



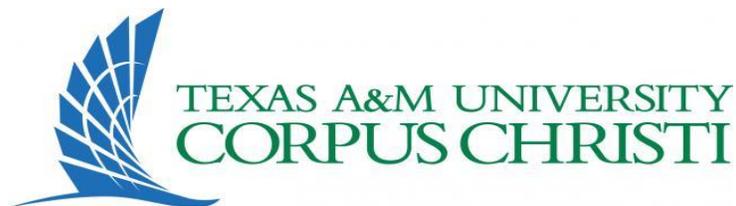
# **NUECES COUNTY JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**

## **RISK FACTOR DATA AND TREND ANALYSIS**

**Philip W. Rhoades, PhD,  
Lilo Burda, MS, and Ryan Hatfield**

**Social Science Research Center**

**January 25, 2014**



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## **Authors**

Philip W. Rhoades, PhD  
Lilo Burda, MS  
Ryan Hatfield

Social Science Research Center  
Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi  
6300 Ocean Dr, #5853  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412

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# NUECES COUNTY JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

## RISK FACTOR DATA AND TREND ANALYSIS

### INTRODUCTION

This report updates the data collection, analysis, and reporting from the 2010 Data Collection and Analysis Project of the Commission for Children and Youth, City of Corpus Christi. It continues the application of the strategic community analysis that occurred in the Youth Opportunities United (YOU) Comprehensive Planning process of 1997-2006. The original intent of the YOU effort was to provide to the community a research and data based image of the risk factors producing juvenile delinquency in Nueces County. The text is structured to support such a community image. However, this report and its companion documents, the *Delinquency Risk Factors with Supporting Data Indicators* file, and the *Delinquency Data Indicators Graphics File*, may be used to examine problem behaviors, community issues, and topics detailed by the data indicators beyond delinquency. This project, like the 2010 one, expands the available data, graphics, and report summaries into other areas with the companion data set and report both entitled: *Nueces County Data Profile: Selected Demographic, Health, Social, Economic, Housing, and Educational Characteristics*. Also, available are ten (10) short fact sheets. The theoretical construct used to structure this risk factor report is “a community model of risk and protective factor-focused prevention” (Catalano, Chappell, & Hawkins, 1996: i) for juvenile delinquency.

The YOU initiative’s foundation was the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s (OJJDP) comprehensive strategy described in the *Guide For Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders* (referred to here as *Guide*) (Howell, 1998) and in *Communities that Care Prevention Strategies: A Research Guide to What Works* (Wong *et al.*, 1996). The comprehensive strategy posits that juvenile delinquency must be addressed along a continuum of action from prevention programs for all youth, through at-risk youth programming, intervention with youth demonstrating problem behaviors, enforcement and sanctions for those engaged in delinquency, and finally aftercare for those incarcerated at the end of graduated sanctions. Strategic planning and program creation for this continuum is guided by five principles: strengthen the family, support core social institutions, promote delinquency prevention, intervene immediately and effectively, and identify and control the small group of serious offenders (Howell, 1998: 7-15). The Commission for Children and Youth encourages everyone in the community to use these documents for such strategic planning, grant writing, and program creation.

**Purpose and Uses:** The Commission for Children and Youth has supported the construction of this set of documents because it believes that they are needed in the community and are very valuable in serving its mission. The Commission believes that all government, private, and non-profit organizations serving families and children in the community need, current, valid, and readily available information for the purposes of policy creation, program development, grant writing, and program evaluation.

To adequately serve a community, one needs as clear an image of the current conditions and trends among the population served as possible. Without such an image, resources, actions, and effort are often misdirected and needs are unmet, problems are not addressed, and waste occurs. The products of this project are founded on the fundamental management principles that decisions making should be evidence based and that evidence should be current, research based data. The information provided from this project will permit community decision makers to engage in strategic and program planning, policy creation, program development, grant writing, and program evaluation from a position of knowledge.

The functions noted above were effectively performed during the YOU initiative from 1997 to 2006. Strategic planning processes occurred internally with YOU and with many community organizations, policies and procedures were changed to make services to youth and families more streamlined and effective, new programs were developed, and program evaluations were conducted which improved service delivery. Of significance was the use of the data and report products of the time for grant writing. The YOU Grant Writing Office and community partners supported by the products coming from the Social Science Research Center produced in excess of twenty-five (25) million dollars in successful grants for the community. When costs for the Office and the SSRC are compared to the result, the community received a 3,600% return on its investment. Problem/needs statements or community assessments based on well presented, valid data are very effective in grant applications. Having such data readily available is a time and effort saving phenomena for the community's grant writing efforts.

The community is encouraged by the Commission to use the reports, fact sheets, graphics, and data. This can be done in a number of ways. The fact sheets, graphics file, and reports may be distributed to committees and decision makers engaged in strategic or program planning or policy creation/analysis in full or in part. Organizations may excerpt portions of any of the products to be inserted into needs assessments supporting such decision making. Grant writing efforts may use appropriate data from the data files to create tables, graphs, or text unique to the grant proposal. Alternatively, sections of text and graphics may be taken from the reports, fact sheets, and graphic file to be inserted as they are into grant proposals. Because the data files, texts, and graphics display trends, the products may be used to assist in program evaluation. Programs designed to address particular community issues may find that appropriate data indicators are available to determine if the past 3, 5 or 10 years of effort have had desired effects. The Commission notes that any community organization may avail itself of these materials.

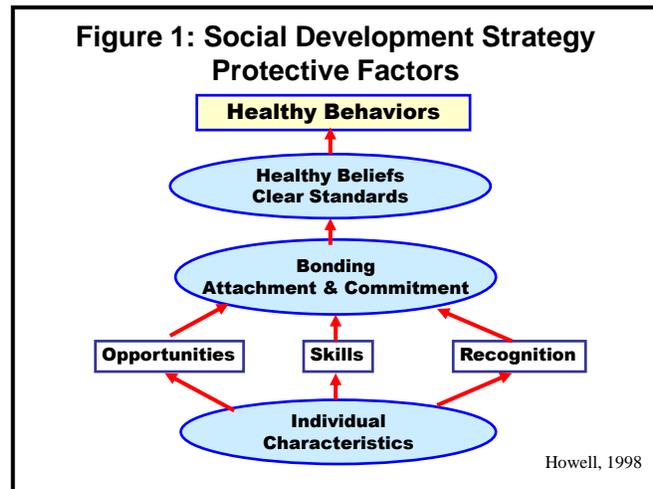
**The Theoretical Model Used:** The approach to delinquency prevention in the

OJJDP model is risk-focused. “This approach states that to prevent a problem from occurring, the factors contributing to the development of that problem must be identified and then ways must be found (protective factors) to address and ameliorate those factors” (Howell, 1998: 11). Risk factors that cause delinquency are found in several domains as listed in the first two columns on Table 1. The 19 risk factors that have empirical support in the literature fit into community, family, school, and individual/peer domains. Each risk factor contributes to the existence of one or more problem behavior: delinquency, violence, substance abuse, academic dropout, and teen pregnancy.

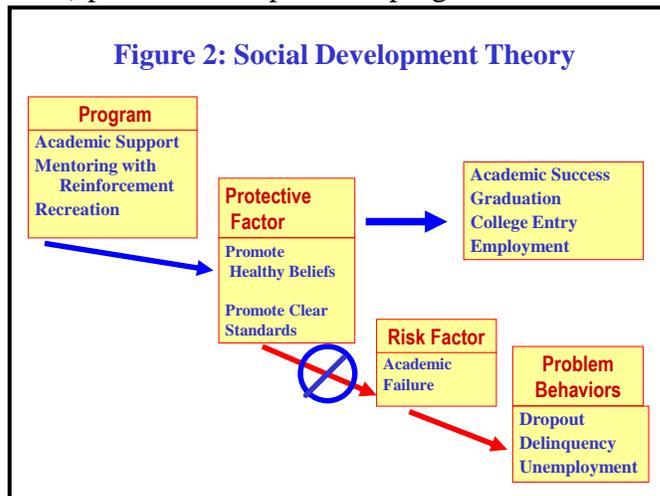
Risk factors may be addressed directly by a community. For example, Extreme Economic Deprivation can be addressed by supporting policies and practices that create higher levels of employment or higher income levels. Alternatively, risk factors can be addressed by the generation of protective factors within the Social Development strategy. Note that all of the OJJDP protective factors address all of the risk factors (Table 1, column 3).

Domain	Risk Factor	Protective Factors
Community	1. Extreme Economic Deprivation 2. Availability of Drugs 3. Transitions and Mobility 4. Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization 5. Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use, Firearms, and Crime 6. Medial Portrayals of Violence 7. Availability of Firearms	Healthy Beliefs  Clear Standards
Family	8. Family Management Problems 9. Family Conflict 10. Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors 11. Family History of the Problem Behavior	Bonding: produced by  Opportunities
School	12. Lack of Commitment to School 13. Academic Failure 14. Early and Persistent Antisocial Behavior	Skills
Individual/Peer	15. Early Initiation of the Problem Behaviors 16. Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior 17. Rebelliousness 18. Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior 19. Constitutional Factors	Recognition

To reduce the problem behaviors, community prevention and intervention efforts should be targeted at reduction of identified risk factors and in the development of and strengthening of protective factors detailed in the Social Development Strategy (Howell, 1998: 23) as diagrammed on Figure 1 and listed in the third column in Table 1. Healthy behaviors are supported through establishing healthy beliefs, clear standards, and bonding. Bonding is supported by providing children with meaningful, challenging opportunities to contribute, teaching them the skills they need to take advantage of opportunities, and providing recognition for their efforts in order to reinforce skillful performance and contribution (Howell, 1998: 23-24).



The *Guide*, and in greater detail, the *Research Guide to What Works* (Wong et al, 1996) provide descriptions of programmatic forms that have been successful in addressing



specific risk factors through evaluation research. Specific program types generate protective factor effects which in turn ameliorate the negative effects of risk factors. This process is described on Figure 2. Programs such as mentoring or academic support promote clear standards and healthy beliefs which support academic success and the proceeding positive outcomes. Successful production of protective factors not only mitigates against

the risk factors, but problem behaviors such as dropout and delinquency may not develop. Instead targeted youth should be academically successful though high school graduation and have positive choices of professional training, college entry, or gainful employment.

For a government agency, a non-profit organization, or a community as a whole to effectively address a particular problem behavior by generating protective factors, it must know which risk factors are most significant in the community. Those significant risk factors are identified by collecting current, valid information on data indicators shown by research to identify the presence of specific risk factors. YOU was guided in this effort by the *Communities that Care Data Workbook* (Catalano, Chappell, & Hawkins, 1998) which links data indicators to risk factors. This work was begun by the

volunteers of the YOU Data Collection and Analysis Workgroup and was passed to the YOU Data Collection and Analysis Office at the SSRC as funding was received for YOU. The 2010 project and the current one have been supported by the Commission for Children and Youth and the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Corpus Christi. Funding for the current effort came from a variety of organizations with a significant share from the Corpus Christi Crime Control and Prevention District.

This report continues to use the risk factors specified in the *Guide*. Additional data indicators have been added. This report and its allied documents provide updates to the most current year of data available within the tables of indicators. For most data indicators, information is available in the *Delinquency Risk Factors with Supporting Data Indicators* from 1990 to the most current year (2010 to 2012 depending on the indicator). The *Delinquency Data Indicators Graphics File* provides visual displays of data typically for five years. However, some charts are for fewer or more years. This graphics file also contains charts for data reported in the *Nueces County Data Profile*, a report that provides description of demographic, health, social, economic, housing, and educational characteristics for Nueces County that are not theoretically connected to juvenile delinquency, but that may be useful of planning, grant writing, and program planning purposes.

This report begins with comments about the County population. Then, it provides an overview of the Primary Risk Factors. It continues with a discussion of each of the 19 risk factors in sections for the Priority Risk Factors followed by other risk factors that have a clear impact and contribute to delinquency in the community, and risk factors for which a clear, strong conclusion cannot be made.

## **THE POPULATION CONTEXT**

The population context for Nueces County remains important. Population data tables are found both in the *Delinquency Risk Factors With Supporting Data Indicators* file and the *Nueces County Data Profile: Selected Demographic, Health, Social, Economic, Housing, and Educational Characteristics* file.

Population figures indicate that Nueces County continues to have families with fewer working age adults available to provide for the young and elderly. The 2011 and 2012 population estimates indicate that Nueces County continues to grow at a slower rate than the State as a whole. Nueces County grew only 8.4% from 2000 to 2010 while the State grew 20.6%. By 2012, Nueces County had 25.4% of its population age 17 and younger compared to 27.3% in Texas. At the same time, 12.6% of the County's population was 65 years and over while only 10.3% of the State was 65 or over. Nueces County had only 62.0% of its population in the 18 to 64 age range that is the primary group available as workers and taxpayers compared to 62.4% for Texas. While this is not a large difference these figures indicate that the County has fewer young people moving into the working ages and more aging out of the working ages. Indeed, the County has 5.5% of its population that is 75 or older compared to only 4.5% for the State. That Nueces County has slightly fewer persons in the working age range is compounded by

the issue of whether or not these individuals can work. In the 21 to 64 age group in 2012 for Nueces County, 12% had a disability compared to a lower 10% in Texas. These data do not show what proportion of those with a disability have limitations on their capacity to work, but it is logical to assume that that proportion is higher in the County than it is in Texas as a whole.

In 2012, the County had a median household size of 2.68 that is lower than the State's 2.75. The County had a median family size of 3.23 which was also slightly lower than the State at 3.31. Also, 36.4% of Nueces County households have persons under 18, while 38.9% of households Statewide have persons under 18. These data on household and family size appear to show an advantage for Nueces County with slightly smaller family size, but data on family composition reveal problematic realities. Nueces County has more single parent families with 3.4% of families with children having only a male head of household and 8.7% with only a female head of household. Texas reports 2.5% and 8.4% respectively. Therefore, while Nueces County families are about the same size as those in Texas, the County has more that have only one adult. Also, found in the County data (2011) is that 10,799 grandparents live with their own grandchildren. Of these families, 48.6% in Nueces County, but only 42.8% in Texas, the grandparent(s) is (are) responsible for the children in the home. Therefore, while Nueces County families are slightly smaller than the State average, they are more likely to have a single parent or a grandparent as the responsible adult and are more likely to contain a disabled family member.

With a lower household median income in 2011 than the State (\$49,390), Nueces County (\$43,470) has more families, adults, and children in poverty. Nueces County families must try to support a similar number of people as families in Texas as a whole with fewer workers available and less income for those that do work. Nueces County families have fewer resources available to deal with risk factors in this community compared to the State.

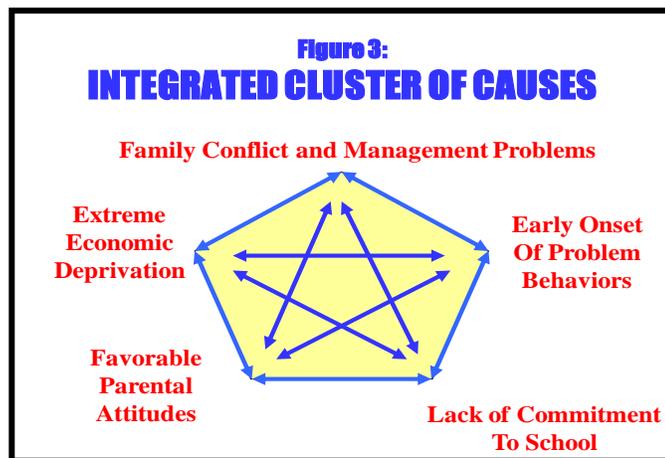
## **PRIORITY RISK FACTORS: AN OVERVIEW**

Within the comprehensive strategy process, data indicators are collected for each of the 19 risk factors. A judgment (here by the authors) is then made about each risk factor in regard to their probable effect on the problem behaviors in the community and their importance compared to the other risk factors. The risk factors that are shown by data and analysis to have the most serious effect and strongest proof of existence are labeled Priority Risk Factors. For the purposes of planning and creating prevention and intervention programmatic responses, Priority Risk Factors are the most important to address and their amelioration or prevention will have the greatest effect in reducing the problem behaviors. The data reported here confirm a group of six (6) risk factors as the Priority Risk Factors for Nueces County/Corpus Christi. This group has changed little since the 1999 YOU Comprehensive Plan and the last group reported by for the Commission in 2010. This report concludes that the Priority Risk Factors for the community include:

1. **Family Management Problems**
2. **Family Conflict**
3. **Extreme Economic Deprivation**
4. **Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors**
5. **Lack of Commitment to School**
6. **Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior**

The Priority Risk Factors appear to be fueling the five problem behaviors: delinquency, violence, substance abuse, drop out, and teen pregnancy. Of significance are the data indicators related to the problem behaviors of delinquency and substance abuse. These indicators demonstrate that for both adults and juveniles alcohol and substance use and abuse have remained higher than levels reported for the State. Over the past 5 years, adult arrests for alcohol offenses have remained declined, remain double the level for the State. Arrests for drug offenses have also decreased but remain higher than the State. Adult arrests for property crimes have remained stable, but a recent increase has occurred with violent crime. Juvenile arrests for both alcohol and drug offenses have decreased, but remain higher than the state. Juvenile arrests for violent and property crime reflect rates double those for the State. Juvenile arrests for property offenses among those 10 to 14 years of age have increased significantly in the past 3 years of data. This younger age group demonstrates a rate of arrest for violence that is triple the rate for the State. Also, the rate of arrest of all juveniles for curfew, vandalism, and disorderly conduct has increased. Data show that school attendance rates have remained stable and attrition rates to graduation have declined. However, these are worse than State rates. While the rate of teen pregnancies has declined, the County rate remains higher than that for the State.

The priority risk factors are those which are clearly indicative of problems for Corpus Christi and Nueces County. They form an integrated cluster, related by cause and effect with each risk factor also serving to compound the effects of the others. This relationship is demonstrated on the Figure 3. It shows that all of the Priority Risk Factors relate to each of the others. Worsening conditions or improvements in any priority risk factor will have an effect on all of the other factors. If risk in one area can be prevented such as some improvements in economic conditions or parental capacity to manage families, it is likely that lack of commitment to school and early initiation of the problem behaviors will decrease.



Of concern the County's economic conditions that appear to have improved without reducing the number of families and children that live in poverty. **Extreme Economic Deprivation** may have increased for the County's children. While per capita income has been steadily increasing in Nueces County, the large gap remains between the County and the Statewide and National income levels. The proportions of County families and children in poverty remain higher than the State and Nation and have increased. The proportion of families with children in poverty reached its highest recorded level in 2011 at 21.8%. The proportion of children also reached its highest recorded level in 2011 at 33.5%. This record has also been set for the proportion of children from economically disadvantaged families in the Corpus Christi Independent School District (69.8% in 2011-2012). The proportion of children from economically disadvantaged families was higher in the 2011-2012 school year than in the 2006-2007 school year for the Calallen, Corpus Christi, Flour Bluff, Tuloso Midway, and West Oso School Districts. **Extreme Economic Deprivation** is not just an important risk factor for this community. It may be the driving force in Family Management Problems and Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors.

It appears that the worsening economic conditions for families and children have contributed to a stability in **Family Management Problems and Family Conflict**. In 2012, the rate of abused children per 1,000 children was significantly lower than its record high in 2009 for the County, but remains more 36.9% higher than the State rate. Also, in 2011, a record number of children were treated for child abuse at Driscoll Children's Hospital and the record rate of confirmed Adult abuse cases was tied. The rate of family violence reports per 1,000 population reached a high in 2011.

Stress from both economic conditions and family conflict contribute to adult participation in criminal behavior which, in turn, provides negative role modeling for youth. The data for **Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors** indicate much higher rates of involvement in crime by adults than for the State as a whole. While the adult arrest rate in 2011 for violent crime in the County is slightly lower than in 2009 increased from 2010 to 2011. For 2011, it is 79.0% higher than the rate for the State. The 2011 County arrest rates for alcohol offenses show a decline from 2008 and property offenses while increasing are still below the 2008 high. However, alcohol arrests were 110% and property arrests were 70.2% higher than the 2011 State rates. The County rate of adult arrests for drug offences stabilized over the 2009-2011 time compared to the previous 5 years, but in 2011 it was 70.8% higher than the rate for the State. The sale of alcohol has been increasing as has the number of adults in drug or alcoholism treatment. The rate of adults in treatment in the State has been declining. The County rate is 544.8% higher than that for the State.

Role modeling of negative behaviors at an early age is found within the data indicators for **Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior**. The rate for property offense arrests for the 10-14 age group in the County had decreased to lows in 2006 and 2007, but since that time the TCR rate of arrest has increased 81.6% to an all-time high in 2011. For that year, it was 144.2% higher than that for the State. The 10-14 age group's rate of arrests for violent offenses has demonstrated an increasing trend in the County over the

four years leading to 2008 and then doubled in 2010. It dropped back to the 14.5 per 10,000 rate in 2011. At that level, it was 159.8% higher than the State rate. For drug offenses in the County, the rate for this age group reached a peak in 2009 in both Texas Crime Reports (TCR) and Juvenile Probation Department figures. It dropped to a low in 2011 in TCR data, but remained double the rate for the State. The Juvenile Department figure for 2012 reflects an increase from 2011. These and other indicators in the report clear show that youth initiate their participation in the problem behaviors at an earlier age here than in the State as a whole.

The risk factor **Lack of Commitment to School** remains in the Priority Risk Factors because its data indicators demonstrate recent issues with remaining in school. Juvenile Probation Department data indicate that referrals for truancy significantly increased in 2010 and 2011 even though the rate dropped significantly in 2012. The same agency reports that referrals for have declined from 2008 to less than half that level in 2012. A measure of attrition, the number of entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders that are still present at graduation from high school, indicates a reduced number of youth failing to reach graduation from the class of 2005 to the class of 2011 where the attrition rate was 30.2%. While improving, the large proportion of youth that do not complete high school still indicates a **Lack of Commitment to School** in the County.

The integrated nature of the priority risk factors is a reminder that the community's work must remain collaborative and comprehensive. Programmatic advances in the City/County need to be integrated with and contribute to the range of protective responses already in place. The work of the future needs to remain focused on the Priority Risk Factors and Factors with Clear Impact as detailed in the following.

## **PRIORITY RISK FACTORS: THE DETAILS**

- 1. Family Management Problems**
- 2. Family Conflict**
- 3. Extreme Economic Deprivation**
- 4. Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior**
- 5. Lack of Commitment to School**
- 6. Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior**

All of the priority risk factors are related to the five problem behaviors: delinquency, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, violence, and dropout. Their integration assists in designing strategies for their amelioration and strategies chosen to affect one will likely affect the others. At least one of the four priority risk factor sets is found in each of the four domains: community, family, school, and individual/peer. Thus, appropriate response strategies may be found in any of the four domains.

The Priority Risk Factor Sets are reported in their order of seriousness for the community.

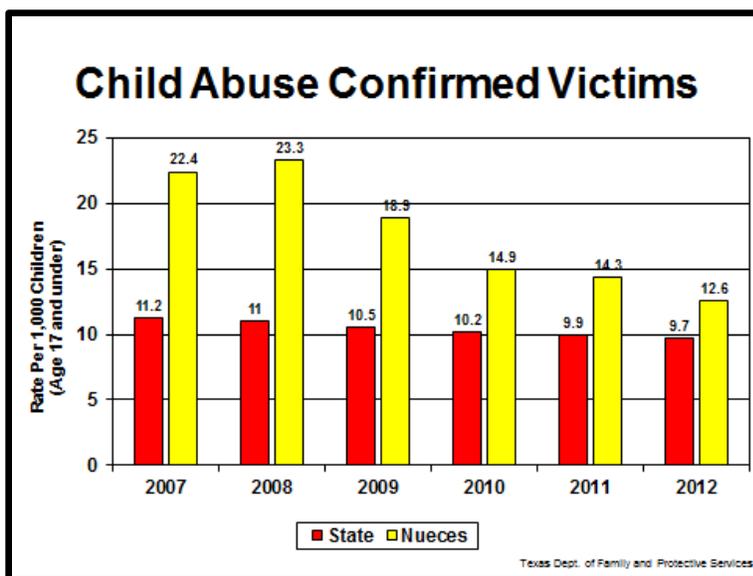
### **1. & 2. Family Management Problems and Family Conflict.**

These risk factors have been grouped together because they are inherently related. Families that are experiencing management problems are families in conflict. Failure of a marriage due to conflict is a failure in cooperative management of the family as a social unit.

The research literature well supports the conclusions that child abuse, domestic violence, family conflict, and failure of parenting contribute to juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. These problems contribute to the cycle of violence wherein children growing up in negative environments grow up to be ineffective and potentially abusive parents themselves. Nueces County is an example of the reality of these research findings.

**Family Management Problems:** From 2007 to 2012, the total investigations for child abuse and neglect increased 1.7% for the State. In the same time period, total investigations decreased 19.4% for Nueces County. During the same time, the State recorded a drop of 8.7% in confirmed cases from those investigations while the County recorded a drop of 39.7%. However, these data conceal the more disturbing fact that the rate of confirmed victims of child abuse in Nueces County is higher than that for the State.

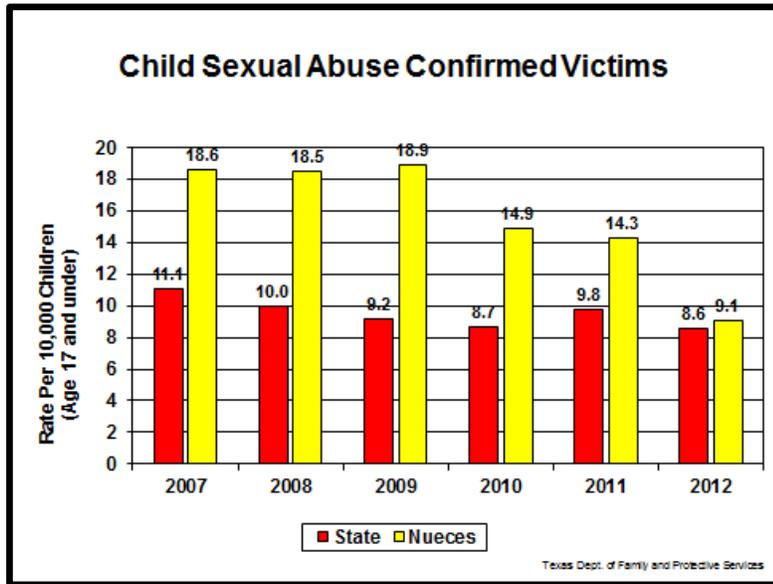
From 2007 to 2012, the State rate (per 1,000 children) of child abuse confirmed victims decreased by 13.4% to 9.7. In the same time, the Nueces County rate decreased by 43.7% to a rate of 12.6. This dramatic decline is a very positive change. However, the County rate of confirmed child abuse victims remains 29.9% higher than that for State. This difference is likely due



only in part to a higher reporting rate in the County. It most likely reflects a real difference in the number of children experiencing abuse. These data do raise some interesting questions. Child abuse rates tend to be responsive to economic conditions and indicators of adult behavior. Employment levels have dropped and while income levels have increased, family and child poverty have increased over the time period that child abuse rates have decreased. The reverse should be true. Also, adult crime levels have either dropped or remained relatively stable. These crime rates would support some, but not such a large decline in the child abuse rates. The reduction in child abuse rates from

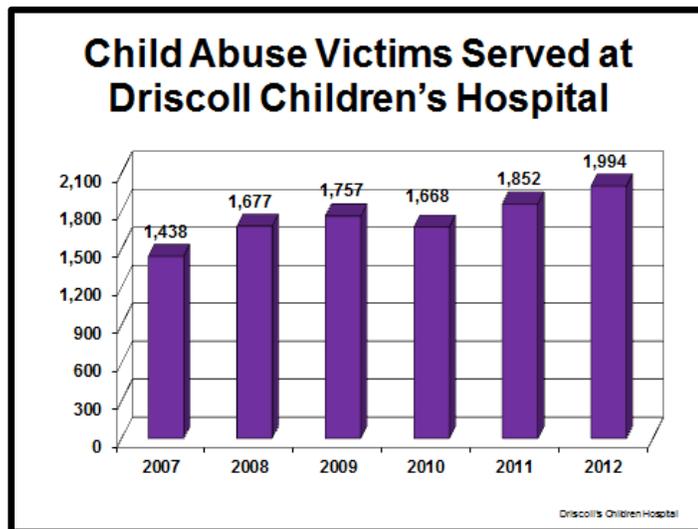
2008 to the present is a very positive change that appears to be occurring in the face of trends that would mitigate against such improvement.

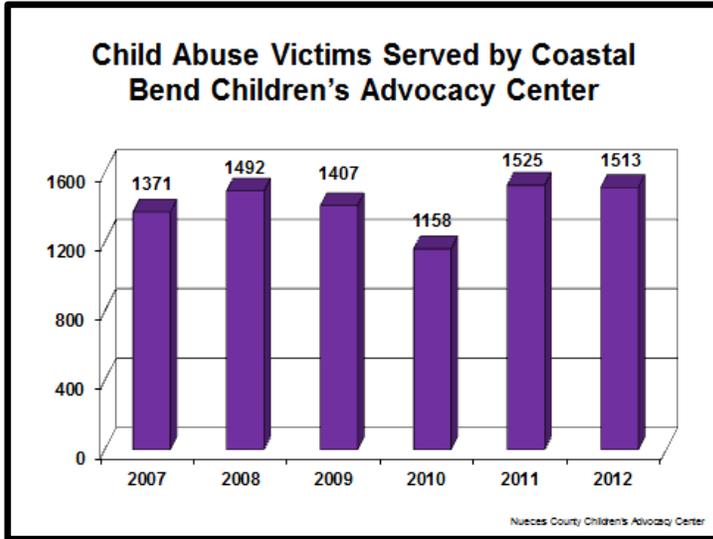
Child sexual abuse victimization has been a significant problem for Nueces County when compared to the State. From 2003 to 2008, the State rate (per 10,000 children) of confirmed child sexual abuse victims decreased 18.9% to 10.04. During this time period, the Nueces County rate decreased 19.9% to 18.55. It remained near that level through 2011 and then declined



dramatically as noted on the chart. The State rate dropped 6.5% from 2009 to 2012 for a rate of 8.6 per 10,000 children. The County rate decreased over the same time period by 106.7% to a rate of 9.4 in 2012.

Confirmed child abuse victims can be further evidenced through the number of clients served by local response agencies. Driscoll Foundation Children's Hospital reports a 38.6% increase in child abuse victims treated from 2007 to 2012. This continues a long term trend for the Hospital. It should be noted that Driscoll Children's Hospital serves a region and that only a portion of the children identified as abused come from Nueces County. This does point to a problematic trend within the region served by the Hospital.

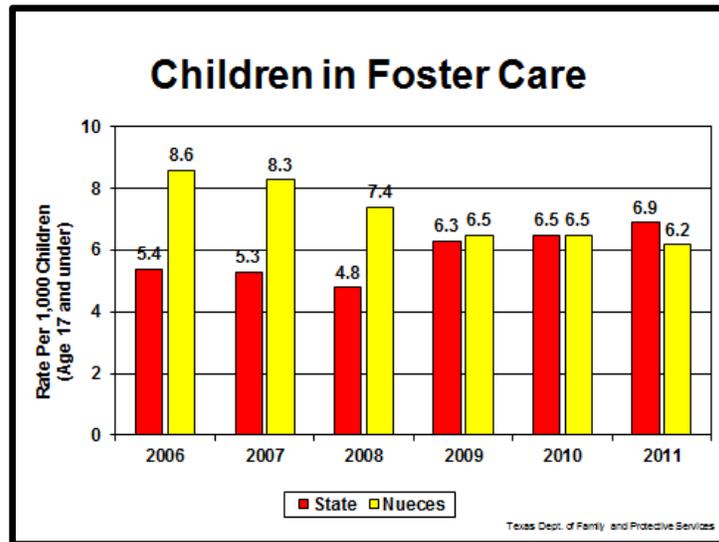




The number of children served by the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of the Coastal Bend generally increased from 2003 to 2011 to its highest level. In 2012, the number of children served dropped 21.1% to 336 children. From 2007 to 2012, the number of children treated at Coastal Bend Children's Advocacy Center for sexual assault and serious physical abuse increased 10.4% to 1,513 with a much lower figure

occurring in 2010 (see Chart). Note also that the data for these two agencies reflect regional service areas, not just Nueces County. However, these figures help provide an understanding of the need for victims' services and the significant workload being experience by local agencies.

From 2006 to 2011, the State rate (per 1,000 children) of children living in foster parent homes increased 27.7% after a two year decline. The Nueces County has demonstrated an overall decline from 2006 to 2011 as seen in the Chart. The County rate dropped 27.9% across that time period to a lower rate of 6.2 than that for the State at 6.9. This is the first year on record where the County rate for foster care has been below that of the State since the data collection effort began in 1998.



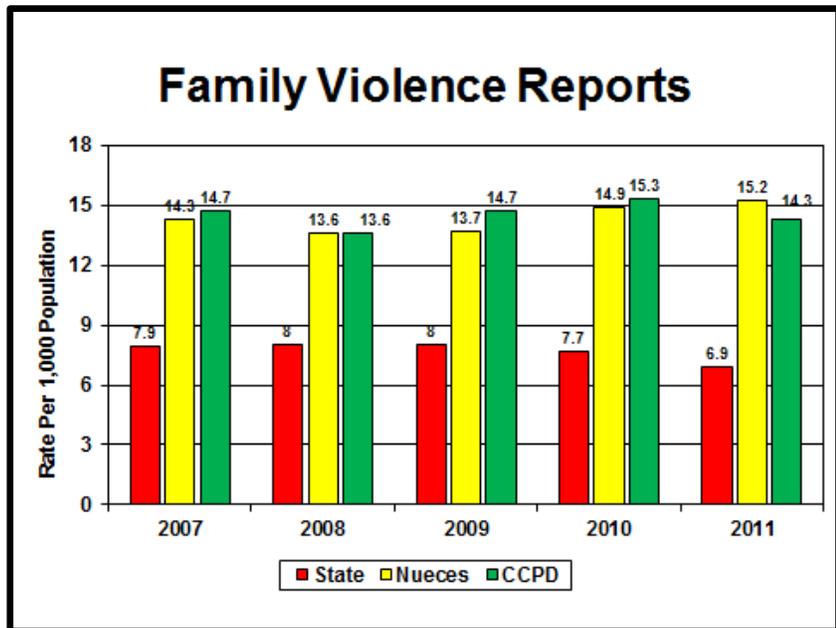
Two alternate sources of data for runaways have previously existed and permitted comparisons between National, State and County data. The National crime reports appear to have terminated the reporting of runaway. The State level data from the Juvenile Probation Commission for all juvenile offenses is not available for the past 5 years due to software issues. What can be said is that at all levels runaway appeared to have been decreasing across the previous decade. A low of 7.2 referrals per 1,000 youth was recorded in Nueces County for 2008. Since that time higher rates of runaway have been reported. The rate in 2012 of 12.15 is a 68.5% increase over the 2008 rate, but it is half

that from the 2000 to 2002 time period. Where data are available, County runaway rates have been higher than those for the State.

The data indicators reported above demonstrate that **Family Management Problems** remain significant in the community. However, higher levels of confirmed child abuse cases and children served by Driscoll Children’s Hospital and the Advocacy Center indicate that the community provides services to a greater number of victimized children and their families than elsewhere in the State. These services produce protective factors for this risk factor. It may be a very positive thing that agencies have increased their service delivery.

**Family Conflict:** According to *The Texas Crime Reports*, the State rate (per 1,000 population) of family violence reports dropped about 8 from over the 2006 to 2009 period to 6.9 in 2011.

From 2007 to 2011, the Nueces County rate increased 6.3% to 15.2. According to the Corpus Christi Police Department, from 2007 to 2011, the Corpus Christi rate of family violence reports has varied, but has ended slightly lower at 14.3. It is strikingly clear that family violence is a serious problem in Nueces County because both the

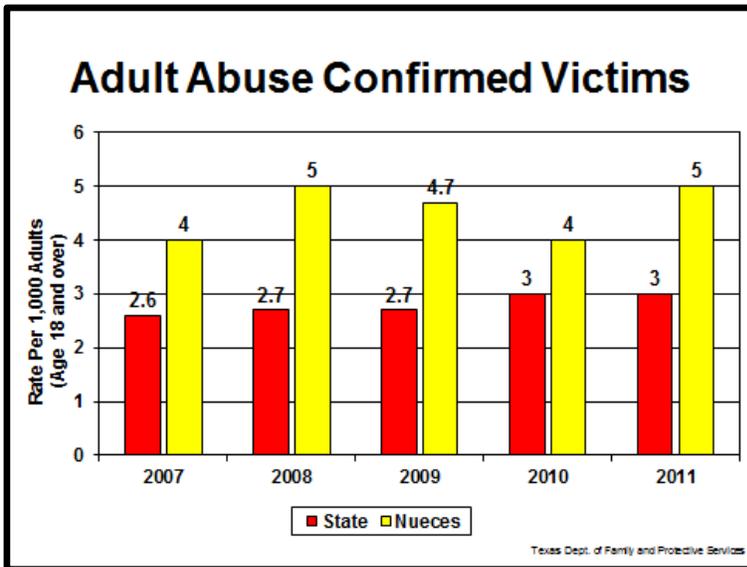
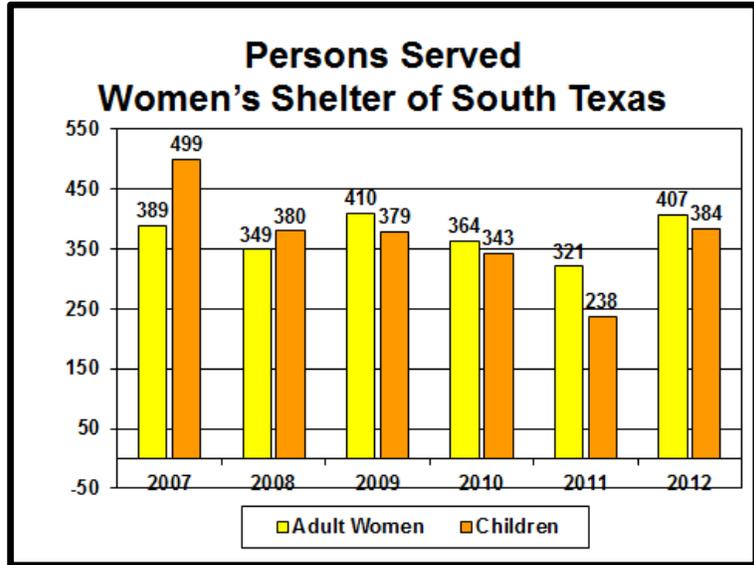


Nueces County and Corpus Christi rates are significantly higher than the State rate of family violence reports. The County rate for 2011 is 120.3% higher than that for the State. The data show that a greater proportion of the County’s families are in conflict than those in the State as a whole. The County and the City rates appear to be relatively stable and consistently higher than the State’s.

An indicator that domestic violence in Nueces County has been at a higher level than the State are the figures for the number of domestic violence victims served by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. From 2003 to 2009, the number of victims served in Texas decreased 0.8%. From 2004 to 2009, the number of victims served in Nueces County increased 28.4%. Note that these figures are older than most in this report. Attempts to obtain more recent data have not been successful. The Project will continue to seek these data for future adjustments of the data file, charts and report. Newer figures were available from the Women’s Shelter of South Texas. These data indicate that while the number of women and children served by the Shelter decreased

over the 2007 to 2011, an increase was experienced in 2012 to much higher levels. The increase from 2011 to 2012 in adult women being provided shelter was 26.8%.

From these two indicators, it may be concluded that family conflict remains a problem in the community. It is important to see these data also as indicators that services are receiving services. These services provide a protective response that mitigates against the effects of the risk factor of Family Conflict.

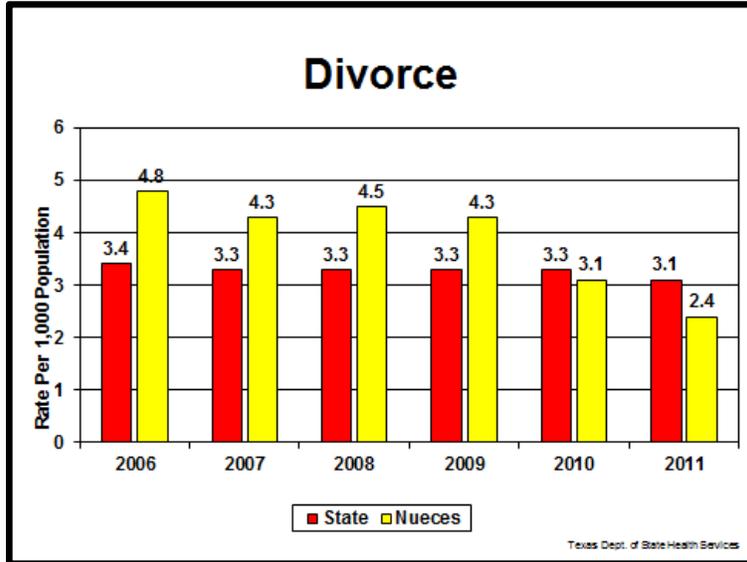


When examining the data from Texas Department of Family and Protective Services on confirmed adult abuse victims, the State rate (per 1,000 adults) has increased from 2.6 to 3 from 2007 to 2011. In the same time period, the County rate has fluctuated between highs and lows but has basically increased 25% to a rate of 5.0 in 2011. The higher rate of adult abuse in the County compared to the State mirrors that of the child abuse present in the County. The

2011 rate reflects a continuation of an increase in the rate of adult abuse that started in 1998.

Since 1998 when these data were first collected for earlier editions of this report, the divorce rate in Nueces County has been higher than the State divorce rate. However, that changed in 2010. The divorce rate for the State remained stable at 3.3 per 1,000 population from 2005 with few exceptions. It then declined to 3.1 in 2011. The County rate had been above 4.2 and as high as 4.8 across this same time period. It fell to a lower rate than the State in 2010 for the first time and dropped again to an all-time low of 2.4 per 1,000 population in 2011. The information in the *Nueces County Profile* on marriage indicate a marriage rate for the County that had been above 7 per 1,000 population from

2005 to 2009. A one year drop to 6.2 was experienced in 2010 and then an increase occurred to 7.7 in 2011 and again to 9.0 in 2012. A change is also found at the 2009 time point in the proportion of all households headed by single adults. The proportion of household headed by a single female with no husband present had been 30% or higher until 2009 where this category has dropped to the 15-17% level. The proportion of households headed by a single male with no wife present had been at 9-11% until 2009 where it has dropped to the 6-7% level.



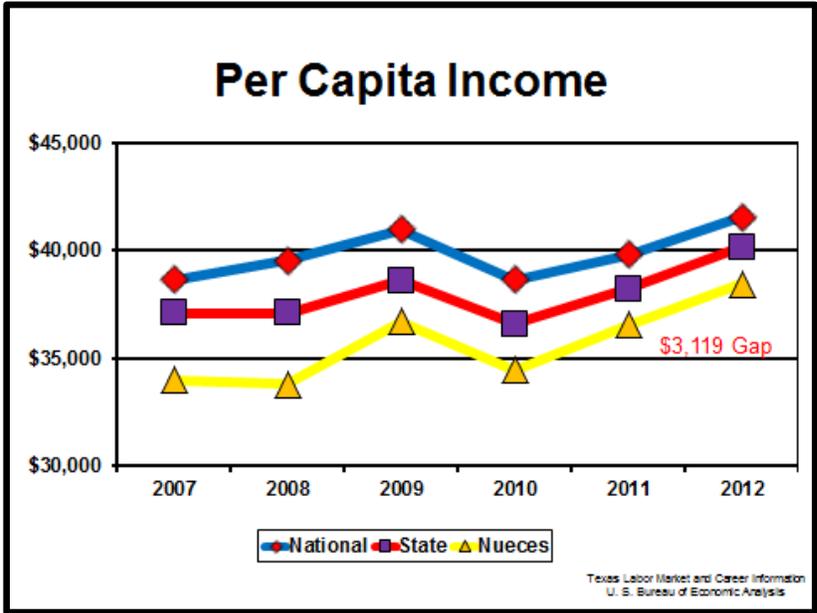
In both categories, the proportion of these single adult household with children is higher that the State level across the 2010-2012 time period. It is possible that the economic conditions of the County contributed to an increase in marriage and a decrease in both divorce and households with single parents. This speculation is supported by the data below which shows that child poverty was decreasing in the County through 2008 and began a dramatic increase in 2009. At the same time increasing median household income reversed with a significant drop in 2009 even though it has begun to rise again. It is very possible that an increase in marriage and a reduction in divorce in the County are related to economic conditions over the past 5 to 6 years.

The data presented above demonstrate that the two risk factors **Family Management Problems and Family Conflict** are clearly present in the community. Data indicators for child abuse and other forms of domestic violence show higher affects here than in the State as a whole.

### 3. Extreme Economic Deprivation.

Family management problems and conflict occur often in situations of family stress. A significant stress on families are their financial conditions. The following data show some gains for Nueces County. However, economic conditions in the County are worse overall than in the State. **Extreme Economic Deprivation** remains an important risk factor for this community.

Nueces County clearly demonstrates worse economic conditions than the Nation or the State. One way of looking at economic deprivation is through the use of per capita income figures. Per capita income in the Nation, State, and County increased over the decade leading to 2009. For this whole time period, the County per capita income was lower than that for the State and the State's was lower than the Nation's. From a peak in

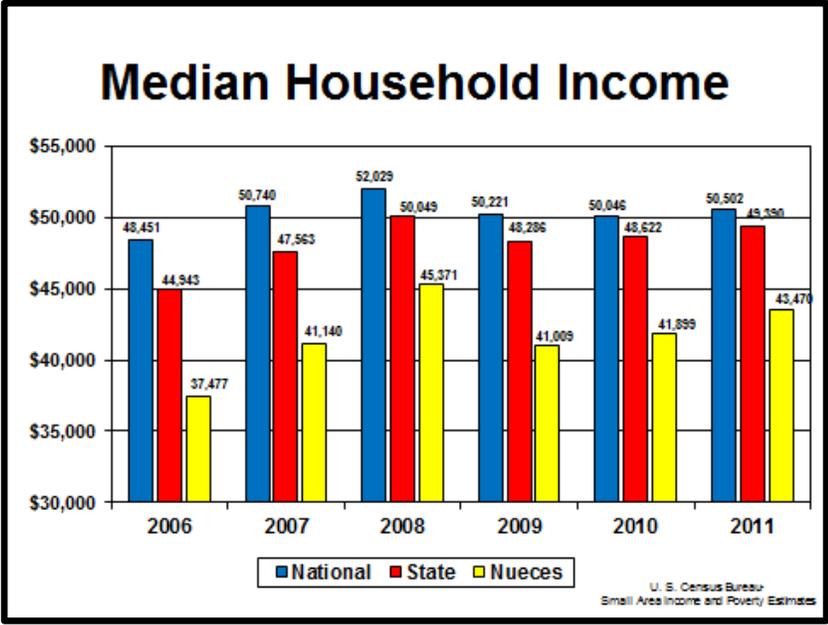


2009, per capita income fell at all levels in 2010. It has come back from that low at all levels. The 2010 to 2012 increase for the Nation was 7.6% to \$41,560. In the same time period, the per capita income in Texas increased 9.7% to \$40,147 and the per capita income in Nueces County increased 11.6% to \$38,441.

While the recent improvement is

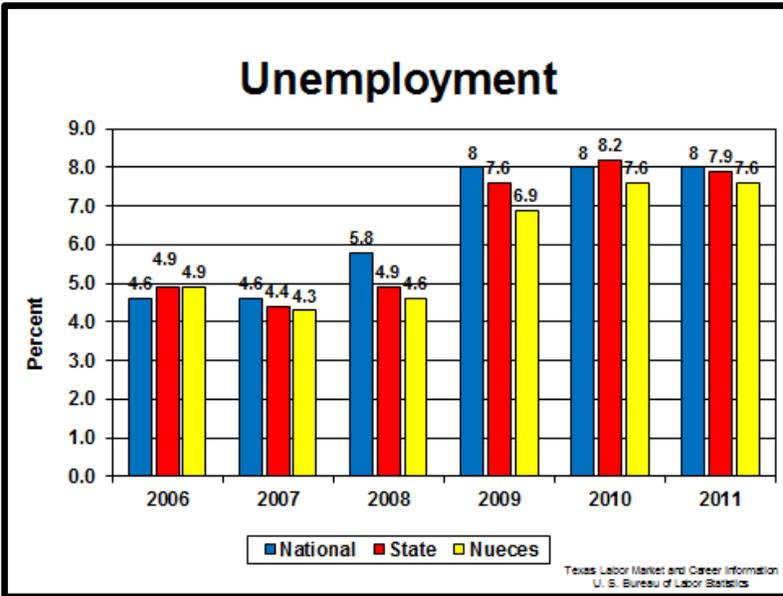
remarkable and is at a higher level for the County than for the State or Nation,, the per capita income in Nueces County is still significantly lower than the Nation's and the State's. As noted on the graph, Nueces County residents earned \$3,119 less per capita than the National income figure for 2012, a difference of 7.5% of the national figure.

The median household income for the Nation, State, and County levels had been steadily increasing from 1990 until 2009. The recession caused a drop of household income at all levels. The County drop was 9.6% of the 2008 level. From 2009 to 2011, median household income has improved at all levels, but it has not yet returned to the highs



recorded in 2008. For all of the time in the available data, the State has ranked behind the National level with the 2011 State median income being \$49,390 compared to the National median income of \$50,502. The County median ranks even lower than the State's. In 2011, the County's median household income was \$43,470. The County's median is \$5,920 less than the State's and \$7,032 less than the Nation's median income.

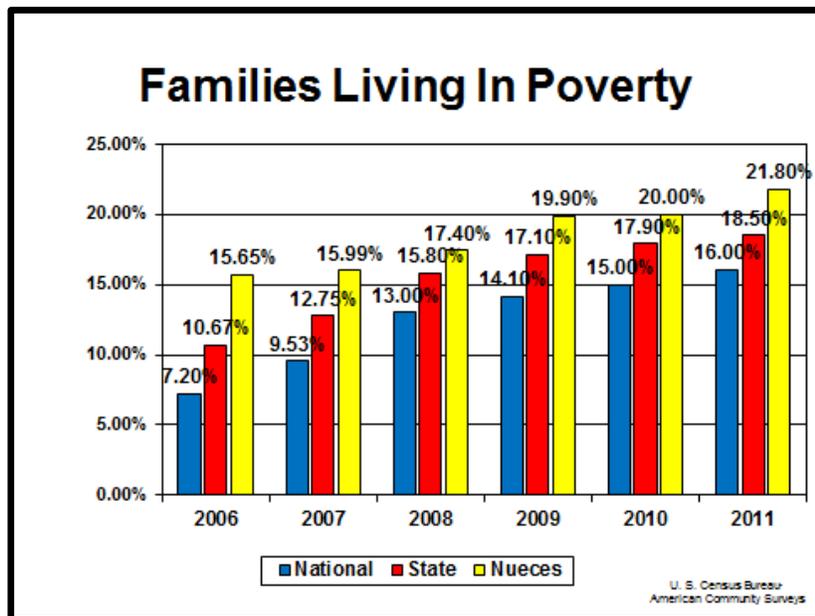
These data mean that families in the County, though of similar size to that for the State have less income to cover the needs of family life.



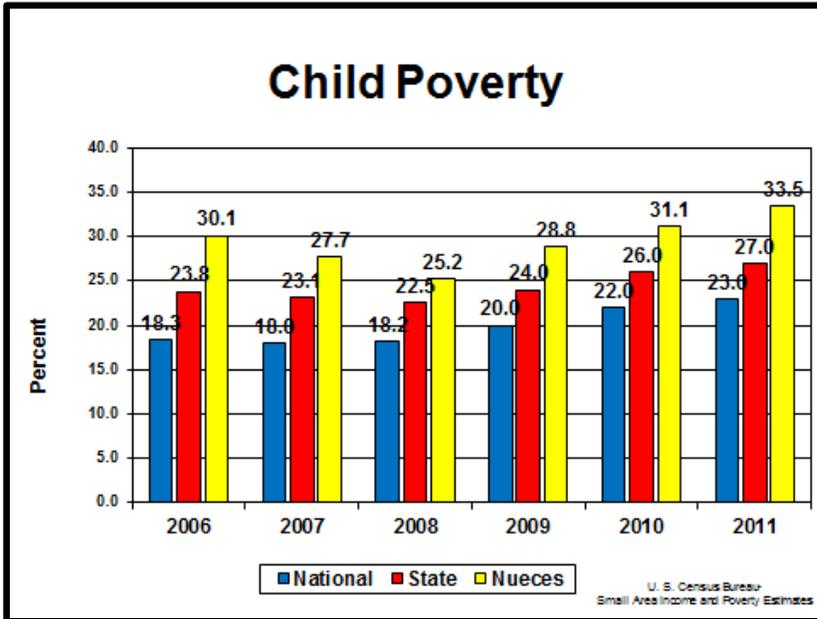
Unemployment in the County had historically been higher than State levels. It is possible to demonstrate this with data extending back more than forty years. However, more recently, from 2007 to 2011, unemployment rates in Nueces County have been lower than those in Texas. From 2003 to 2008, unemployment in Nueces County decreased 29.2% to a percentage of 4.6. At

that point the economic downturn caused a return of much higher unemployment rates for the Nation, State and County. The increase in unemployment for the County from 2008 to 2011 has been 65.2% from the low of 4.6 to the 2011 level of 7.6. An important consideration about employment is described in the *Nueces County Profile* report. The County's employment situation is better than the State's in number, but not in the nature of the jobs available. The County has a greater proportion of its jobs in lower paying positions in industries that do not necessarily provide higher levels of income. Thus, with better unemployment figures, income levels as per capita income and as median household income remain lower than those for the State.

The proportion of families living below the poverty level has been gradually increasing for the Nation, State, and County regardless of changes in employment rates and median family income levels. From 2007 to 2011, the proportion of families living below the poverty level in Nueces County increased 36.3%. This is a lower increase than that for the Nation that



increased 72.0% and the State that increased 45.1%. From 2004 to 2011, the proportion of families living below the poverty level in Nueces County has been higher than that for the Nation and the State. In 2011, the County's proportion of families in poverty was 21.8% which was higher than the State at 18.5% and the Nation at 16.0%. The accompanying chart shows this annual increase of families in poverty very clearly.

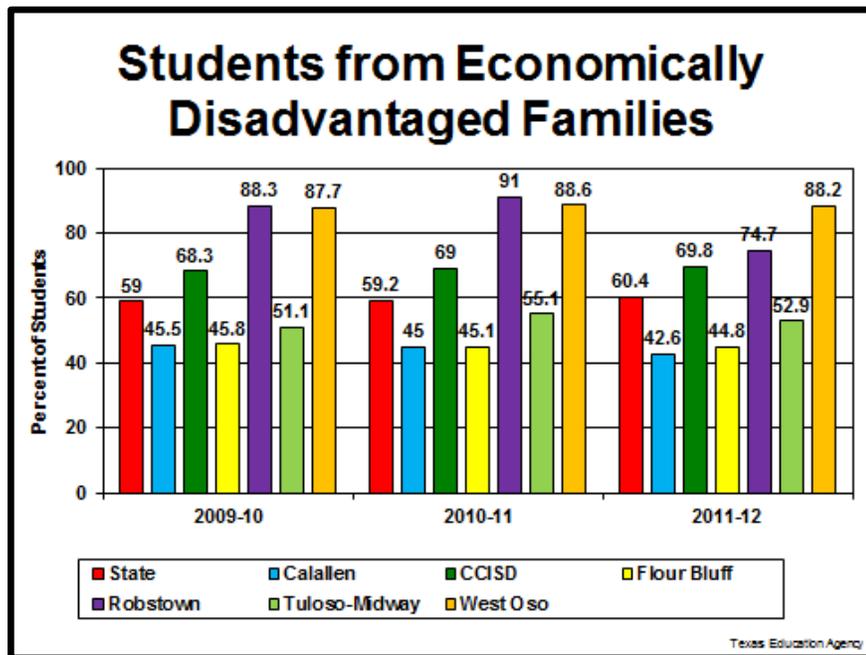


A much starker image is found with the proportion of children living in poverty. The percentage of children in poverty in the Nation, State, and County has increased to 2011 from lower levels found in 2006 and 2007. The State and County proportions had actually dropped to lows by 2008 (for the County a record low), but began to climb to higher levels that have

set all-time records. The increase for the State from 2008 to 2011 has been 20% and for the County it has been 32.9%. The 2011 County figure means that slightly greater than one-third (33.5%) of the children in the County live in conditions of poverty. The County's proportion is 45.6% higher than that for the Nation and 24.1% higher than that for the State. The change from a record low level of children in poverty for the County to a record high in four years will potentially contribute to undesired changes in educational and delinquency indicators over the next several years.

Economic deprivation is also evidenced by the school district data on children from economically disadvantaged families. These are students that qualify for free or reduced cost lunch due to their families' economic status. Data for the State and the six largest school districts in the County are found in the *Risk Factor Data File* and for all school districts in the County in the *Nueces County Profile Data File*. For the State and four of the largest school districts, the proportion of students from economically disadvantaged families has increased over the 2007-2008 to 2011-2012 academic years. Some reduction in that proportion has occurred in the West Oso and Robstown Districts. However, these last two districts remain considerably higher than the State and the other districts in the County as can be seen on the chart.

The proportions in the 2011-2012 school year ranged as low as 42.6% for Calallen ISD to as high as 88.2% for West Oso ISD. CCISD reported 69.8% of its students to be economically disadvantaged that year which establishes a record high. This CCISD figure is important as the number of students



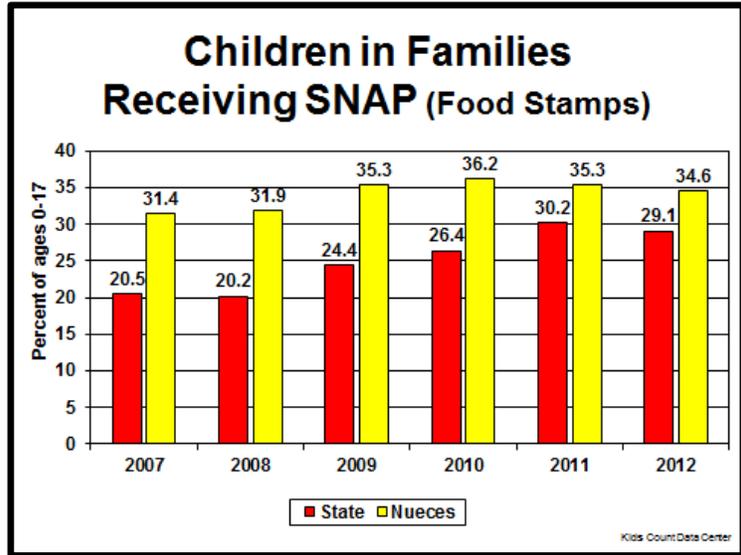
in that District totals more than the others combined. The 2011-2012 proportion for CCISD is an 11.8% increase over its 2007-2008 figure and is 15.6% higher than the State proportion for 2011-2012. Summed across all of the reporting districts in the County, it appears that a majority of local school children come from economically disadvantaged families.

An increase has occurred in the number of infants and children (Age 0-4) receiving assistance through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program at the State and County levels. From 2005 to 2010 the State recorded an increase of 7.6% to 43.6% of children age 0-4. At the same time the County recorded an increase of 11.4% to 51.6%. This was 12,429 children in the County, a record number and a higher proportion (18.3% higher) than at the State level.

The percentage of children under 18 without health insurance coverage in Nueces County for 2010 was 11.3%. This is higher than the proportion for the Nation at 8.5%, but lower than that for the State at 15.3%. In relation to these figures, the proportions of children enrolled in CHIP for the State and County in 2012 were 8.0% and 8.1% respectively. This is a very good increase in enrolled children from the low in 2007 of only 4.8%.

The Project has had difficulty in obtaining data for recent years for State subsidized child care and the number of children in Head Start. Notice also that the information on insurance was found only to 2010. Some continued effort will be made to find these data. They have not been found on appropriate web-sites and e-mail and telephone requests for the data have not been answered.

Children in families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance or SNAP (food stamps) as measured by the proportion of children 0 to 17 (monthly average) had drastically increased from 2001 to 2006 at both the State and County levels. This increase continued to 2010 and then a small decrease has occurred to 2012. However, the State proportion increase from 2007 to 2012 has been 41.9% while the County increase has been only 10.2%. The County proportion of children receiving SNAP remains higher than that for the State. The County's proportion in 2012 was 34.6% which was 18.9% higher than that for the State at 29.1%.



The number and proportion of children age 18 and under enrolled in Medicaid have increased at both the State and County levels. From 2007 to 2011, a 20.9% increase in the proportion of children enrolled in Medicaid occurred at the State level and only a 1.3% increase occurred at the County level. As the County proportion has been relatively similar across the past 5 years, the State figure has climbed higher. Thus, in 2012 the County proportion of children enrolled in Medicaid at 37.5% was only 13.98% higher than the State proportion at 32.9%. This is the lowest difference between the County and State proportions since 1999.

The number of children in families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) decreased significantly from 2005 to 2010 at both the State and County levels. During this time period, a decrease of 48.1 % occurred at the State level and a 50.0% decrease occurred at the County level. When examining the percent of children in families receiving TANF in 2010, the County had a higher percent (21.4%) enrolled when compared to the State. The decrease does not appear to be in relation to actual economic conditions in the County or the State, but rather it is due to changes in policy concerning eligibility for assistance.

From 2007 to 2012, the number of food stamps recipients of all ages in the County increased 22.9%, Medicaid recipients of all ages increased by 12.3%, from 2007 to 2011.

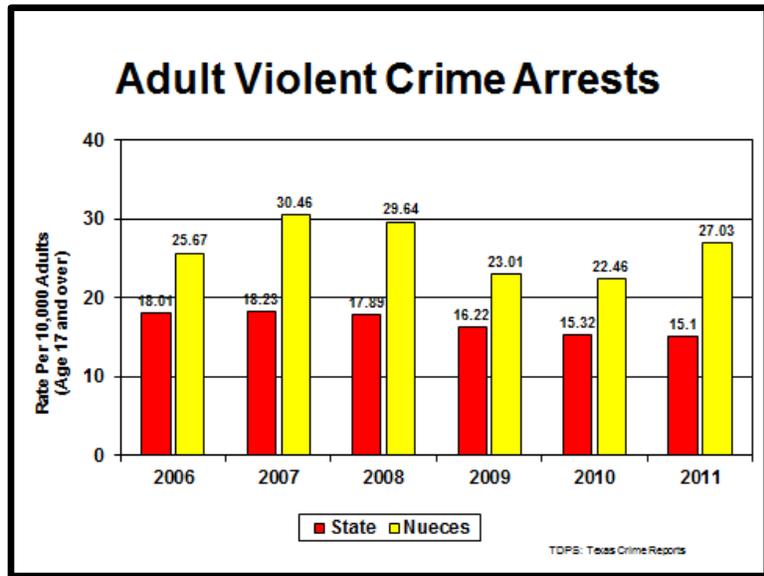
These data show that the number of individuals receiving State aid has increased in the County, as have the major indicators of poverty. The large increases in State assistance do not appear to be due to policy changes. They appear to reflect a growing poverty problem in Nueces County. More families and children are eligible for assistance

because more families and children are living in conditions of poverty. These data indicators demonstrate that **Extreme Economic Deprivation** is a significant risk factor for the community.

#### 4. Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior.

Children whose parents or guardians engage in problem behaviors or who have expressed attitudes that are favorable to such behaviors are likely to engage in the problem behaviors. A clear pattern appears between the data indicators for this risk factor and Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior by juveniles. When examining adult and juvenile violent crimes, property crimes, alcohol- and drug-related arrests, Nueces County has a significantly higher rates than the State.

Violent crimes as counted here include homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, and sexual assault. Adult violent crimes arrests have remained relatively have been declining in the State, but after a decrease from 2008 to 2009, violent crime arrests have increased in the County to 2011. From 2007 to 2011, the rate of adult (per 10,000 adults age 17 years and older) violent crimes arrests decreased in

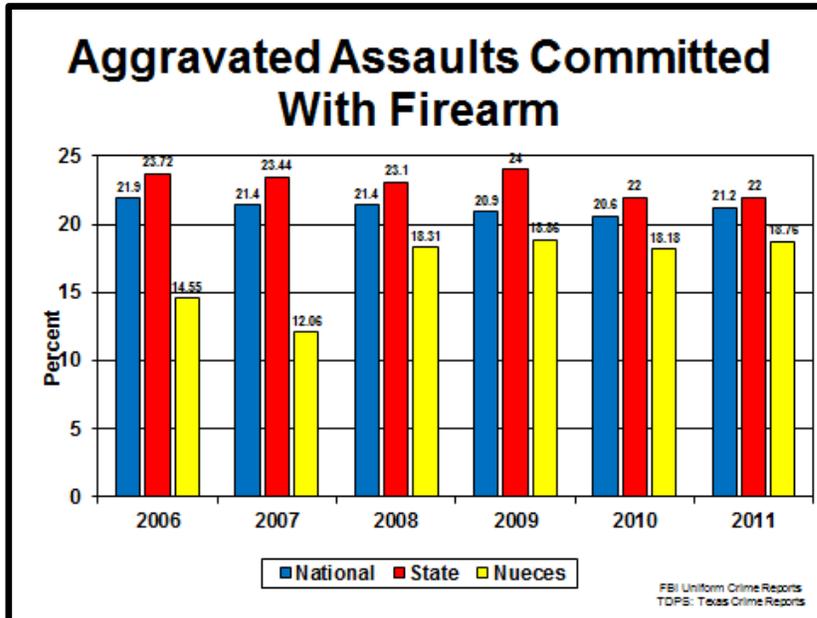


Texas by 17.23% to a rate of 15.1 per 10,000 adults. In the same time period, the rate in Nueces County decreased 11.2% to a rate of 27.03 per 10,000 adults. While the County arrest rate for 2011 is lower than that for 2007, it is higher than the lows recorded in 2009 and 2010. The County 2011 rate is 79.0% higher than that for the State.

The proportion of homicides committed with firearms has increased in the State to a high of 69% in the data recorded by this Project (1999-2011). For the past 5 years that proportion has been 65% or higher. Also, for the County the 66.6% of homicides committed with a firearm for 2011 was the highest proportion since 2003. From 2007 to 2011, the County's proportion increased 12.7%. From 2003, the County proportion of homicides committed with a firearm has been lower than that for the State. However, the increase in 2011 brings the County's proportion much closer to that for the State.

The proportion of robberies committed with firearms in Texas has been higher than that for the Nation since 1998, the year for which the Project first collected these data. The State proportion had increased from 2006 to 2010, but fell to 46% in 2011. In Nueces County, the proportion of robberies committed with firearms dropped from a high

in 2006 to lower figures until an increase to 25% in 2011. The County has tended to have lower proportions of robberies committed with firearms than the State or Nation for the time period being recorded by the Project. The County proportion for 2011 is only 45.6% of the State proportion.



The State has recorded proportions of aggravated assaults committed with firearms higher than those for the Nation and the County since 1998. Both the State and the National proportion of aggravated assaults committed with firearms have remained fairly stable from 2006 to 2011 with a very small decline. At the County level, From

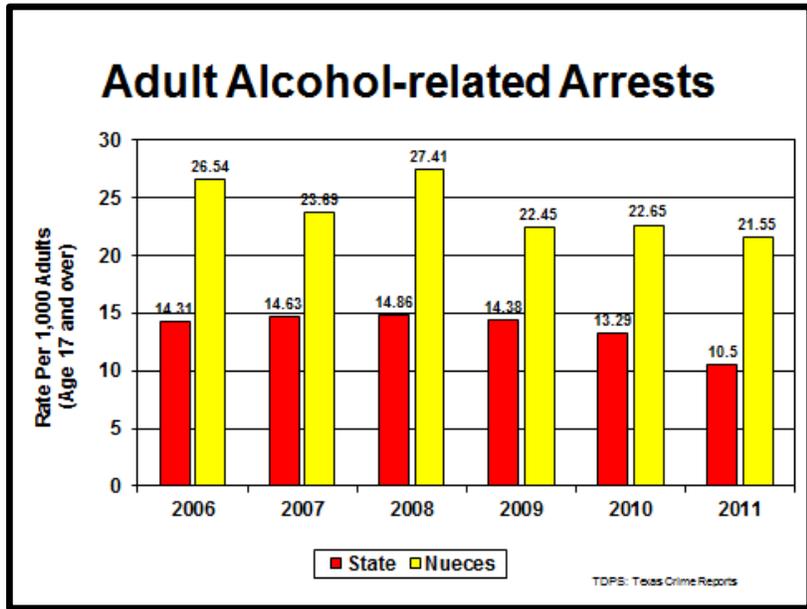
2006 to 2011 an increase has occurred of 28.9%. The County proportion remains lower than those for the State and Nation in 2011. At 18.76% in 2011 the County figure is 14.7% lower than the State's 22%. A chart for each of the offenses discussed is available in the *Graphics File* only the one for aggravated assaults is provided in this text.

The data for the commission of violent crimes with firearms for the three crimes indicate that the County has a lower level of firearm use than the State or Nation. However, it is of concern that for all three offenses, the proportion of violent crimes committed with firearms has increased in recent years. A potential benefit exists with the lower use of fire arms in the County. Because injuries caused by firearms are more damaging than those committed by other weapons or hands, violence in the County, though more common, is likely to result in fewer deaths and fewer serious injuries.

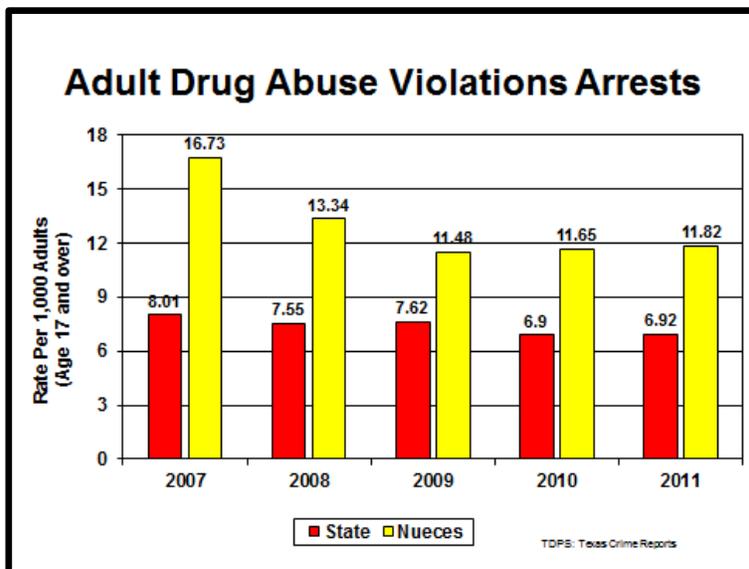
Adult property crimes (burglary, larceny, and auto theft) arrests have been relatively stable in the State and the County. From 2007 to 2011, the rate of adult (per 1,000 adults age 17 years and older) property crimes arrests decreased in Texas by 4,6% to a rate of 5,77 after some small increases. In the same time period, the rate in Nueces County fluctuated ending at a rate of 9.82 which was higher in 2011 by only 1.5% than 2007. The pattern that is consistent is that the County property crime arrest rate is higher than that for the State. For the 2011 figures cited above, the County rate is 70.2% higher than the State rate. A chart is available in the *Graphics File*.

Adult alcohol-related arrests have decreased at both the State and County levels. From 2006 to 2011, the rate of adult (per 1,000 adults age 17 years and older) alcohol-

related arrests decreased in Texas by 26.6% to a rate of 10.5. In the same time period, the rate in Nueces County decreased 18.8% to a rate of 21.55. Even with the decline, the County arrest rate for alcohol-related offenses remains much higher at 110% of the State rate. The alcohol-related arrest data and the drug arrest data that follow should be considered in combination with the

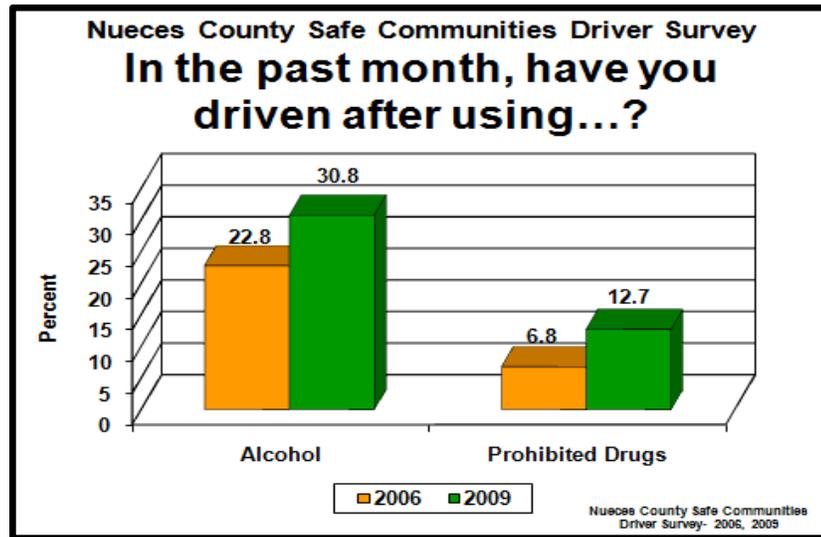


data found with data indicator on sales of alcoholic beverages linked to the risk factor **Availability of Drugs**, the data indicator on Alcohol and drug-related deaths linked to the risk factor **Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward the Problem Behaviors**, and the data indicator on adults in drug or alcoholism treatment units linked to the risk factor Family History of High Risk Behavior. These data indicators provide a very clear picture that the County experiences a much higher rate of alcohol and drug use and abuse which does not just contribute to delinquency. Lives are damaged and lost, families are disrupted, and careers are either prevented or ended by this high rate substance use and abuse.



Adult arrests for drug abuse violations have decreased at both the State and County levels. From 2007 to 2011, the State rate of adult (per 1,000 adults age 17 years and older) arrests for drug abuse violations decreased by 13.6% to 6.92. The County rate decreased by 29.3% in the same time period. The County rate for 2011 is 70.8% higher than the State rate of arrests for drug abuse violations. This pattern has been present from 1999.

The Safe Communities Project reported from a 2009 survey of 417 Nueces County residents that 30.8% of the respondents stated that they had driven after consuming alcohol and 12.7% had driven after consuming a prohibited (illegal) drug in the past month. The 2009 results demonstrate a pattern of increased reporting of alcohol use before driving in the Nueces County surveys from 2000 to 2002, 2006, and 2009.



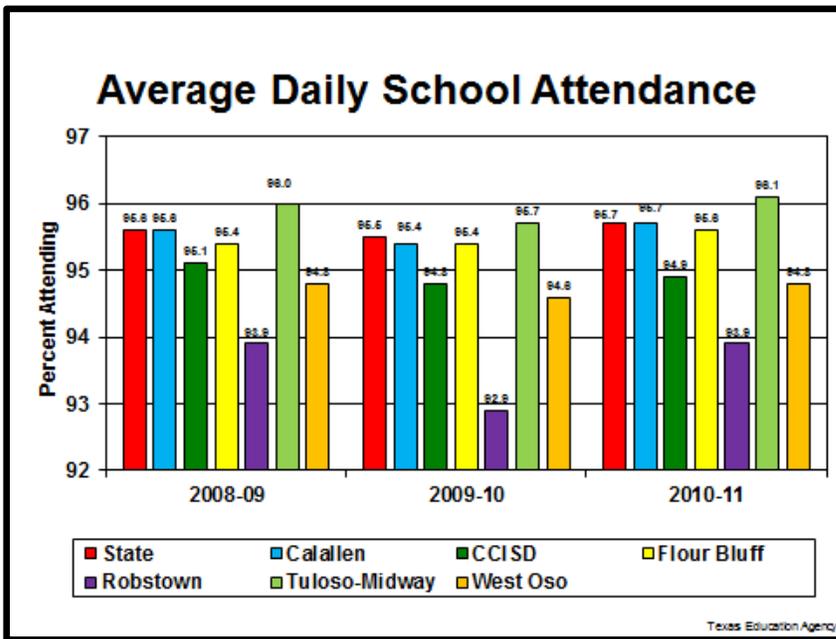
According to the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), the prevalence of pregnant women using alcohol during the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester has decreased 28.2% from 2007 to 2010. Approximately 6.1% of pregnant women in Texas for 2010 reported drinking alcohol during the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. No additional or local data were found concerning this indicator. The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Surveillance Network estimates range from 0.3 to 1.5 cases of FAS per 1,000 live births in certain areas of the United States. At this time, no national monitoring of the extent of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) exists. From 2003 to 2009, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) funded Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) prevention programs in seven states to create such a system. Current CDC estimates range from 0.5 to 2.0 cases of FAS per 1,000 live births. Rates for alcohol-related neurodevelopment disorders and alcohol-related birth defects are believed to be approximately three times greater than FAS rates.

Although older, more educated, employed, and unmarried pregnant women were more likely to use alcohol, low socioeconomic status is believed to increase the risk of FAS. Several research studies have shown that prenatal drinking is a significant predictor of alcohol use during pregnancy. Given the high incidence of poverty and indicators of alcohol use in Nueces County, the community should be concerned with these alcohol-related issues.

The indicators for **Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior** of drug and alcohol abuse are strikingly clear. The stability of the adult violence and property office indicators are also of concern. It is likely that these adult behaviors are sending a powerful message to the children of Nueces County. Evidence for this conclusion is found among the data indicators that follow.

## 5. Lack of Commitment to School

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, high school dropouts are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested than high school graduates. When examining attendance rates, truancy violations, and attrition rates, it is clear that the County's students are less committed to school than in the State as a whole, which contributes to the higher juvenile arrest rates in the County.



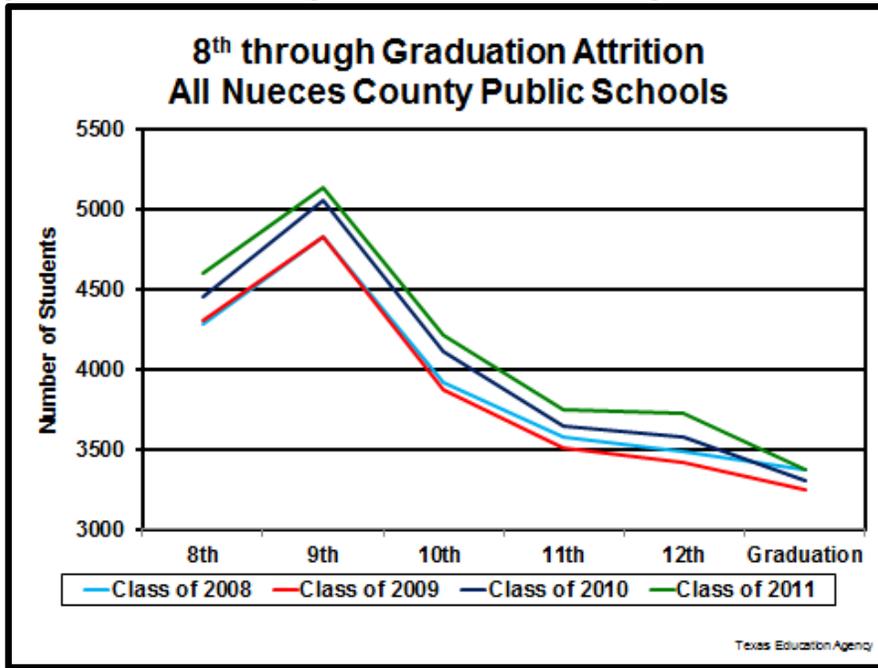
Average daily attendance has remained relatively stable in Texas at about 95.5% in the State in the academic years 2005-2005 to 2010-2011.

Attendance rates appear to have been stable for the County's school districts in the same time period. Three of the largest school districts, Corpus Christi ISD, West Oso ISD, and

Robstown ISD, have had lower attendance rates than the State. These are school districts that account for the majority of the County's school children.

The community's capacity to compare truancy and failure to attend school data between the County and the State has been eliminated by data issues with the State level system. The State adopted a new data system, but did not install analytical software which would have permitted the abstraction of data from the data base. As a result, the Project has been able to obtain County, but not State data from Juvenile Probation sources. The County has recorded a significant increase from 2007 to 2011 in truancy referrals to the Juvenile Department. The rate per 1,000 youth age 10 to 17 in 2007 was 2.8 which increased 171.4% to 7.6 in 2011. An unusual drop to a rate of only 0.76 occurred in 2012. It is not clear what may have caused such an unusual change in the rate of referral for truancy. Failure to Attend School is a separate offense that causes juveniles to be referred to the Juvenile Department. This rate per 1,000 youth increased from 22.0 to 31.5 from 2007 to 2008 remained high in 2009 and then declined significantly to 13.5 in 2012. The latter figure for 2012 represents a decline of 38.6% from 2007. It is very possible that given the stability of attendance rates and the improvement in attrition that is described next, truancy and failure to attend school have declined in the County over the past 5 years. Please, see charts in the *Graphics File*.

The attrition of enrolled students experienced of Nueces County public schools was calculated by examining the number of students enrolled each year, beginning in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, to the number of graduates. When examining the overall County and State attrition



rates (from 9<sup>th</sup> grade to graduation), approximately a third of the students that start 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the County do not graduate with their class. The line chart indicates visually this loss of students. The attrition rates for 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 graduating classes are 34.4%, 34.8%,

32.8%, and 30.2% respectively. Alternative charts in bar form are available in the *Graphics File*.

Attrition rates do not account for students who move away, graduate early, or obtain a GED, but it is highly unlikely that more than one-third of the County’s students who enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade left for those reasons. This is especially true since the school age population of the County has not significantly changed. Annual dropout rate is an alternate indicator for measuring graduation rates (See slide under the risk factor **Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior**). Also, one must examine the data indicator on educational attainment for the 25 and older population that is linked with the risk factor on **Family History of High Risk Behavior**. Only a portion of those that do not graduate with their class go on to graduate or obtain an alternative certification because the County had 20.3% of its 25 and over population with less than a high school diploma or equivalent in 2011.

These data indicators demonstrate that **Lack Of Commitment To School** is a significant risk factor for the community.

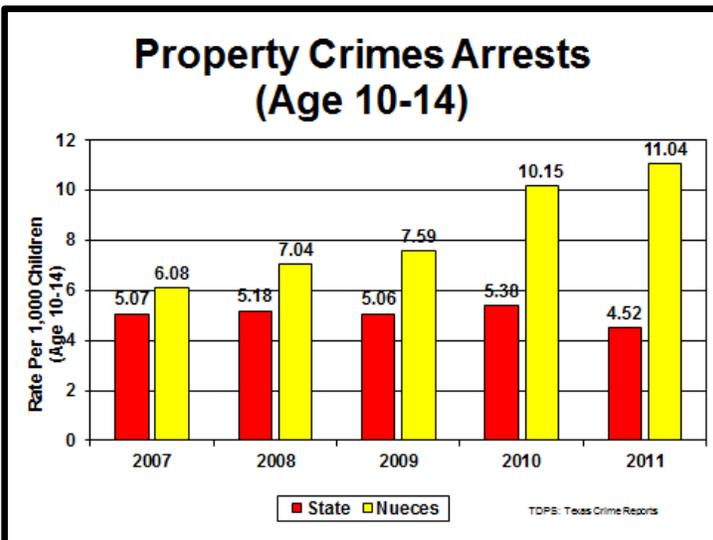
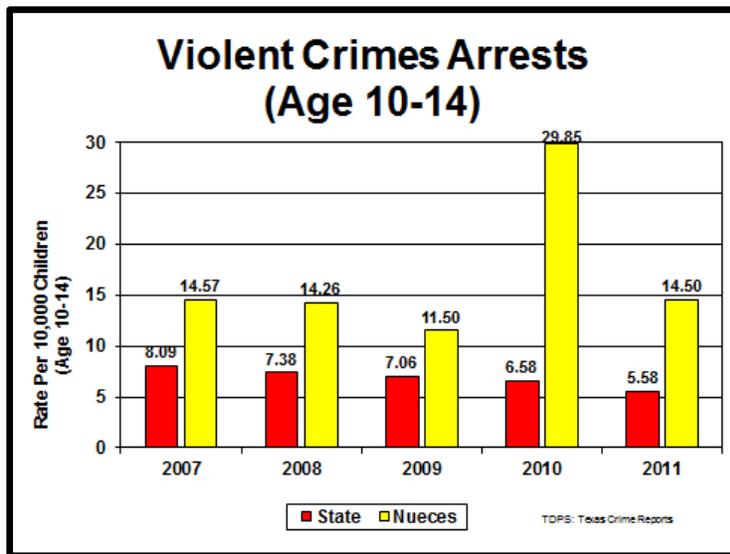
Economic growth is heavily dependent upon a workforce that can perform well in today’s market. Our community cannot offer as high a proportion of high school and college educated and literate prospective employees as other communities can. Thus, we are unable to compete for new businesses and industries as well. Although unemployment is improving, salaries remain low. Economic stress on families is perpetuated. Perhaps adults use drugs or alcohol to escape the stress, and thus, provide

negative role models for youth. One of the related results is the lack of commitment to school in the next generation.

## 6. Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior.

Generally, it has been demonstrated that the earlier children begin their involvement in problem behaviors, the more serious and longer that involvement becomes. Children from families in conflict, experiencing economic stress, and provided with inappropriate role models are at high risk of engaging in the five problem behaviors at an early age. The data indicators reported below confirm that this is happening in the community.

Violent crimes arrests for the 10 to 14 age group have declined in the State, but have remained at a similar level from 2007 to 2011 in the County. From 2007 to 2011, the State rate (per 10,000 10 of 14 year old children) for violent crimes arrests decreased 31.0% to 5.58. In the same time period, the Nueces County rate experienced an exceptional peak in 2010, but returned to 14.5 in 2011, basically the same as in 2007. With the decline in the State rate, the difference between the State and the County rate for 2011 has become 159.8%. This rate of arrests for the 10 to 14 age group demonstrates a greater stability than the arrest rate for adults for violent crimes.

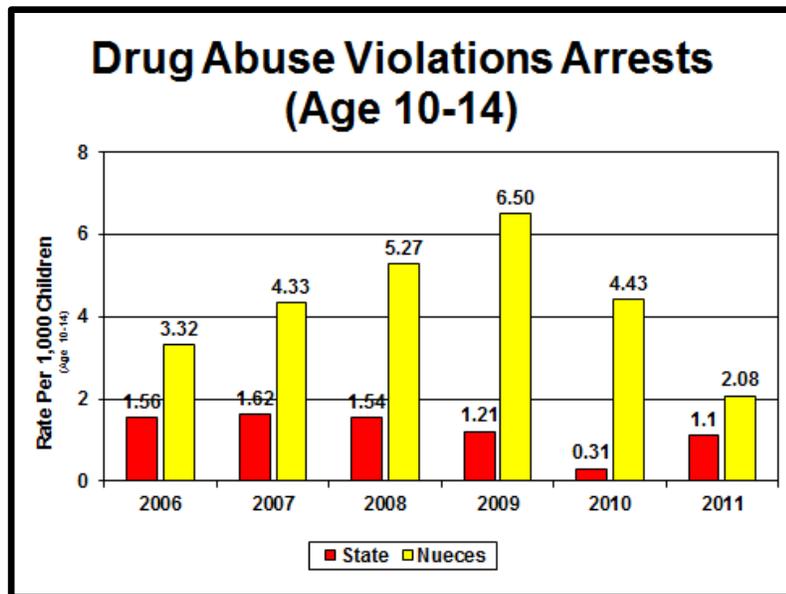


Property crimes arrests for the 10 to 14 age group have returned to higher rates in the County. From 2003 to 2008, the State rate (per 1,000 children) of property crimes arrests for the 10 to 14 age group decreased 27.6% to 5.18. The State rate decreased from 2008 an additional 12.7% to 4.52 in 2011. The County rate had decreased from 2002 to 2007. However, a dramatic increase has occurred. From the

2007 low, arrest rates of the 10 to 14 age group for property crimes have increased 81.6% to 11.04 in 2011. This is the highest rate recorded from 2002 to 2011. The increase in property crime arrests patterns very well with the increase in the proportion of children in poverty and families in poverty described earlier. A connection between the risk factor **Extreme Economic Deprivation** and **Early Initiation of the Problem Behaviors** may be visually made when looking at the related charts.

The abuse of alcohol and drugs among the adult population in Nueces County appears to spill over to the problem behaviors of the juveniles. The juvenile data suggest that the behavior of the juveniles in regard to alcohol and drug use mirrors that of the adults in Nueces County (see slide under the risk factor **Friends that Engage in the Problem Behaviors**).

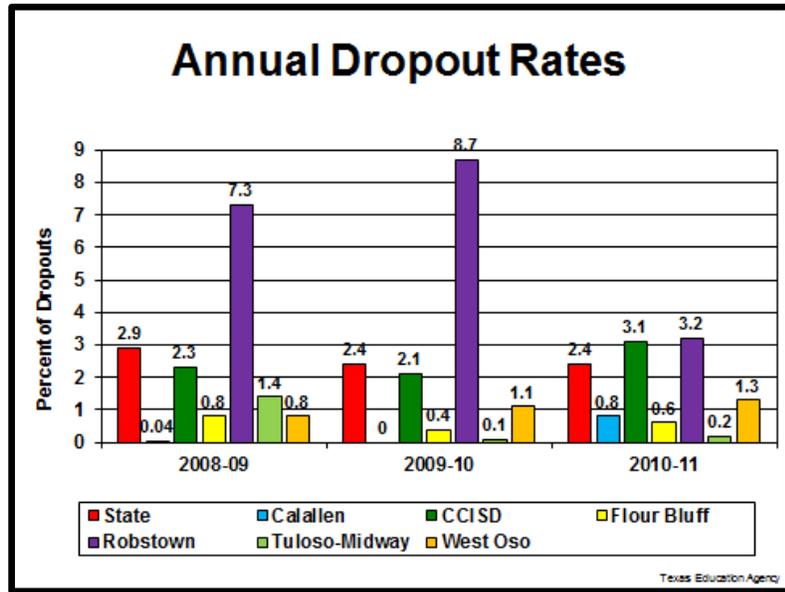
Arrests of juveniles in the 10 to 14 age group for drug abuse violations have decreased in the State and after a large increase the County too. From 2003 to 2008, the State rate (per 1,000 children) of drug-related arrests for the 10 to 14 age group decreased by 19.8% to 1.54. It has declined further to only 1.1 in 2011. The Nueces County 2008 rate of 5.79 is 3.7% lower than



it was in 2003, but was increasing through 2009. It has dropped in 2010 and again in 2011. The 2011 rate of 2.08 is the lowest recorded since 1998 in the TCR data. It remains 89.1% higher than the State rate for 2011. Alternative data comes from the Juvenile Department. These data indicate a rate of referral for drug offenses of 3.79 in 2011. This is the lowest rate recorded since 1999 and is much lower than the high of 6.59 in 2004. However, in 2012 the Juvenile Department recorded a referral rate of 4.69. This is a 46% decrease from 2007. Regardless of the decrease, it is a rate that is problematic for the County. This early start of drug use increases the probability that drug use becomes long term and involves a greater variety of drugs.

Juveniles entering TCADA funded treatment for drug abuse in the County have tended to report their first use of alcohol or marijuana at an earlier age than the rest of the State. For example, in 2012, the average age of first use for juveniles entering treatment in the County was 12 for alcohol and 12 for marijuana. For the State, the average age of first use was 13 for alcohol and 13 for marijuana.

In the 2010-2011 school year, the annual dropout rates for most of the school districts in Nueces County were below the State's rate of 2.4. The two exceptions were CCISD and Robstown at 3.1 and 3.2 respectively. The annual dropout rates vary appear to vary considerably over the years. Among the 6 largest school districts in the County the data pattern for the 2010-2011 school year appears to be typical even if the numbers are not.



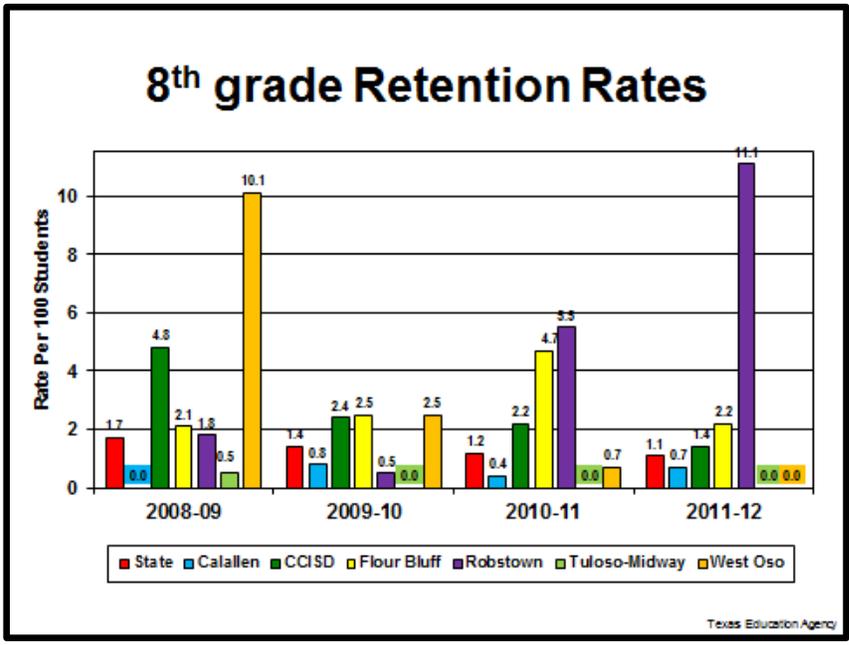
For the Class of 2011, the longitudinal dropout rate (Grades 9-12) for Texas was 6.8% which is lower than those reported from 2006 to 2010. For the same year, the longitudinal dropout rate was 9.2% for CCISD, 31.5% for Robstown ISD, and 8.8% for West Oso. For the remaining large school districts, their dropout rates were lower than that of the State. A chart is available for the longitudinal dropout rate. Both the annual and the longitudinal dropout rates need to be compared to the attrition rate reported earlier. A greater loss of students occurs than can be accounted for by dropout rate figures.

In review, rates of arrests for violence, property crime, and drug offenses in Nueces County for the 10 to 14 age group remain above the State rates. Also, as noted above, dropout remains a problem for school districts covering a majority of students in the County. It is useful to consider teen pregnancy as an alternate data indicator for this risk factor. Teen pregnancy is a greater problem in the County than in the State as a whole (See slide under the risk factor **Friends who Engage in the Problem Behavior** below). From these data indicators, it may be concluded that **Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior** is present in the community.

### RISK FACTORS WITH CLEAR IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY

The following seven risk factors are supported by data indicators for which adequate data are available. The data permit the conclusion that these risk factors are present and are contributing to the presence of delinquency in the community.

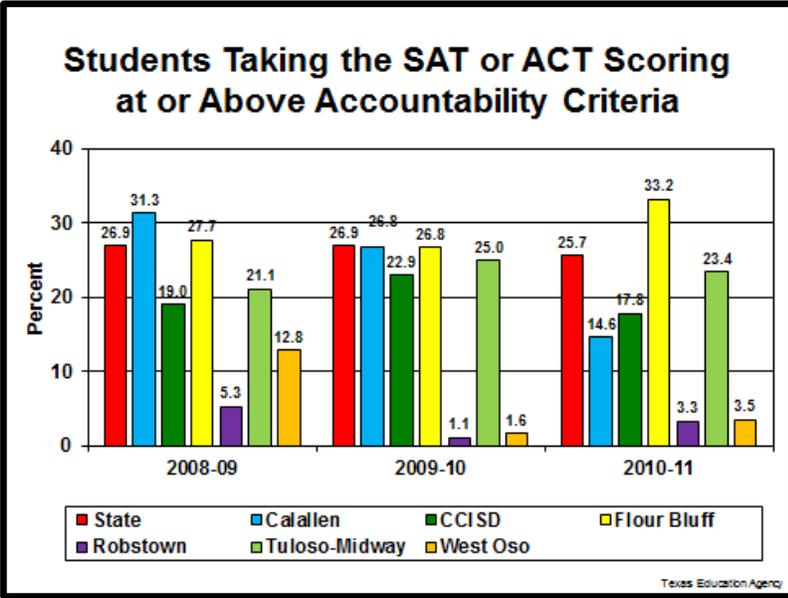
**Early Academic Failure:** When examining the retention rates in the past 4 academic years, CCISD, Flour Bluff ISD and Robstown ISD have tended to retain more students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade than the State. In the 2011-2012 school year, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade retention



rates for CCISD and the State were 1.1 and 1.4 respectively. Flour Bluff and Robstown were higher at 2.2 and 11.1. In the past, West Oso ISD also retained more 8<sup>th</sup> graders than the State until the 2010-2011 school year when its rate dropped below the State's and remained there. Flour Bluff ISD, the second largest school district in Nueces County,

retained more 5<sup>th</sup> graders than the State in the past seven academic years. In the 2011-2012 school year, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade retention rates for Flour Bluff ISD and the State were 2.0 and 1.2, respectively. Robstown ISD has had higher 5<sup>th</sup> grade retention rates than the State for the past 4 years and CCISD has had higher rates for the past two years. According to the National Association of School Psychologists, retained students are more likely to drop out of high school and have lower self-esteem. Students who drop out of school experience higher rates of substance abuse and criminal activities.

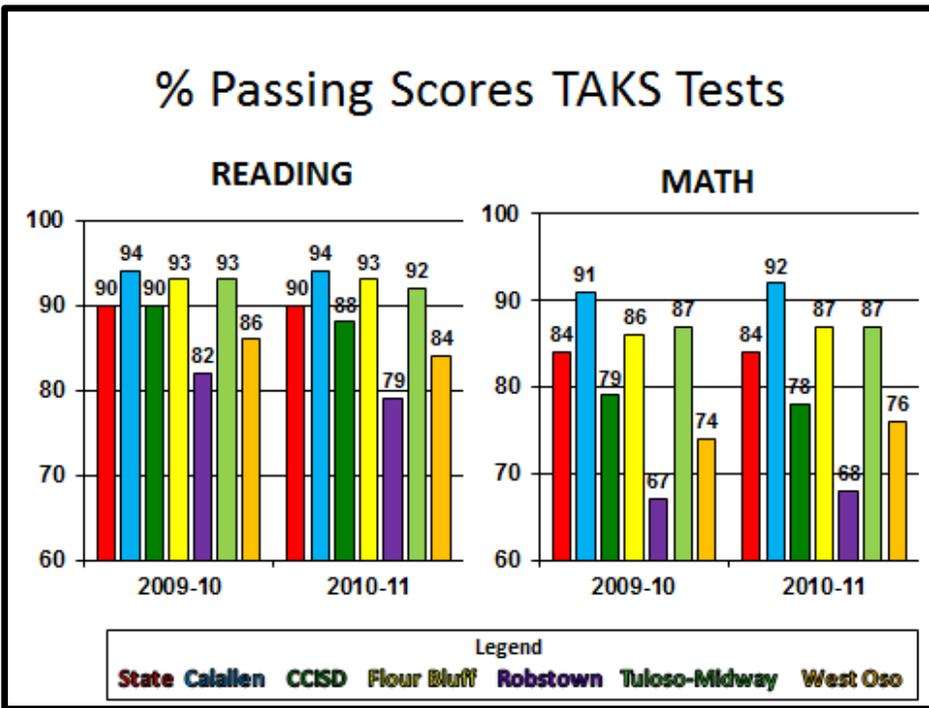
The proportion of students taking the SAT or ACT that scored at or above the Texas Education Agency accountability criteria is lower for the County compared to the State. This condition has worsened over the past four school years. In the 2007-2008 school year, the proportion of students scoring at or above the criteria in the Calallen, Flour Bluff, and Tuloso-Midway



ISDs was higher than that for the State. However, the proportion for Calallen changed the next year and that for Tuloso-Midway changed the following year. This means that for the 2010-2011 school year, only students in the Flour Bluff ISD had a proportion that

scored at or above the criteria that was higher than the State. The proportions for CCISD and Calallen ISD are the lowest on record since the 1997-1998 school year when these data were first collected. The proportions for West Oso ISD and Robstown ISD have traditionally been the lowest in the County. These Districts have rarely had a proportion above 10% and have often recorded 0%. The decline in this proportion in the County may contribute to the condition that fewer individuals in the County have college degrees. Admission to institutions of higher education is partially based on these test scores. The County may be placing fewer students in institutions of higher education or is seeing fewer students as well prepared for higher education than it should see if it has goals of academic success and creation of higher paying employment.

Reading and Math proficiency has improved over the past 5 to 6 years in the State and in the County's school districts. As measured by the TAKS test, both reading and math test scores have improved over the past six academic years for the State and for the six largest school districts in Nueces County. However, for three of these school districts



(Corpus Christi ISD, Robstown ISD, and West Oso ISD) in 2010-2011, test scores were below the State average the math test. These three districts represent a majority of the County's school children. This pattern of lower scores

one that goes back past 1999-2000. In addition, the test scores for Robstown ISD and West Oso ISD have consistently been below the State average for reading. The test score average in Reading for CCISD has occasionally been higher or tied with that for the State.

These indicators support the conclusion that **Early Academic Failure** is present in the community.

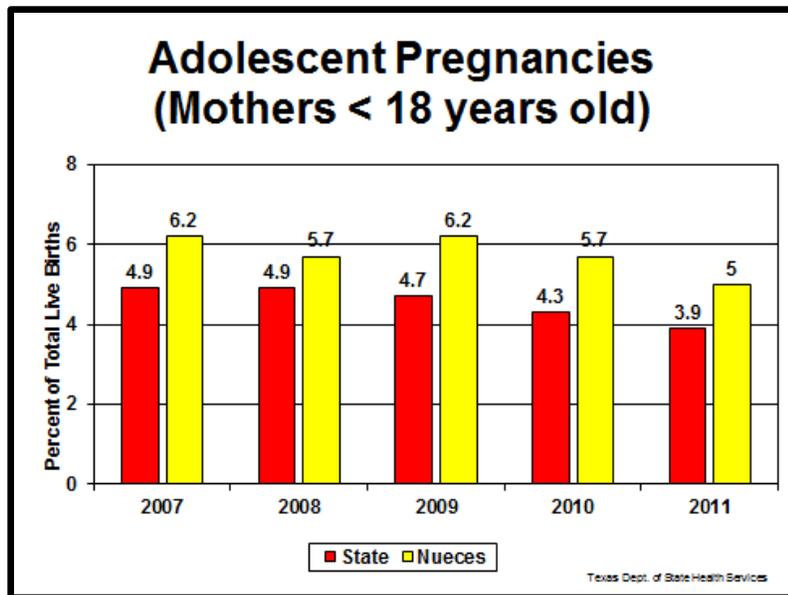
**Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior:** The best data available concerning alcohol and drug use and attitudes of school age children comes from the Texas School Survey of Substance Abuse Among Students, which is conducted every

other year. Note that Nueces County school districts tend to not participate in these surveys. Thus, local data for comparison are not available. According to these surveys, Texas school children perceive alcohol and marijuana use as dangerous. For alcohol, the proportion of 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> graders that perceived alcohol use as dangerous in 2008 was 91.9%. The proportion of these youth that perceived marijuana use to be dangerous in the same year was 83.0%. Newer data was not found. Some disturbing details are present in these data in regard to 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. The proportion of students perceiving alcohol use as very dangerous was much less than their younger counterparts. In 2010, only 76% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 77% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 78.4% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders viewed alcohol as dangerous. In 2010, 81.4% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 68.1% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 62.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders viewed marijuana as dangerous. For the 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, the proportions perceiving alcohol as dangerous are slightly higher than those reported in 2008, but remain lower than those reported in 2002. For marijuana, the proportions perceiving the drug as dangerous to use have continued to decline from 1994 to the 2010 figures and are at their lowest level recorded. Charts are available for these indicators.

The data in regard to juvenile alcohol and drug arrests and arrests of juveniles in the 10 to 14 age groups reported earlier demonstrates that alcohol and drug use is a serious problem in Nueces County. It is believed that this risk factor is present in the community.

**Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior:** Adolescent pregnancies appear to be a significant problem for Nueces County when compared to the State. The

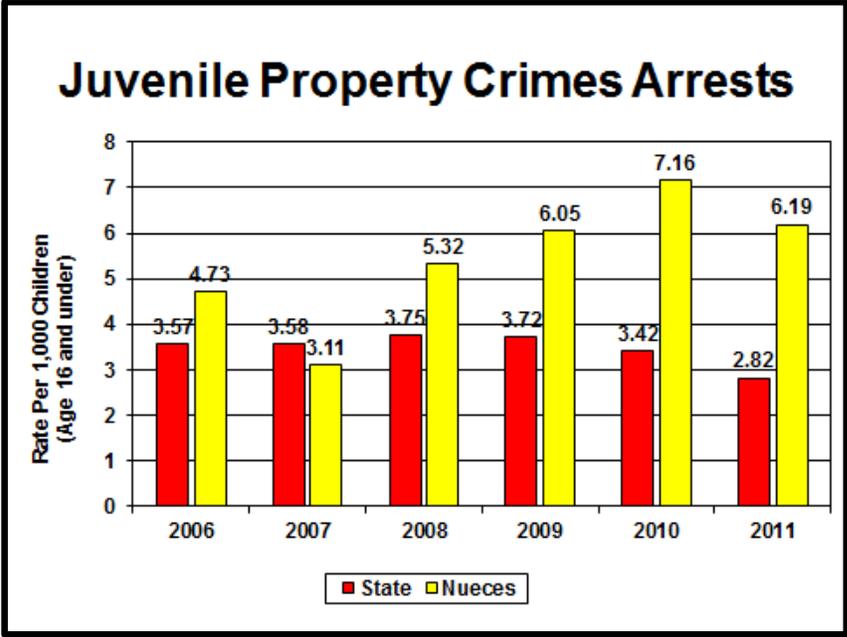
proportion of live births that were to mothers under 18 years of age in the State remained has been declining since 1998. At 3.9% of live births in 2011, this figure is at its lowest level recorded. The figures for Nueces County have also declined from 1998 to the 5.0% recorded in 2011. This is also the lowest figure recorded for the County. The proportion of live births to mothers under 18



years of age in the County has decreased 19.3% from 2009 to 2011. This proportion remains higher than the State’s proportion. The County figure in 2011 is 28.0% higher than the State’s.

Significant confusion was found in web-based information on youth ages 15 to 17 with Sexually Transmitted Diseases. This confusion could not be resolved when

comparing older data to those currently on State web-sites. As a result, these data have been removed from the data, slides, and text. A request for the data has been made to the State with no response. Further attempts will be made to obtain these data.



Juvenile property crimes arrests, after a brief increase, have decreased in the State. From 2006 to 2011, the rate of juvenile (per 1,000 children age 16 years and under) property crimes arrests decreased in Texas by 21.0% to a rate of 2.82 in 2011. In the same time period, the Nueces County rate has dramatically increased 30.9%.

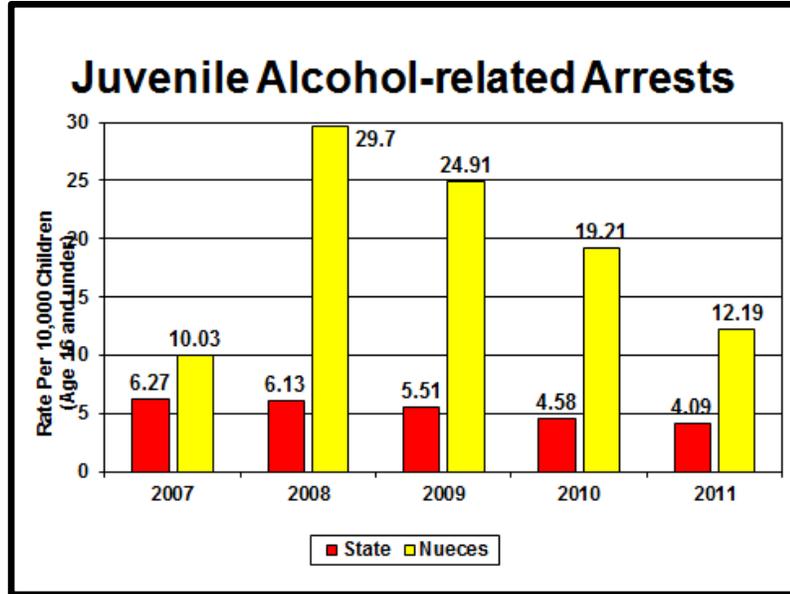
This opposite trend may be related to economic conditions for children in the County. The increase in the County parallels the increased proportion of children and families in poverty. This County 2011 juvenile property crime arrest rate was 119.5% larger than the State rate.

According to the Texas School Survey of Substance Abuse Among Students, from 2004 to 2010, an increased proportion of 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that some, most, or all of their close friends use marijuana. The proportion in 2004 was 21.9% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 40.0% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 40.9% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders. In 2010, 22.8% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 41.7% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 44.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that some, most, or all of their close friends use marijuana. The proportion of 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> graders reporting that some or most of their close friends use marijuana was 8.0% in 2004 and 7.0% in 2008. No data were found for these lower grades for 2010. Newer data (2012) for all grades on this question is not readily available. In comparison to the National data for this question in 2010, the State proportions are close to 20 percentage points higher for each grade level.

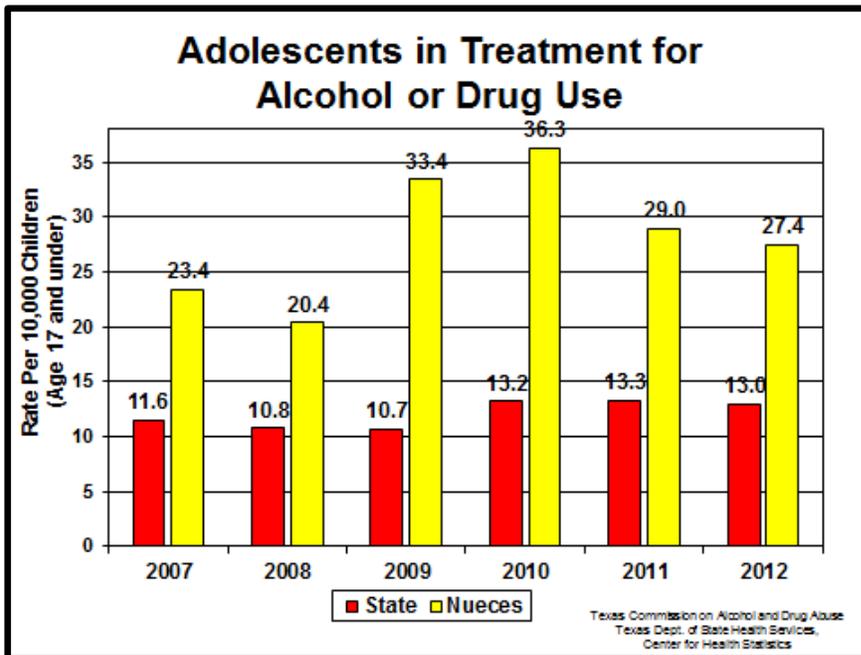
In contrast to the marijuana data, from 2004 to 2010, a decreased proportion of students in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades reported that some, most, or all of their close friends drink alcohol. The proportion in 2004 was 36.2% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 61.5% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 68.1% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders. In 2010, 34.7% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 58.5% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 67.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that some, most, or all of their close friends drank alcohol. This decline in reported alcohol use by friends is also found in the National data. However, the State figures are 15 to 20 percentage points higher than the National data

for each grade level. Again, newer data for this question is not found on State web-sites where it has been reported before. For the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> graders reporting the proportion that some or most of their close friends drink alcohol was 26.1% in 2004 and 23.9% in 2008.

Juvenile alcohol-related arrests also seem to be a significant problem in Nueces County. However, a recent trend has been toward fewer arrests. From 2007 to 2008, the rate (per 10,000 children age 16 and under) of juvenile alcohol-related arrests decreased by 24.3% in Texas. In comparison, the County 2008 rate saw a very dramatic increase of 196.1%. From that peak,



the County rate of arrest of juveniles for alcohol related offenses has steadily declined by 58.9% to 12.19 in 2011. This County rate for 2011 is 198.0% of the State rate if 4,09 which was a continued decline going back to 1998.



For Texas, the rate of adolescents in alcohol and drug treatment facilities (per 10,000 children under 18) funded by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) increased 12.1% from 2007 to 2012, to 13.0. From 2007 to 2012, the rate in Nueces County increased by 17.1% to 27.4. The County

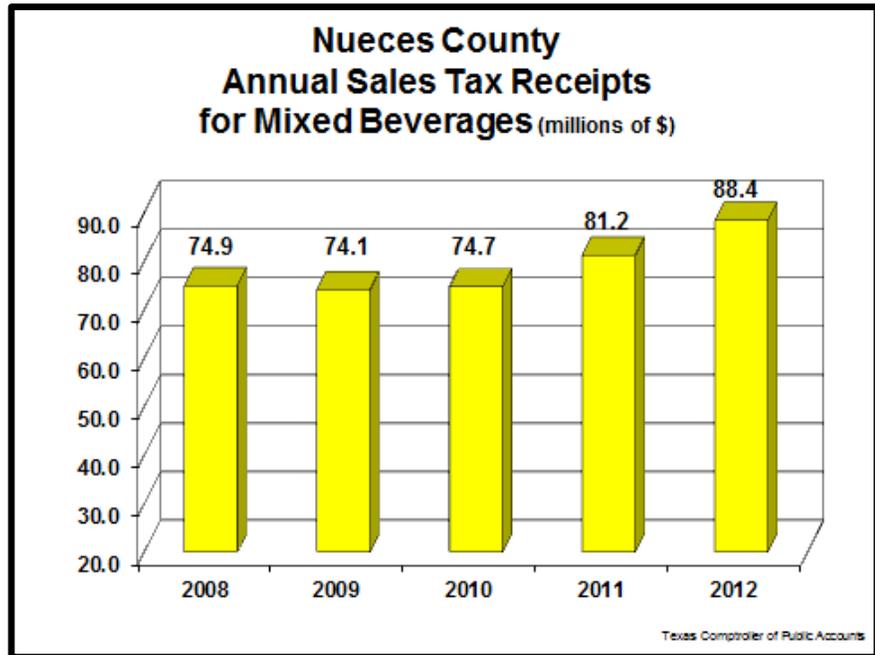
rate of adolescents in treatment shows a similar dramatic increase and then decline as that for juvenile alcohol arrests. The rate increased significantly from 2008 to 2009 and again increased in 2010 before falling to the lower level in 2012. This can be seen very well in

the accompanying chart. The last two indicators confirm that the County has a more significant problem of juvenile alcohol and drug use than the State as a whole.

It is evident from the rates of teenage pregnancies, juvenile property crime arrests, juvenile alcohol-related arrests, and adolescents in alcohol or drug treatment that the risk factor **Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior** is present in the community.

**Availability of Drugs:** According to the Texas School Survey of Substance Use Among Students, from 2004 to 2010, an increased proportion of 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that marijuana and alcohol is somewhat easy or very easy to obtain. In 2010, 64.5% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 80.4% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 84.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that alcohol would be somewhat easy or very easy to obtain. These figures were a few percentage points higher compared to 2004 and were approximately the same in 2010 as the figures for the National data. For marijuana in the State for 2010, 23.8% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 49.9% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 57.2% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported that it would be somewhat easy or very easy to obtain. For marijuana, the State proportions are lower than those for the Nation in 2010 by a considerable margin. It is regrettable that these figures are not available for the County. The higher rates of arrest for juveniles for alcohol and drug offenses in Nueces County compared to the State may be related to higher availability of alcohol and drugs. Data to examine this idea are partly available.

That alcohol is available in Nueces County is clear. Nueces County sales of alcoholic beverages have increased significantly. Nueces County annual sales tax receipts for mixed beverages increased 18.0% from 2008 to 2012. The increase from 2002 to 2012 has been 73.9%. A very small decline

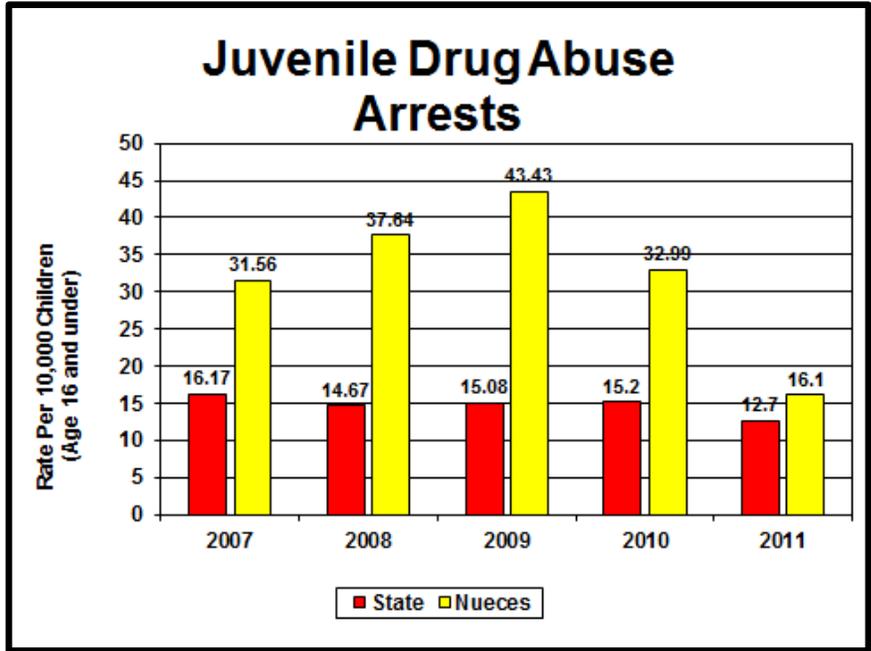


occurred at the start of the recession. However, sales tax receipts never dropped below the 74 million dollar mark once it was reached in 2008. An increasing pattern without any reduction due to the recession is found with Gross liquor store sales for the Corpus Christi MSA. Gross total liquor store sales for Corpus Christi MSA increased 20.4% from 2008 to 2012. The increase in gross sales from 2002 to 2012 has been 26.3%

without any decline. These data indicate an increased consumption of alcoholic beverages in the County.

The available indicators show that the risk factor of **Availability of Drugs** is present in the County.

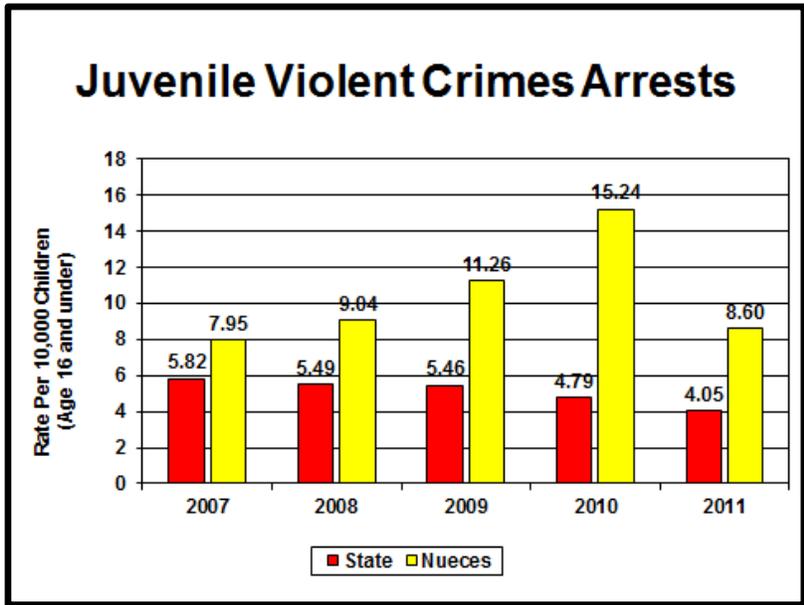
**Community Laws and Norms Favorable toward the Problem Behaviors:**



From 2007 to 2011, the State rate of juvenile (0-16 years old) drug-related arrests decreased 21.4% to a rate of 12.7 arrests per 10,000 children. In the same time period, the rate in Nueces County decreased by 48.9% to 16.1. This was after a large increase over the 2000 to 2009 time period. The 2011 County rate is 26.8% higher than

the State rate. Only in 2011 did the County record a juvenile drug offense arrest rate lower than the State from 2000 to 2012. In the recent past, as seen on the chart, the County rate has been double or more than the State rate. These data are a clear indication that the community has a serious juvenile drug use problem.

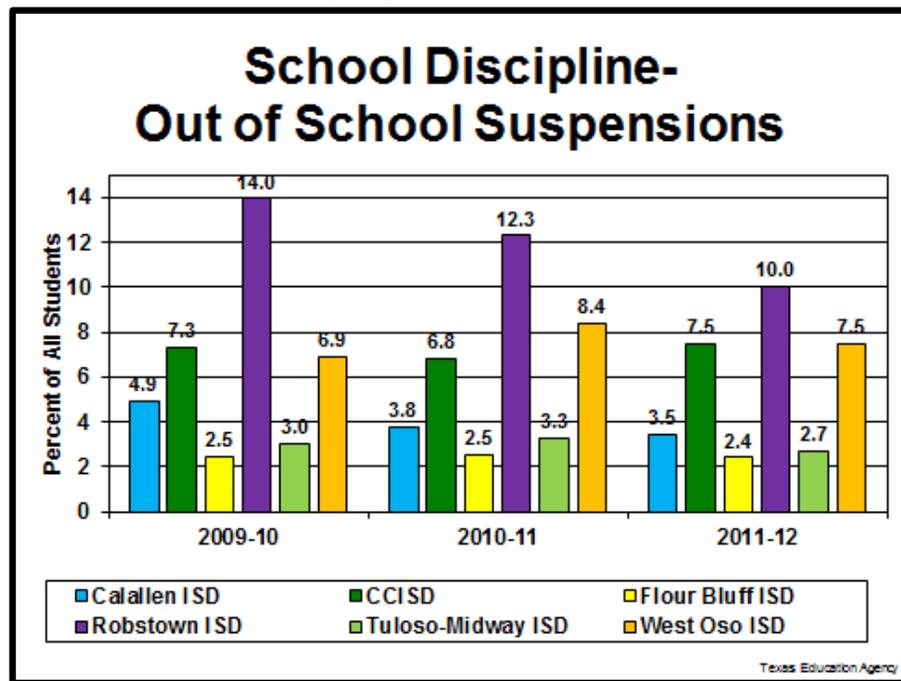
Juvenile arrests for violent crimes have decreased in the State from 2007 to 2011, but increased in the County. From 2003 to 2008, the State rate (per 10,000 children age 16 and under) of juvenile violent crimes arrests decreased by 30.4% to a rate of 4.05 in 2011. From 2007 to 2011, the rate in



Nueces County increased 8.2%, but this disguises a steady increase in violent crime arrests from 2007 to 2010 of 92%. The drop in the County rate from 2010 to 2011 removed the majority of the increase from the earlier years. The main issue remains that the County rate of juvenile violent crime arrests is 112.3% higher than that for the State for 2011.

School discipline is significant for this risk factor. Specific data on behavior-related and drug-related expulsions and suspensions have been difficult to obtain. However, data are available for all suspensions and expulsions. In recent years, most of the six largest school districts in the County experienced an overall decrease in the proportion of students suspended.

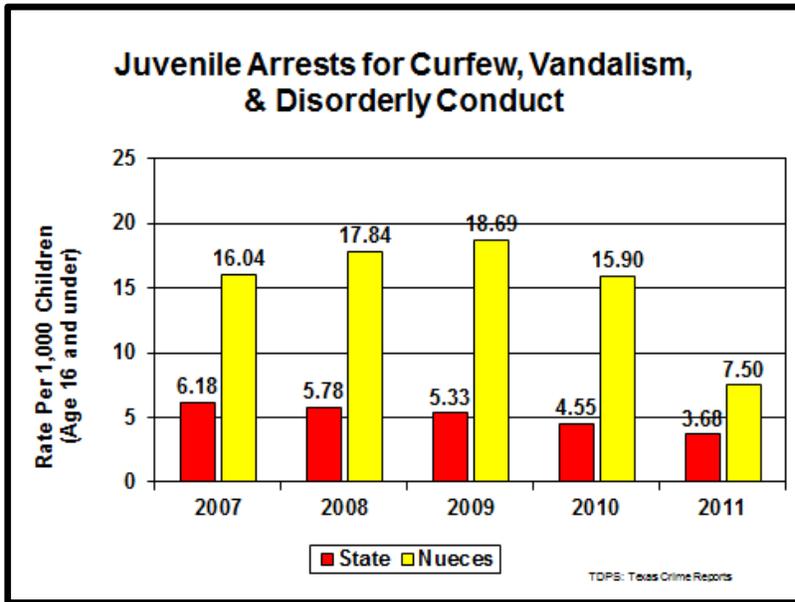
The numbers for individual districts have varied up and down. For example, from the 2009-2010 year to the 2011-2012 year, the proportion of students suspended out of school in the Calallen, Flour Bluff, Robstown, and Tuloso-Midway districts declined.



The proportion increased in the Corpus Christi and West Oso districts. When one looks back to the 2003-2004 year, all of the districts record a decrease in suspensions. On this measure, all of the 6 largest districts in the County report a lower proportion suspended for disciplinary reasons when compared to the 10.4% reported for the State as a whole.

It is difficult to determine a trend in expulsions because the numbers are masked and not available when they are less than 5. From the data that is available across the past 5 to 7 years, expulsions for disciplinary reasons have declined in all of the 6 largest districts in the County. Data and a chart are available in the other files of this Project.

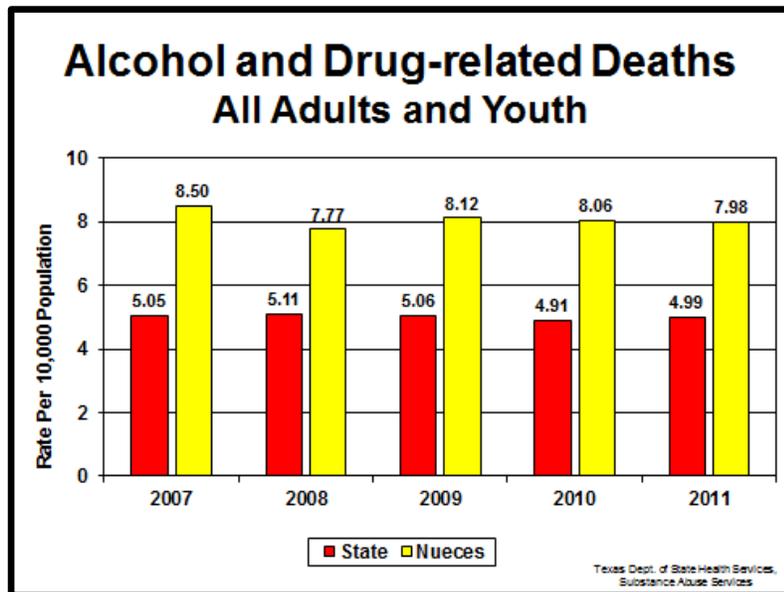
Juvenile arrests for curfew, vandalism, and disorderly conduct are considered “gateway” behaviors. Engaging in these behaviors may encourage or lead juveniles to attempt more serious acts of delinquency. This is especially true if the juvenile experiences little or no intervention due to the delinquent behavior. Therefore, it is a very good sign that in 2011 at the National, State, and County the rates of arrests for these offenses reached their lowest level recorded since 1998. From 2007 to 2011, the rate of



arrest for these offenses has decreased by 41.7% for the State to 3.6. In the County the rate increased from 2007 through 2009, but then evidenced a significant two year decline to 7.5. This resulted in a decrease from 2007 to 2011 of 53.3%. Again, the problematic issues for the County is that its rate of arrest for juveniles for curfew, vandalism and disorderly conduct in 2011 was 108.3% higher

than the rate recorded for the State.

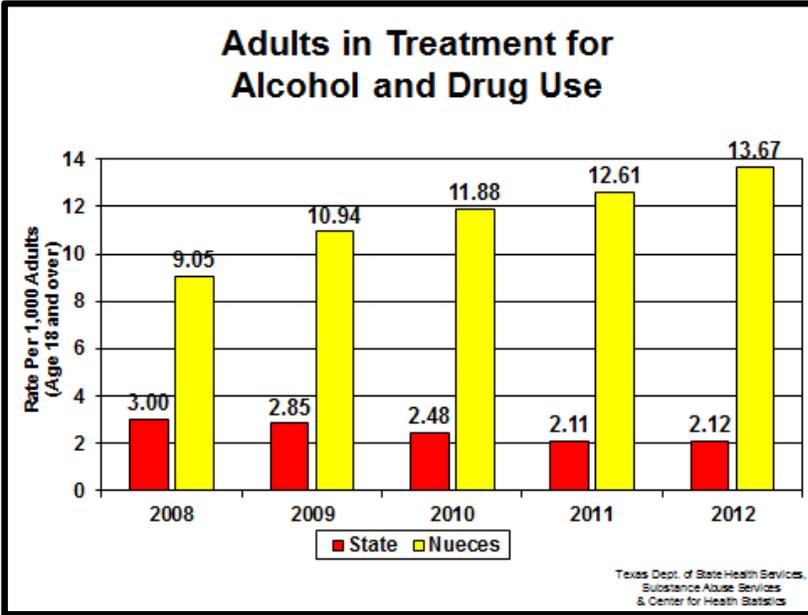
When examining the rate of alcohol- and drug-related deaths in the State and County for individuals of all ages, the County has consistently experienced a higher rate per 1,000 population. Both the State and the County have recorded declines in the rate of alcohol and drug related deaths from highs in 2000 or 2001. More recently, the State has recorded a decrease of 1.2% in this rate from 2007 to 2011 to end at 4.99. The County has experienced a decrease of 6.1% in the same time for a 2011 rate of 7.98. The 2011 County rate is 59.9% higher than the rate for the State.



A contributing factor to the previous indicator is the proportion of serious injury motor vehicle crashes that are substance-related (drug or alcohol). This proportion has been declining for the State to 7.88% in 2011. In the County, the proportion has been increasing to 7.05 in 2011. However, for the time period 1999 to 2011, the County proportion has systematically been lower than that for the State.

These data indicators support the conclusion that the risk factor of **Community Laws and Norms Favorable to the Problem Behaviors** is present in the community.

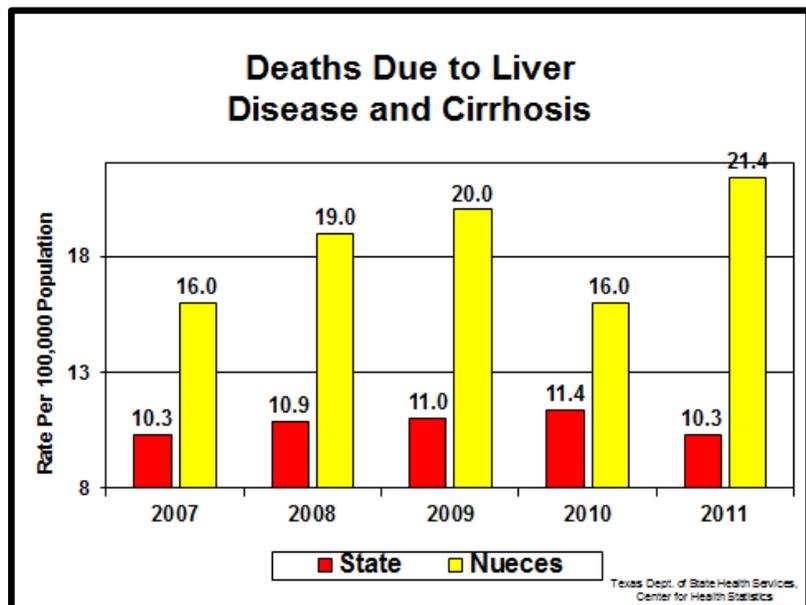
**Family History of High Risk Behavior:** The first two data indicators for this risk factor also contribute to the very clear fact that the County has significant issues with



alcohol and drug use and abuse. The number of adults in alcohol or drug treatment units has decreased in the State from 2008 to 2012. In that time, the rate of adults (per 1,000 adults age 18 and over) in drug or alcoholism treatment facilities decreased 29.0% in Texas to 2.12. A vary opposite and striking trend has occurred in Nueces County. From 2008 to 2012, the rate in the County increased

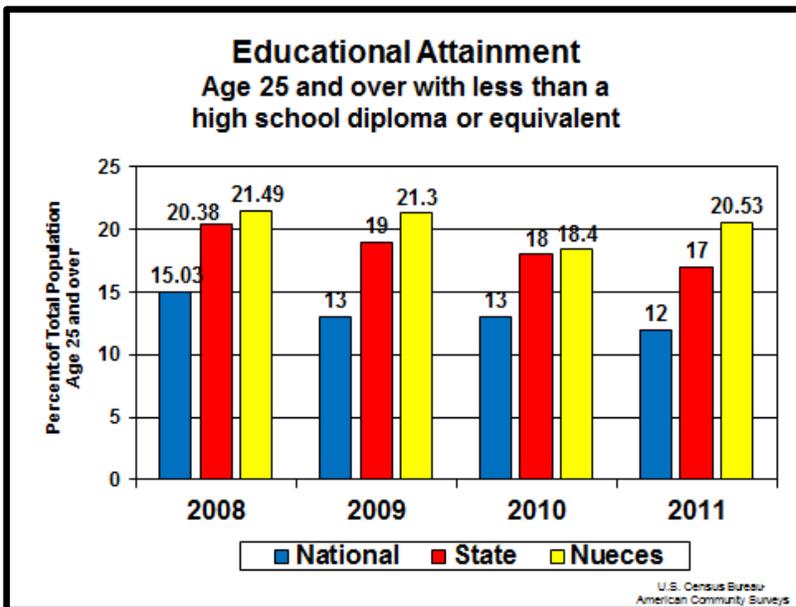
51.0% to 13.6 per 1,000 adults. The 2012 rate for the County is the highest that the Project has recorded since 1996. The 2012 County rate is 544.9% higher than that for the State. While this indicator has a positive aspect, adults are entering treatment, it is very clear that alcohol and drug use are problems among the adult population in Nueces County.

An alternate data indicator for this risk factor is the number of deaths due to liver disease and cirrhosis. These conditions are largely attributable to the consumption of alcohol and other drugs. The figures indicate that Nueces County has had a much higher death rate due to liver disease and cirrhosis than the State since at least 1999. From 2007 to 2011, the rate of deaths due to



liver disease and cirrhosis remained relatively stable For the State between 10.3 and 11.4 and ending where it began at 10.3. In the same time period, the rate in Nueces County has increased 33.75% to an all-time high of 21.4. This 2011 County rate was 107.7% higher than the State rate. Again, this is a clear indicator that drug and alcohol use is a significant problem in the community.

Nueces County had a lower level of adult illiteracy than the State but a higher level than the Nation in 2003. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, 17% of adults (age 16 and older) in Nueces County lacked basic prose literacy skills. The proportions of adults in the State and Nation that lacked basic prose literacy skills were 19% and 14.5%, respectively. Thus, a greater proportion of County adults function at lower literacy levels than in the Nation. This survey has not been conducted since these 2003 data were reported.



When examining educational attainment, persons over the age of 25 years in Nueces County have lower educational attainment than those in the State and Nation. In 2011, 20.5% of the County’s residents had less than a high school diploma or equivalent, whereas the State and Nation had only 17% and 12%, respectively. The County figure has changed by less than two percentage points since 2000 when

it was at 22.15%. For the 2011 figures, the County proportion that has less than a high school diploma or equivalent is 20.7% higher than that for the State and 70.1% higher than that for the Nation. Additionally, the County only had 18.9% of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher, whereas the State and Nation had 25.3% and 27.7%, respectively. These latter data are found in the *Nueces County Profile* report. These data connect to the existence of Extreme Economic Deprivation because they show that the County does not have as many potential workers with educational qualifications for higher paying jobs. These data also link to the risk factor on Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior, i.e. drop out.

The data reviewed above indicate that this risk factor, **Family History of High Risk Behavior**, is also present in the community.

**Constitutional Factors:** The YOU community initiative was led through the examination of risk factors by a consulting team and a set of workbooks and guides. Within this process, the risk factor of Constitutional Factors was left out. It was added to the Project in 2009-2010 and is updated here.

“Constitutional factors that contribute to problem behaviors may have a biological or physiological basis” (*Guide*, 1998: 21-22). Poor pre-natal care, poor pre-natal nutrition or in early childhood, “low birth weight, and fetal exposure to alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs,” contribute to this risk factor (*Communities That Care*, 1996: 11). Each of these conditions and early childhood trauma due to child abuse contribute to restrictions in brain development and associated lack of development of physical, social, and emotional skills. A review of these issues can be found in the analysis provided by Karr-Morse and Wiley in their book *Ghosts from the Nursery Tracing the Roots of Violence* (1997).

For Nueces County, support that the Constitutional Factors risk factor is present is found throughout this report and its associated data files. The probability that pre-natal care and nutrition is poor for a large proportion of parents and children is strong. Data Indicators under the Extreme Economic Deprivation Risk Factor show that 21.8% of Nueces County families and 35.5% of its children in 2011 were living in poverty. More than a half, 51.6%, of the County’s children from birth to 4 years old were receiving WIC in 2010. Some 11.3% of the County’s children were without health insurance in 2010 while 37.5% were eligible for Medicaid in 2011.

The probability is high that a larger proportion of Nueces County children when compared to the State are affected by fetal exposure to alcohol and illicit drugs. The data indicators for the risk factor Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors show that Nueces County adults have higher arrest rates for alcohol and drug offenses than the State. Also, the County has a higher rate of adults in alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs and a higher rate of death due to liver disease and cirrhosis. Support for this probability is also found with the risk factor Availability of Drugs. Sales tax receipts for alcohol and sales of alcohol continue to increase.

The youngest age group of mothers is less likely to be able to cope financially and psychologically with the stresses of pregnancy and early childhood. This may result in lapses in nutritional, emotional, medical, or physical care that is provided to children. The probability is high that this is occurring in Nueces County because it has a higher proportion of births to adolescent mothers (5.0% in 2011 found in the risk factor Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behaviors) than the State or Nation and has a higher rate of low birth weight infants (7.8% in 2011 from the *Nueces County Data Profile*).

Medical, emotional, and nutritional neglect and physical and sexual abuse of children contribute to the development of the Constitutional Factors which in turn cause delinquency and violence. Adams (2010) reports

Youth who have experienced trauma may be more likely to be involved in illegal behavior for a variety of reasons, including the neurological, psychological and

social effects of trauma. A growing body of research in developmental neuroscience has begun to uncover the pervasive detrimental effects of traumatic stress on the developing brain. The majority of brain development is completed during the first five years of life, with the most critical development occurring within the first two years (2).

A traumatic event can involve interpersonal events such as physical or sexual abuse, war, community violence, neglect, maltreatment, loss of a caregiver, witnessing violence or experiencing trauma vicariously (1).

Research shows that while up to 34 percent of children in the United States have experienced at least one traumatic event, between 75 and 93 percent of youth entering the juvenile justice system annual in this country are estimated to have experienced some degree of trauma (1).

The Data Indicators for the risk factors Family Conflict and Family Management problems provide evidence that this causal process is occurring in Nueces County. The County has a rate of confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect of 12.6 per 1,000 children (2012) which is higher than for the State. Also, the County has a higher rate of adult domestic violence 15.2 per 1,000 (2011) which more than double that for the State. Because traumatic injury to pregnant women has negative consequences for the development of the fetus, it is possible that these effects are more common here than in the State as a whole.

While this risk factor, **Constitutional Factors**, does not add additional data indicators to this report. It becomes clear that those data indicators discussed in relationship to other risk factors support the conclusion that this one is present and affecting children in Nueces County.

## **RISK FACTORS WITH POSSIBLE IMPACT ON NUECES COUNTY**

The following six risk factors may be present in the community.

**Rebelliousness:** Nueces County has recorded between 25 and 44 suicides each year from 2001 to 2011. The years 2008 to 2010 recorded higher numbers than typical with the highest number, 44, in 2010. However, the number of suicides dropped to 25 in 2011. No clear pattern can be discerned in these numbers. The numbers are also very small which makes them unreliable for making predictions or conclusions. Juvenile suicides in the County have tended to vary from 0 to 3. These numbers are also too small and varied for use in making valid conclusions.

Reported gang involvement should be measured by the number of known juvenile gang members. However, these data are not kept systematically by local agencies. No trend data are available.

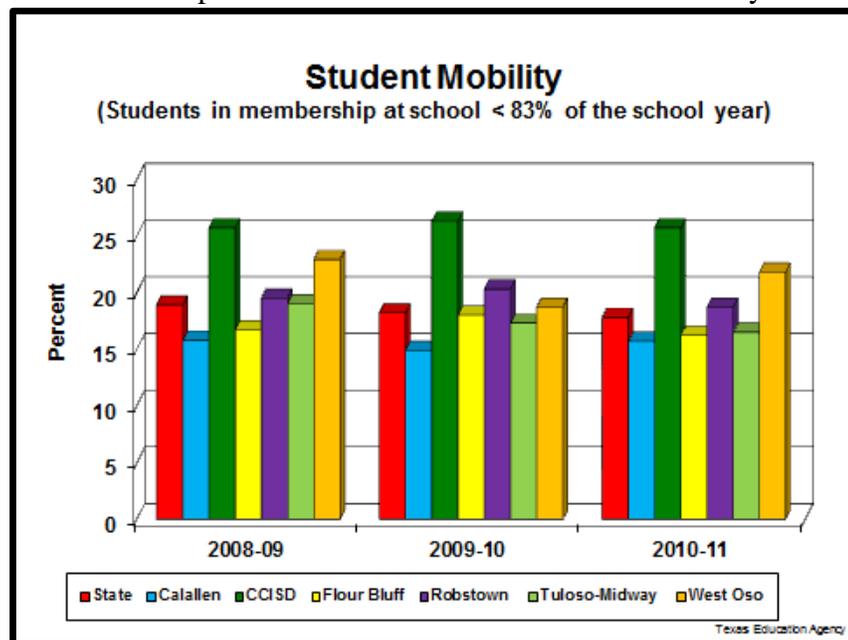
Vandalism arrests in the State have increased 17.0% from 2009 to 2011.

The Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) is designed to decrease juvenile crime in Corpus Christi by providing assessment and case management services to juveniles at risk of delinquency due to truancy or violation of curfew (among other issues). The number of children processed and intakes steadily decreased from 2003 to 2008. In 2003, the JAC had 1,280 intakes and processed 1,067 children. In 2008, the JAC had 821 intakes and processed 761 children. In 2009 and 2010, computer related and data entry problems have made JAC data unavailable. These issues have affected the number of children processed for 2011 and 2012 also. The JAC reports 213 intakes in 2011 and 266 in 2012. This is a dramatic reduction in the number of intakes occurring at the JAC from the 2007-2008 time period. This reduction in intakes may be related to the recent decline in truancy and failure to attend school. A contributing factor may be change in law enforcement policy or procedure concerning juveniles.

While it is likely that this risk factor, **Rebelliousness**, is present in the community, additional local data indicators are needed to confirm it.

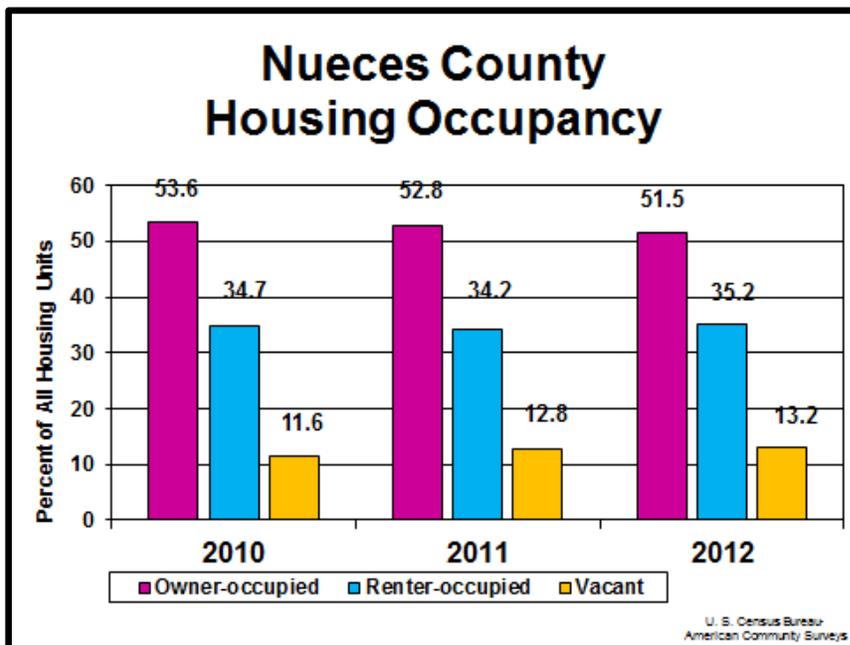
**Transitions and Mobility:** Student mobility is measured by examining those students that have been in membership at the school less than 83% of the school year. Of the six largest

school districts in the County in the 2010-2011 school year, CCISD had the highest percentage of student mobility at 25.7%, followed by West Oso ISD at 21.8% and Robstown ISD at 18.7%. All of these were higher than the proportion of students that were mobile in the State at 17.8%. For the



Calallen, Flour Bluff, and Tuloso-Midway districts, student mobility was lower than the State level for 2010-2011. From 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, Student mobility has decreased one to three percentage points for the State and each of the large districts in the County with the exception of Robstown where the decrease has been larger. One of the smallest changes has occurred with CCISD that accounts for the majority of the school children in the County.

When examining housing occupancy, the proportion of vacant housing units in the County increased from a low of 11.6% in 2006 to a high of 15.1% in 2009, but decreased to the 13.2% recorded for 2012. The proportion of housing units that were



owner-occupied in 2012 was 51.5% for the County. This figure is the lowest on record since 200 except for a dip in 2001. From 2006 to 2012, the proportion of renter-occupied housing increased in the County by 13.8% to 35.2%. The economic conditions of the past several years have reduced the number of owner-occupied housing units and increased both the

number of renter-occupied and vacant housing units.

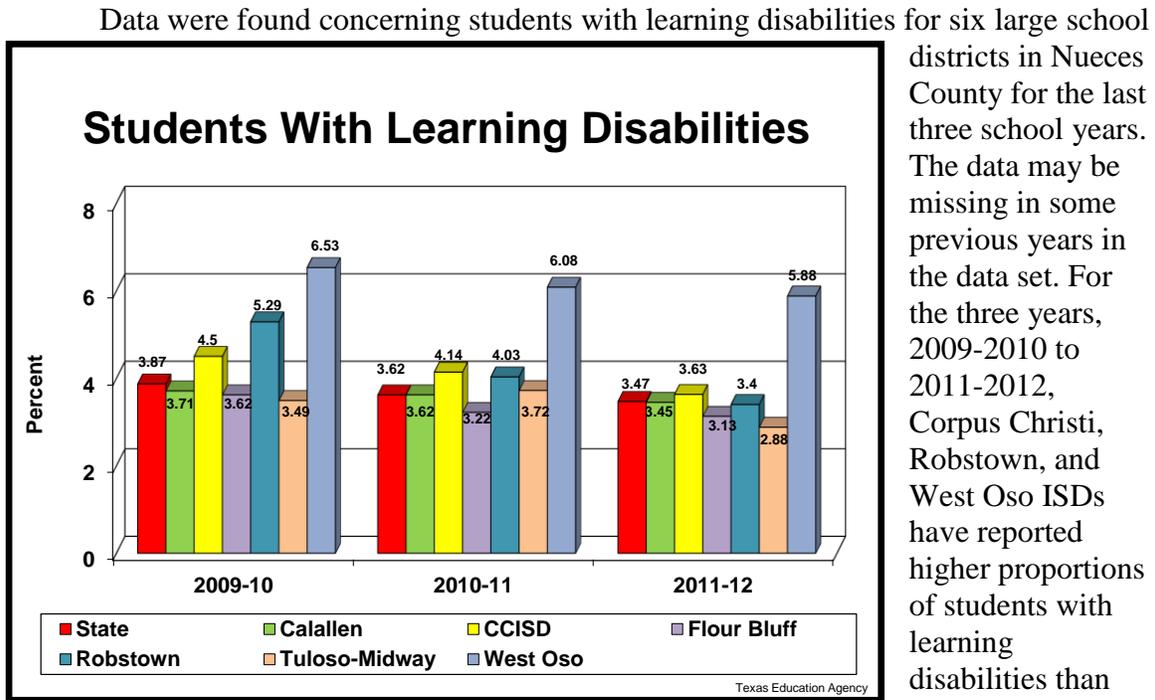
In Corpus Christi, the number of residential construction permits issued decreased 25.6% from 2008 to 2011 to a total of 631. A reverse of this downward trend occurred in 2012 with an increase of 42.5% to 899 residential permits issued. This is likely to signal a return to higher mobility of residents in to or simply in the County. Also, data was found for existing home sales in Nueces County. Existing home sales increased 18.8% from 2010 to 2012 to a total of 4,249. This also reverses a trend that had occurred in fewer home sales from 2006 to 2010.

In 2011, 80.2% of the people at least one year old living in Nueces County were living in the same residence one year earlier; 12.5% moved during the past year within the same county, 4.7% from another county in Texas, 2.1% from another state, and 0.5% from abroad. In 2011, 82.9% of the people at least one year old living in Texas were living in the same residence one year earlier; 10.6% moved during the past year within the same county, 3.8% from another county in Texas, 2.0% from another state, and 0.7% from abroad. The data indicate that over the past 4 years a slightly greater number of persons in the County were living in the same residence as one year earlier. This number has been 1 or 2 percentage points smaller than that for the State. Thus, some greater mobility is present in the County.

From this data, it may be concluded that the County's residents are slightly more transient than the State's. Therefore, the risk factor of **Transitions and Mobility** is likely to be present in the County. However, it is not as significant a factor as others.

**Early and Persistent Anti-Social Behavior:** Elementary school disciplinary problems is a primary data indicator for this risk factor. Data for this risk factor is not

readily found in the Texas Education Agency data. Disciplinary data does not appear to be separated by grade level. Alternative data, the proportion of all students that had a disciplinary placement has been provided for 4 of the 5 most recent academic years. Data for 2008-2009 appear to be inaccurate and have been excluded. In the 2010-2011 year, all of the large school districts in the County reported higher proportions of students with disciplinary placements than the State proportion of 1.8% except for Calallen. CCISD recorded 2.6%, Flour Bluff 3.8%, Robstown 3.2%, Tulo-so-Midway 1.9% and West Oso 2.8%. These figures are very typical for each district over the past several years.



for Robstown ISD in 2011-2012 where it tied the State figure. Over the past decade, the proportion of students reported with learning disabilities has declined in the State and for the County's ISDs where the data has been available. The chart displays this drop for the past three years.

At this point, it may be concluded that this risk factor, **Early and Persistent Anti-Social Behavior**, is likely to be present in the community. However, the available indicators are few and the evidence is not strong.

**Media Portrayals of Violence:** The risk factor media portrayals of violence was originally based on research extending back several years from the time of publication of the *Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders* (1998) and the *Communities that Care Prevention Strategies: A Research Guide to What Works* (1996) that were used in the Youth Opportunities United (YOU) initiative. At the time that YOU was operating, few data indicators existed for this risk factor except those from surveys including the YOU Survey 2000. These sources are now dated. Alternative data indicators have not been found and do not appear

to exist for Texas or Nueces County. Provided here is an update from the scholarly research on the risk factor.

In a recent review of the literature on television violence, Murray (2008) concludes that “there seem to be three main classes of effects: aggression, desensitization, and fear.

- Aggression: Viewing televised violence can lead to increases in aggressive behavior and/or changes in attitudes and values favoring the use of aggression to solve conflicts.
- Desensitization: Extensive violence viewing may lead to decreased sensitivity to violence and a greater willingness to tolerate increasing levels of violence in society.
- Fear: Extensive exposure to television violence may produce the mean world syndrome effect, in which viewers overestimate their risk of victimization.”

Literature reviews from research based articles on media violence exposure often offer conclusions such as that found in Ostorov, Gentile, and Crick’s (2006: 612) study: “media violence exposure increases subsequent physical aggression across development... and can be associated with other negative outcomes.” These outcomes include “desensitization to real violence, aggressive cognitions and behavior, and problematic parental and peer relationships (Ostorov, Gentile, and Crick, 2006: 612). Their own longitudinal study of pre-school children found that both the amount and the content of media are associated with future observed aggression (Ostorov, Gentile, and Crick, 2006: 622). A study that compared non-delinquent to delinquent high school students found that “violent media exposure is associated with involvement in violent behavior” (Boxer *et al*, 2009). Barboza *et al* (2009) pose an ecological model of bullying in their study of a sample of adolescents. Along with the effects found from school and family variables was that “broader societal attitudes towards violence—exemplified by the violent content of television shows—increase the likelihood of chronic and frequent bullying.”

A media not examined in the studies cited above, but that also exposes youth to violent content are video and computer games. Levermore and Salisbury (2009) interviewed high school youth and found that the playing of violent video games “was positively correlated with total aggression, physical aggression, and verbal aggression.” Gentile *et al* (2004) have reported from a study of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students that “Adolescents who expose themselves to greater amounts of video game violence were more hostile, reported getting into arguments with teachers more frequently, were more likely to be involved in physical fights, and performed more poorly in school.” Literature reviews of studies of video game violence exposure indicate that such exposure is correlated with increased physiological arousal, aggressive feelings (anger or hostility), aggressive cognitions, and aggressive behavior, but decreased prosocial behavior (see Barlett, Anderson, and Swing, 2009 and Anderson and Bushman, 2001).

While the effects reported about media exposure to violence appear to be well documented and replicated, the importance of this risk factor must be considered. Many of the studies cited above or reviewed within the literature reviews included peer, family, school, and other risk factors. The effects of media exposure to violence were limited and many point out that correlation with may not translate to cause of violent or aggressive behavior. Savage (2008) has provided an extensive literature review that is essentially critical of much of the available research, and more importantly, places doubt on the usefulness of this risk factor in creation of policy or program. She concludes that if we are concerned with the prevention of violence we should focus on “the more obvious risk factors for serious violence such as parenting, child abuse, poverty, and concentrated disadvantage.” In its selection of primary risk factors, this report focuses on those more obvious risk factors.

**Availability of Firearms:** No data could be found directly bearing on firearm sales in the community. However, some local data were found on firearm ownership. According to the 2009 Safe Communities Survey, 26.6% of respondents indicated that they had firearms in the home. This figure is consistent with the 2002 finding of 23.7% and the 2006 finding of 24.0% that reported owning a firearm in the Safe Communities Surveys for those years. In 2009, only 50.0% reported that they have trigger locks on their firearms, and 50.0% reported storing them under lock and key. The Safe Communities Surveys are based on convenience samples. Thus, they may not accurately measure the number of homes with firearms in the community. A random sample survey was completed in 2000 of Corpus Christi residents for the Crime Control and Prevention District. That survey found a much higher proportion, 47.5%, of respondents that had a firearm in the home. Of these Corpus Christi residents, 24.3% stated that they carry a knife, gun, club or stun-gun when out of their home.

A national opinion poll has been taken on firearm ownership by homeowners each year for several decades. This data indicates a steady level of 39 to 45% of American homes report the presence of a firearm across the 2006 to 2012 time period. In 2012, 43% of Americans in this poll reported owning a firearm. The region in which Texas is placed tends to report greater ownership of firearms than the nation as a whole. Across the 2006 to 2011 time period between 50% and 56% of residents in the South reported a firearm in the home. In 2011, 54% of homes in the South reportedly had a firearm. The Safe Communities data appear to indicate that fewer Nueces County residents own firearms than those in the region or nation. This may be part of the reason that fewer violent crimes are committed by firearm in the County as compared to the State as reported above.

Brady Bill applications for firearms have been increasing nationally. From 2006 to 2010, the number of Brady Bill applications increased 19.0%. However, it cannot be determined how many of these applications resulted in a firearm purchase. Further, these data would not account for firearms sold between citizens and not from a commercial outlet. Local data for Brady Bill Applications processed by the Corpus Christi Police Department is no longer available.

According to reports from the Texas Department of Public Safety, Concealed Handgun Licensing Bureau, the number of licenses issued has significantly increased from 2007 to 2012. In Texas, the number of licenses issued increased 67.5% to 146,367 in 2012. In Nueces County, the number increased 88.5% to 1,880 in 2012. These data seem to indicate that the possibility exists that more firearms are actively carried in the community by those that have the appropriate license.

The Availability of Firearms is considered a risk factor because a variety of forms of research indicate that the greater the availability of firearms, the higher the homicide rate tends to be. Hepburn and Hemenway (2004) report from an extensive review of the literature that the

evidence is quite consistent. The few case control studies suggest that households with firearms are at higher risk for homicide, particularly firearm homicide. International cross-sectional studies of high-income countries find that in countries with more firearms, both men and women are at higher risk for homicide, particularly firearm homicide... Time series studies of particular cities and states, and for the United States as a whole, suggest a positive gun prevalence-homicide association. Finally, perhaps the strongest evidence comes from cross-sectional analyses of U.S. regions and states. Again, places with higher levels of gun ownership are places with higher homicide rates (2004: 437).

Newer studies continue to support the conclusions reached in the literature review. "States with higher rates of household firearm ownership had significantly higher homicide victimization rates" was the conclusion of an examination of firearm ownership and homicide using 2001-2003 data (Miller, Hemenway, & Azrael, 2007). A national case-control study found that having a firearm "in the home is a risk factor for gun-related homicide and suicide" for adults in the U.S. (Wiebe, 2003a).

The latter study introduces the topic of additional risks surrounding firearms. "In the United States, firearms are by far the most common method of completed suicide, and the prevalence of firearms suicide is closely correlated with firearms ownership rates... Handguns, compared to long guns; loaded guns, compared to unloaded guns; and unlocked guns, compared to locked guns, are all more closely associated with suicide" (Brent and Bridge, 2003). Also, unintentional (accidental) deaths are associated with firearm prevalence. In a study of adults in the U.S., it was found "that the presence of a gun in the home was a risk factor for unintentional shooting death. Having multiple guns appeared to compound the hazard, as did having handguns in particular" (Wiebe, 2003b). The data of the National Violent Death Reporting System were used to examine unintentional firearm deaths from 2003 to 2006. Nearly half, 49%, of the unintentional shooting deaths were other-inflicted, but this varied by age with 78% of the deaths of those 14 and under caused by another. The deaths of children tended to occur when the firearm was being shown or played with and the shooter tended to be another child (Hemenway, Barger, Miller, 2010). Access by children to unlocked and loaded firearms may be a significant factor in these deaths. "Areas where gun owners tend to store

firearms both loaded and unlocked have the highest rates of unintentional firearm deaths” (Miller et al, 2005).

From the Safe Communities Survey data, it is possible to conclude that fewer residents (households) in Nueces County have a firearm than is typical of the State and Region. This may relate to the data indicators for Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behaviors that show Nueces County with lower proportions of homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault committed by firearm than the State or Nation. However, of concern for prevention of injury and death are the Survey results that indicate that only 50% of residents lock or lock-up their firearms. This contributes to the potential loss of unsecured firearms into inappropriate hands due to larceny or burglary and to increases in the risks of suicide and unintentional death.

**Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization:** Voter turnout appears to be dropping in Nueces County. In 2012, 52.9% of the total voting-age population in the County voted in the Presidential election. The voter turnout for the State and Nation were 31.4% and 57.5%, respectively. This is the highest voter turnout for a Presidential election in the County across the 1992-2012 time period.

The number of churches and synagogues with listings in the Corpus Christi area telephone book yellow pages increased from 239 in 1999 to a high of 378 in 2005, but declined to 355 in 2009. The number of churches and synagogues increased again in 2010 to a high of 437 and then declined to the 380 listed in in 2012. From year to year, part of the variation may be due to whether or not these organizations chose to be listed in the yellow pages a particular year. However, across the past decade an increased number of listings has occurred.

The homicide rate has decreased in the State and County. From 2007 to 2011, the State homicide rate (per 100,000 population) decreased 25.4% to a rate of 4.4 in 2011. In the same time period, the County homicide rate peaked in 2008 and again in 2010 to finally result in a decrease of 26.4% to the rate of 3.9 in 2011.

The data available do not provide a strong, basis from which to judge if this risk factor, **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization**, is operative in the community. However, the evidence available in the reduction of the homicide rate and increase in both voting and availability of churches and synagogues may indicate that it is not.

## **SUMMARY AND RESTATEMENT OF PRIORITY RISK FACTORS**

The data reviewed above provide evidence that the Corpus Christi-Nueces County community experiences juvenile delinquency fostered by six Priority Risk Factors and additional risk factors. **Family Management Problems** and **Family Conflict** provide unstable environments, reduce the probability of social bonding, and prevent the development of healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. They damage children’s

potential development early and reduce the possibility that families can be supportive of successful growth, educational completion, and gainful employment.

**Extreme Economic Deprivation** contributes significantly to the stresses that lead to family management problems and conflict, reduces parents' resources to be supportive of children, and creates family and neighborhood environments conducive to the development of behavioral problems.

As a result, children from these environments demonstrate **Lack of Commitment to School**. At the same time, these risk factors contribute to the failure of children to grow-up with the education and skills needed to be competitive in the economy, prepared for advanced education or technical training, and ready for professional jobs. They leave youth without the coping, problem solving, communication, and other skills necessary to be good parents and manage families well.

Thus, they may grow up to be adults that seek temporary stress relief through the use of alcohol and drugs. This is seen in the risk factor: **Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior**. Adult participation in violence, property crime, alcohol abuse, and drug use provides role models of participation in the problem behaviors. Children model their parents' and other adults' behaviors. They begin their substance abuse and delinquency at an early age.

**Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior** tends to remove children from environments where successful development is likely. These children are less likely to bond with their families, social institutions, or society itself. They are less likely to develop socially acceptable standards of behavior and healthy beliefs. They are more likely to fail in school, fail to develop an adequate work ethic or advanced job skills, and fail to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to be good parents. Thus, they are likely to grow into adulthood to establish families in environments of economic deprivation that they fail to manage well.

In the manner described, the six Priority Risk Factors and other risk factors perpetuate themselves and the production of the problem behaviors of delinquency, violence, drug use, teen pregnancy, and dropout in the community. The data have provided a clear, valid problem image on which to focus community intervention.

The preceding analysis of nineteen (19) risk factors using data for Nueces County and the City of Corpus Christi has included more than 100 data indicators. The analysis of the data indicators in relation to risk factors demonstrates that six (6) of the nineteen (19) risk factors may have influence in the community. The evidence for these risk factors is more moderate or weak and/or the evidence does not involve high quality local data. Also, for some of these risk factors, too few data indicators exist to support a firm conclusion. These risk factors are discussed above in the section on: **RISK FACTORS WITH POSSIBLE IMPACT ON NUECES COUNTY**

They include:

- **Rebelliousness**
- **Transitions and Mobility**
- **Early and Persistent Anti-Social Behavior**
- **Media Portrayals of Violence**
- **Availability of Firearms, and**
- **Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization.**

For an additional seven (7) risk factors, the evidence is strong and the data indicators provide a clearer image of the risk factors. These are discussed in the section of this report entitled: **RISK FACTORS WITH CLEAR IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY**. The evidence for these risk factors is stronger, is supported by multiple data indicators, and is largely based on local information.

The following seven risk factors clearly have impact on delinquency in the community:

- **Academic Failure**
- **Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior**
- **Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior**
- **Availability of Drugs**
- **Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use and Crime**
- **Family History of High Risk Behavior**
- **Constitutional Factors.**

The strongest evidence from data indicators is found with six (6) **Priority Risk Factors**. For these Priority Risk Factors, the data provide unmistakable, long-term trends that are confirmed through the use of multiple data indicators using local data and most often contrasted to benchmarks for the State or Nation.

The **Priority Risk Factors** for the community are:

- 1. Family Management Problems**
- 2. Family Conflict**
- 3. Extreme Economic Deprivation**
- 4. Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior**
- 5. Lack of Commitment to School**
- 6. Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior.**

The Priority Risk Factors exist within each of the four domains: community, family, school, and individual. They each contribute to all five problem behaviors: delinquency, teen pregnancy, drug use, violence, and dropout. They are interconnected by both cause and effect into an integrated cluster of causes. Thus, the set of Priority

Risk Factors is most appropriate for the continued development of policies and programs to prevent or intervene with juvenile delinquency.

The last report provided to the Commission for Children and Youth from the YOU Comprehensive Planning Initiative indicated that some positive changes had occurred in the community. It concluded that some of the programs funded by grant writing and modified in the planning process had reduced delinquency in the community. However, that report noted the economic downturn that occurred in the time period around 2001 and increases in child abuse, family violence, and juvenile crime in the 2001-2003 period possibly associated with increased economic stress. Economic conditions for children worsened over several years leading to 2008 and 2009 which points to the importance of economic conditions in the risk factor analyses. The 2010 edition of this report and its supporting documents did not yet show the longer term effects of the economic changes that were occurring. This report shows evidence of improved economic conditions, but also, of increased family and child poverty and increased juvenile delinquency directly tied to economic conditions. Adult arrests have remained stable over the past 4 to 5 years. However, this means that the County continues to have significantly higher adult crime involvement compared to the State as a whole. This demonstration of favorable parental attitudes and involvement in the problem behaviors appears to continue to support early initiation of juvenile delinquency in the County that continues into the later juvenile years. While juvenile delinquency has decreased overall, the County's delinquency rates across all forms of delinquency remain higher than the State's rates. This current assessment highlights the risk factors that need attention to change these conditions.

It is known that comprehensive, strategic planning for a 20-year time frame such as was intended when the YOU initiative began, is a continual process of assessment, adjustment, re-planning, and extension. Focusing community efforts on the complex problem of juvenile delinquency and the five problem behaviors requires ongoing data gathering and analysis. Community efforts to produce protective factors require modifications of goals, priorities, targets, and action plans for those efforts to remain viable over the long term. This report has been provided by the Corpus Christi Commission for Children and Youth to support and encourage those community efforts.

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