Kerr County

Criminal Justice

Community Plan

2013-2014



Fall, 2013

Kerr County Criminal Justice Community Plan

What Is a Community Plan?

This plan is formally known as the Kerr County Criminal Justice Community Plan, the purpose of which is to identify gaps in services regarding criminal justice issues. The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor’s Office (CJD) requires that Criminal Justice Community Plans be developed and maintained by counties and regions throughout Texas.

The document that is represented here reflects the efforts of many in Kerr County that are concerned with assuring that any gaps in services are closed, thus making our communities safer places in which to live and work. It is with grateful acknowledgement that the names of those involved in the process of developing this Plan are listed in the section entitled Community Planning Team.

Though the final draft of this Plan was completed in January 2014, this is a work in progress. When new criminal justice goals are identified, the Planning Group changes as a result of individual and agency circumstances, and requirements concerning the makeup of the Plan are subject to change from year to year. Thus, Kerr County is interested in keeping up with these changes, and including them in updates that will be posted from time to time.

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 can be addressed to either Rosa Lavender, Community Plan Coordinator for Kerr County, or to a Criminal Justice Program staff member of the Alamo Area Council of Governments. Contact information is provided at the end of this document.

The Kerr County Commissioners’ Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for development and implementation of the Kerr County Criminal Justice Community Plan. Additionally, the Commissioners’ Court supports grant applications from county departments as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in this Community Plan.

Areas Represented

Incorporated Communities:

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| Ingram  Kerrville |  |  |
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Unincorporated Communities:

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| Center Point  Hunt  Mountain Home |  |  |
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School Districts:

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| Center Point  Comfort (part in Kerr County and part in Kendall County)  Divide  Hunt  Ingram  Kerrville |  |
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**Brief description and history of Kerr County:**

Kerr County is located in the South Central region of Texas and includes the cities of Kerrville and Ingram and unincorporated areas of Center Point, Hunt and Mountain Home. The county’s geographic area measures 1,106 square miles and includes rich farmlands along creeks and the Guadalupe River in the eastern part of the county and more rugged ranchlands in the western part. The headwaters of the Guadalupe River spring from karst limestone formations in the western part of Kerr County.

Kerr County’s early history is tied to the discovery of the springs that create the headwaters of the Guadalupe River and its basin by Spanish explorers in the 1600s. Later Spanish military units traversed the area while defending San Antonio from Apache Indian attacks.

By the 1840’s interest in the making of cypress shingles led the first people into Kerr County in search of more timber. Cypress trees along the Guadalupe provided the much sought after source for the new industry. Joshua D. Brown and

several others founded the first permanent settlement in 1848 and named it Brownsboro. More settlers followed, establishing sawmills and farms along the river and various tributaries in the area.

The original settlement was later renamed Kerrsville at the request of Joshua Brown to honor his friend and fellow veteran of the Texas Revolution, James Kerr. The “s” was later dropped and the community of Kerrville became the county seat of the new Kerr County formed on January 26, 1856.

In 1887 the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway reached Kerrville and two years later the town was incorporated. Kerrville continued to develop as a regional transportation, banking and medical center for the western Hill Country and Edwards Plateau.

A complete description of Kerr County and its rich history can be found on the county’s official website. Go to [www.co.kerr.tx.us/historical](http://www.co.kerr.tx.us/historical)

Today the economic base has diversified and broadened through business, agriculture, light manufacturing, health care, transportation services, education, the arts and tourism.

Kerr County is often described as a retirement community. The most recent U.S. Census estimates that almost 26% of the population are over the age of 65, and an estimated 6,322 military veterans live in Kerr County.

The community’s three hospitals, multiple retirement homes, assisted living facilities and nursing homes support a strong medical community and provide many of the service related jobs in Kerr County.

The 2012 population estimate according to the U.S. Census Bureau was 49,786 and the 2013 projected population estimate is over 50,000 with 94.2% of the population made up of Caucasian and Hispanic residents. Because undocumented workers and families are not likely to be counted by the Census, the number of Hispanics living in the county is probably higher than recorded.

Growth in Kerr County has been steady over the past decade but the percentage has been less than contiguous counties that have experienced significant growth in the past decade. Kerr County’s population increased from 43,653 in 2000 to 49,625 in 2010 according to the U.S. Census Bureau estimates. Between 2010 and 2012 (the last available data) the population increased another 0.3%.

The median household income in Kerr County increased from $42,406 in 2008 to $43,849 in 2012. The percentage of persons below poverty level in Kerr County rose slightly from 13.3% to 13.9% in that same period of time.

Kerr County has three local law enforcement agencies, the Kerr County Sheriff’s Department, Kerrville Police Department and the Ingram City Marshal’s Department. Additionally there are 4 Constables and 3 deputy constables, plus Department of Public Safety troopers, game wardens and a Texas Ranger who provide law enforcement for county residents.

Kerr County residents are served by three prosecutor offices. The Kerr County Attorney’s Office, which handles misdemeanor and juvenile cases, has a county attorney plus two assistants supported by both administrative and clerical staff. The 216th Judicial District which handles felony cases includes Kerr, Gillespie and Kendall counties has one district attorney and four assistants plus administrative/clerical support. The 198th Judicial District which handles felony cases includes Kerr and Bandera counties has one district attorney and one assistant plus administrative/clerical support.

Within Kerr County there are 17 public school campuses in five school districts plus several smaller parochial and private schools. Growth in the county’s school population remains steady but low because of the demographics of people moving to Kerr County, many of whom do not have school-age children.

Three hospitals serve Kerr County residents plus provide services for a wide multi-county area. Peterson Regional Medical Center, the Kerrville State Hospital and the Veterans Administration Medical Center-Kerrville, a part of the South Texas Veterans Health Care System, are all located in Kerr County.

The City of Kerrville provides countywide Emergency Medical Services plus designated fire services on a contract bases with Kerr County. The county has an active First Responder Program that supports the EMS program in rural areas.

In addition to the Kerrville Fire Department there are multiple rural volunteer fire departments that provide fire and first responder services in various parts of the unincorporated areas of Kerr County. Two emergency service districts (ESDs) in the western part of Kerr County (Ingram and Mountain Home) have been approved and have taxing authority to help support the costs of the respective rural VFDs in their areas.

The employment base in Kerr County is based on the growing healthcare industry and businesses that support or enhance healthcare services, a mixture of government jobs, retail businesses, service industry jobs, some light manufacturing and the construction trades. The county’s wage scale is lower than the state average as is the median household income but the unemployment rate is consistently below both the state and national levels.

Workforce Solutions Alamo maintains an office and training center in Kerrville which draws persons seeking help in finding employment or improving their skills from Kerr, Kendall, Bandera and Gillespie counties. Both the Christian Women’s Job Corps and the Christian Men’s Job Corps have active programs in Kerr County to help adults upgrade their job skills, work ethic and prepare them for jobs in the community. Both programs also provide job placement services for their graduates.

Schreiner University and the Alamo Community College campuses in Kerrville provide multiple opportunities for enrichment and job training in addition to the traditional college curriculum offerings. Club Ed through the Dietert Center also provides lifetime learning experiences for all ages in a variety of disciplines.

There is no significant heavy industry in Kerr County. Several small industries do provide significant jobs and contributions to the local economy.

James Avery Craftsman known for its extensive jewelry collection worldwide has its headquarters and major manufacturing facility in Kerr County.

Vention, a medical related plastics manufacturing company, is also located in Kerrville.

Fox Tank Company relocated to Kerr County in recent years and set up production of storage tanks for oilfield use in the airport industrial park area. Not only have they added a significant number of good paying jobs to the local economy but also have partnered with the Alamo Community College District to set up a vocational welding program to provide the company with trained employees.

Mooney Aircraft Company was recently acquired by new owners and has begun hiring employees in early 2014 with the plan to re-open its manufacturing facility located adjacent to the local airport. The promise of new jobs as the airplane manufacturing process ramps up promises a brighter economic future for Kerr County.

**QuickFacts from U.S. Census Bureau**

**People QuickFacts\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Kerr County**

Population,2012 estimate……………………………………… ………………….49,786

Population, percent change, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012….………………………0.3%

Population estimates base, April 2010……………………………….....………….49,625

Persons, under 5 years old, percent, 2012………………………………..………....5.3%

Persons, under 18 years old, percent, 2012…………………………..……………19.7%

Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2012……………………………………..25.9%

Female persons, percent, 2012……………………………………………..….……51.6%

White alone, percent, 2012………………………………………..………………….71.7%

Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2012……………………………………….…....24.9%

Black or African American alone, percent, 2012…………………………………….2.1%

American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, 2012.………………..……….1.1%

Asian alone, percent, 2012…………………………………………………………....0.9%

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, 2012………………...0.1%

Two or more races, percent, 2012…………………………………………..………..1.6%

Living in same house in 1 year & over, percent ……………………………..…….83.5%

Foreign born persons, percent, 2012………………………..……………………… 6.3%

Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2012……….….…..18.3%

High School graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2012……………………….88.0%

Bachelor’s degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2012……………….………29.3%

Veterans, 2012……………………………………..………………..………………….6,322

Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2012…………………….….19.4

Housing Units, 2012……………………………………………………………………….………..…..23,899

Homeownership rate, 2012………………………...…………………………………71.2%

Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2012………………………………12.0%

Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2012…………………………$147,000

Households, 2012……………………………………………………...……………..20,376

Persons per household, 2012…………………………………………………………..2.33

Per capita money income, 2012……………………………………………………$26,433

Median household income, 2012…………………………………………………..$43,849

Persons below poverty, percent, 2012………………………………………………13.9%

**Business QuickFacts\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Kerr County**

Private non-farm establishments, 2011………………………………………………1,374

Private non-farm employment, 2011………………………………………………..15,035

Private non-farm employment, percent change 2010-2011………………………..1.6%

Non-employer establishments, 2011………………………………………………….4,904

Total number of firms, 2007……………………………………………………………6,312

Manufacturers shipments, 2007 ($1000)………………………………………….161,752

Retail sales, 2007 ($1000)………………………………………………………….719,852

Building Permits\*, 2012…………………………………………………………………….43

\*City of Kerrville only

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Community Planning Team

Community Plan Coordinator for Kerr County: ***Rosa Lavender / Victim Assistance Coordinator for Kerr County***

In developing this Community Plan, members of the team were divided into several focus groups for the purpose of narrowing the scope of research and data that are incorporated into the Plan. Some members may serve in multiple capacities/categories.

Juvenile Services:

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| ***Jason Davis***  ***Jeremy Taylor***  ***Ann Sparks***  ***Steve Schwarz*** | ***Kerr County Probation Department***  ***Baptist Child and Family Services***  ***Baptist Child and Family Services***  ***Kerrville Independent School District*** |
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Victim Services:

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| ***Patsy Lackey***  ***Rosa Lavender*** | ***Hill Country Cares***  ***Kerr County Victim Services Coordinator*** |
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Law Enforcement:

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| ***Bill Hill***  ***Rowan Zachry*** | ***Kerr County Sheriff’s Department***  ***Ingram City Marshal’s Department*** |
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(Other Focus Group): Mental Health, Health and Family Services

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| ***Jeannie Stevens*** | ***Hill Country Center on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Inc.*** |
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Identification of Community Problems

General Public Safety Needs and Issues

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| The greatest needs in Kerr County are all defined in Priority 1 of each of the three categories in this Community Plan. Kerr County has reached a population of over 50,000 in this decade. Although the population is less than the major metropolitan areas in the state, our problems are the same as theirs.  The limited resources of a smaller community make the challenge of providing for those in need of services even more acute. Crime has become more sophisticated and the threat to our community more complex.  The truancy rate plus the proliferation of drugs and the crimes related to substance abuse among the youth of the community continue to challenge our resources. The decline in parental involvement in the lives of the youth complicates the problems further. The need to continue our extremely successful YAD program through Baptist Child and Family Services is our number one priority.  The need to continue to provide services to victims through Hill Country Cares, Kids’ Advocacy Place and the Kerr County Victim Services Program are most important. As the population of Kerr County continues to grow, so too do the family violence, sexual assaults, child abuse and other violent crimes. The need to continue to provide the safety net of services now in place in this community is vital.  Issues and challenges in the law enforcement, courts and corrections arenas surround the need to be able to better communicate agency to agency and to upgrade our ability to protect the citizens of our community from criminal activity and to solve crimes when they occur. With nine area law enforcement agencies, two judicial districts and eight courts in place the need to update technology is an on-going and a huge challenge because of the costs. Currently several local agencies lack the ability to receive sensitive and necessary information or to exchange data through in-car wireless computers with other law enforcement agencies. They also lack the ability to access NCIC and TCIC through the OMNIX system which hampers their effectiveness in the field and compromises officer safety. |

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

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| Priority #1 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Continue existing services to an increasing number of Kerr County at-risk youth who are referred to the Kerr County Juvenile Probation Department because of truancy issues and other juvenile crimes. | Kerr County has been experiencing a significant problem with juvenile crime and truancies. Current resources for intervention with the problems, particularly truancy, that are available to the justices of the peace are limited, and economic shortages have exacerbated these issues. Some resource limitations are due to the rural nature of the county, which must spread assistance broadly to meet basic needs of citizens. The truancy cases must be addressed if the county is to successfully prevent increases in more serious juvenile crime. County Probation records for the 2011- 2012 fiscal year also indicated around 31% of youth referred were failing or behind in school. New guidelines for dealing with juveniles with status offenses prohibit detaining them, a sometimes effective threat for youth in past years. By the time a youth faces a show cause hearing for truancy, he or she may have missed 30 or more days of school, and be significantly behind peers, decreasing the likelihood of a successful return to school. The first five months of the 2008-2009 school year, before the YAD program was implemented, the number of Kerr County show-cause hearings for truancy was 62% higher than for the previous year, indicating that initial interventions (e.g. fines and other means) were often ineffective. As a result, youth began to enter the juvenile probation system in growing numbers and overtaxing the capacity of Kerr County probation officers. Kerr County Probation has also been strained due to decreases in funding for supportive services for youthful offenders. Federal budget cuts resulted in 10% less available funding to Kerr County Probation, funding previously used for services such as mental health treatment, drug and alcohol counseling, and education and training. Consequently, families of youthful offenders who cannot afford such services out-of-pocket, no longer have access to them. The strong relationship between mental health difficulties and juvenile delinquency has been documented in a variety of contexts. Conservative estimates depict approximately 30% of the juvenile justice population presenting with significant mental health needs. This estimate focuses primarily on juveniles who experience affective disorders such as Depression, Mania and/or Anxiety. When juveniles who experience substance abuse difficulties and/or are diagnosed with a disruptive disorder are added to the aforementioned population, the reported estimates more than double. One study by the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention found that two-thirds of all delinquent youth could be diagnosed with one or more mental health or substance dependency disorders (see Supporting Data below). Last, Kerr County lacks resources to address the needs of delinquent youth whose family circumstances are strong contributors to criminal behavior. These circumstances include chaotic lifestyles, substance abuse, poor employability, and a lack of basic living skills. Family violence and ongoing conflict are also contributors to youth delinquency and the early departure of many youth from their homes. Many delinquent youth quietly become “throwaways” and are poorly prepared to meet the challenges of adulthood including: acquiring affordable housing, maintaining steady employment, and utilizing basic life skills. As a result, their behavior and mental health deteriorate even further, increasing the likelihood of involvement in serious crime. Furthermore, families of project youth are much more likely to be financially stressed and unable to meet even basic needs: 70% of current YAD client families have incomes below the federal poverty level. The Youth Averted from Delinquency (YAD) project provides intensive, evidence-based wraparound services to 60 youth who have truancy cases filed in justice of the peace courts, and to 40 youthful offenders each year. Since the beginning of the program, 268 youth have been enrolled in the project, which has a completion rate of 88.5%. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| The two potential responses and goals for the Youth Averted from Delinquency (YAD) project are to:   1. Decrease the incidence of recidivism for juvenile offenders, particularly those who have committed violent and serious offenses; and 2. Increase the number of truancy cases that are successfully resolved by the youth’s return to and completion of school.   The proposed activities are modeled on evidence-based programs such as Wraparound Milwaukee and similar wraparound programs in urban centers. To our knowledge, no comparable program exists for a rural community. The YAD project provides intensive, wraparound services by a therapist and case manager to adjudicated youth at high risk for institutionalization, along with their families. This project serves a rural county (Kerr), targeting youth ages 12-17 who are juvenile offenders (40 youth) or truants (60 youth). Because the project includes intense family involvement, youth must have at least one adult caregiver who will commit to participating with them. Activities include assessment and individualized case planning, as well as home-based services combined with group therapy, family therapy, drug and alcohol education, life skills training, case management, parenting training, educational assistance, tutoring, and other supportive services. The proposed outcomes for the project are that 80% of juvenile offenders will have no further delinquency cases filed against them, and that 85% of the truant youth who complete the program will have no further truancy cases or juvenile offenses filed against them. The most recent Kerr County Community Plan identified continuation of Project YAD as its first priority for juvenile services. Long-term re-offense rates for youth served by YAD are less than half that for the entire county (12.8% vs. 34%). Kerr County schools are key community partners in this project. They provide YAD clients with hall passes during school hours to meet with YAD counselors on campus for educational support and count the students’ time in the program as time spent toward recovering credit hours. | |

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

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| Priority #1 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need to provide victims with information and services to aid in the recovery from the crime and trauma-related effects of victimization with special emphasis on rural locations. | Numbers of crimes against adults and children (child abuse and neglect) have continued to increase in recent years. Hill Country CASA served 99 children in 59 Kerr County cases in 2013. They also served an additional 101 children from surrounding counties. Hill Country Cares and Kids’ Advocacy Place served a total of 1296 adults and children in 2013. K’Star housed a total of 92 children from Kerr and surrounding counties for a total of 2,914 days of service in 2013. Of that number 18 were Kerr County residents who stayed a total of 409 days. Child Protective Services-Kerr County-Kerr County investigated 425 cases of abuse and neglect and confirmed 190 victims in 2012.in the investigation in 425 investigations in 2012 and conducted 332 investigations confirming 150 victims in 2013. The Kerr County Victims Services Department provided services for 533 adults and 43 children and their families who were victims of violent crime in Kerr and surrounding counties in 2013. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| 1. Continue and expand existing services through the Kerr County Victims Services Department, Peterson Regional Medical Center, Hill Country CARES, Kids’ Advocacy Place, K’Star, Hill Country CASA, Adult Protective Services, Child Protective Services, and other private or religious-based service organizations, including information, referral, personal and legal advocacy, counseling, emergency shelter and support. 2. Continue to provide special outreach programs for rural residents and, when possible, address the transportation needs of residents who seek the services offered by the different agencies. Target awareness campaigns plus foster and encourage local programs to support families at risk. 3. Accelerate prevention activities based on CDC guidelines for primary prevention (of intimate partner violence and sexual violence) initiatives in sexual assault, and Texas-based research on family violence programs. 4. To engage community-wide initiatives for child abuse/neglect prevention. 5. To strengthen programs to prevent elder abuse/neglect/exploitation. 6. Encourage non-profit organizations to engage in cooperative ventures to enhance prevention and intervention services including more immediate short-term financial help for victims who may need to relocate to get away from the abuser while waiting for help from the Texas Crime Victims Compensation Program. | |

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| Priority #2 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Additional training for law enforcement, judicial and victims’ services providers which would lead to improved coordination of services and faster more effective response to crime victims. Issues that delay services to victims and often delay prosecuting cases need to be addressed. | Our small, rural law enforcement agencies experience turnover as seasoned officers retire or move to agencies with higher salaries and benefits…thus continual training for new officers is necessary. The ability to successfully prosecute cases and assist victims depends on having more complete data collection in incident reports. Training in that area would be beneficial for both victim services providers and their partners in the criminal justice system. Consistent responses to crime victims within and across agencies can be improved with training. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| More training initiatives with assistance from AACOG. Establish an interagency task force to meet monthly to coordinate criminal justice system and service provider activities, especially in domestic violence and sexual assault cases. | |

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| Priority #3 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Lack of housing alternatives for victims of intimate violence who feel they have no choice but to return to the abusive living environment where they may be at risk for re-victimization. | Kerr County continues to have inadequate numbers of federally subsidized housing units available…in fact the waiting list for Kerr County has been closed for most of the past two years through AACOG. Long waiting lists and narrow eligibility criteria keep most victims from successfully finding alternative housing. Hill Country Cares provides short term shelter availability but when they leave the emergency shelter they often have no place else to go. National statistics show that up to 50% of all homeless women and women with children in their custody are homeless due to domestic violence. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| 1. Develop a transitional housing program for crime victims where the lack of alternate housing options exposes them to additional risks of re-victimization. 2. Couple the transitional housing program with a case management program to better ensure the successful reintegration of such client/victims into independent living. 3. Develop a program and seek local funding to provide limited immediate emergency assistance to relocate victims and their children who are waiting for benefits from the Texas Crime Victims Compensation Program. | |

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| Priority #4 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need for support services designed specifically for senior and disabled populations who are at high risk for crime victimization and persons with mental illness and substance abuse disorders. | Kerr County’s retired population is ever increasing and the life span of those adults is extended through better medical care and other factors. The over-65 age group makes up over 25% of the population of the county. Many of these seniors are imports into the area, lacking family and social supports which can help prevent problems of elder abuse, neglect and self-neglect , as well as early intervention and assistance following crime victimization. Similarly, the population (between 18 and 64) with a disability continues to increase. There is also an ever-increasing number of persons disabled by serious or persistent psychiatric and /or substance abuse disorders living in our community. The proliferation of sober living/halfway houses in our community in recent years stretch resources at all levels. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| 1. Increased awareness of risk factors and prevention activities. 2. Coordinate planning and service delivery with the Alamo Area Council of Aging and the Hill Country Community Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center. 3. Coordinate with area resources available to victims with mental illness or substance abuse disorders. 4. Study the feasibility of developing a social drop-in center for adults with serious and persistent mental illness, with daily availability to and support services for eligible participants and their caregivers. | |

Law Enforcement Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

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| Priority #1 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need for countywide computer information sharing system, including mobile data terminals for all law enforcement agencies in Kerr County and be able to resolve interoperability issues. | Nine area law enforcement agencies must perpetually update and seek new technology based on advancements in the marketplace. Presently the Sheriff’s Office, Constables and Ingram City Marshal’s Department lack computer capability in their vehicles to receive sensitive and necessary information and they lack the ability to exchange data through in-car wireless computers with other Kerr County Law Enforcement agencies. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| 1. Secure funding to purchase the equipment to create a countywide computer information sharing system, including mobile data terminals for all law enforcement agencies in Kerr County. This would include access to shared data bases and OMNIX.  2. Secure funding to replace the Sheriff’s Office aging VHF analog two channel simulcast system with P25 standards based system. | |

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| Priority #2 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need for enhanced surveillance video capability. | The Kerrville Police Department does not have the ability to enhance surveillance video, a challenge faced every day, collected from complainant individuals and businesses as it relates to robberies, burglaries, thefts or assaults. This technology gap is further exacerbated by the disparate video systems being deployed around the community. In 2013 the Kerrville Police Dept. had 720 cases involving thefts and 430 where surveillance video was recovered as evidence. Five separate video systems using an equal number of different software were used making it impossible to enhance the content to maximize the prosecution opportunities. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| Secure funding to acquire necessary hardware and software to process the disparate surveillance videos recovered from crime events. | |

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| Priority #3 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need for wireless surveillance cameras to make our community a safer place to live and work. | As the community grows and crime becomes more sophisticated, the threat to our community becomes more complex. Kerr County law enforcement agencies are currently evaluating the need for surveillance cameras to monitor critical infrastructure and areas where citizens are more vulnerable to crime. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| Secure funding to install surveillance equipment to monitor critical infrastructure such as utilities (water, power, telephone, data storage and data systems, radio communications, etc.) and other areas where our citizens might be vulnerable to crime such as parks, parking lots, commercial areas, etc. | |

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| Priority #4 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Need for technology improvements for our courts and prosecutors which would improve the efficiency of those agencies. | Kerr County has two district courts, two district attorney offices plus the County Court at Law and County Attorney office. Currently there is very limited information sharing between the agencies through technology. Software programs are on the market that can enhance and strengthen their ability to prosecute criminal cases. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| Need for technology improvements for our courts and prosecutors which would improve the efficiency of those agencies. | |  |
| Potential Response to Problem   |  | | --- | | Identify and secure funding to acquire software and hardware to upgrade agency capability to exchange info and standardize format for better efficiency. | | |  |

Health, Mental Health and Family Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

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| Priority #1 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Shortage of Primary Care Providers: Physicians, Physician Assistants, and Nurse Practitioners | Kerr County is one of several counties in this area designated as “Medically Underserved Areas”. Many local physician practices and mental health facilities are over capacity and are forced to limit the types of patients they can accept, in order to prevent one payer type from becoming too large a percentage of their practice. Several physicians have closed their practices recently. Some have retired and others have relocated. Community residents who are unable to find an accepting physician or provider are forced to travel to neighboring counties to seek primary health care.A new doctor’s building was recently completed adjacent to Peterson Regional Medical Center which will provide office space for new physicians who come to the community. The opening of the Peterson Outreach Clinic in 2013 has relieved the hospital’s emergency room staff from having to deal with many patients who were using the ER as their source of primary care or aftercare. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| Continue to actively recruit new physicians and medical support professionals to Kerr County. | |

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| Priority #2 | |
| Problem Identified | Data |
| Shortage of mental health professionals to deal with the ever growing number of persons in Kerr County who need mental help. | A disproportionate number of consumers present to providers with mental health issues directly correlated with substance abuse. Many consumers report the wait time to access mental health services is 30 days or more which further exacerbates their mental health issues. Co-occurring issues must be treated together. These consumers often do not have the resources (financial, transportation, time off work) to obtain these specialized services and regularly do not receive the care that is needed. The impact of mental health and mental health disorders on mortality in rural areas appears in several forms. Suicide rates, a standard indicator of mental illness, are higher in rural areas, particularly among males and children. |
| Potential Response to Problem | |
| Improve access to substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment in Kerr County for unfunded, under-funded, uninsured and under-insured residents. Possible solutions may include a Detox facility, jail diversion program, psychiatrist on staff at the hospital and more eligibility (and funding) under the State of Texas criteria for treatment in community MHDD centers and other substance abuse treatment providers. | |

Resources Available

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

Juvenile Justice:

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| *Kerr County Juvenile Probation Department*  *Kerr County Juvenile Detention Facility*  *BCFS Health and Human Services* | *Law Enforcement*  *Residential Detention*  *Transition Services to foster youth and adults ages 15-24*  *Juvenile Justice Rehabilitation and Prevention Program ages 10-17*  *Transitional Living Apartments for foster youth and young adults ages 18-25* | *Supervision of Juveniles who have entered the Criminal Justice System. Located at 3499 Legion Dr. 830-896-9013*  *Short term residential housing, education services, behavior modification. Located at 3501 Legion Dr. 830-257-6110*  *501(c)3 Non Profit Agency designed to work with at-risk children and young adults. Located at 1105 E. Main (830)-896-0993* |
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Law Enforcement, Prosecution and Courts:

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| *Kerr County Sheriff’s Office*  *Sheriff Rusty Hierholzer*  *Kerrville Police Department*  *Chief John Young*  *Ingram City Marshal’s Department*  *Marshal Rowan Zachry*  *198th District Attorney*  *Scott Monroe*  *216th District Attorney*  *Bruce Curry*  *Kerr County Attorney*  *Robert Henneke*  *198th District Court*  *Judge Rex Emerson*  *216th District Court*  *Judge Keith Williams*  *Kerr County Court at Law*  *Judge Spencer Brown*  *Justice of the Peace Pct 1*  *Judge David Billeiter*  *Justice of the Peace Pct 2*  *Judge J R Hoyne*  *Justice of the Peace Pct 3*  *Judge Kathy Mitchell*  *Justice of the Peace Pct 4*  *Judge William Ragsdale* | *Law Enforcement, Jail*  *Law Enforcement*  *Law Enforcement*  *Prosecution of felony crimes*  *Prosecution of felony crimes*  *Prosecution of misdemeanor crimes, juvenile cases*  *Felony Criminal and Civil Jurisdiction*  *Felony Criminal and Civil Jurisdiction*  *Misdemeanor, Probate, Juvenile*  *Class C Misdemeanor, Civil, Mental Health*  *Class C Misdemeanor, Civil, Mental Health*  *Class C Misdemeanor, Civil, Mental Health*  *Class C Misdemeanor, Civil,Mental Health* | *400 Clearwater Paseo*  *(830) 896-1216*  *429 Sidney Baker St*  *(830) 257-8181*  *226 Hwy 39, Ingram*  *(830) 367-2636*  *401 Clearwater Paseo*  *Phone (830) 315-2460*  *200 Earl Garrett Ste.202*  *Phone (830) 896-4744*  *700 Main, Lower Level Annex*  *Phone (830) 792-2220*  *700 Main, Second Floor*  *Phone (830) 792-2290*  *700 Main, Second Floor*  *(830) 792-2290*  *700 Main, First Floor Annex*  *(830) 792-2207*  *700 Main*  *(830) 792-2230*  *400 Clearwater Paseo, Ste 103*  *(830) 792-6444*  *700 Main, Lower Level Annex*  *(830) 792-2233*  *3324A Junction Hwy, Ingram*  *(830) 367-2245* |
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Victim Services:

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| *Hill Country Cares*  *Kerr County Victim Services Department*  *K-Star* | *Non-Profit providing crisis intervention, emergency shelter and other services to victims of crime.*  *County funded-serves victims of violent crime in Kerr County and 198th and 216th Judicial Districts*  *Emergency Children’s Shelter* | *Crisis Intervention (Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Child Abuse, Elder Abuse and Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Kids’ Advocacy Place*  *Phone (830) 257-7088*  *Crisis Intervention, help with completing Texas Crime Victim Compensation applications, help with relocation benefits, referrals to counseling, court advocacy and help with completing and delivering victim impact statements. Located in the Kerr County Courthouse-Lower Level Phone: (830) 792-2297*  *Provides emergency shelter, youth and family services, parenting education classes*  *Phone (830) 896-5437* |
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Health, Mental Health and Family Issues:

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| *HEALTH:* |  |  |
| *Peterson Regional Medical Center*  *Peterson Community Care Clinic*  *Raphael Free Community Clinic*  *Veterans Administration Medical Center*  *Texas Department of Health*  *City of Kerrville EMS*  *Kerr County Indigent Health Program*  *MENTAL HEALTH:*  *Hill Country Council on Alcohol*  *and Drug Abuse, Inc.*  *Kerrville State Hospital*  *Kerr County Mental Health Center*  *La Hacienda Treatment Center*  *Starlight Treatment Center*  *Villa Del Sol*  *FAMILY ISSUES:*  *Any Baby Can*  *Baptist Child and Family Services-Health and Human Services*  *Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services*  *Hill Country Court-Appointed Special Advocates*  *Hill Country Chapter of the American Red Cross*  *Special Opportunity Center*  *Christian Assistance Ministry*  *Salvation Army*  *St. Vincent De Paul Society*  *Partners in Ministry*  *Habitat for Humanity-Kerr County*  *Families and Literacy Inc.*  *Christian Women’s Job Corps*  *Christian Men’s Job Corps*  *Kerr County Child Services Board*  *Art2Heart*  *Doyle School Community Center*  *Dietert Center*  *Texas Department of Family and Protective Services*  *Workforce Solutions Alamo*  *Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid Inc.*  *Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program*  *Young Life*  *YMCA Kerr County* | *Regional Hospital*  *Outpatient Clinic*  *Low income clinic*  *Veterans Hospital*  *Public Health Office*  *Emergency care and transport*  *State Mandated-County Program*  *Community based-Non-Profit*  *Outpatient Services*  *State forensic unit with Crisis Intervention Unit*  *Out-patient Services*  *Privately owned and funded*  *Privately owned and funded*  *Privately owned and funded*  *Non-profit*  *Non-profit*  *State Agency*  *Non-Profit, partial state funding*  *Non-Profit*  *Tri-County Agency*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit*  *State Agency*  *State Agency*  *State Agency*  *Hospital based*  *Non-Profit*  *Non-Profit* | *551 Hill Country Drive*  *(830) 896-4200*  *After care, uninsured*  *By appt. only*  *823 Junction Hwy*  *(830) 258-7900*  *Clinic services for low income who qualify*  *By appt. only*  *(830)895-4201*  *Hospital, long term care facility*  *3600 Memorial Blvd*  *(830) 896-2020*  *Provide immunizations, tuberculosis management and treatment, communicable disease investigations*  *819 Water St Ste 290*  *(830) 896-5515*  *87 Coronado Dr. Ste 200*  *(830) 257-5333 (business)*  *Call 911 for emergency services*  *Assists persons who qualify with health care costs for basic health care needs only…on a temporary basis. Must be Kerr County resident to apply*  *700 Main, Lower Level Annex*  *(830) 792-2239*  *Licensed out-patient treatment facility for drug and alcohol and mental health counseling. Substance abuse after care treatment. Substance abuse and mental health assessments. State mandated DWI offender program, tobacco education program for minors, drug testing, anti-theft and victim impact panel program.*  *102 Business Dr.*  *(830) 367-4667*  *700 Thompson Drive*  *(830) 896-2211*  *Counseling, intervention and monitoring of MHMR patients*  *500 Thompson Drive*  *(830) 257-6553*  *Substance abuse treatment facility*  *P.O. Box 1*  *(145La Hacienda Way)*  *Hunt, TX 78024*  *(830) 238-4222*  *Substance abuse treatment facility*  *P. O. Box 317, Center Point*  *(830) 634-2212*  *Substance abuse treatment facility for juveniles*  *520 Witt Rd. Center Point*  *(830) 634-3370*  *Intervention with families of children born with physical or emotional disabilities*  *819 Water St. Suite 109*  *(830) 792-4222*  *Transition services for foster youth and young adults, Juvenile Justice rehabilitation and prevention program, transitional living facilities for foster youth and young adults, job training program*  *1105 E. Main*  *(830) 896-0993*  *Serves adults with disabilities who can go back to work, if assisted. Assists persons who are physically, mentally or hearing impaired.*  *516 Sidney Baker*  *(830) 257-7556*  *Provides legal advocacy for children whose parents or guardians are involved in the criminal justice system or other crisis situations.*  *P.O. Box 290493, Kerrville*  *(830) 896-2272*  *Provides disaster relief, health and safety training, services to families who have members serving in the armed forces*  *Provides services to adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities*  *200 South Lemos St.*  *(830) 896-4606*  *Local food bank, utility assistance, clothing, prescriptions (limited assistance if qualified)*  *624 Clay St.*  *(830) 257-4222*  *Financial assistance with rent and utilities, prescriptions, limited transportation, food pantry, clothing vouchers, dental services, emergency shelter, men’s recovery program, disaster services, soup kitchen.*  *855 Hays St.*  *(830) 257-3620*  *Food Pantry. Provide limited help with utilities, clothing, prescriptions*  *1145 Broadway*  *(830) 896-2926*  *Focus on children, youth, those in poverty. Provide mentoring through local schools, provide mentoring for mothers of newborns and work with troubled youth. Coordinate efforts of seven local agencies who help families in financial crisis. Provide home repair help for elderly and disabled.*  *(830) 792-3131*  *Partners with qualified families and community volunteers to build decent, affordable housing for lower income families who qualify. Houses are sold to families with interest free mortgages.*  *(830) 792-4844*  *Adult Education Classes; GED preparation, English as a Second Language, Personal Finance, Citizenship, Parenting and GED Test Registration.*  *(830) 896-8787*  *Job Skills, life skills and employment support (12 week program…fall and spring)*  *(830) 895-3660*  *Job training, life skills, faith-based activities.*  *(830)-257-2545*  *Oversees and manages donated funds for use on children under the care of Child Protective Services in Kerr County. Funds cover expenses not provided by the state or other funding such as eyeglasses, doctor bills, sports program physicals, orthodontic work, school supplies, birthday and Christmas gifts. Oversees the Rainbow Room, a clothes closet where CPS caseworkers can get clothing, diapers, toiletries and other essentials children need after they are removed from a home with nothing but the clothes on their back. (830) 792-2211*  *Fine arts program for children and youth.*  *(830-459-4590*  *Limited activities…diabetic support group, monthly community senior luncheons, Boy Scout troop, community interest meetings.*  *(830) 257-4446*  *Senior Nutrition (Meals on Wheels program and congregate dining), Recreational/Educational activities and Independent Living. Dietert PAL Emergency Response devices, “Take Five Club” caregiver respite, caregiver resource library, loan of medical equipment, reassurance calls and information and referral to area resources.*  *(830) 792-4044*  *Serves Kerr, Gillespie, Bandera, Uvalde and Real counties. Legal services, family-based safety services and investigations of child abuse or neglect*  *(830) 792-4303*  *Serves Kerr, Kendall, Bandera and Gillespie counties. Job seekers employment searches, help individuals apply for unemployment insurance and people on public assistance with training and other programs.*  *(830) 257-3181*  *Serves Kerr, Gillespie, Bandera, Kendall and 7 other counties. Routine family law counseling to complex litigation in state and federal courts, from the local justice of the peace courts all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Three dozen different practice areas in which TRLA attorneys specialize including community economic development, federal taxation, colonias and real estate, civil rights, environmental justice, low-wage workers, displaced workers, workers compensation, public benefits, disaster assistance, federal subsidized housing, mortgage foreclosure, bankruptcy, wills and estates, torts and general civil litigation, border issues, immigration, human trafficking, international child abduction, elder law, children’s rights and foster youth.*  *(210) 212-3700 or 800-369-0489*  *Hotline: intakes only 888-988-9996*  *Forensic sexual assault examinations for adult and child victims.*  *(830) 258-6464*  *Christian youth program for area juveniles (830)896-7565*  *Provides child care, after school care, day camps and various youth sports programs through the schools and the Kroc Community Center.*  *(830) 896-8000* |
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Interagency Cooperation

The following is a description of how the various resources listed in the previous pages could cooperatively work together to accomplish the goal of closing identified gaps in services:

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| The Kerr County Juvenile Probation Department works with law enforcement, prosecutors, and all of the local school districts to identify and monitor juvenile offenders in school environments and in the community. Once a month meetings between law enforcement representatives, school administrators, victim services, Crime Stoppers, and prosecutors are held to discuss problems in the community related to juvenile activity, identification of gang activity and what can be done to prevent juvenile problems from developing.  Victims’ services agencies work closely together to provide crime victims with quick and comprehensive intervention when needed. Hill Country Cares provides counseling, shelter and other services to both adults and children in crisis. K’Star provides emergency shelter for children displaced by criminal incidents or other events that create a dysfunctional family environment. Kids’ Advocacy Place, a division of Hill Country Cares, provides law enforcement a one-stop location for investigating crimes perpetrated against children and provides support for child victims and their non-offending family members. Hill Country CASA provides legal advocacy for children during the court process both for children who are victims and children who have been removed from their homes due to other reasons. The Kerr County Victim Services Department works with all of the programs listed above and provides additional legal advocacy, support and referral for adult victims of crime. Included in this program is the filing of Crime Victim Compensation claims for victims, if need, plus preparation of the Victim Impact Statement and/or Victim Allocution for the courts and working with both law enforcement and prosecutors to see that the rights of victims are protected during the process from the criminal incident through the adjudication of the case in a court of law.  The Kerrville Police Department and Kerr County Sheriff’s Department has a multi-agency Special Operations Unit to respond to critical incident events. Members of the SOU are trained negotiators in addition to other special training to defuse situations.  The Kerrville Police Department has a Special Crimes Unit which works in collaboration with other agencies to investigate and prosecute narcotics and organized crime cases in Kerr County.  Kerr County Crime Stoppers also works closely with law enforcement to provide funding for tips that have led to the solving of several major crimes in Kerr County in recent years. Crime Stoppers also works with Kerrville, Ingram and Center Point school districts to sponsor Campus Crime Stoppers Programs on all of the secondary campuses in the school districts. The majority of funds disbursed by Crime Stoppers comes from Crime Stoppers fees paid by persons adjudicated in the County Court at Law and both district courts in Kerr County. The organization also funds “Leads-on-Line,” a program that aids in the recovery of stolen property and prosecution of offenders involved in burglaries and other property crimes for the Kerr County Sheriff’s Office. Since 2010 the Crime Stoppers program has accepted tips by email and text messaging through the TipSoft software program.  The Kerrville Area Rural Firefighters Association is made up of all volunteer fire departments in the county and some in contiguous counties that serve areas of Kerr County. The county provides some funding to the VFDs in their annual budget but the VFDs primarily depend on donations and fundraisers to pay the cost of providing fire protection in the unincorporated areas of the county. They cooperate with each other in actual responses to fires but also in training, equipment purchases and other cooperative efforts.  The Kerr County Child Services Board uses funds provided by the county and from donors to purchase birthday gifts, school supplies and Christmas gifts for children who are foster homes under Child Protective Services placements in Kerr County.  Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid provides legal advocacy and intervention to victims of crime identified through Hill Country Cares and the Kerr County Victim Services Program. TRLA attorneys have been a great asset to help deserving families, not only crime victims, in this community for many years. |

Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Kerr 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 Kerr 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 fall, but agency and community representatives typically 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 by e-mail with requests for comments, changes, etc. Wherever possible e-mail is used to reduce the need for meetings, printing, postage, etc.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Group to improve outcomes for Kerr County families struggling with problems described in the Plan’s focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Kerr 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 encourage agencies to provide programming that addresses the outlined focus areas.

Contact Information

Kerr County Community Planning Coordinator

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| Rosa Lavender  (830) 792-2297  [rlavender@co.kerr.tx.us](mailto:rlavender@co.kerr.tx.us) |

Community Planning Liaison from Alamo Area COG

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| Jennifer Forbes, Contract Consultant  (210) 834-6719  [jforbes@aacog.com](mailto:jforbes@aacog.com) |

This Plan is available on-line at the following URL address:

[**www.co.kerr.tx.us**](http://www.co.kerr.tx.us)