



Services to At-Risk Youth (“STAR”)

STAR is housed within the PEI division at the Department of Family and Protective Services. The current funding level for STAR is \$21,000,862, found in line item C.1.1 in Article II of the state budget.

What is STAR?

STAR is a prevention and early intervention program designed to support young people and their families who are in crisis before situations escalate to the point that more expensive and intrusive services are needed. STAR services are available 24 hours a day in all 254 counties in Texas, to youth under the age of 18 and their families. Services include family conflict resolution, short-term counseling, parenting classes, and emergency shelter for youth who need respite care.

Why is STAR important?

STAR is a safety net that offers communities resources to come to the rescue when a parent is at the end of their rope, a young person is at risk for going down the wrong path, and a family is at its breaking point. In many communities, STAR is the only option for youth who have not been diagnosed with a severe mental illness to receive free counseling services. The program prevents youth and families from ending up in the costly foster care and juvenile justice systems. STAR served more than 23,000 Texas youth and their families last year.

How much is it to serve a youth and his or her family through STAR?

In FY2013, the average cost to serve one youth and family through STAR for one month was \$255.16. Clients typically receive services for 2 to 3 months, at a total average cost of roughly \$600.

Does the STAR program work?

Yes. Data show that the completion of STAR services results in improved situations for young people and their families.

In FY 2013:

- 99.7% of children who received STAR services remained safe.
- 93.6% of children who received STAR services were not referred to juvenile probation.
- 86.5% of youth who received STAR services has better outcomes 90 days after termination of services.