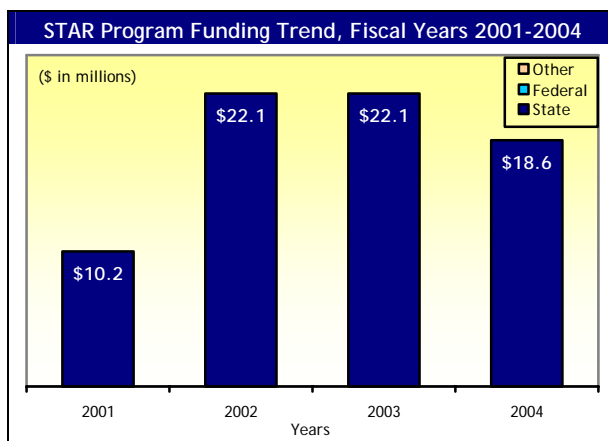


Summary by the Texas State Auditor's Office on:

# Services To At-risk Youth Program (STAR)

GAA Page II-109, Rider 13 (78<sup>th</sup> Legislature)

| Funding Sources, Fiscal Year 2004 |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Federal                           | State Appropriations  |
| \$ 0                              | \$18,581,994  |
| Other                             | \$ 0  |
| Funding Method                    | RFP-based contract awards   |
| No. of Contracts                  | 43  |
| Range                             | \$90,410 - \$1,236,714  |
| Eligible Entities                 | Private nonprofit or for-profit entities, public agencies, government entities, school districts, individuals |



| Flow of STAR Program Funds, Fiscal Years 2001-2004 |                      |                      |                      |                      |                     |              | LEAs, Other Entities, Students, and Parents Served |            |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--|------------|
| Year   | Appropriated         | Budgeted             | Awarded              | Expended             | Deobligated         | Lapsed       | Districts <sup>a</sup>                             | Students   |
| 2001   | ≥ \$10,182,071       | \$ 20,767,933        | \$ 20,767,933        | \$ 19,707,824        | \$ 1,060,109        | \$ 1,060,109 | 1,220  | 32,543     |
| 2002   | ≥ \$22,121,422       | \$ 20,796,315        | \$ 20,796,315        | \$ 19,862,500        | \$ 933,815          | NA           | 1,220  | 33,520     |
| 2003   | ≥ \$22,121,422       | \$ 20,802,947        | \$ 20,802,947        | \$ 19,667,054        | \$ 1,135,893        | \$ 934,894   | 1,220  | 32,414     |
| 2004   | ≤ \$18,581,994       | \$ 17,760,556        | \$ 17,760,556        | \$ 17,360,556        | \$ 400,000          | NYA          | 1,220  | NYA        |
| <b>Totals</b>                                      | <b>\$ 73,006,909</b> | <b>\$ 80,127,751</b> | <b>\$ 80,127,751</b> | <b>\$ 76,597,934</b> | <b>\$ 3,529,817</b> | <b>NYA</b>   | <b>4,880</b>                                       | <b>NYA</b> |

UA - Unavailable NA - Category does not apply NYA - Not yet available (as of report date)

<sup>a</sup> Contractors provide services to children and youth of school age and their families in all 254 Texas counties. Consequently, STAR services potentially support at-risk students or students who have dropped out in all LEAs in ways that would contribute to a greater likelihood of the students' school success.

## Targeted Students and Grade Levels

Children and youth under 18 and families who are dealing with family conflict, delinquent behavior and juvenile offenses, poor school attendance and truancy, and running away and who do not meet the criteria for child protective services or juvenile probation programs may participate in STAR.

## Program Components

| Program Component                              | Required/Recommended/Allowed |
|--|------------------------------|
| Counseling/Case Management                     | ✓                            |
| Diagnostics-Based Intervention                 |                              |
| Academic Intervention                          |                              |
| Small Group Instruction/<br>Limited Class Size |                              |
| School-Day or Out-of-School Activity           | School Day and Out-of-School |
| Computer Assisted Instruction                  |                              |
| Literacy/ESL/Bilingual Instruction             |                              |
| College Preparation                            |                              |

| Program Component                             | Required/Recommended/Allowed |
|---|------------------------------|
| Career Preparation                            | ✓                            |
| Mentoring                                     | ✓                            |
| Professional Development                      |                              |
| Parental Involvement/Education                | ✓                            |
| Community Involvement/Services/<br>Enrichment | ✓                            |
| Pregnancy and Parenting Services              |                              |
| Children's Day Care                           |                              |
| Safe Environment                              |                              |

The information in these program summaries has been compiled from multiple sources of varying reliability and is unaudited. Sources include the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Department of Education, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, universities, colleges, and other nonprofit organizations.

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## Comments

STAR contractors must provide an array of short-term services that will address the problems and issues for which clients have been referred. They may provide services to individual clients for up to 180 days, including no more than 60 days per year for respite care. Services include intake assessment, crisis intervention, family and individual counseling, skills-based training for parents and youth, emergency short-term respite services, universal child abuse and neglect prevention activities, and follow-up. High priority is placed on developing collaborative community efforts to provide these services.

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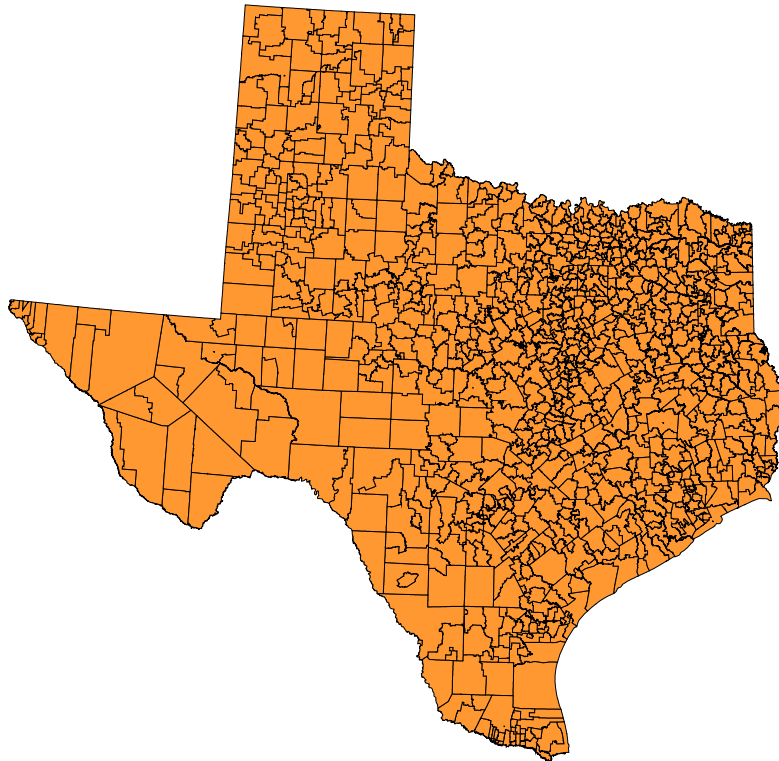
## Evaluation\*

A March 2003 report, *Services to At-risk Youth (STAR) Program Evaluation*, prepared by the Criminal Justice Policy Council (CJPC) reported the following about recipients of STAR services in fiscal year 2001:

1. STAR effectively supports youth remaining in their homes; 97 percent of the participants who entered the program while living at home exited the program living at home. Forty-six percent of those who entered while not living at home were back in their homes by the time they left the program.
2. STAR participants who enrolled in the program for extended periods of time, especially those referred for family conflict and truancy, had better outcomes.
3. Participants who received youth skills or family skills training were less likely to be referred to a juvenile probation department within a year of exit.
4. Eighty-three percent of STAR participants were not referred to juvenile probation departments in the year after they left the program. Of those who were referred, 72 percent had committed a misdemeanor or status offense.
5. The CJPC used participant data from the Prevention and Early Intervention Management System maintained by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). Outcomes are measured in terms of participants who were not delinquent or truant and who were not runaways during the year subsequent to receiving STAR services. For family conflict referrals, outcomes are measured by family reports regarding their situations following program participation. DFPS has no current plans for future program evaluations, but it is revising the STAR contract to better define expected performance-based outcomes.

\* In most cases it is not possible to isolate the effects of funding for a single program on students' performance because districts applying for state funding for at-risk students are required to combine local, state, and federal resources to maximize services to at-risk students. For the same reason, a single program's cost does not provide a meaningful basis for determining the cost per student of a desired or achieved outcome.

## Services To At-risk Youth (STAR) Program Statewide Distribution, School Years 2000-01 through 2003-04 (Divided by LEA jurisdictions)



The information in these program summaries has been compiled from multiple sources of varying reliability and is unaudited. Sources include the Texas Education Agency, the U.S. Department of Education, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, universities, colleges, and other nonprofit organizations.