

Unaccompanied Children in Austin/Travis County



**Immigrant
Services Network**
of Austin

Immigrant Services Network of Austin

Our Purpose

We are a working group of diverse community stakeholders and immigrant service providers operating together to coordinate efforts, increase public awareness and inform policy to better serve the immigrant community.

Our Vision

ISNA promotes the success and well being of immigrants to secure the long-term prosperity of the entire community.

In the headlines...

THE FURNACE

Number of Unaccompanied Children at the Border Tops 68,000 for Fiscal Year 2014



Oct. 9, 2014 5:45pm | Pete Kasperowicz

As Unaccompanied Children Cross Border, One Group Tries To Get Them Lawyers

Posted: 09/09/2014 12:05 am EDT | Updated: 09/09/2014 12:59 am EDT



around the nation

Trauma Plagues Many Immigrant Kids In U.S. Illegally

August 8, 2014 • Social service agencies and nonprofits are scrambling to figure out what they need to do to help the thousands of immigrant children who have come to the U.S. in recent months.



around the nation

Many Unaccompanied Minors No Longer Alone, But Still In Limbo

March 9, 2015 • Many of the thousands of youths who arrived in the U.S. in 2014 now live with family, awaiting hearings on whether they can stay. But finding legal and mental health assistance remains a challenge.



Report: 39,000 Unaccompanied Alien Children Expected to Enter U.S. in FY 2015



Unaccompanied Children Crisis Background

- Between October 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014 U.S. Customs and Border Protection reported apprehended 57,525 unaccompanied children from:

- Honduras (29%)
- Guatemala (24%),
- El Salvador (23%)
- Mexico (22%).



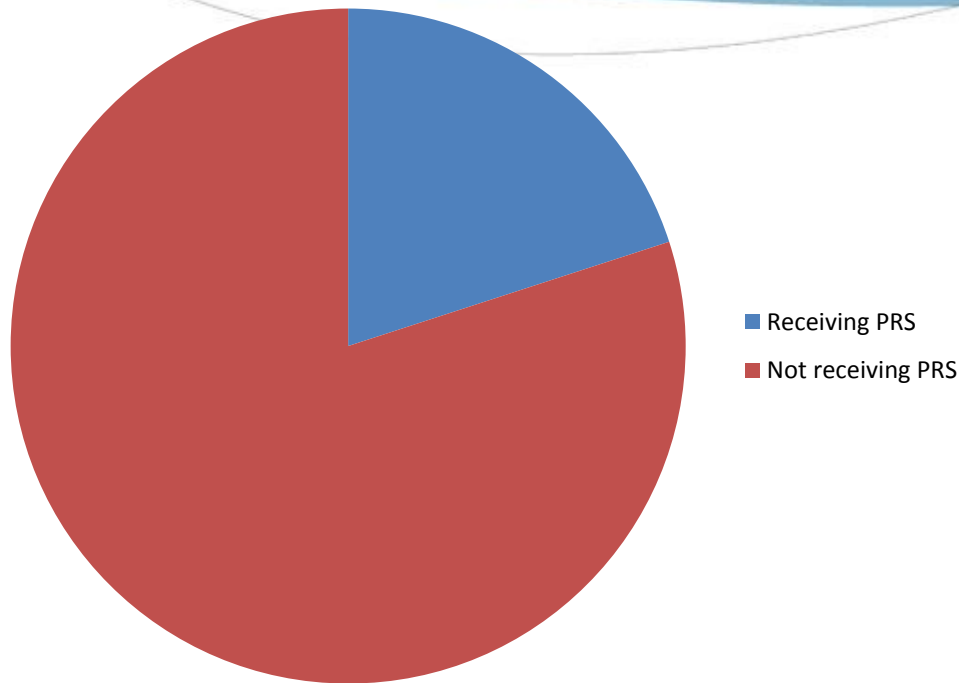
- The 2014 UNHCR Children on the Run report found that over 50% of children interviewed qualified for international refugee standards of protection due largely to violence in the home and organized criminal actors.

Unaccompanied Children Needs



- ◆ Case management for families around areas of need and concern
- ◆ Culturally-appropriate services and community referrals:
 - ◆ Health Services
 - ◆ Mental Health Services
- ◆ Systems advocacy with community providers
- ◆ Legal Services to provide immigration relief

Unaccompanied Children in Travis County




477 unaccompanied children have been released from Office of Refugee Resettlement custody to sponsors in Travis County as of January 2015

Only 20 % of unaccompanied children placed in Travis County are receiving post-release services

This means that 382 children are left vulnerable and isolated from existing community resources.

Austin/Travis County Community Response



June 31,
2014 Special
Informational
Session: A
humanitarian crisis
at our borders”

August 2014 ISNA
Unaccompanied
Children’s
Taskforce

Sep 14 –Jan 15
UAC Task Force
Meetings

Jan-March 2015
UAC Service Plan
Committee
Meetings

April 15
Finalized UAC
Program Proposal

ISNA UAC Task Force

The Unaccompanied Children's Task Force goal is to centralize UAC related information, data and best practices in order to:

- 💧 better allow for the coordination of services,
- 💧 foment the identification and development of resources,
- 💧 identify methods to improve gaps in services.



ISNA UAC Participants

- ◆ American Gateways
- ◆ Caritas of Austin
- ◆ RAICES Texas
- ◆ University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work
- ◆ Texas Civil Rights Project
- ◆ University of Texas at Austin Immigration Clinic
- ◆ Austin Children Services
- ◆ Refugee Services of Texas
- ◆ Equal Justice Center
- ◆ Texas Legal Services Center
- ◆ For the City Network
- ◆ Southwest Key Program
- ◆ Austin Independent School District
- ◆ City of Austin
- ◆ Austin People's Community Clinic
- ◆ Justice for Our Neighbors Austin
- ◆ Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid
- ◆ Community Advancement Network
- ◆ Center for Child Protection
- ◆ Texas Interfaith
- ◆ Texas Region XIII
- ◆ Catholic Charities of Central Texas
- ◆ Circle of Health International
- ◆ Society of Saint Vincent De Paul Diocesan Council of Austin
- ◆ YWCA of Greater Austin
- ◆ Austin Independent School District
- ◆ Ventanilla de Salud Austin
- ◆ City of Austin
- ◆ Travis County Research and Planning
- ◆ Interfaith Action Network (I-ACT)
- ◆ Austin Independent School District

UAC Service Plan Committee

- ◆ Caritas of Austin
- ◆ Refugee Services of Texas
- ◆ Austin Independent School District
- ◆ YWCA Greater Austin
- ◆ Catholic Charities of Central Texas
- ◆ Interfaith Action
- ◆ RAICES Texas
- ◆ Interfaith Action Network

Our Proposal

The Austin / Travis County Unaccompanied Children Program



Who is eligible



- ◆ An unaccompanied child placed with a sponsor in Austin/Travis County
- ◆ Under the age of 18
- ◆ At 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.



Case Management Services

Three geographically allocated Case Managers/Social Workers in Travis County focusing on the following school districts:

- ◆ Elgin and Manor Independent School District
- ◆ Austin Independent School District
- ◆ Del Valle School District



Each case manager will perform outreach to identify and engage unaccompanied children in the case management process and assess the child's needs. As a result of this the case manager will develop a comprehensive and individualized service delivery case plan for each child.



Case Management Services

- ◆ The case plan will include:
 - ◆ Identifying and connect the school resources available to the UAC.
 - ◆ Liaise with School Social Worker/Counselor
 - ◆ Identify relevant community resources for the UAC and sponsor and refer out as appropriate such as medical services
 - ◆ Educate and refer sponsor to available community resources as appropriate. Refer UAC and sponsor to YWCA for Mental Health Services
 - ◆ Refer sponsors to Caritas of Austin Education Program Classes when appropriate.
 - ◆ Coordinate with Catholic Charities Legal Services to ensure that the UAC has access to legal services
 - ◆ Complete AORs (Affidavits of Relationship) for children arrived since January 2014 as needed.





Case Management Services

Outputs and Outcomes

- 💧 Output: 100 unduplicated HH served
 - 💧 Outcome: # of HH that received a comprehensive and individualized service delivery case plan
 - 💧 Outcome: #HH that received Screening and Assessment
 - 💧 Outcome Rate: 85% of HH are stable due to access to services
- 💧 Outcome: 160 unduplicated children served
 - 💧 Outcome: # of unduplicated unaccompanied children served who demonstrate improved grades, improved attendance, and/or observation of successful psychosocial integration
 - 💧 Outcome: # of unduplicated unaccompanied children who are served via liaising with the school social workers/counselors
 - 💧 Outcome Rate: 80% of unduplicated unaccompanied children served by liaising with school social workers/counselors will demonstrate improved grades, improved attendance, and/or observation of successful psychosocial integration
- 💧 # of Affidavits of Relationship (AOR)

Legal Services

In order to assist unaccompanied children in Travis county who are eligible for the unaccompanied children grant, the following are needed to focus solely on assisting the unaccompanied children residing in Austin/Travis County:

- ◆ 2 full time attorneys
- ◆ 1 legal assistant

This team will work through the family court and immigration legal process with each child in order to ensure that every avenue is pursued to secure their lawful presence in the U.S. and that they can remain indefinitely with their sponsors/families.



Legal Services



◆ Forms of Relief

- ◆ **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status**
 - ◆ 12-14 months
- ◆ **Asylum**
 - ◆ 10-12 months
- ◆ **T-Visa**
 - ◆ 8-10 months
- ◆ **U-Visa**
 - ◆ 12-14 months
- ◆ **Humanitarian Parole**
 - ◆ 4-6 months

Legal Services

Outputs and Outcomes

- 💧 Output 1: # unduplicated households served
 - 💧 Outcome 1a: # unduplicated unaccompanied children that obtained lawful status
 - 💧 Outcome 1b: # unduplicated individuals that qualify for immigration relief
 - 💧 Outcome Rate 1c: % of USCIS petitions cases successfully adjudicated
- 💧 Output 2: # unduplicated unaccompanied children served
 - 💧 Outcome 2a: # unduplicated children that may qualify for any type of relief and successfully acquired Permanent Resident Status
 - 💧 Outcome 2b: # cases successfully adjudicated for initial visa or status
 - 💧 Outcome 2c: % of unaccompanied children that successfully achieved Permanent Resident Status
- 💧 Output 3: # of legal consultations provided
- 💧 Output 4: # of USCIS petitions filed

Mental Health Services

Understanding the need: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, suggests that certain experiences are major risk factors for the leading causes of illness, death, and poor quality of life in the United States.

Lack of physical safety, nutritional security, etc. impact a child/adolescent's emotional well-being and has adverse effects in later life.

- ◆ anxiety
- ◆ depression
- ◆ trauma
- ◆ violence
- ◆ family dynamics
- ◆ PTSD
- ◆ immigration
- ◆ sexuality
- ◆ gender identity/expression
- ◆ intimate relationships
- ◆ grief and loss
- ◆ attachment
- ◆ loss of pregnancy
- ◆ newly formed families
- ◆ parenting
- ◆ pre/post-natal mental health



Mental Health Services

Family First Programs

These services are particularly useful for children who have experienced disruptions through parental substance abuse, mental illness, separation and divorce, foster care, CPS, incarceration, hospitalization, immigration, military service, and other ruptures.

- ◆ Family therapy involves the family in examining the concerns, relationships, behaviors, patterns, subsystems, communication, and other functions of the participants involved.
- ◆ Family play therapy improves the child-parent/sponsor relationship. Parents/sponsors are taught child centered skills necessary to practice effective listening and respond to a child's emotions, as well as tools to help encourage the child's self-esteem.
- ◆ Attachment first services aim to build a healthy bond between the parent/sponsor and children. This program focuses on bonding basics such as gazing, mirroring, healthy touch, play, and singing. Parents/sponsors are guided and supported to practice these therapeutic attachment activities.



Mental Health Services

Outputs and Outcomes

- ◆ Output 1 : Total number of unduplicated clients served
 - ◆ Outcome 1a: # of individual/family counseling clients demonstrating improvement in mental health status/functioning
 - ◆ Outcome 1b: Total # of unduplicated individual/family counseling clients assessed
 - ◆ Outcome Rate 1c: % of individual/family counseling clients demonstrating improvement in mental health status/functioning
- ◆ Output 2: Total # of unduplicated clients served – individual/family counseling
 - ◆ Outcome 1a: Number of individual/family counseling clients demonstrating improvement in mental health status/functioning
 - ◆ Outcome 1b: Total number of unduplicated individual/family counseling clients assessed
 - ◆ Outcome 1c: % of individual/family counseling clients demonstrating improvement in mental health status/functioning
- ◆ Output 3: Total number of unduplicated clients served – therapy and skill building groups

Why is this Important to You?



“Austin Values and Respects its People” – City of Austin, Imagine Austin

Austin is a Welcoming City that promotes a *“Austin promotes immigrant-friendly, welcoming environment”* because it recognizes that *“Austin’s immigrant population is a key driver of our economic prosperity and an asset to our entire community,”* and *“it is imperative for our continued success that new immigrants feel welcome and at home in Austin.”*

- City of Austin Economic Development Department

Call To Action

- ◆ Make a recommendation to Austin City Council to allocate \$292,948 in funding to add to the \$292,948 we are seeking to leverage from Travis County in a joint effort to address the needs of unaccompanied children in Austin/Travis County. The total combined funding amount requested is \$585,896 for two years.
- ◆ Below is a description of the proposed program strategies by each organization in this collaboration:
 - ◆ Caritas of Austin will serve as the fiscal agent and provide case management, it is requesting \$242,179 for this service component
 - ◆ Catholic Charities of Central Texas will provide legal services and is requesting \$314,717 in funding
 - ◆ YWCA Greater Austin will provide mental health services and is requesting \$29,000 for this service component.

Questions?