

Executive Summary

The Travis County Commissioners Court, through the Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service Department (TCHHS/VS), annually invests over \$9.8 million in community-based social service programs. These Department investments align with and supplement our direct services and also promote the Department's mission to optimize self-sufficiency for families and individuals in safe and healthy communities.

The annual Community Impact Report provides an overview of TCHHS/VS investments in health and human services. The *2011 Community Impact Report Part I: Community Condition Highlights* provides a general overview of current community conditions and is available here: http://www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/research_planning/publications/cir/cir_2011/2011_cir_part_1.pdf. This overview is intended to offer highlights of the community conditions most pertinent to the services purchased within a given issue area in 2011. The *2011 Community Impact Report Part II: Performance Highlights* details investment, programmatic, and performance information on the Department's social service contracts.^a

Most data included in this report cover calendar year 2011^b and are drawn from contracts and reports provided by contracted service providers.^c Each contract is classified into the issue area most closely aligned to its central goals and objectives.

- a Please see Appendix B for a list of social service contracts not included in the *2011 Community Impact Report*.
- b The report covers calendar year 2011 because the majority of the social service contracts included in the report follow a calendar year schedule.
- c Please note that clients participating in more than one program are counted multiple times in the summary of contracted service providers' data. Reports also include a percentage of unknown client data, and compiled client demographic and residence data may not be representative of those clients with unknown data.

Client Demographics

Service providers collected client demographic data, when possible.^d Overall, demographic data were provided for 56%-80% of clients, depending on the demographic category. Of clients with known demographics, 55% were female and 44% were male. In terms of race, 60% of these clients were White, 25% were Black or African American, and the remainder were of another race. In terms of ethnicity,^e 39% of clients were Hispanic or Latino. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of clients were ages 25 to 39, and another 23% were between 40 and 59 years of age. Children and youth ages 17 and younger accounted for 29% of clients. Close to half (44%) of clients had incomes below 50% of the Federal Poverty Income Guideline (FPIG) level and 24% had incomes between 50% and 100% of FPIG. (See Appendix C for specific guideline income levels.)

Client Location by Zip Code

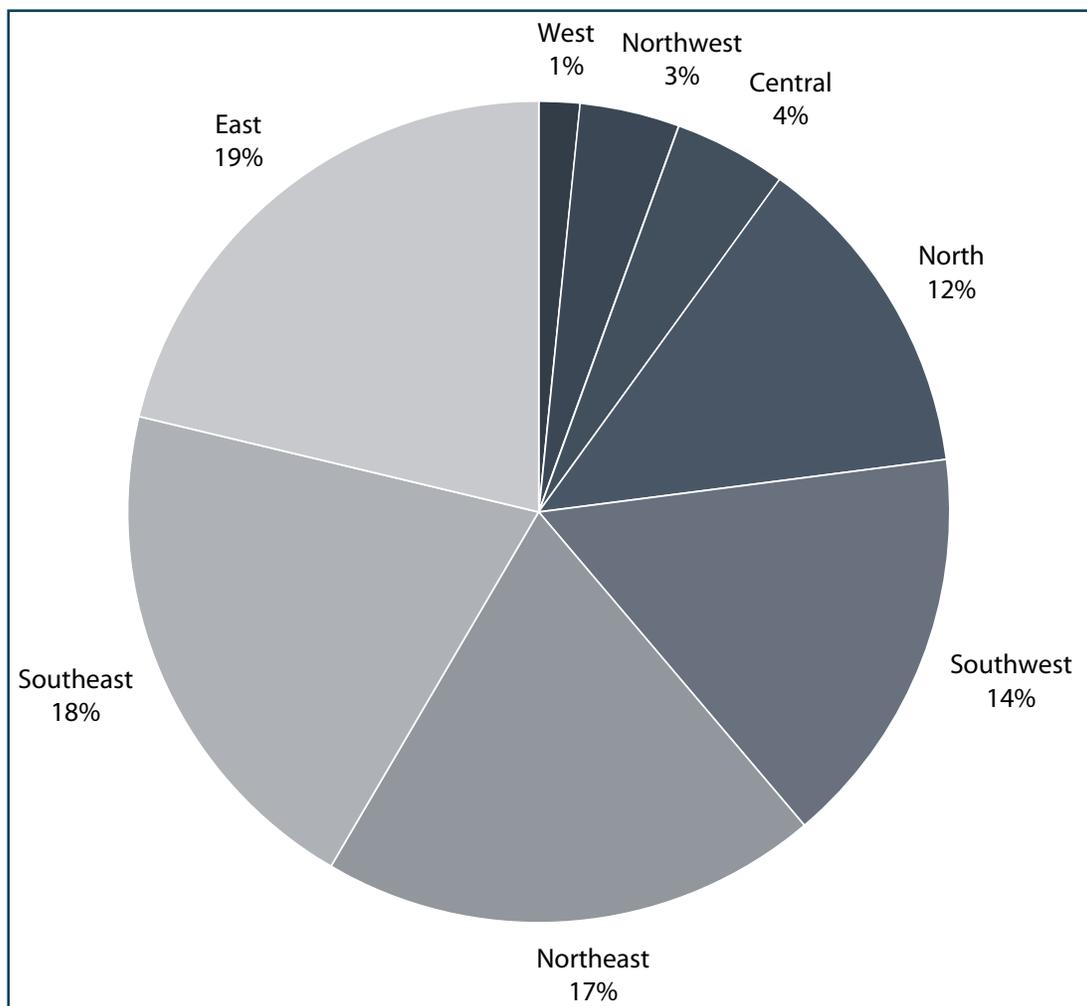
When possible, the contracted service providers also documented the zip code where clients resided when they entered the program.^f Service providers collected residential information for 75% of all clients, including clients with zip codes

- d Client demographic data may be unreported for reasons such as: protection of client privacy and difficulty obtaining data (e.g., due to services delivered via outreach or at large-scale events). Further, one contracted service provider used different age and income categories that did not allow for aggregation with the larger set of demographic data. Clients enrolled in programs that do not collect income information were classified as "unknown" in the income level category.
- e The U.S. Census Bureau considers race and Hispanic origin to be two separate and distinct concepts. Hispanics and Latinos may be of any race. Therefore, clients reporting their race, such as White or Black or African American, may also be Hispanic or Latino.
- f Client zip code data may be unreported for reasons such as: protection of client privacy and difficulty obtaining data (e.g., due to services delivered via outreach or at large-scale events).

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within Travis County (66%), clients with zip codes outside of Travis County (2%), and clients who were homeless at entry into the program (6%); the remainder (25%) represent clients with unknown zip codes. Of clients with known zip codes within Travis County, 19% of clients resided in the East area and 18% were located in the Southeast area. The Northeast (17%) and Southwest (14%) areas also had sizeable shares of clients in residence. (See Appendix E for zip code classification map.)

Areas of Client Residence, 2011



Investment by Issue Area

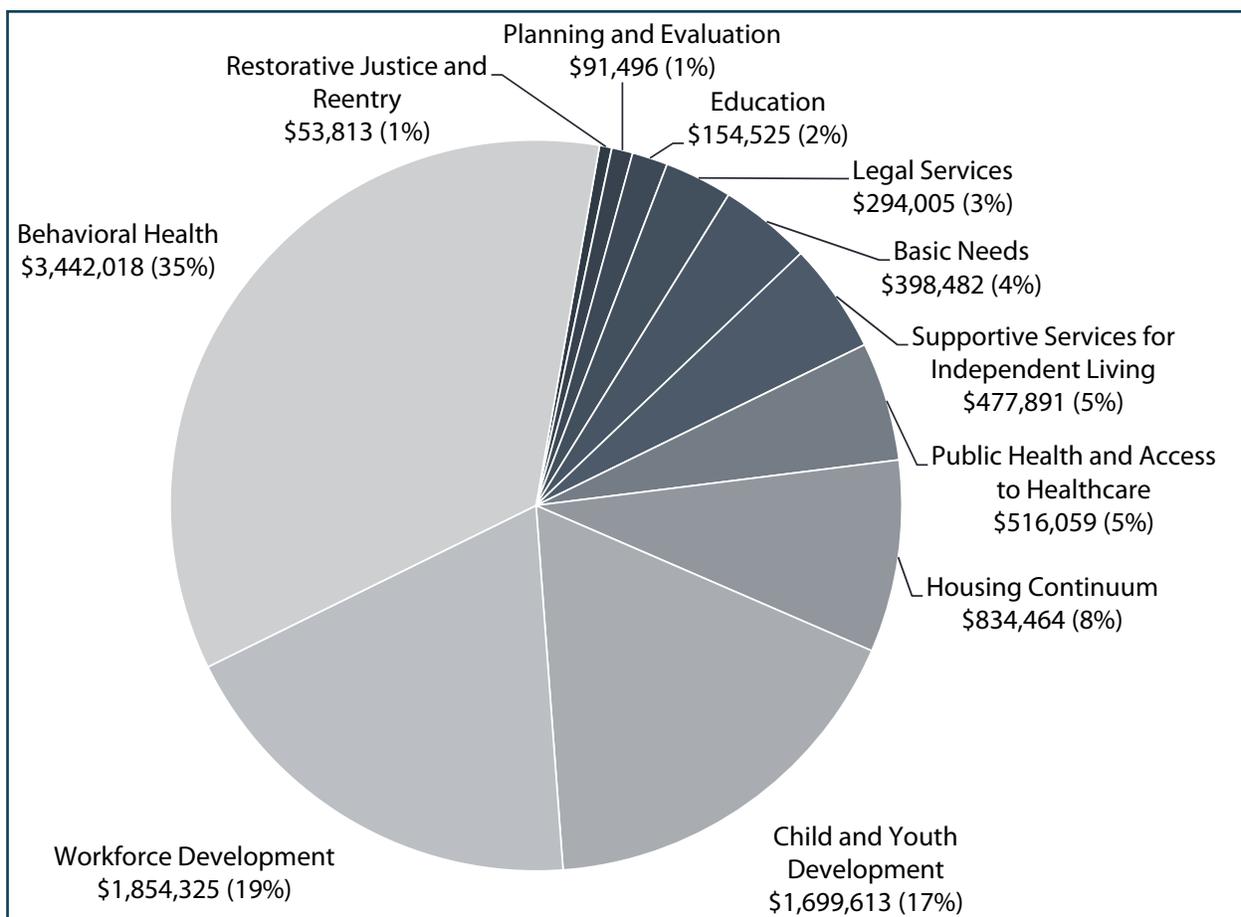
The following chart does not represent total TCHHS/VS investments and services. It only shows the percent of funding devoted to each issue area for the social service contracts included in this report. These contracts are a subset of the Department's broader investments of general funds in both purchased and direct services. The Department also makes grant-funded program investments.

Behavioral Health contracts accounted for the greatest share (over one-third) of the TCHHS/VS investment reflected in this report, followed by Workforce Development contracts. The Department's investments

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represented varying percentages of each contracted program's total budget. Investment percentages ranged from 0.6% to 100%, constituting an average percentage of roughly 19% of a program's total budget. Actual investment percentages for each social service contract are provided on each program's page.

Investment in Issue Areas for Social Service Contracts, 2011



Performance

The social service contracts included in this report have a wide range of goals, objectives, services, and performance measures. In 2011, most programs met the targeted range of performance across both output and outcome measures. Meeting the targeted range of performance means that the performance measure meets or exceeds at least 90% of the contractual performance goal.

Programs falling short of output goals were often the result of basic operational issues, such as staffing turnover and funding cuts. Changes in client populations also impacted output performance, including clients requiring additional time in a program, thus reducing new client enrollments. Also, for programs serving smaller numbers of clients, even minor changes can lead to highly volatile performance results. Programs falling short of outcome goals were primarily due to economic conditions, and in particular, the

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difficulties in securing and retaining employment. Please note that performance measures reflect the entire program's performance, and not the share of the program funded by TCHHS/VS.

Considerations When Reading This Report

Performance results provide only a starting point for understanding the impact of these programs. These summary statistics are not necessarily an indication of the programs' overall performance, but rather a snapshot and general gauge of their performance over a one-year period. Readers are encouraged to locate the particular programs of interest in subsequent sections within this report and review the detailed programmatic and performance information. Within these sections, service providers offer explanations for variance in performance. This information, in particular, is critical to providing context and meaning to these summary results.

These performance results do not reflect the programs' full value to and impact on the community, which would require formal program evaluations, qualitative studies, and a review of other research. Therefore, it is also important to keep the following considerations in mind when reviewing program performance.

Participant characteristics can significantly influence a program's performance results. For example, performance results may be lower for programs with clients who face considerable challenges (e.g., serious mental illness or addiction issues) and have little social support. Readers should therefore use caution when comparing

output and outcome results across programs.

Many additional factors beyond the program's control may also impact the program's performance. For example, if jobs become scarce, an effective workforce development program may experience lower client employment rates, regardless of the quality of training and support provided to their clients. Similarly, if jobs become abundant, a workforce development program may experience higher client employment rates, even if the program provided training that was not marketable. Without controlling for these factors, the true impact or efficacy of the program on outcomes cannot be discerned.

Readers should also use caution when examining outcome results for programs with less than 30 clients. For such small programs, the outcome of just a few clients can greatly affect the program's total outcome result. In these instances, examining percentages may be less helpful than examining raw numbers.

Finally, this report captures a narrow set of performance measures, which may not reflect the program's full impact on participants and their families, peers, and neighborhood. For example, though an individual was unable to obtain employment within the time period analyzed, a program may have increased the readiness and capacity of the individual to succeed on the job once eventually employed. Additionally, performance measures may not all be equal in importance or value to the community. Also, some agencies may have negotiated performance measures that were more difficult to achieve than others.

Introduction

For more than sixteen years, the Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service (TCHHS/VS) Department has contracted with community-based organizations to meet the critical needs of local residents. Community-based organizations are frequently geographically and culturally embedded in the communities they serve and are often best positioned to provide needed services.

This report examines over \$9.8 million of the Department's purchased social service investments, and covers the 2011 contractual period. These investments are a critical component of the Department's strategy to optimize self-sufficiency for families and individuals in safe and healthy communities.

Purpose of Report

The *Community Impact Report Part II: Performance Highlights* is intended to contribute to local knowledge about some of the Department's contracted community-based programs. Toward this end, the report addresses the following questions:

- What issue areas do the programs support?
- What is the Department's investment in the programs?
- What do the programs strive to achieve and what services do they provide?
- Who are the programs intended to serve and who do they serve?
- Where do clients reside?
- How have the programs performed?

This information will provide a foundation for policy makers, program managers, and others to better understand these investments, recognize and celebrate accomplishments, identify areas for

improvement, disseminate lessons learned, and highlight areas warranting further research.

When reviewing the information presented in this report, it is important to keep in mind the considerations cited at the Executive Summary's conclusion. Please also refer to Appendix A for further description of the report's data sources.

Readers should also consider this report in conjunction with other local analyses and reports in order to obtain a more complete picture of the community. The *Travis County Snapshot from the American Community Survey 2010*,⁹ in particular, provides complementary contextual information around current demographics and local conditions.

Community Conditions: Overarching Information

Community conditions impact social service providers and the individuals they serve. Economics, demographics, as well as social structures and systems, all influence the level of need within a community and the resources available to successfully address community needs. Community conditions help determine service delivery approaches most effective in addressing community needs and issues. These conditions also inform public stakeholders of progress toward community goals and can help correlate particular program contributions and value in advancing those goals.

Most social service programs described in this report serve Travis County residents who are in or near poverty. Some programs assist vulnerable populations, such as those experiencing abuse and neglect, irrespective of their income. The

⁹ The *Travis County Snapshot from the American Community Survey 2010* is available at: http://www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/research_planning/publications/acs/ACS_2010.pdf.

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current economic climate elevates the need for social services for Travis County residents. For further information on current community conditions, please see the *2011 Community Impact Report Part I: Community Condition Highlights*.^h

Organization of Report

This report addresses ten issue areas. Each section begins with summary information about the issue area and programs covered within that issue area.

An issue area encompasses those programs with goals most aligned with the goals of that issue area. While each program is included in only one issue area, a program may promote the goals of several issue areas. For example, a workforce

development program may primarily include work readiness services but also include a small educational program. The principal goals of the program promote the workforce development issue area goals, so the program is categorized in the workforce development issue area rather than the education issue area.

This report provides detailed information about each program covered by an issue area, including an overview of program goals, principal services provided, program eligibility criteria, and funding. This report also captures each program's performance results compared to its contractual performance goals and explanations of notable variance (+/- 10%) between the performance results and goals.

^h The *2011 Community Impact Report Part I: Community Condition Highlights* is available at: http://www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/research_planning/publications/cir/cir_2011/2011_cir_part_1.pdf.