this planning process develops, implements, and refines the community criminal justice plan to help meet the emerging needs of Freestone County. The goal of this planning process is to achieve a significant reduction in the frequency and severity of crime to facilitate a sense of pride, health, and safety in all our communities by:

- Promoting the planning and implementation of comprehensive strategies to prevent and control crime in general and violence in particular, throughout the community.
- Identifying philosophical principles that will promote the participation of law enforcement, judiciary, prosecution, corrections, victims, treatment providers,

- educators, media, businesses and citizens throughout the community in the development of strategies to prevent, reduce and control crime and violence in the community.
- Promoting the fairness, effectiveness, and efficiency of all segments of the criminal and juvenile justice system.

## PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The building of assets in youth and the community is an important component of a community plan. Therefore, it is imperative that prevention issues take precedence over those based on incarceration and deterrence if the long-term impact of crime control spending is to be maximized. Nonetheless, the control of known delinquents who present a clear threat to public safety must also remain an important strategy.

In each of the areas below, problems are identified, and data is included that supports both the existence and severity of the problems as they are found in Freestone County. Below is a discussion of the problems, the manner in which the problems are being addressed, and strategically how responses to these community problems could be improved.

## **Victim Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Support Services**

Data Collection:

#### **Child Abuse**

- Need for foster parents and adoptive parents.
- Shortage of mental health services at a low cost or sliding scale
- Limited number of police, social workers, etc. with second language capabilities for intervention
- Need for resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps.
- Need for affordable childcare.
- Need for school-age childcare, after-school and summer programs for youth.
- Need for comprehensive mental health case management services for child victims.
- Need for programs for children who witness violence.
- Need for multidiscipline investigation and response to child abuse.
- Need for non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence.

#### **Domestic Violence**

- Need for stable victim resource revenues.
- Need for resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps.
- Need for support groups for male victims.
- Need for standardized requirements for obtaining a protective order.
- Need for training for judges granting protective orders.
- Need for specialized services and awareness for elderly victims of domestic violence.
- Need for non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence.
- Need for awareness among minority groups, cultural groups, and immigrants.
- Need for awareness of available resources in the community.
- Need for transportation to shelter and other resources.
- Need for affordable and accessible childcare.
- Need for awareness of cultural differences and needs.
- Need for services specific to the LGBTQ population.
- Need for comprehensive case management, job training, transportation, and job search services.
- Need for a seamless continuum of care.

- Need for improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement, and other local agencies.
- Limited services for victims of sexual violence
- Delays in victims receiving CVC benefits.

#### **Sexual Violence**

- Need for local SANE response.
- Need for local volunteers.
- Need for training.
- Need for outreach.
- Need for counselor/case management.

#### **Secondary victims**

Secondary victims of crime often go unnoticed. However, they may experience severe trauma as a result of the crimes.

- Services specific to dealing with traumatic grief.
- Education and intervention services concerning traumatic grief.
- Resources for adults dealing with issues of grief.
- Need for services for mental health issues.
- Need for an organized, identified emergency response team.
- Need for specific training for service providers in trauma issues.
- Need for non-English speaking services.
- Need for awareness of services to address victim rights.
- Need for improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement, and other local agencies.

#### **Aftercare for Victims**

- Increase law enforcement awareness of services and persons willing to respond to on-scene incidents.
- Agencies that provide these types of services are encouraged to bridge the gaps between their services and law enforcement, to ensure law enforcement are well aware of the agencies' services to assist law enforcement, as well as the victims.
- Need for suicide prevention program.
- Need for non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Continue to support programs that address support services for victims of violence and crime.
- Speed up processing of CVC applications. Develop procedures to coordinate between law enforcement and advocacy agencies for submission of CVC Presumptive Eligibility applications.
- Raise awareness in the community about available services to Freestone County
- Establish local offices and advocates in Freestone County to address domestic and sexual violence.

#### **Resources:**

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Child Protective Services
- Adult Protective Services
- SANE
- SART (Limestone County)
- Heart of Texas Regional Sexual assault Team

#### **Statistical Information:**

- Family Abuse Center
  - In 2022 Freestone County had 57 reported Family Violence incidents that were reported to law enforcement according to the annual Crime in Texas report.

- On average, shelter clients stay 22 days at the Family Abuse Center
- In 2022, FAC received 15 hotline calls from Freestone County and worked with 0 clients from Freestone County.
- Advocacy Center
  - Conducted 649 forensic interviews during fiscal year 2022 to children alleging sexual or physical abuse. Of those interviewed, 7.8% (35) are children that live in Freestone County that also have access to medical exams, case management and therapy through the center.
  - Collaborates with LE, CPS, APS, DA's office, and County Judge in the investigation of all crimes suffered by county residents.
  - Each client case that is prosecuted has case management contact or accompaniment to court.
  - All clients are offered counseling for primary victims and to family members who may be secondary to the victimization. Virtual counseling and case management are available.

## **2. Underutilization of On-Scene Victims Services**

### Data Collection:

- Although resources like Advocacy Center and Family Abuse Center are present in Freestone County, there is often a disconnect in referring victims to these resources.

### Recommendations:

- Increase law enforcement awareness of services and persons willing to respond to on-scene incidents.
- Provide Family Violence training to on-scene victim services providers.
- Agencies that provide victims services are encouraged to bridge gaps between their services and law enforcement, to ensure law enforcement and schools are made aware of the victim's services available.
- Victim services groups must collaborate and create a crisis intervention resource list for Limestone/Freestone jurisdictions and schools (Plan to call it a Bi-Stone County Resources List).
- Agency collaboration is critical. Agencies are encouraged to network and bridge the gaps that exist between the agencies that provide services for victim support, prevention, and treatment.

### Resources/Successes:

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Child Protective Services
- Adult Protective Services
- Family Abuse Center

## **3. Primary Prevention for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault**

### Data Collection:

- Current domestic violence and sexual assault resources are overloaded. The solution is either to increase funding for these resources or prevent such violence from occurring in the first place.
- Children who grow up in homes with domestic violence are more likely to become abusers or victims of domestic violence themselves when they grow up.

### Recommendations:

- Develop task forces to address domestic violence and sexual assault.

- Coordinate with local media to raise awareness and promote cultural change.
- Education/support groups for victims of domestic violence and violent crimes
- Partner with schools to provide early education on healthy relationships and crime/violence prevention.
- Change the community perception of domestic violence and sexual assault through a community-wide domestic violence prevention campaign. Have a special emphasis on non-criminal justice sectors (such as businesses, churches, libraries, youth sports, etc.)

**Resources:**

- Family Abuse Center:
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
  - Prevention and education program staff do presentations for schools, universities, and community organizations to change the attitudes, beliefs, and behavior that tend to lead toward sexual violence.
  - Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children convenes the Freestone County multi-disciplinary team monthly to review cases of child abuse or neglect.

## **Criminal Justice Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Specialized Equipment**

There are significant pressures being placed on the Justice Information Systems in use by Federal, State, and local governments. These pressures have resulted from the post-September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, which caused a major emphasis to be placed on sharing justice information, along with ongoing, significant changes in technology. Compounding the problem is that these pressures are being placed on systems that are frequently old, have limited functionality, and lack the flexibility to address new functional or technical requirements.

There is a major movement underway in Texas counties to improve their Justice Information Systems (JIS). The new generation of systems is frequently referred to as Integrated Justice Information Systems (IJIS).

This integration occurs at two levels:

- (1) a comprehensive system architecture that serves the needs of all justice-related and law enforcement agencies within a county, government and
- (2) the ability to integrate a county's justice information with other governments, including other local, State, and Federal agencies within that county. By the single entry of data in a county's IJIS system, the information is made available to all agencies within the county boundaries, and state and federal government justice agencies.

For example, a police officer making a traffic stop could have immediate access to the vehicle registration data and determine if the driver is wanted within the county, in another city or county, or by state and federal agencies.

### **Problem Statement**

Information systems operated by Texas justice agencies have been proprietary, and incapable of linking and exchanging information; consequently, the justice community must address new strategies to deliver effective and efficient information-related services throughout the State of Texas. During the past year, federal and state agencies, urban counties, rural counties, and municipalities from across Texas have been discussing the need to join together in the development of an integrated justice information system. Although justice agencies need the same information, they have historically been focused on capturing and using information necessary for their own processes- legacy systems.

Although Freestone County government and most cities throughout Freestone County have justice information management systems, Freestone County is one of 254 Texas counties that

does not have the resources currently available to develop an integrated justice information system that can effectively share information between, the federal, state, county, local governments, and communities.

#### Data Collection:

- Radio communication interoperability
- Thermal imaging equipment
- Insufficient funds to purchase basic law enforcement equipment for smaller jurisdictions (i.e., vests, weapons, vehicles, body-worn cameras, etc.)

#### Problem Statement

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During Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Freestone County did not have the capability to communicate with other communities.

#### Recommendations:

- Equipment must be updated or replaced.
- Support and seek funding that will enable jurisdictions to purchase/replace basic equipment.
- Coordination/cooperation among agencies
- Need for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and PPE training on use.

#### Resources/Successes:

- Use of reverse 9-1-1 for citizen notification
- Radio communications are a centerpiece of the regional homeland security plan. Based on funding availability, future equipment acquisition will fit into the regional interoperability plan to maximize the county's communication effectiveness.
- Heart of Texas Regional Advisory Council offers courses in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) for first responders and other partners.

## 2. Insufficient Funding for Staff

#### Data Collection:

- Wortham PD and Wortham ISD need a School Resource Officer
- Not enough funded positions to meet the optimal needs of the community.
- Low salary – not able to pay competitive wages for more qualified personnel.

#### Recommendations:

- Obtain funding to hire an SRO for Wortham ISD
- Funding for qualified personnel, as well as competitive pay for existing employees to reduce turnover rate inside departments.

- Enhanced recruitment efforts
- Incentive programs for officers
  - Give free rent to officers in return for services after duty hours.
- Improved coordination among agencies

**Resources/Successes:**

- Funding for Victims Advocate Coordinator
- History Club Volunteers

### **3. Training for Law Enforcement**

**Data Collection:**

- Training opportunities are hindered due to not having backfill or funds to travel to training.
- Mandates for training coming state. Funding is needed to bring training in locally, and to accommodate shift personnel.

**Recommendations:**

- Search for additional funding in the next grant period to allow for sufficient training of staff.
- Coordination among agencies
- Training on domestic violence and substance abuse

**Resources:**

- HOTCOG Law Enforcement Training Program
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children:
- Family Abuse Center
- Wortham PD – Family Violence Unit
- East Texas Crisis Center
- SANE Hospital-Athens/Palestine
- Safe Call Now

### **4. Increase in Domestic Violence Calls**

Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the U.S. – more than muggings, rapes, and auto accidents combined. The escalation of violence in families has become a justice, public health, and economic problem for the families themselves, as well as society as a whole. Domestic violence and violence between intimate partners are a problem for Freestone County because the county lacks a cohesive and implementable plan for reducing the number of incidents and the resources to mediate the damage done to the victim's families. Domestic violence crosses all racial, ethnic, economic, social, and religious barriers. Violence between intimate partners continues to be a perpetual cycle led to victims into feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Domestic violence is not only a problem within the adult population but is increasing within the youth population. Date rape, violence between dating partners, and sexual assault of teen boys and girls continue to increase. Intervention during the school years may help to prevent the incidence and acceptability of acquaintance violence.

**Data Collection:**

- Domestic violence is the number one cause of injury to women in the U.S.  
*Source Book: Surgeon General's Workshop on Violence and Public Health*
- In 2022, Freestone County had 64 reported family violence incidents that were reported to law enforcement according to the annual Crime in Texas report.
- In 2022, FAC received 15 hotline calls from Freestone County and worked with 0 clients from Freestone County.

### **Gaps in the community**

The following issues require a concerted effort by all entities involved in the victim and criminal justice arena.

- Programs needed for outreach; local resources are not easily accessible.
- The need for stable victim resource revenues threatens the ability of organizations to maintain core services.
- Need for resources and accessibility to resources for victims with physical handicaps.
- Need for support groups, services, and awareness for male victims.
- Need for standardized requirements for obtaining a protective order.
- Need for training for judges granting protective orders.
- Need for training for law enforcement.
- Need for specialized services and awareness for elderly victims of domestic violence.
- Need for non-English speaking resources for victims of domestic violence.
- Need for awareness among minority groups, cultural groups, immigrants, LGBTQ, and male victims.
- Need for awareness of available resources in the community.
- Need for transportation.
- Need for affordable and accessible childcare.
- Need for comprehensive case management, job training, transportation, and job search services.
- Need for a seamless continuum of care.
- Need for improved collaborative relationships among service providers, law enforcement, and other local agencies.

### **Recommendations:**

- Support efforts to address gaps, as well as establish safety zones in the county (for instance in the hospital) where victims can stay until victims' services can come to transport them to shelter.
- Increase prevention services for domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Acquire a local safe house.
- Media campaign to increase public awareness.

### **Resources:**

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Domestic Violence Liaison (grant required to hire liaison for a two-year period)

### **Statistical Information:**

- On average, shelter clients stay 22 days at the Family Abuse Center
- In 2022, FAC received 15 hotline calls from Freestone County and worked with 0 clients from Freestone County.
- In 2020, the Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children served 1157 survivors in the Victims Center, forty-five of whom were from Freestone County.

## **5. Substance Abuse**

In recent years the overall crime rate has decreased; however, studies show that a record number of crimes being committed today are drug and/or alcohol related. Drug-driven crimes can be defined as an offense committed for the sole purpose of obtaining monies for the purchase of illegal substances or the sale of such substances.

#### **Data Collection:**

- Continues to be a problem.
- No specialized unit to respond to the manufacturing of illegal drugs.

In a study conducted by the Department of Justice – Bureau of Justice Statistics, 61,000 convicted prisoners reported that their offenses were committed in order to obtain money for drugs. The study also revealed that of 12,658 homicides committed, 4.5% of the homicides were related to narcotics. Since the mid-1980s, every state and federal court system has experienced an overload of drug offenses on its dockets.

The high recidivism rates associated with drug-related offenses have proven that prosecution and incarceration alone will not break the cycle of the recurrence of drug-related offenses. Based on the belief that drug abuse treatment is demonstrably more effective in reducing both drug addiction and drug-related crime, jurisdictions developed an alternative approach to the traditional adjudication process.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Need for local support groups, prevention, and treatment.
- Need for local treatment facilities.
- Pursue funding streams and resources to support prevention and treatment.
- Support Drug/Alcohol Court Programs requiring mandatory participation.
- Seek medically supervised alcohol detoxification services for offenders suffering from acute alcohol abuse.
- Affordable residential and supportive outpatient services for offenders needing longer-term care.
- Utilize Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that provide affordable and appropriate treatment services for employees with alcohol problems.
- Ensure supervision of all DWI offenders who are required by law to have an ignition interlock.
- Need mental health transport officer.

#### **Resources/Successes:**

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
- VOICE, Inc.
- Bluebonnet
- HOTRMHMR
- Community Supervision & Corrections Department
  - DWI education, drug offender education, DWI intervention classes
- Senior

## **6. Transportation**

#### **Data Collection:**

The transport of mental health individuals and domestic/sexual violence victims strains law enforcement. There is limited personnel to transport mental health individuals.

This causes a financial burden on law enforcement due to the long processing times required to screen and assist individuals who have mental health issues. Processing and transport often require many hours of staff time.

#### **Resources:**

- County mental health transport officer
- Public transit system
- Volunteers who transport patients for health care and treatment
- LaFleur Transportation

- FAC

## **7. Cultural Diversity Training for Staff working with minority populations.**

### **Data Collection:**

Resources for diversity training are often lacking in counties like Freestone which are geographically removed from larger urban centers. Smaller populations also mean that encounters with culturally diverse populations are less frequent than in larger cities. However, minority groups still exist in rural counties and as such, law enforcement and the criminal justice system need a good understanding of the unique needs, challenges, and assets of these populations.

### **Recommendations:**

- Increase awareness and training for working with immigrant populations.
- Increase awareness and training for working with LGBTQ populations.
- Increase awareness and training for working with victims and offenders of varying ethnic and racial backgrounds.
- Increase the number of officers who are female, Black, Hispanic, and from other minority populations.

### **Resources:**

- Family Abuse Center
- Texas Advocacy Project
- HOTCOG Law Enforcement Training Program

## **Juvenile Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Counseling Services**

#### **Data Collection:**

- Counseling services are limited due to juvenile and/or family members having to travel out of the area to receive counseling.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Support for local resources available for more than just an on-call basis
- Begin the Communities in Schools (CIS) program.
- Recruit counselors

#### **Resources:**

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
- Family Abuse Center
- Central Texas Youth Services Bureau (CTYSB)
- Utilize Hanna's House for counseling parenting, anger management, and mediation.
- Bluebonnet Outreach, Screening, Assessment and Referral (OSAR)

### **2. Youth Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

#### **Data Collection:**

- Need for services for teen alcohol and drug abuse prevention or treatment programs.
- Need for in-house treatment.
- Need for follow-up care.
- Need for prevention alternatives and education.
- Need for the tobacco awareness program. Tobacco use is a common problem in Texas and Freestone County. Although some small progress has been made in the number of "smoke-free" facilities, smokeless tobacco continues to be a problem. Tobacco usage among children and youth continues to be a problem.
- Need for Vape awareness training.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Seek and acquire funding sources to allow for prevention, treatment, and follow-up care for juveniles struggling with addictions and peer pressure.
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health, and/or substance abuse treatment programs.
- Develop programs that address anger management for children and adolescents.
- Develop programs that address goal setting for children and adolescents.
- Develop early identification and intervention programs that can divert children and adolescents into treatment.
- Begin Community in Schools (CIS) program – parenting program.
- Bullying prevention
- Implement tobacco cessation programs.
- Media campaign about preventing and ending tobacco use.
- Promote free State Quitline for tobacco.
- Promotion of tobacco prevention in county schools targeting youth and middle school students
- Education update on point of purchase and enforcement for tobacco and vape products.

#### **Resources:**

- Baylor Scott & White Medical Center Trauma Services – Teen Safe Program
- Voices Inc. has a curriculum for K-12
- Bluebonnet

- HOTRMHMR
- Tobacco Awareness Program at point of purchase, education, and enforcement
- Community Supervision & Corrections Department
  - DWI education, drug offender education, DWI intervention classes
- Health Care Providers
- School Districts
- DSHS Office of Tobacco Prevention and Control

### **3. First Offenders Program**

Data Collection:

Recommendations:

- Support funding for programs that provide education and skills to first-time offenders to prevent entering further into the criminal justice system.

Resources:

None

### **4. Delinquent Behavior**

Truancy is one of the minor juvenile crimes and is often the least enforced in most communities within Freestone County. There is substantial evidence that youth who become truant will eventually drop out of school and put themselves at high risk of becoming disadvantaged unproductive citizens. The linkages between truancy, tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use can lead to other chronic delinquent behaviors and possibly other violent behaviors. Truancy is the first sign of trouble. Coupled with academic failure, these two indicators may be the initial signs that a young person is giving up and dropping out. The high percentage of students dropping out of high school jeopardizes the future economic security of the target area, increases the number of individuals with low educational attainment levels, and indicates a definite need for academic and prevention services.

Data Collection:

- Truancy
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Aggression/anger management
- Substance abuse
- Schools are generally understaffed with regard to student-teacher and student-counselor ratio and find it difficult to address individual needs. Sometimes, students are able to establish a pattern of non-attendance and are no longer eligible for credit before anyone identifies the problem and acts.
- The school, family, and community at large must continue to work together to tighten communication regarding the importance of school attendance, academic success, and graduation.
- There is limited focus on the importance of education and its lifelong impact at the lower grade levels such as middle and junior high school.
- First-generation citizens are unable to navigate the complex systems of barriers to attending school.
- Communities need to provide a full range of services to youth. In order to meet the needs of youth involved in the juvenile justice system, targeted mental health and substance services must be available at all levels of need. Services that target this population of youth, from early intervention and prevention programs, diversion programs, services in detention, and aftercare treatment need to be developed and implemented.
- Risk factors in children should be identified as early as possible with services including evaluations in all domains.

- Limited availability of intervention services for youth not involved with the juvenile justice system.
- No easily accessible and coordinated programs for youth experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.
- Limited access to programs and services for youth attending alternative schools.
- Need for interim services for youth on waiting lists.
- There is a need for communication and coordination between the involved systems. The absence of good communication means restricted access to services and programs, duplication of services, missed identification of youth, philosophical barriers, and ineffective intervention/treatment strategies.
- Services are often provided in a piecemeal fashion, or they address only a fragment of the problem. Strategies should include intensive service plan coordination, as well as a “wrap around” approach that targets all domains (psychological, academic, physical, family, social, economic, mental health/substance abuse)
- Problem - Instances of delinquency, violence, and persistent misbehaviors in children and youth continue to increase.
- Bullying prevention

#### **Recommendations:**

- Support programs that will allow for aftercare services that provide extended support, treatment, and prevention.
- Expand stay-in-school, after-school, and school appreciation activities.
- Expose youth to the value of pursuing higher education through college visit programs.
- Provide information to youth and parents regarding financial assistance for pursuing advanced training opportunities or education.
- Educate youth and parents on the value of completing high school by exposing them to career opportunities related to school completion.
- Continue programs that reduce risk factors associated with delinquency and strengthen protective factors that prevent such behavior; supporting prevention programs addressing youth issues including a range of behaviors such as impulsivity, bullying, and racial name-calling and threats, as these are precursors to more violent and aggressive behaviors; encourage prevention programs addressing coping skills, social competency skills, enhancement of personal responsibility, and respect for others.
- Ensure availability of services, both inpatient and outpatient, for children and adolescents who have a co-occurring substance abuse disorder.
- Develop mechanisms for improving communication and collaboration among providers who serve juvenile offenders.
- Raise awareness among policymakers of funding needs to develop new services or enhance existing services.
- Educate the general public about the behavioral health needs of children and adolescents.
- Develop a tracking system to follow a child through juvenile justice, mental health, and/or substance abuse treatment programs.
- Support programs addressing Anger Management for children and adolescents.
- Develop programs addressing goal setting for children and adolescents.
- Foster outpatient counseling programs for children and adolescents
- Implement after-school programs and summer camps for school-age children.
- Provide positive activities.

#### **Resources:**

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children: Staff offers training to school counselors.
- HOTBHN
- Voice, Inc.

- Bluebonnet OSAR
- Fairfield ISD Officers
- Fairfield Police Officers

## **5. Dating Violence & Sexual Aggression**

### Data Collection:

- 1 in 3 teens report experiencing dating violence and abuse in their dating relationships.
- LGBTQ individuals are at an increased risk for experiencing dating violence, sexual violence, and gender-based bullying.

### Recommendations:

- Initiate prevention services, such as educational presentations for students and faculty
- Raise awareness in school and youth programs about domestic violence resources available in Freestone County
- Train school staff on understanding and aiding LGBTQ students who become victims of violence.

### Resources:

- Family Abuse Center
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children
  - Prevention education programming is available to school districts, civic organizations, churches, and other groups interested in addressing Freestone County community concerns regarding changing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that tend to lead toward sexual violence. Presentations are done virtually and via social media.

## **6. Referrals to HOTBN**

### Data Collection:

Limited resources if the juvenile doesn't qualify for MHMR services. Freestone County Juvenile Justice Division coordinates with MHMR for client mental health needs and assessments. However, at times the resources are stressed due to the need for counselors to accommodate Freestone and surrounding counties. Additional staff and mental health resources are needed. Due to recent mandated state laws, persons previously eligible for MHMR services have been reclassified as non-eligible. There remains, however, the need to address these individuals' needs.

### Recommendations:

Funding of additional staff and mental health resources to be supported, as well as resources for those individuals that do not qualify for MHMR.

### Resources:

HOTRMHMR Counselor visits Freestone County once per month  
Bluebonnet Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR)

## **7. Residential Treatment Facilities**

### Data Collection:

- Limited local treatment facilities

### Recommendations:

- Support programs that will allow for treatment facilities to operate, and support beds for in-house treatment.

### Resources:

- Pleasant Hill Children's Home
- Presbyterian Children's Home

## **8. Aftercare Programs**

Data Collection:

- Long term
- Short term
- Residential in-house
- Outpatient

Recommendations:

- Agencies that provide these types of services are encouraged to bridge the gaps between their services and law enforcement, to ensure law enforcement are well aware of the agencies' services to assist law enforcement, as well as the victims.

Resources:

- No available.

## **9. Adolescent Sexual Health and Parenting**

Early sexual activity is extremely common in the state of Texas. The consequences of early sexual behavior are negative not only for the teen but also for the family, the community, and the state as a whole. Negative consequences include disease (which may be incurable and/or fatal), early pregnancy (which may result in dropping out of school and negative health consequences for the baby before and after birth), and parenthood with limited or no skills and support. Teens that become pregnant or father a child are more likely to experience negative life consequences. Teen parents are more likely to drop out of school, acquire less education, have fewer job/career opportunities, and receive local, state, and federal support paid for by tax dollars. Prevention of early sexual activity and the delay of parenthood is positive for all concerned.

Data Collection:

- School Districts
- Health Care providers

Recommendations:

- School-based programs focusing on sexual health issues including pregnancy/disease prevention and relationships beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Church-based programs for youth and parents focus on sexual decision-making, relationships with others, morality, values, and pregnancy/disease prevention.
- Parenting programs for parents of school-age children and youth focusing on talking with kids about sex, sexual decision-making, pregnancy/disease prevention, sharing of values, etc.
- In-school programs for pregnant and parenting teens (both males and females) which include information on contraception to prevent second pregnancy
- In-school programs for pregnant and parenting teens (both males and females) focusing on financial management, the importance of education, job skills, career development, assistance available, etc.

Resources:

- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides parenting class groups to families referred to by CPS. Prevention education is available to interested groups.
- Family Abuse Center

## **10. Child Safety**

Child safety concerns in Freestone County range from lack of appropriate after-school care to child abduction and sexual assault to environmental hazards. Deserted, crumbling houses provide areas for homeless and drifters to congregate; provide an area to “cook,” use, and distribute drugs; increase incidence of mosquitoes, rats, and stray animals carrying diseases; is a public health issue as well as a nuisance to residents. The lack of sidewalks, walking and bike trails, and neighborhood parks mean that children ride their bikes, skate, and rollerblade in the streets. In addition, children have limited safe areas to play within their neighborhoods. The lack of safe bikes and walking routes to school results in a reduction of physical activity for children and adds to parental stress in transporting children. Inadequate pedestrians and school crossings result in dangerous environments for children. There is a need for a countywide examination of safety issues.

Data Collection:

- Law enforcement
- Healthcare providers
- School officials

Recommendations:

- Tear down deserted and crumbling houses, garages, and other buildings
- Build sidewalks.
- Put crosswalks, pedestrian crossings, and safety lights in areas that are dangerous to children and other pedestrians.
- Develop bike and walking trails which are safe, well-lit, and monitored for safety.
- Increase the number of neighborhoods parks
- Increase and fund positive activities for youth after school, evenings, and weekends.

Resources:

- Churches with youth facilities/gyms
- Family Abuse Center
- Voice, Inc.
- Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children

## **11. HealthCare**

Lack of health care and access to healthcare is a significant problem in Freestone County. Challenges include an insufficient number of health care providers (currently there are 4 doctors and 3 nurse practitioners), lack of health insurance, inability to pay for health care, and lack of education regarding the importance of health care. Improved nutrition, a decrease in obesity, and an increase in physical activity would make inroads into this problem.

Data Collection:

- ETMC and other medical facilities in the county
- Healthcare providers
- School Districts

Recommendations:

- Increase the number of healthcare providers through active recruitment.
- Increase funds to support those with no health insurance for both preventative, well care, and specific needs.
- Increase education is related to the importance of physical activity and nutrition in regard to health.
- Implement programs to increase physical activity.
- Implement programs to reduce obesity and improve nutrition.

- Increase literacy related to medications and health care.

Resources:

- ETMC and other health care facilities
- Local physicians
- Fitness facilities
- Schools
- Voice, Inc.

## **Emergency Management Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)**

### **1. Mandates to school districts concerning emergency planning.**

#### **Data Collection:**

- No available

#### **Recommendations:**

- The school districts have begun and will continue to work with the County Emergency Management Coordinator, as well as law enforcement and other first responders to prepare the school and school-aged children for potential catastrophic events.
- Employ the use of CERT to assist with training in the schools.

#### **Resources/Successes:**

- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

### **2. Involvement of the public/residents to work together and participate in neighborhood groups that will assist law enforcement and other first responders in the community.**

#### **Data Collection:**

Homeland Security Strategic Plan includes private citizen involvement in emergency response and assisting in public needs. Including, but not limited to:

- Community Emergency Response Team
- Neighborhood Watch
- Volunteers in Policing
- Protect Texas
- Fire Corps

#### **Recommendations:**

- The HOTCOG will work with jurisdictions and the County Emergency Management Coordinator to develop and/or build upon programs in all areas of the region.

#### **Resources/Successes:**

- Advocacy Center

### **3. Need for HazMat team.**

#### **Data Collection:**

Due to legislation dissolving the Regional Drug Task Force, extensive training, and education, as well as equipment for responders and law enforcement will be needed in the counties to safely break down Meth Labs, as well as, responding to chemical hazards and spills caused by transportation accidents and accidental releases.

#### **Recommendation:**

Support programs and funding that will allow for the training and equipment to all first responders and law enforcement in the county.

#### **Resources:**

Waco Fire HAZMAT Regional Team

## **Resources Available**

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Included below are resources identified by the Freestone County Community Planning Team that are available to provide services that could potentially help in closing criminal justice gaps:

### **Juvenile Justice:**

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
MCYC	School Social Work	Work with students in schools who are at risk of dropping out. Also, work with students who are in juvenile detention.
ESC Region 12	Education	College preparedness for students, student leadership forum
Central Texas Youth Services Bureau (CTYS)		Provides full services to Bell, Coryell, Lampasas, Falls, McLennan, Milam, Limestone, and Freestone counties. Each county has local CTYS offices except Falls which is served from Waco and Freestone which is served from our Groesbeck office.
HOTBHN	Mental Health	Provide a full array of mental health services to children involved in the criminal justice system. Provide truancy court support, provide assessment and treatment services to children in detention facilities, provide cross-referencing of all children booked into detention with the State data system, and provide specialized intensive casework services to children on Probation in McLennan County.
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter & Resource Center	24-hour. Hotline 800.283.8401 Office 254.772.8999 <a href="http://www.familyabusecenter.org">www.familyabusecenter.org</a>
Baylor S&W Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe 254.202.6533 866.332.0005 FB: Teen Safe Waco	Hospital, Non-profit 501c3, grant-funded	The Teen Safe Youth Traffic Safety Educational program focuses on teen traffic safety, driving responsibility, underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. The program also educates parents on the laws relating to teen traffic safety. This prevention program is a combination of videos, simulations, and written materials along with computer-based simulations. This program is FREE.
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501c3 Non-Profit	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24/7 crisis hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, counseling and case management, court accompaniment, and assistance in filing Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim's Center program. Services may be provided via Telehealth. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, APS, or law enforcement. Educational

		<p>presentations on victims' issues and prevention are available. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) are available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a></p>
Workforce Center		<p>Adult and Youth: The Workforce Center can provide monies for training, counseling, transportation, and childcare. Work with students in schools who are at risk of dropping out.</p>
VOICE, Inc.		<p>Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after-school, and summer programs. La Vos Para La Familia program is a parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families.  John Goodnight, Program Director  903.872.0180  <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a></p>
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	<p>Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free.  Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or <a href="tel:800-841-1255">800-841-1255</a>  <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a></p>
Center for Learning and Development	Non-profit Educational Support	<p>Conducts research-based projects and provides workshops, seminars, learning tools, and group processes aimed at preventing and/or intervening with behavioral and educational difficulties.</p>
Counseling Network	Counseling services	<p>Multiple counselors are available for individuals, children, adolescents, families, and group counseling. Specializing in play therapy, EMDR, substance abuse (out-patient) treatment, and domestic abuse issues. Bio-psycho-social assessment for drug and alcohol abuse (hair follicle and UA tests available).  211 E. Elm St. Hillsboro, TX 76645 (by appointment only). 214-724-0702 or <a href="http://www.cnimetro.com">www.cnimetro.com</a></p>
Eagle Experience at Counseling Network	501(c)(3) Non-Profit	<p>Equine Assisted Guidance &amp; Learning Experience offers equine-assisted psychotherapy for individuals and groups.  <a href="http://www.eaglexp.org">www.eaglexp.org</a></p>

## Law Enforcement:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
TX Dept of Public Safety	Law Enforcement	All crime victims in the region are eligible for services: crisis intervention; personal advocacy; assistance filing for crime victim's compensation; court accompaniment;

HOTBHN	Mental Health	Provide training and consultation services for law enforcement through workshops, jail personnel training, academy training, and through ongoing discussions with line staff. Provide emergency services which include 24-hour crisis support, inpatient services, evaluation unit placements, and information and referral. Work with jail staff in all six counties providing services to inmates while incarcerated who have mental health issues. Provide specialized intensive casework services in Hill and McLennan Counties pairing mental health staff with probation and parole officers. Provide regional screening and continuity of care services for all inmates in TDC in the Central Texas area.
Family Abuse Center	Non-profit Domestic Violence Shelter & Resource Center	24-hour Hotline 800.283.8401 Office 254.772.8999 <a href="http://www.familyabusecenter.org">www.familyabusecenter.org</a>
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501C3 Non-Profit	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24/7 crisis hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, counseling and case management, court accompaniment, and assistance in filing Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim's Center program. Services may be provided via Telehealth. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, APS, or law enforcement. Educational presentations on victims' issues and prevention are available. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a>
VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after-school, and summer programs. La Vos Para La Familia program is a parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a>
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or <b>800-841-1255</b> <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a>
HOTCOG LE Training Program		Provides 30 + LE training classes each year. Input on TCOLE classes offered comes from regional law enforcement agencies and the Law Enforcement Training Advisory Committee (LETAC).

Safe Call Now	Law Enforcement 501(c)(3) nonprofit	Provides public safety, emergency services personnel, and their families with a simple and confidential way to ask for help with an emotional crisis, addictions, or just a desire for someone to listen. Phone 206.459.3020 <a href="http://safecallnow.org">safecallnow.org</a>
Counseling Network	Counseling and Training	Offering counseling services for first responders (PTSD, marriage and family, individual and group sessions). Training and consultation for law enforcement agencies. 214-724-0702 or <a href="mailto:karin@cnimetro.com">karin@cnimetro.com</a>
Hill County Children and First Responders in Every School (Hill Co. CARES)	Advocacy 501(c)(3) Non-Profit	Hill Co CARES seeks to establish and grow positive and trusting relationships between the youth of Hill County and the first responders in their community. We seek to do this by coordinating positive interactions between the groups through cooperation with schools, churches, and athletic sponsors. <a href="http://www.hillcocares.org">www.hillcocares.org</a> <a href="mailto:info@hillcocares.org">info@hillcocares.org</a>

### Victim Services:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
TX Dept of Public Safety	Law Enforcement	All crime victims in the region are eligible for services: crisis intervention; personal advocacy; assistance filing for crime victim's compensation; court accompaniment.
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501c3 non-profit organization	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24/7 crisis hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, counseling and case management, court accompaniment, and assistance in filing Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim's Center program. Services may be provided via Telehealth. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, APS, or law enforcement. Educational presentations on victims' issues and prevention are available. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) are available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a>
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	HHSC	Educational events regarding prevention. Education regarding Texas Law and Elder Law Assistance with filing complaints and making reports to abuse. Links to Texas Legal Services Center and victim's compensation.
HOTBHN	Mental Health	A full array of mental health services to people who have been victimized fall into our targeted population identified by State Health Services which

		includes individuals with a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder or Major Depression.
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter & Resource Center	24-hour Hotline 800.283.8401 Office 254.772.8999 <a href="http://www.familyabusecenter.org">www.familyabusecenter.org</a>
Counseling Network, Inc.	Counseling Services	Bi-lingual counselors are available for individual counseling with survivors of domestic abuse. Supervised Visitation for CPS-related cases. Play therapy, EMDR, and a variety of evidence-based modalities to address PTSD and anxiety-related matters. 214-724-0702 or <a href="http://www.cnimetro.com">www.cnimetro.com</a>
HOTSART Heart of Texas Sexual Assault Response Team	Victim Services	Reviews Adult Sexual Assault cases, sets best practices protocols, provides resources information for victim services, provides training for judges, prosecutors and law enforcement.

## Health / Medical / Substance Abuse:

Name of Agency	Agency Type	Description
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	Health and Human Services	Educational events regarding health and wellness, public benefits, health insurance, prevention, and resources in the HOT region. Legal documents to protect rights of health care choices
HOTBHN	Mental Health	Provide specialized substance abuse services to people who also have a co-occurring psychiatric disorder.
Waco-McLennan County Public Health District	Public Health	HIV/AIDS & STD Clinic
Baylor S&W Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe 254.202.6533 866.332.0005 FB: Teen Safe Waco	Hospital	The Teen Safe Youth Traffic Safety Educational program focuses on teen traffic safety, driving responsibility, underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. The program also educates parents on the laws relating to teen traffic safety. This prevention program is a combination of videos, simulations, and written materials along with computer-based simulations. This program is FREE.
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501c3 non-profit organization	Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24/7 crisis hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, counseling and case management, court accompaniment, and assistance in filing Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim's Center program. Services may be provided via Telehealth. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, APS, or law enforcement. Educational presentations on victims' issues and prevention are available. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) are available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a>
Catholic Charities of Central Texas	Faith-based	Homeless prevention and rapid re-housing, application assistance with state benefits
VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after-school, and summer programs. La Vos Para La Familia program is a parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> <a href="http://www.voiceinc.org">www.voiceinc.org</a>

Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or <a href="tel:800-841-1255">800-841-1255</a> <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a>
Heart of Texas Regional Advisory Council	Non-profit, 501c3 State and Federal grant funded	Prevention and education for cardiac, stroke, and trauma.
Cenikor Foundation 254.224.8881 Waco 888.cenikor	501c3	Addiction treatment, detoxification, short-term only.
HOT Recovers! 254.297.7771 <a href="mailto:hotrecovers@gmail.com">hotrecovers@gmail.com</a>		Recovery Oriented Systems of Care (ROSC) Focus on education, employment, housing, peer support, transitional support, transportation, and veterans. Recovery-oriented care is what mental health and substance use treatment and rehabilitation practitioners offer in support of the person's own long-term recovery efforts.
211		Help finding information and referrals to the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) community organizations, and volunteer opportunities. <a href="http://www.211texas.org/211">www.211texas.org/211</a> or 2-1-1 option 1 or 1-877-541-7905
Texas STAR and STAR+PLUS Programs		Help with finding Medicaid medical and dental providers, education on benefits, and enrolling with a Medicaid-managed care plan. Call 1.800.964.2777.
Texas Health Steps		Education on Medicaid medical, dental, vision, mental health, and case management benefits for children birth-age 20 yrs. old on Medicaid. Call 1.877.847.8377.
Family Abuse Center	Non-profit Domestic Violence Shelter & Resource Center	24-hour Hotline 800.283.8401 Office 254.772.8999 <a href="http://www.familyabusecenter.org">www.familyabusecenter.org</a>
Counseling Network, Inc.	Outpatient counseling	Substance abuse evaluations (bio-psycho-social evaluation) with a hair follicle and UA testing are available. Group counseling for drug/alcohol treatment is available. Medicaid accepted. 214-724-0702 or <a href="http://www.cnimetro.com">www.cnimetro.com</a>

## **Prevention / Intervention:**

<b>Name of Agency</b>	<b>Agency Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Area Agency on Aging HOT Benefits Counseling/Legal Awareness	HHSC	Educational events regarding, Prevention of ID Theft, Scams, and Financial Abuse. Education regarding Texas Law and Elder Law Assistance with filing consumer complaints and making reports of abuse.
Klara's Children's Center ECI	Early Childhood Intervention	Early intervention services to children ages birth to 3yrs who have developmental delays. Services are community-based and family-focused.
HOTBHN	Mental Health	<p>Mental Retardation Services (254-757-3933)  <b>MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</b>  (254-752-3451)</p> <p>Eligibility: Adults (18+)  Serving persons w/ severe and persistent mental illnesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schizophrenia</li> <li>• Schizoaffective</li> <li>• Bipolar and</li> <li>• Severe Major Depression</li> </ul> <p>Fee: Based on monthly maximum fee schedule; accepting insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare</p> <p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information/referral</li> <li>• Screening/assessment</li> <li>• Crisis services (day/night)</li> <li>• Crisis respite</li> <li>• Psychiatric/pharmacological</li> <li>• Jail-based assessment/ diversion services</li> <li>• Probation/Parole assessment and treatment</li> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Service Coordination</li> <li>• Supported Employment</li> </ul>
MCYC-CIS, PACES	School Social Work	Work with students in schools who are at risk of dropping out. Also, work with students who are in juvenile detention.
Family Abuse Center	Non-Profit Domestic Violence Shelter & Resource Center	24-hour Hotline 800.283.8401 Office 254.772.8999 <a href="http://www.familyabusecenter.org">www.familyabusecenter.org</a>
Baylor S&W Medical Center Trauma Services Teen Safe 254.202.6533 866.332.0005 FB: Teen Safe Waco	Hospital	The Teen Safe Youth Traffic Safety Educational program focuses on teen traffic safety, driving responsibility, underage drinking, substance abuse, and driving under the influence. The program also educates parents on the laws relating to teen traffic safety. This prevention program is a combination of

		<p>videos, simulations, and written materials along with computer-based simulations. This program is FREE.</p>
Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children	501c3 non-profit organization	<p>Advocacy Center for Crime Victims and Children provides 24/7 crisis hotline services, sexual assault nurse examination, counseling and case management, court accompaniment, and assistance in filing Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE registration through its Victim's Center program. Services may be provided via Telehealth. Forensic interviews are available to children from each county upon request of CPS, APS or law enforcement. Educational presentations on victims' issues and prevention are available. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) are available. Office: 254.752.9330 Hotline: 254.752.7233 or 888.867.7233 <a href="http://www.advocacycntr.org">www.advocacycntr.org</a></p>
Department of State Health Services	Public Health	<p>Health Service Region 7 is one of eleven health service regions of the Department of State Health Services, the state governmental agency responsible for bringing comprehensible public health services to the citizens of Texas. Health Service Region 7 serves a 30-county area in Central Texas.</p> <p>It is our mission that we commit, through personal and organizational excellence, to be an agent of change dedicated to achieving a healthier Texas.</p> <p>Programs and Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#"><u>Birth Defects Monitoring Division</u></a></li> <li>2. <a href="#"><u>Children With Special Health Care Needs</u></a></li> <li>3. <a href="#"><u>Consumer Health Protection</u></a></li> <li>4. <a href="#"><u>Epidemiology</u></a></li> <li>5. <a href="#"><u>Field Office Locations</u></a></li> <li>6. <a href="#"><u>Immunization Program</u></a></li> <li>7. <a href="#"><u>Public Health Improvement</u></a></li> <li>8. <a href="#"><u>Public Health Nursing</u></a></li> <li>9. <a href="#"><u>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</u></a></li> <li>10. <a href="#"><u>Tobacco Prevention and Control</u></a></li> <li>11. <a href="#"><u>Tuberculosis Elimination Division</u></a></li> <li>12. <a href="#"><u>Vision and Hearing Services</u></a></li> <li>13. <a href="#"><u>Zoonosis Control Program</u></a></li> </ul> <p><b>Public Health Improvement Program:</b>  The mission of the DSHS Division for Regional and Local Health Services is to serve the needs of Local Public Health Agencies, DSHS Health Service Regions, and local communities in building and maintaining the capacity to provide essential public health services responsive to local needs.  <a href="mailto:Shelby.hyde@dshs.state.tx.us">Shelby.hyde@dshs.state.tx.us</a>  Dorothy Turrubiarte 903.389.2134</p>

VOICE, Inc.		Substance abuse prevention services and curriculum for K-12; alcohol, tobacco, drugs. Spring break, after-school, and summer programs. La Voz Para La Familia program is a parenting curriculum delivered to Hispanic families. John Goodnight, Program Director 903.872.0180 <a href="mailto:jgoodnight@voiceinc.org">jgoodnight@voiceinc.org</a> www.voiceinc.org
Bluebonnet Trails Community Services	Substance Abuse Treatment	Outreach, Screening, Assessment, and Referral (OSAR) provides alcohol and drug screenings, as well as assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, education, support, and case management. All services are free. Jamie Schmitt 254.297.7771 or <b>800-841-1255</b> <a href="mailto:jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org">jamie.schmitt@bbtrails.org</a>
ESC Region 12, HOTRAC, Waco PD Hostage Negotiators, DHSH Region 7		Each of the listed agencies will provide crisis intervention training for first responders.
Center for Learning and Development	Non-profit Educational Support	Conducts research-based projects and provides workshops, seminars, learning tools, and group processes aimed at preventing and/or intervening with behavioral and educational difficulties.

### **Transportation:**

HOTCOG Rural Transit District	Rural Transit System	Call 48 hrs. ahead, minimal cost. Call 254.750.1620
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## **Interagency Cooperation**

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The Freestone County Community Planning Team agencies were proactive in their approach to identifying the needs of the communities and by putting their own special interests aside they succeeded in developing a plan to aid in prioritizing and closing the identified gaps in the community.

The Planning Team shared the different services they offer, as well as services offered by agencies and individuals that were unable to attend the planning meeting. The team maintains a cooperative working relationship.

Law enforcement, juvenile justice, victims' services, and social services groups continue to work together to reach the overall objectives of making the Freestone County communities a safer environment, as well as, increasing awareness through intervention, prevention, and education.

## **Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation**

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The Freestone County Community Planning Team works in conjunction with other planning groups in the county to ensure a regular exchange of ideas. Individuals active in the planning process generally serve on many of these committees and share mutual concerns.

The Freestone County Community Planning Team strives to meet periodically to review the plan and make necessary additions and deletions. At least one formal meeting of the entire group is held each biennium, but agency and community representatives may submit suggestions and changes via telephone and e-mail throughout the year to the Community Planning Coordinator.

Drafts and annual updates of the Community Plan are circulated via e-mail with requests for comments, updates, and changes. Wherever possible, e-mail is used to reduce the need for meetings, printing, postage, etc.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Team to improve outcomes for Freestone County families struggling with problems described in the plan's focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Freestone County agencies and organizations to address problems with local funds, as well as grant funds from multiple state and federal sources. To the extent that these funds are available, the Community Planning Team will continue to urge agencies to provide programming that addresses the outlined focus areas.

## **Contact Information**

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### ***Freestone County Community Planning Coordinator***

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