

## **ACF Region VI Parent Representation – See Parent Representation Initiatives in Training Section of Report**

The workgroup exists to help improve the quality of legal representation for parents in CPS cases. CIP / Children's Commission (CC) collaborates with other ACF Region VI states (Louisiana, New Mexico, Arkansas, Oklahoma) and in FY2013 Texas participated in the development of the American Bar Association *Indicators of Success in Legal Representation for Parents*. Also, the CC is using the *Indicators* document in partnership with McLennan County Parent Representation Project.

### **Family Visitation Oversight Committee**

The purpose of the committee is to develop and execute a plan to move from a traditional one-size-fits-all approach on visitation to one that serves the child and family in a more individual manner. DFPS manages 3 workgroups: Assessments, Visitation Plans, and Best Practices. The Commission provided a JIR letter on family visitation in December 2013, and will continue to provide training and information and judges on the new visitation law, advocate duties, and best practices. Link to JIR here: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/18985/27%20Family%20Visitation%20JIR.pdf>

**Update:** The Visitation Oversight Committee met in February to review the drafts of the temporary and full visitation plan templates, visitation observation forms, training of staff and other stakeholders, assessing for safety concerns, establishing a level of monitoring and frequency, and best practices applicable to all areas. The plans and associated informational documents will help explain to parents their rights regarding visitation, when or why visits might be terminated, sharing of information gathered during visits, as well as possible parent coaching during visits. The Children's Commission will include information about visits in the new Parent Resource Guide, and will produce a brochure about visitation (in partnership / consultation with the Parent Resource Group and the Visitation Oversight Group).

### **Legal Representation Reform**

The Children's Commission created a 30-member multidisciplinary LRS Workgroup in 2011 to implement the study's recommendations. The LRS Workgroup met several times during FY2012, and was on hiatus during FY2013 due to the legislative session. Legislation passed in response to the work of the LRS included amendments to Texas Family Code Chapters 107, 262 and 263. Judges were provided a legislative update in May 2013 at the Child Welfare Judges Conference. The Legal Representation Reform workgroup will meet on February 28, 2014 in Austin to examine whether voluntary standards of representation should be drafted; to continue support of State Bar Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect efforts to establish a Child Welfare and Protection specialization through the Texas Board of Legal Specialization; to develop

a written guide and online resource center for parents trying to navigate the CPS system; and to discuss attorney compensation, training, and relationships with commissioners' courts. The Children's Commission will continue to staff and support the LRS Workgroup by hosting and facilitating meetings, reimbursing travel expenses for workgroup members, develop agendas and meeting materials, and collecting federal match information.

**Update:** The LRS met on February 28, 2014 for the first time in about two years. The group discussed legislative changes from the 83<sup>rd</sup> Session, but also discussed where the project would go in 2014 and 2015. Issues on the 2014-2015 agenda include: Voluntary Standards of Representation; Legal Specialization through the Texas Board of Legal Specialization; Written and Online Guidance / Assistance for Parents; Training Needs and Methods; Compensation and Commissioners' Courts and County Relationships.

### **Hearing Observation Project**

**Update:** Judge Robin Sage and Tara Garlinghouse recently completed a court observation project aimed at collecting data regarding court and judicial processes and handling of CPS cases, legal representation for parents, and parent satisfaction with legal representation. The primary purpose of the project was to establish a baseline about the quality of court hearings occurring in child welfare cases in Texas, including factors such as timeliness and length, depth of issues discussed, party and judicial compliance with the Texas Family Code, parental due process, party engagement, children's appearance in court, attorney preparedness, and attorney and parent satisfaction with legal representation. The courts observed were in urban and rural areas, district courts, county courts at law, and Child Protection Courts, presided over by district judges, associate judges, and Child Protection Court associate judges.

The court observations involved the use of an observation tool designed to capture whether relevant issues were addressed at hearings by using a set of "quality and well-being indicators" to track those issues discussed in the hearing or case file. The observation tool also captured data on the type of hearing, hearing length, which parties were present, including the parties' level of engagement, and how the lawyers in the case advocated on behalf of their clients. Case file reviews were also conducted for each of the cases observed in court to gather background information on the history of the case. There were 36 quality indicators affecting procedural fairness and child well-being as well as federally mandated findings related to reasonable efforts and the Indian Child Welfare Act. The tool also measured steps taken to inform parties of the case status, set hearings, and next steps. Although not all indicators were relevant or applicable in each hearing due to the unique characteristics of each case and the nature of the type of hearing observed, making note of those addressed and

not addressed highlighted areas needing further training and/or statutory or policy changes.

The study highlights several important issues: (1) courts should schedule a maximum of 15 hearings per half day; (2) hearings must last at least ten minutes to allow sufficient time to address the relevant and pertinent issues and thus result in an effective and meaningful hearing; (3) courts and the child welfare agency must engage more actively, and deeply, in a discussion regarding reasonable efforts, which is required by state and federal law; and (4) Texas must continue efforts at training legal stakeholders about the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

The final report can be viewed on the Children's Commission website.

### **Judicial Disproportionality Workgroup**

**Update:** The JDW met by conference call in March and began planning an educational session at the annual Child Welfare Judges Conference regarding implicit bias. The JDW will also meet in person on the second day of the Child Welfare Judges Conference in June.

The Center for the Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities has named Sheila Craig as its new Director. Sheila has been serving as the Interim Director and has been working with her team to pilot their newly-developed curriculum. The CEDD also just hosted a delegation from the African Canadian Legal Clinic. The specific program focus for this meeting was the Youth Justice Education Program. A team from Toronto traveled to Austin on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> to learn more about CEDD, the Texas Model: A Framework for Equity, the CEDD curriculum, and to hear from community partners and systems leaders about the work in Texas on addressing disproportionality and disparities.

### **Tribal/State Collaboration**

Newly appointed Commissioner Jo Ann Battise has begun a monthly call with a small workgroup focusing on tribal and state collaboration. The group is currently made up of Commissioner Battise, Collaborative Council member Larry Williams, Tribal Law expert Judge Cheryl Fairbanks, DFPS Disproportionality Manager Tanya Rollins and Disproportionality Specialist Michael Martinez. The Children's Commission will be co-hosting a half day judicial round table discussion about the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in the wake of the Baby Veronica case and best practices in state and tribal collaboration. The Round Table will be April 23<sup>rd</sup> in Livingston, Texas, the home of the Alabama-Coushatta, and will coincide with the Annual Tribal/State Symposium on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Peacemaker Battise would like to make a video highlighting the practices of the Peacemaking Court that could be used in judicial and attorney education.

**Update:** Preliminary results from the above-referenced Court Observation Project revealed that less than 15% of the child protection hearings in the study included ICWA inquiries at the hearing or in court file. The Children's Commission is committed to

developing Training that provides judges with the foundational knowledge they need to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the ICWA. The upcoming Alabama-Coushatta Annual Symposium is an excellent resource for judges to develop a solid working knowledge of the requirements of ICWA, an understanding of why the law is necessary, and how they can be leaders, to improve outcomes for Indian children and their families.

The speaker line-up for the April 24th boasts nationally-recognized leaders in tribal/state collaboration, including Tricia Tingle of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Chrissi Nimmo, who represented the Cherokee Nation in the Baby Veronica case. Kicking off the Alabama-Coushatta symposium will be the half-day judicial round table on April 23<sup>rd</sup> where many state and tribal judges and leaders in child welfare will collaborate on how courts can use the ICWA to meet the needs of children and tribes.

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has released “Improving Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: A Guide for Juvenile and Family Courts.” This guide includes practice recommendations and tools to improve compliance with ICWA and will be used as a discussion guide at the half-day round table.

### **Psychoactive Medications / HB915 Implementation Workgroup**

In 2011 a Children’s Commission Workgroup came together to create a dialogue and understanding between the judiciary, DFPS, and the medical providers regarding psychotropic medication use among children in foster care. The Workgroup resolved many issues surrounding the Psychotropic Medication Utilization Parameters (Parameters). The Parameters have been considered successful, leading to a significant reduction in the overall use of psychotropic medications and decrease in the use of multiple medications for the same purpose, to which this Workgroup sought to promote more widespread use of the Parameters. In July 2012, the Commission hosted a Round Table discussion later issuing a Report on Psychotropic Medication and Foster Care. The Round Table Report led to the work of many stakeholders during the 83<sup>rd</sup> legislative session and ultimately resulted in House Bill 915 which addressed consent for psychotropic medication, allows children the right to provide an opinion on their medical care; allows foster youth 16 and older to act as their own medical consentor; requires attorneys and guardians to evaluate medical care; elicit their client’s view on medical care being provided, and mandates that the youth transition plan provided to each child 16 and older include provisions and instructions regarding medical care and psychotropic medications.

Following the close of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Session, the Children’s Commission facilitated the HB915 Implementation Workgroup, which was charged with soliciting input and collaboration from approximately 60 stakeholders. The group was charged with identifying practices and policies in place to support HB915, making recommendations regarding new policies required to support the implementation and ongoing execution

of DFPS's duties under the new bill, identifying training needs required to support new practices, expanded collaboration and communication to support the objectives and mandates of HB915, and with meeting regularly to ensure stakeholder involvement and communication on implementation progress. The HB915 Implementation Workgroup met three times over the summer; workbook items can be found here: [June 11, 2013](#), [July 23, 2013](#), and [August 27, 2013](#).

On September 9, 2013, the Commission hosted a session to enable stakeholders to evaluate and comment on DFPS's updated medical consenters and psychotropic medication training. The training lasted over 7 hours with meticulous review by several stakeholders. The new training is now available at: [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Medical\\_Consent/documents/Medical\\_Consent\\_Training\\_Caregiver.pptx](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Training/Medical_Consent/documents/Medical_Consent_Training_Caregiver.pptx)

**Update:** On March 7th the HB915 Implementation Workgroup convened for its final meeting to review the progress of the many stakeholders and DFPS with implementation of the new law and to identify next steps. DFPS presented to the group on the new trainings required for medical consenters, including a newly developed training specifically on psychotropic medications. The trainings were highly very well-done and DFPS received positive feedback for this work. Other examples of implementation projects included new policies regarding youth training requirements, transition plans, review of dually-managed children and children in Texas under the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, parental notifications, and enhanced court reports. The workgroup heard from Catherine Guess from Harris County DFPS on how the Human Service Technician program has improved practices relating to psychotropic medications by allowing the caseworkers to attend the appointments of the kids in their caseload.

#### **Texas Blueprint: Implementation Task Force, formerly Education Committee**

The Texas Blueprint Implementation Task Force and its three workgroups continued to meet during the last quarter of 2013 and work on steps identified in their action plans. The Task Force and workgroups will meet until the end of 2014, at which time the Task Force will provide recommendations and a final report to the Children's Commission, outlining next steps in the initiative to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care.

Some things of note which have occurred since the last commission meeting:

- DFPS and Commission staff participated in a one-day training for approximately 100 school district foster care liaisons in the Dallas area in October 2013;

- The Task Force Chair sent an update to the Blueprint Implementation Advisory Council in December 2013 highlighting some of the progress our state has seen since the release of the Texas Blueprint;
- Texas was invited to send a team to a Casey Family Programs Shared Learning Collaborative on data exchange between child welfare and education that was held in Austin in December 2013. The Texas team was among one of 5 states that attended and included representatives of the Children’s Commission, DFPS, and TEA;
- A Texas team also was accepted into and participated in the Georgetown University Information Sharing Certificate Program in December 2013. As part of the program, the Texas team, which includes DFPS, TEA, and the CC, will embark on a capstone project in 2014 to look at methods to capture school mobility of foster students;
- Since the Education and Foster Care Summit was held in February 2013 and passage of SB 832 in June 2013, the number of school district foster care liaisons identified by TEA has jumped from less than 200 to roughly 750;
- The Task Force has provided feedback in the implementation of recently passed legislation regarding education of foster students;
- The School Stability Workgroup has looked closely at placement practices and how they impact school mobility as well as school enrollment issues;
- TASB, TEA, DFPS and the Children’s Commission hosted a focus group of school administrators to discuss enrollment and information-sharing related to foster students at the Mid-Winter Conference of the Texas Association of School Administrators in January 2014;
- The Data Workgroup is supporting work within TEA and DFPS to establish a common understanding of the data elements exchanged and how to more effectively analyze the data exchanged, which may lead to the two agencies issuing a joint report regarding the data exchanged;
- The Training Workgroup is looking at how key stakeholders are trained on foster care and education issues and whether existing resources may be used to further train these individuals; and
- Collaborative work between the courts, education and child welfare continues to expand on the state and local levels.

Between now and the next commission meeting, commission staff will continue to support the task force and its workgroups as well as work on some of the benchmark items, including developing resources regarding education of foster students for multiple stakeholders and collaborating with Texas CASA in the creation of an education toolkit for local CASA programs and develop resources regarding education of foster students.

## **Training Grant Committee**

The Training Committee met by conference call on March 19, 2014. Meeting minutes are pending.

At the March committee meeting, FY2014 funding was approved by the Training Committee for the following projects:

### **1. Amended award statement to TCJ for the following:**

**Costs associated with the Child Welfare Judicial Conference** – This year’s Child Welfare Judges Conference will be held June 9-11 in Bastrop. This will be the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Texas Child Welfare Judges Conference held. CC staff began engaging in weekly planning meetings with TCJ after the beginning of the year and organized a group of judges in January to identify topics for this year’s agenda. The Child Protection Court judges will hold their annual meeting in conjunction with the conference.

**Judicial Scholarships to Attend the NCJFCJ National Conference in July 2014** –TCJ will award approximately 20 scholarships to this years NCJFCJ conference, which will be held July 13-16 in Chicago. A number of the scholarships will be offered to judges who serve on one of the commission’s committees or workgroups and the remainder will be offered to qualifying judges. The scholarship criteria includes: 1) attendance at the June Child Welfare Judges Conference; 2) handling CPS cases; and 3) NCJFCJ membership.

**2. Additional Trial Skills Training in 2014** – The committee approved up to \$25,000 for an additional Trial Skills Training to be held in October 2014.

**3. Grant Application of State Bar of Texas Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Committee** – The committee approved setting aside \$10,000 as requested by the CAN committee to utilize for support of its Child Welfare Law Conference, to be held in June 2014 in Houston.

### **Other Training Projects:**

**Attorney Practitioner Manual:** CC is developing a plan to update the Attorney Practitioner Manual, which needs substantive and legislative updates. This project was also discussed on 2/28/14 at the Legal Representation Workgroup meeting hosted by Judge Rucker. The group discussed the possibility of the manual being converted to a wiki-type tool that would allow attorneys and others to add and modify content, such as checklists and practice tips. This is a new idea that requires some research and no decision has been made regarding its feasibility. No research into or decision yet on whether this is feasible. There is still a possibility that the Children’s Commission may recruit volunteers to revise the current manual.

### **Attorney Ad Litem Appointment Eligibility Online Training**

The State Bar offers online courses to court-appointed attorneys and state and DFPS attorneys at no charge on the following topics:

- Advocating for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care
- Resources and Processes for Representing Crossover Youth with Disabilities
- Special Education Advocacy for Kids in the Foster Care System
- Representing Teen Parents in CPS Cases
- Practice Tips on Representing Children
- Representing Parents in CPS Cases
- Preserving Error and Appeals Issues in CPS cases
- Representing Children in CPS Cases, Updated June 2013
- Trial Skills in the CPS Case

The Children's Commission recently met with the State Bar of Texas to determine the most efficient way to register and verify attorneys seeking to complete the CLE at no-charge because they currently accept appointments or represent DFPS in CPS cases.

### **Attorney Scholarships**

The Training Committee sponsored attorney scholarships for last summer's American Bar Association, National Association of Counsel for Children, and the 1-Day State Bar of Texas Child Abuse and Neglect conferences. Scholarship recipients who were surveyed on their CLE experience providing the following findings:

- Half of the scholarship recipients would not have attended without receipt of a commission scholarship.
- Nearly half reported the need for more ICWA training. Commission staff is following up to promote additional training on ICWA.
- Legislative and case law updates were among the most valuable CLEs to those surveyed.
- Scholarship attendees found the collaboration and shared information across different types of attorneys on the CPS docket and different approaches across various states as useful and providing a fresh perspective.

Attorneys were able to write in suggestions in their survey responses. The significant requests for future trainings are as follows:

- More ICWA training is needed.
- Immigration/Special Immigrant Juvenile Status: Attorneys want to know what is the law, department policy and practice.

- Both judges and attorneys want more information about resources available to clients in poor and rural communities.
- Domestic violence in CPS cases.
- Well-being: Continued education outcomes, medication and psychotropic drugs. Attorneys want more information on the Department's new duties and what judges and attorneys can do to ensure implementation.

The next conferences to which scholarships will be awarded will be the 1-day Child Abuse & Neglect Workshop as part of the Advanced Family Law Conference in San Antonio on August 6, 2014 and the NACC Annual Conference, August 18-20, 2014 in Denver, CO.

### **Trial Skills Training**

The live webinar on "Trial Skills in the CPS Case" filmed at the State Bar was the kick-off to the two and a half day Trial Skills Training Pilot in Austin on October 23-25, 2013, presented by Commission staff and the volunteer faculty. The Trial Skills Training (TST) faculty prepared presentations and/or group exercises and demonstrations on all areas of trial preparation including: 1) Case Theory; 2) Voir Dire; 3) Opening Statement; 4) Direct Examination; 5) Cross Examination; 6) Foundations; 7) Objections; 8) Experts; 9) Impeachment; and 10) Closing Argument.

At the Pilot TST:

- There were 19 participants consisting of new or less experienced lawyers in CPS cases.
- The group featured an equal number of Department, state, parent, and child attorneys from 14 different counties.
- Trevor Woodruff of DFPS arranged for four caseworkers to participate in exercises, and Dr. Narang also arranged for three pediatric fellows, all of whom served as mock witnesses.
- Attorney colleagues of the Pilot participants and jurists from several jurisdictions who had attorneys trained at the Pilot have reported that the Pilot participants found it extremely useful and beneficial.

The Pilot received excellent reviews and constructive criticism by participants, faculty, and staff, all of which have been incorporated to improve the program going forward.

The next TST is scheduled for April 2-4, 2014. Based on the feedback received, the curriculum has been expanded to three days in order to appropriately cover all material. A new venue has been secured, with more room for a courtroom-like setting; this change was also made based on the feedback from the Pilot. Seventy-four applications were received for 21 training spots for less experienced attorneys from across the state. Twenty attorneys will participate. As in the Pilot, this group will have roughly equal numbers of state/Department attorneys, parent attorneys, and attorneys ad litem. We are grateful to have live witnesses again; three Caseworkers and three pediatric Fellows will join the Training for more realistic and robust practice sessions with the

participating attorneys. Three prospective new faculty will also attend the April Trial Skills Training in order to be ready to teach the Training in October.

### **NACC Fee Waivers for Child Welfare Specialist Exam**

The Training Committee approved funding to reimburse the exam fees for those Texas attorneys and judges who pass the Child Welfare Specialist Certification Exam offered by the NACC. Six of the test-takers who qualified for the most recent exam passed it successfully. NACC has just reopened 2014 testing, so additional applications from Texas are anticipated. Staff would like to offer scholarships to the annual NACC Conference to those Texas attorneys who are newly minted CWL Specialists.

### **Parent Attorney Leadership Initiatives**

During the Parent Attorney Conference held September 11-12, 2012 in Oklahoma City, the Texas team developed an action plan. One of the action items included identifying an organization that can develop and operate a parent-focused resource such as an Information Packet or Guide for Parents, including parent client's rights, attorney duties, remedies for ineffective assistance, and grievance process.

In the last quarter of 2013, CC staff organized a workgroup, which began meeting to discuss the guide and other resources that might be provided to parents. The UT School of Law is taking the lead on drafting the guide, with input from the workgroup. CC is also working with the Texas Legal Services Corporation to see whether it's feasible to launch an online resource center for parents.

**Update:** Renamed Parent Representation Initiatives. The Children's Commission established a workgroup in August, chaired by Judge Alyce Bondurant and Judge Cathy Morris, that includes parents' attorneys, parents, Texas CASA, and representatives of the Texas Legal Services Center and the University of Texas School of Law. The initial project involves producing an on-line and printed version of a guide and an online resource center similar to the Foster Youth Justice Hotline. UT is writing the resource guide. The online resource center project will be initiated once the written resource guide is finished. The goal of the guide is to help parents be educated about process and their role and responsibilities – and those responsibilities and duties owed to them by others. It will be designed to orient parents to the gravity of their situation, validate emotions they may be feeling, and provide tools that may be helpful in organizing and keep track of progress. The workgroup may discuss making a video later. The guide does not provide legal advice or explain legal rights, but will attempt to explain in non-legal and simple terms:

The definition of abuse or neglect; How reporting and investigations work; What is mandatory reporting and who is a mandatory reporter; What are voluntary placements; What documents they may be asked to sign; Why it is important to note the

caseworkers name, number, and caseworker supervisor; Who does what job at CPS and what kinds of decisions they can make; The dangers of social media, what is confidential and private; What records CPS can access; Possible case outcomes; What to expect in court; How long the case can last; The different types of hearings and whether to bring children; What is mediation and what is trial; What is the difference between termination and relinquishment; Their right to a lawyer, how to get one, and how to replace; What to do if you're denied an attorney; What the attorney should be doing generally; Rights to visitation and access to the child(ren); What is the service plan and the visitation plan; Their right to visit their children, how to plan for it, what to do if they can't attend; How to obtain information on housing and transportation; Special populations: fathers, teen parents, incarcerated, domestic violence, former foster youth; and Acronyms.

The workgroup anticipates completing the guide by the end of the calendar year.

### **Technology Committee Report**

**Children's Commission staff met with OCA Data / Tech staff on Tuesday, January 7, 2014 from 10:30 – 11:00 am. The meeting was attended by Casey Kennedy (OCA), Tim Kennedy (OCA), Darrell Childers (OCA), and Tina Amberboy (Children's Commission).The following was sent to Data/Tech Committee members on Thursday, January 16, 2014 for review and comment. No comments were received.**

#### **Notice & Engagement Web Application**

The project involves using non-confidential case data to build a system whereby notice of statutory hearings and other court-related events requiring notice to parties and interested persons can be distributed via email. OCA has finished building the search screens and notification emails that will be provided to users who sign up for the service. Users will navigate to <https://cpshearings.txcourts.gov> and create an id requiring minimal information. Users can then search for case information by mother's last name, and at least one name of one child (first and last) involved in the case, and the county where the suit is filed. The system will return a list of potential cases and the user will confirm their interest in subscribing to receive notices of hearings for that particular case. The user will have the option to receive notices 1, 3, 7, 14, and / or 30 days in advance of the hearing.

The project will be piloted in DFPS Region 8 and the Children's Commission will work with Judge Cathy Morris, Child Placing Agency representatives and RTCs in Region 8 to recruit users. Children's Commission will at some point develop a survey tool to assess the usefulness, effectiveness and accuracy of the system. OCA will work with the Children's Commission on tracking or logging the number of users and notices provided.

## Video Conferencing

The video conferencing project enables children involved in child abuse and neglect cases to participate in permanency and placement review hearings without them being physically present in the courtroom. OCA hosts and supports the hardware and software required to facilitate video conferencing between courts and residential placements. OCA has drafted a “how to” for use by Courts and other stakeholders who wish to use video conferencing for a particular hearing. OCA also maintains a list of Residential Treatment Centers with video conferencing capability as well as a list of courts.

For FY2014, OCA will maintain a log of all hearings conducted, including the date, time, participating court, type of hearing, participating placement, length of hearing, any problems with the transmission quality or technical difficulties.

OCA and Children’s Commission will issue a Jurist In Residence Letter to judges regarding video conferencing availability, how to use it, and who to contact as soon as the “how to” document is complete.

OCA will work with DFPS and the Children’s Commission on expanding capability and feasibility for use beyond court hearings later in FY2014.

**Update:** Tina Amberboy and Tim Kennedy held a conference call with Robert Hartman in February to review and discuss plans to expand the number of courts participating in the collaborative video conferencing project. As the prime contractor to DFPS for the foster care redesign project, Mr. Hartman advised us there are 6 primary counties within regions 2 & 9 that have 70% of the RTC placements being tracked by Providence Service Corp.

Region 9 - Ector County – Odessa, TX – Child Protection Court of West Texas – Judge Tracey Scown.

Region 9 - Howard County – Big Spring, TX – Child Protection Court of the Permian Basin – Judge Sylvia Chavez.

Region 9 - Midland County – Midland, TX – Child Protection Court of the Permian Basin – Judge Sylvia Chavez.

Region 2 - Taylor County – Abilene, TX – 326th District Court – Judge Aleta Hacker.

Region 9 - Tom Green County – San Angelo, TX – 340th District Court – Judge Jay Weatherby.

Region 2 - Wichita County – Wichita Falls, TX – North Texas Child Protection Court – Judge Alyce Bondurant.

OCA is in the process of setting up each willing court with video conferencing capability; focusing on the child protection courts first and then working on the district courts with regions 2 & 9.

#### **Child Protection Case Management System (CPCMS)**

CPCMS is a case management system that is unique to Child Protection Courts. It has been in use since 2009. OCA provides project management, programming and testing services for CPCMS. OCA staffs a CPCMS Advisory Council of CPC judges, OCA staff and Children's Commission staff to evaluate bug fixes or enhancements. The CPCMS Advisory Group has been meeting monthly since the summer of 2013 and will meet in person this June at the Child Welfare Judicial Conference at Lost Pines.

#### **Children's Commission Website Support and Maintenance**

Children's Commission maintains two websites for the Commission and for Education. The websites inform and apprise stakeholders about the Commission and the offerings and services available from the Children's Commission and Texas Court Improvement Program. CC staff updates the Children's Commission website to ensure necessary reports, information, and links to other relevant resources.