



# HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT MENTAL HEALTH UNIT



## **WINNER**

**IACP Community  
Policing Award**

## **FINALIST**

**Herman Goldstein  
Award for Excellence  
in Problem-Oriented  
Policing**

## **NATIONAL LEADER**

**Department of Justice  
Specialized Policing  
Response National  
Learning Site**

POLICING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

# 2010

POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE

## ANNUAL REPORT



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“Our crisis intervention team is one of the shining stars in the police department and it’s an example of doing the right thing in the right way and how that can make our city safer.”

Mayor Annise D. P a r k e r





“This is the essence of  
community policing...”

Charles A. McClelland, Jr.  
Chief of Police





# Mission

To provide a more professional and humane response to individuals in serious mental health crises.

# Purpose

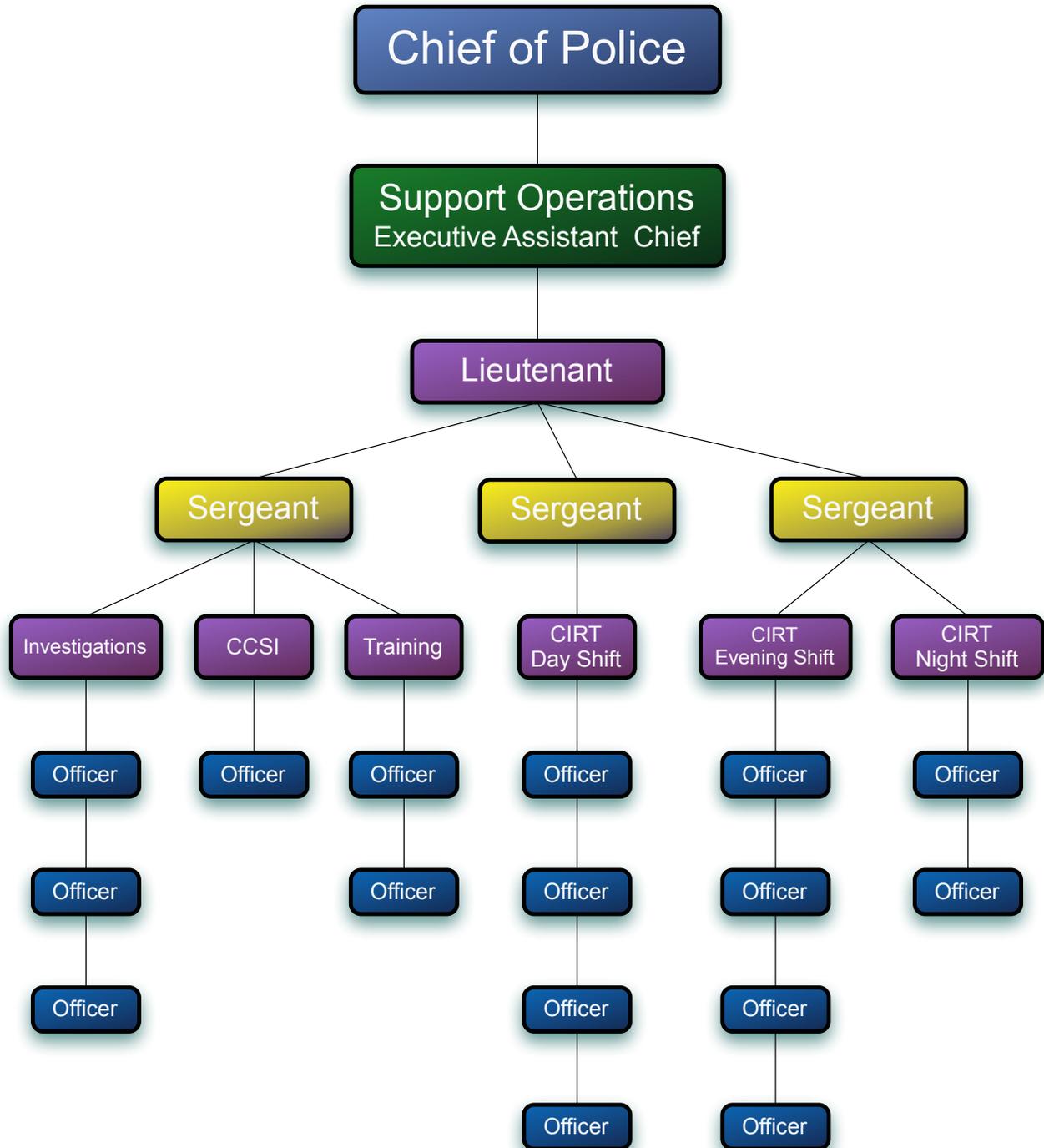
To oversee the department's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT), and Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI). To provide guidance in the area of policy and procedures in dealing with persons in mental health crises.



**Mental Health Unit**  
**December 2010**



# Mental Health Unit





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# Programs of the Mental Health Unit

“ I’m well aware of the leadership that the Houston Police Department has shown in the area of CIT and working with TCLEOSE and the state legislature to get standards and training for all officers in the state of Texas.”

Todd Miller, IACP



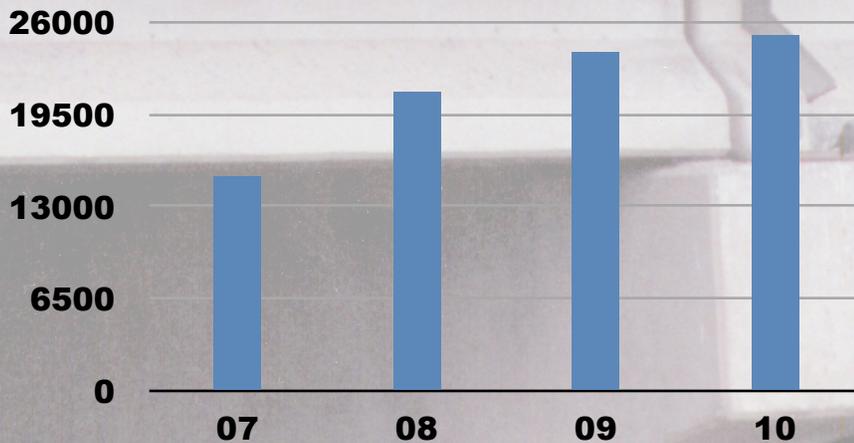


# Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

## Key Facts

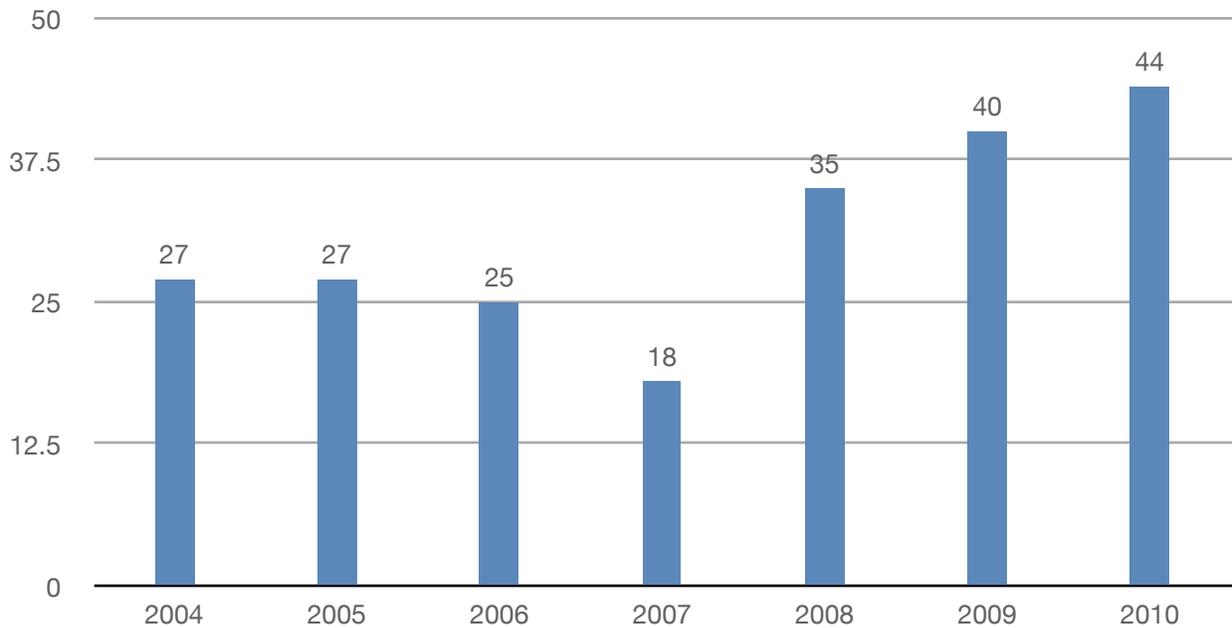
- Department's foundational specialized response for responding to the mentally ill
- Largest program in the nation
- Model program in Texas
- One of the national models
- 1250 CIT officers in uniformed services
- 390 CIT officers in non-uniformed services

## CIT CALLS-FOR-SERVICE (by year)



## PERCENTAGE OF CIT CALLS WITH CIT OFFICER ON SCENE

(by year)



“ One of the historic problems with the CIT program has been the low percentage of CIT calls with a CIT officer on the scene. A primary goal when forming the Mental Health Unit in 2007 was to improve this percentage. This was achieved with increased training for the dispatchers, the implementation of the CIRT program, and training all cadets as CIT officers. Additional programs will be proposed in 2011 to further improve this percentage.”

Lieutenant Mike L e e

Mental Health Unit



# Crisis Intervention Response Team



## Full Time CIRT Unit

December 2010

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“It is not often that a new program exceeds expectations, but that is what has occurred with the implementation of the Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) program.”

Lieutenant Kevin G r i m m e t t  
Hostage Negotiation Team Coordinator



# CIRT Productivity Statistics

Activity	2008	2009	2010	2008/2009 % change	2009/2010 % change	Total
calls-for-service	1388	3461	4518	149	31	9367
on-view investigations	545	1047	940	92	-10	2532
offense reports	695	1076	1599	55	49	3370
supplement reports	0	402	876	N/A	118	1278
arrests	27	61	70	126	15	158
emergency detentions	453	978	1498	116	53	2929
referrals	177	118	137	-33	16	432
follow-up investigations	156	210	285	35	36	651
SWAT calls	19	36	20	89	-44	75

“With the increase in units and recent changes in dispatch, I believe CIRT will file half of the department’s emergency detention orders in 2011.”

Sergeant Patrick **Plourde**

CIRT



## Jail Assessments

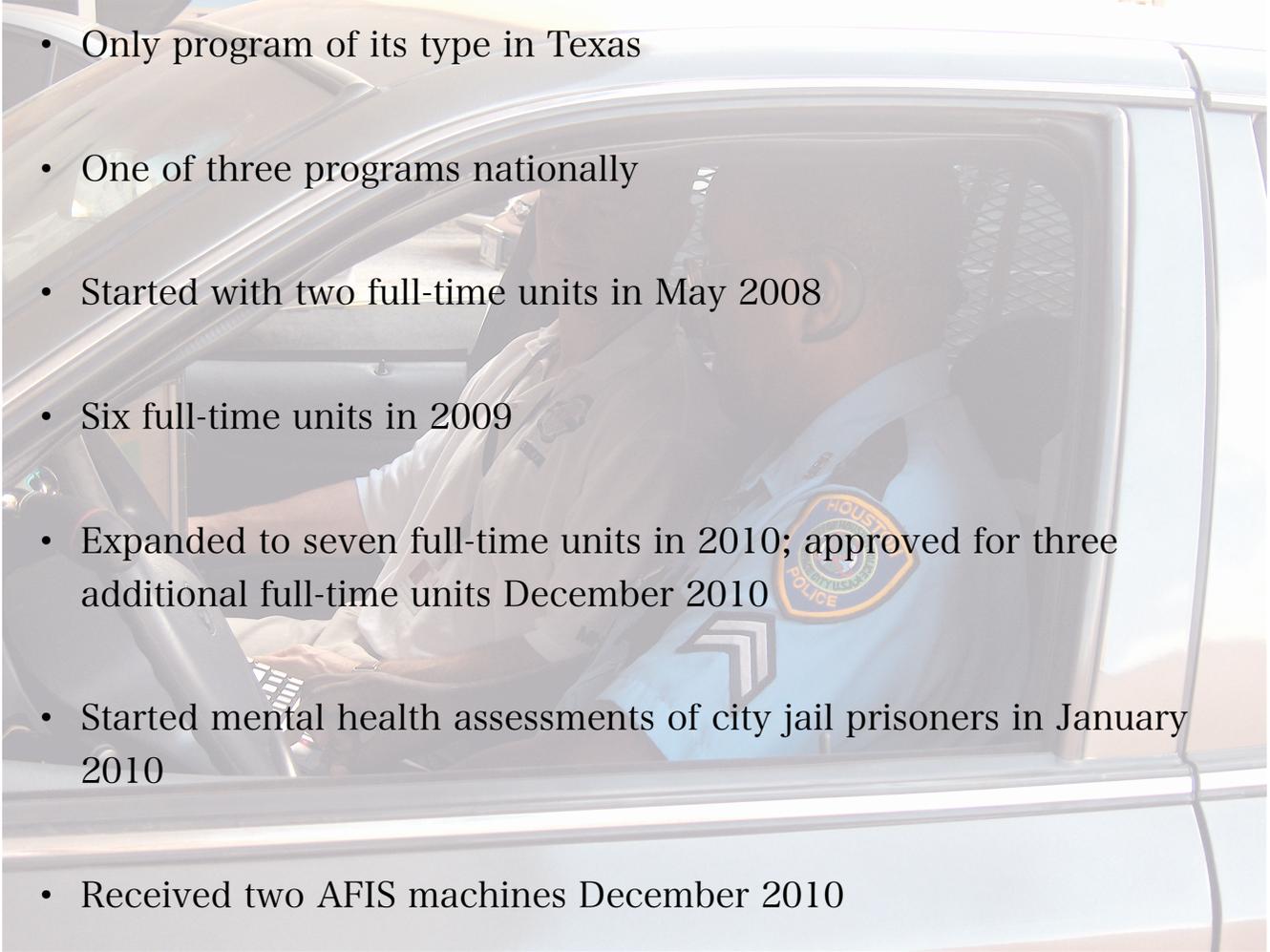
- First-ever formal mental health screening for the city jail started January 2010
- Effort spearheaded by MHU
- CIRT plays pivotal role/final evaluation of prisoner
- **177** jail assessments performed by CIRT in 2010
- **112** prisoners with serious mental illness or true suicidal ideations were properly evaluated and removed from the jail by CIRT

## Portable AFIS

- CIRT issued two Cogent BlueCheck Portable AFIS machines in December 2010
- The AFIS machines will enable CIRT officers to identify consumers, many of whom are homeless and do not have identification
- AFIS machines will also enable the CIRT officers to determine if the consumers have criminal warrants



## CIRT Significant Developments

- 
- Only program of its type in Texas
  - One of three programs nationally
  - Started with two full-time units in May 2008
  - Six full-time units in 2009
  - Expanded to seven full-time units in 2010; approved for three additional full-time units December 2010
  - Started mental health assessments of city jail prisoners in January 2010
  - Received two AFIS machines December 2010
  - 31% increase in calls-for-service in 2010 from 2009
  - 53% increase in Emergency Detention Orders in 2010 from 2009

# Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI)

## Program Summary



Houston Department of  
Health & Human Services

CCSI is an innovative, proactive, *collaborative* community policing program partnering the Houston Police Department, the Houston Department of Health and Human Services and the Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County. Together, these three agencies work to keep individuals with serious and persistent mental illness from continually going into crisis rather than repeatedly responding to their crises. The first year of the program yielded the following impressive results on the consumers placed in the program:

- 70% reduction in the number of encounters with the Houston Police Department
- 76% reduction in the number of Emergency Detention Orders
- 51% reduction in overall admission to the Harris County Psychiatric Center

# Example of CCSI Intervention

Name: R. Jones  
Age: 50  
Diagnosis: Bipolar Disorder



R. Jones' house prior to being placed in the CCSI program.

## Prior to CCSI Intervention

# of Responses by HPD: 16  
# of Emergency Room Visits: 24  
# Hospitalizations: 3  
Behavior: Distrustful, suspicious, would go to bayou to get water  
Living Conditions: Dilapidated home, windows and walls missing, no electricity or running water, no SSI benefits, no phone

## After One Year in CCSI Program

# of Responses by HPD: 0  
# of Emergency Room Visits: 0  
# Hospitalizations: 0  
Behavior: Stabilized, no longer distrustful or suspicious, does not go to bayou to get water  
Living Conditions: Receives SSI benefits, has electricity, water and phone. Family visited her in her home for first time in more than a year.



R. Jones' apartment after placement by CCSI case worker.

# Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI)

## Significant Developments

- Pilot Phase: February 2009 through August 2009
- Became a permanent program in the Houston Police Department in 2010
- Winner of the International Association of Chiefs of Police 2010 Community Policing Award
- Finalist for the 2010 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing



**Todd Miller, Chair, IACP Community Policing Committee presents the IACP 2010 Community Policing Award to Mayor Annise D. Parker and Chief Charles A. McClelland, Jr.**

# Functions of the Mental Health Unit

# Administration

The MHU is driven by information gleaned from offense reports. When the MHU was formed in 2007, there was no database of information. One of the most significant accomplishments of 2010 was the refinement of our database and the entry of data.

**7,024** - Number of offense reports entered into the MHU database in 2010

Number of offense reports reviewed by MHU in 2010 - **10,628**

Data entry screen of the MHU's updated database

# Investigations

“The Mental Health Unit has been a valuable resource to the Sex Crimes Unit. We’ve had several incidents involving complainants, who were obviously in mental health crisis, that were making repeated false allegations of sexual assault. These chronic complaints represent a significant drain on law enforcement. The Mental Health Unit has been able to intervene and get these individuals needed mental health services, which allows us to focus on the victims of sexual assault that truly need our help.”

Lieutenant Mike **W a t e r w a l l**  
Special Crimes



Investigations have become a significant function of the Mental Health Unit. Investigative divisions of the Houston Police Department are increasingly referring cases to the MHU. Additionally, the MHU conducts investigations referred from the office of the Chief of Police, the Mayor’s office, City Council, U. S. Secret Service, U. S. Marshals, and other law enforcement agencies.

**1514** - Number of investigations conducted by the Mental Health Unit in 2010

# Investigative Team

“My goals for 2011 are to create a training manual for administrative/investigative personnel and to have our investigators conduct more in-depth investigations.”

Sergeant Marco **L o e r a**

Administration/Investigations



## Unit Investigators

The investigative staff of the MHU includes (left to right) Senior Officer Merry Rubin, Senior Officer Doug Anders, Officer Priscilla Rayon, Sergeant Marco Loera, and Officer Lawrence Pate.

# Sample of Mental Health Unit Intelligence Bulletin

Developed by Sergeant Loera



## Information Bulletin Houston Police Department

Crime Analysis / Command Center Division

**Confidential:  
For Police  
Use Only**

Charles A. McClelland, Jr., CHIEF OF POLICE

October 5, 2010, 2010  
Prepared by: Sgt M.A. Loera

ATTN: Special Operations Division  
**MENTAL HEALTH UNIT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN**

Inc # [REDACTED]  
Date: 09/17/10  
Time: 2142  
Location: 1000 Preston (1A10)

### Suspect's Description:

Name: [REDACTED]  
Race: B  
Sex: Male  
DOB: 10/10/64  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 157  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Home Address: Homeless



### Suspect's Identifiers:

TX ID: [REDACTED] FBI: [REDACTED] HPD: [REDACTED]  
SS: [REDACTED] DPS: [REDACTED]

On 09/17/10 at approximately 2142 hrs, [REDACTED] slapped and kicked the complainant for no apparent reason. The complainant was able to hold on to [REDACTED] and called the police. [REDACTED] was not charged for the assault. [REDACTED] was transported to the NeuroPsychiatric Center (NPC) and an Emergency Detention Order (EDO) was filed on behalf of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] has prior arrests for assaults, criminal mischief, possession of marijuana, resisting arrest, and evading detention. He has also been listed as a consumer (complainant) on multiple HPD offense reports due to his mental illness.

[REDACTED] has been diagnosed with Schizophrenia and Bi-Polar Disorder and displays threatening behavior. [REDACTED] has been non-compliant with his medications. If a criminal offense of Class B Misdemeanor or above has been committed, contact the Harris County District Attorney's office for possible criminal charges. Use caution when in contact with the listed consumer and request for a Crisis Intervention Response Unit (CIRT), 66M unit to the scene.

For additional information, Officer R. Skillern, Mental Health Unit, 713-970-4647.  
CA101150

# Group Homes

## The Problem

- MHU database has identified over 700 facilities in Houston caring for the mentally ill that the department has responded to, 289 of which are group homes
- The department responded to 2079 calls-for-service to group homes in 2010
- State does not have the manpower to regulate these facilities
- All of these facilities house individuals with varying degrees of mental illness
- There is no requirement the person managing the group home have any training regarding mental illness
- The lack of oversight and training has resulted in many problems in a large number of these facilities

## MHU Response Strategy

- Establish/utilize contacts with other city and state departments with current authority to investigate and regulate these facilities (health, water, fire, utility, etc.)
- Establish/track/monitor data on facilities via MHU database
- Determine if criminal activity is occurring at locations and address activity if found
- Work to develop city ordinances to regulate these facilities. The Texas Legislature passed HB 216 in the 81st legislative session that gives municipalities the authority to pass such legislation

# Example of Problem Group Home

Address: 6205 Saxon

Beat: 3B10

Number of Residents: 20-22

Calls for Police Service in 2010: 78

# of Emergency Room Visits: 24

Complaints:

- Residents wandering away
- Residents found in traffic on interstate 290
- Did not have required occupancy permit
- Did not have health inspection for kitchen
- Inadequate fire escape for second floor
- Lacked smoke detectors for bedrooms and hallways
- Fire alarm system not in compliance
- 23-year-old female who was a resident of a group home wandered off naked and delusional and fell into a bayou and drowned



# Training

“The Justice Center staff is excited by the opportunity to work with the Houston Police Department through the BJA-supported Law Enforcement/Mental Health Learning Sites project. Only six departments were selected nationwide, which illustrates that HPD is a national leader on this issue.”

Blake Norton

Project Director  
Law Enforcement Initiatives  
Council of State Governments



## National Learning Site

Houston was one of six police departments nationwide to be selected as a learning site for specialized policing responses for responding to the mentally ill. As a learning site, Houston will provide information on its multi-faceted strategies for responding to individuals in serious mental health crises, host visitors from across the nation, and train law enforcement and mental health personnel from across the region, state and nation.

## Mental Health Unit Trainers

Houston is fortunate to have two very capable instructors. Senior Officer Frank Webb has a Master of Education degree, was selected to teach all Texas police chiefs in the state-mandated 16-hour CIT curriculum, served as the discipline chair to develop the 24-hour CIT module for the Basic Peace Officer Curriculum of TCLEOSE, and was instrumental in starting Houston's CIT program.

Officer Rebecca Skillern has a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and is a licensed professional counselor supervisor. She brings to the department over 15 years of experience working with people with varying degrees of mental illness. She is an experienced instructor and trainer both in the mental health and law enforcement fields.

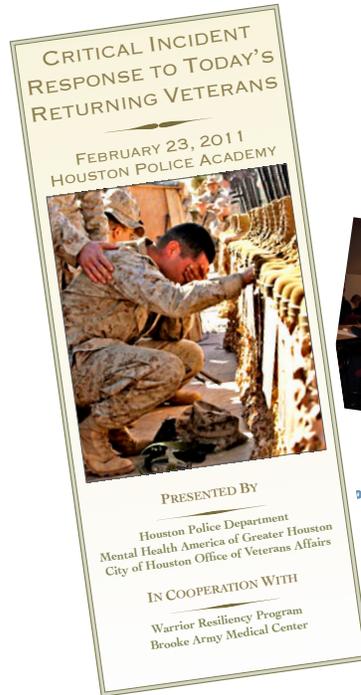


## Training Statistics 2010

Classes	# Classes Taught	# Hours Taught	# People Taught
Advanced CIT	26	208	1820
TCLEOSE Refresher	8	64	122
40-Hour CIT Train-the-Trainer	1	40	21
40-hour Mental Health Peace Officer	1	40	8
40-hour CIT for Cadets	2	80	149
Department Mandatory	52	208	3045

# MHU Media

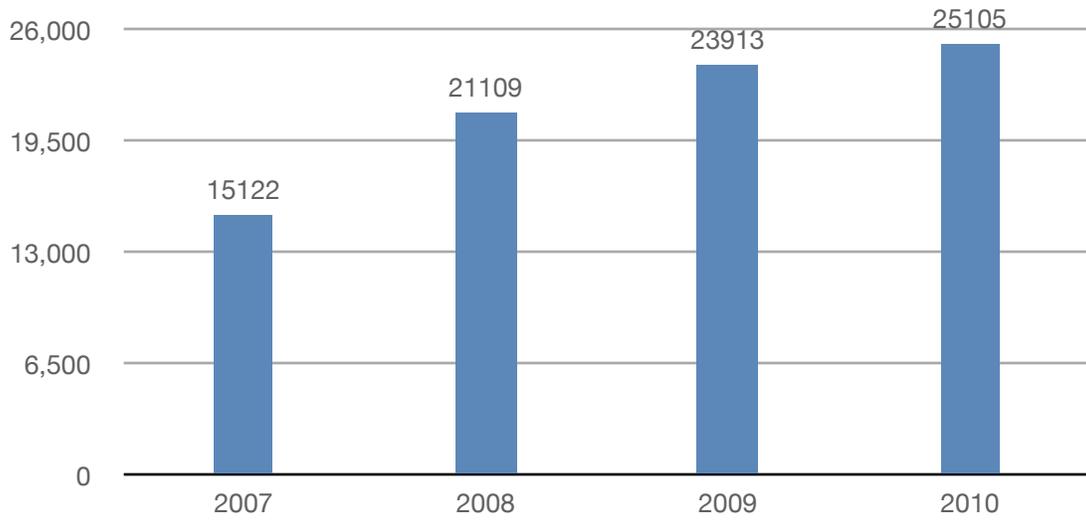
- Brochures
- Fliers
- Professional website
- Monthly newsletter (quarterly starting in 2011)
- Important for disseminating news of the unit throughout the department and local, state and national community
- Important for disseminating training information to agencies across the region, state and nation
- Important in our role as a Department of Justice National Learning Site



# Mental Health Unit Statistics

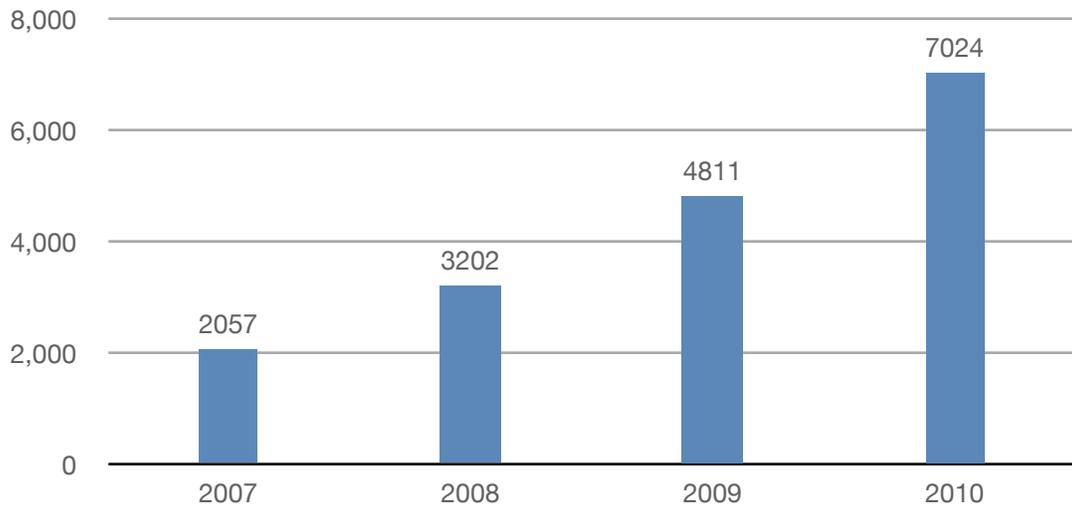
## CIT CALLS-FOR-SERVICE

(by year)



## CIT REPORTS CATALOGUED

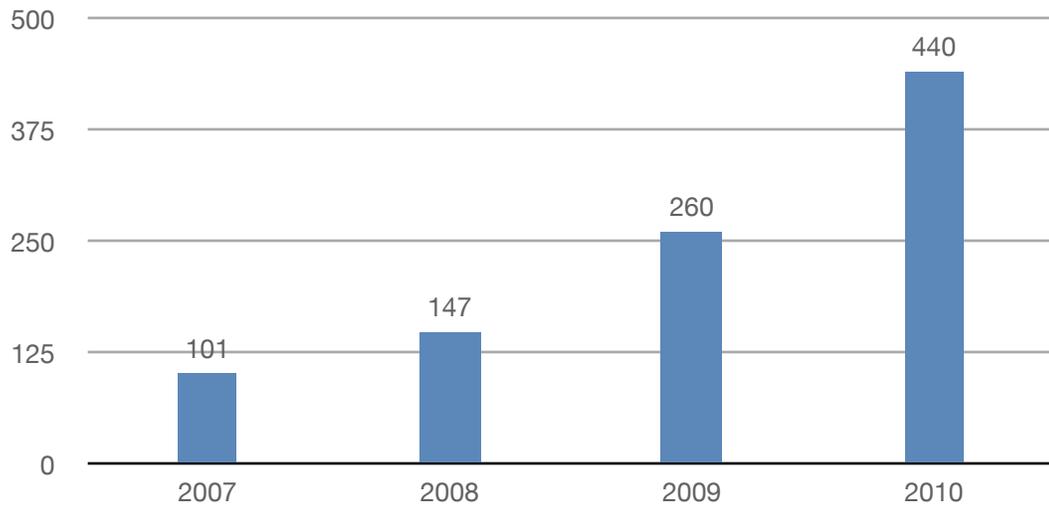
(by year)



Number of reports entered into MHU database

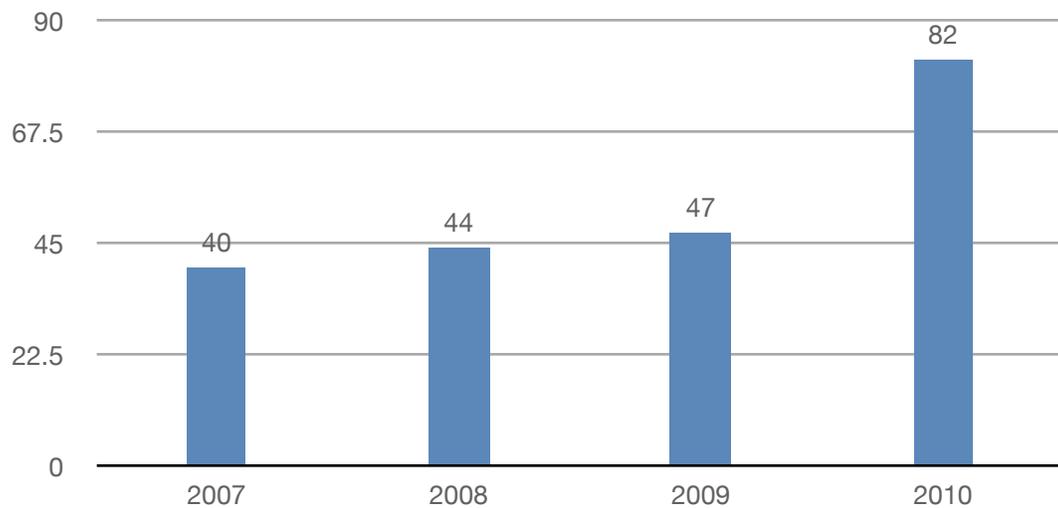
## JUVENILE CIT REPORTS REVIEWED BY MHU

(by year)



## PEOPLE REQUESTING SUICIDE-BY-COP

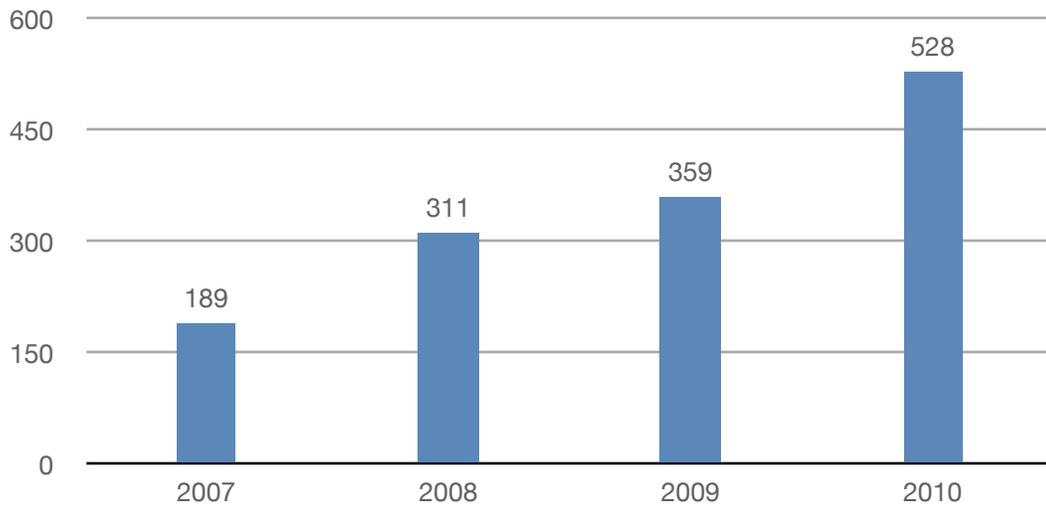
(by year)



Number of people who attempted to have the police kill them in lieu of the person committing suicide

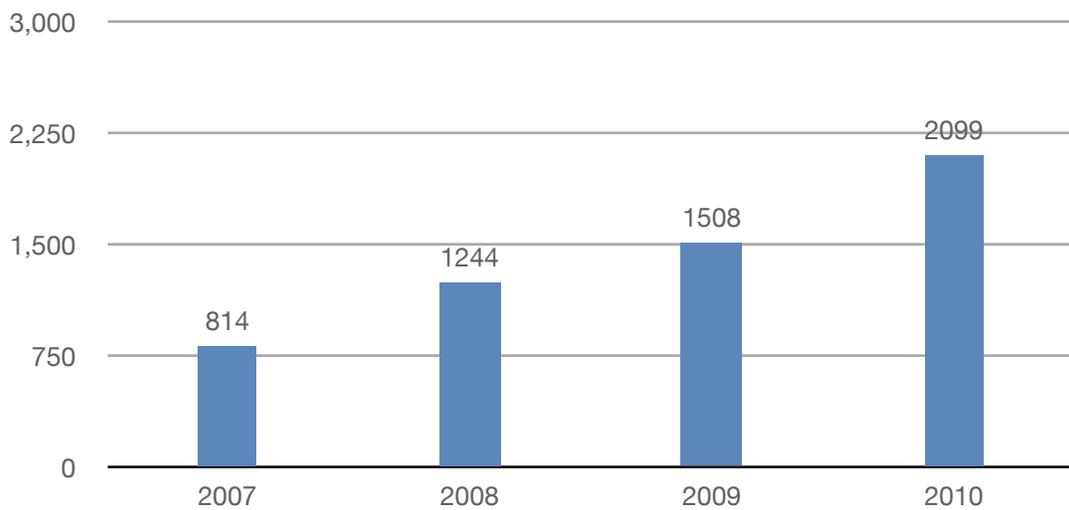
## HOMELESS MENTALLY ILL

(by year)



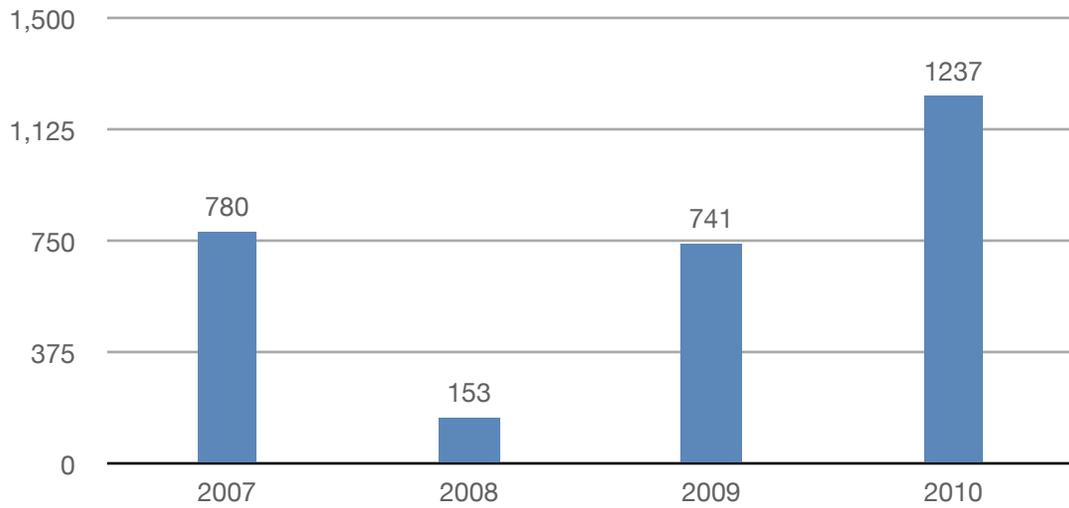
## JAIL DIVERSION

(by year)



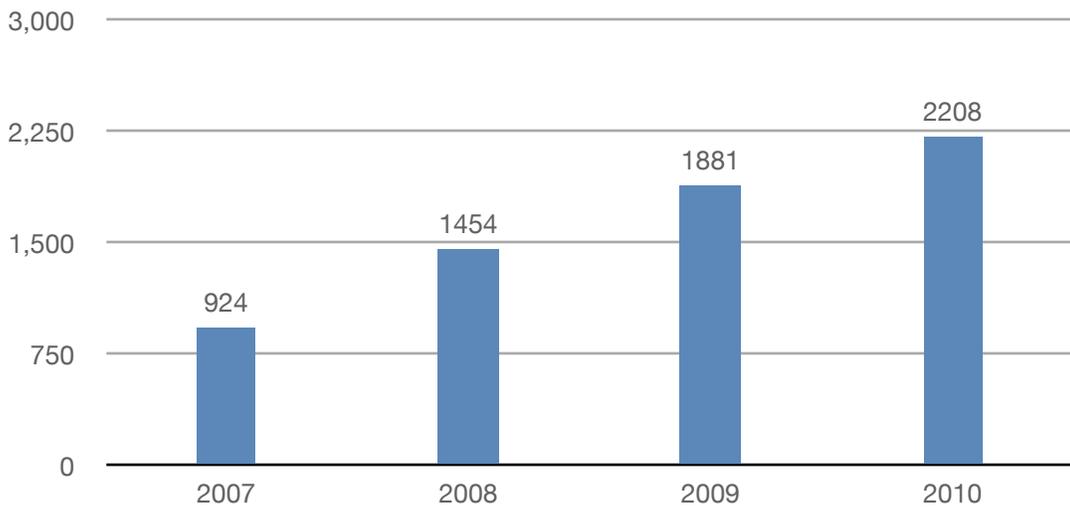
People who committed a crime and could have been arrested but were diverted into mental health treatment

## THREAT OF VIOLENCE (by year)



Number of mentally ill who threatened to hurt citizens and/or officers.

## NUMBER SUICIDAL (by year)



## REPEAT CONSUMERS

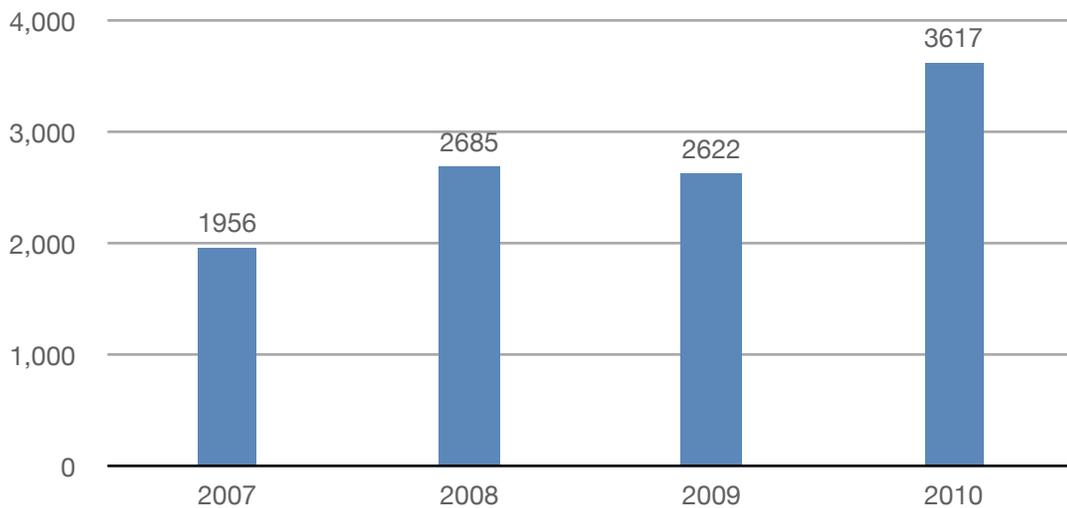
(by year)

Times taken to NPC	2007	2008	2009	2010
2x	133	225	228	322
3x	37	50	52	92
4x	6	16	19	29
5x	7	11	6	13
6x	3	3	2	5
7x	0	3	2	0
8x	0	1	1	2
9x	0	1	0	0
10x	0	0	0	1
12x	0	1	0	2

Number of times the same consumer was taken to the NeuroPsychiatric Center for an Emergency Detention Order.

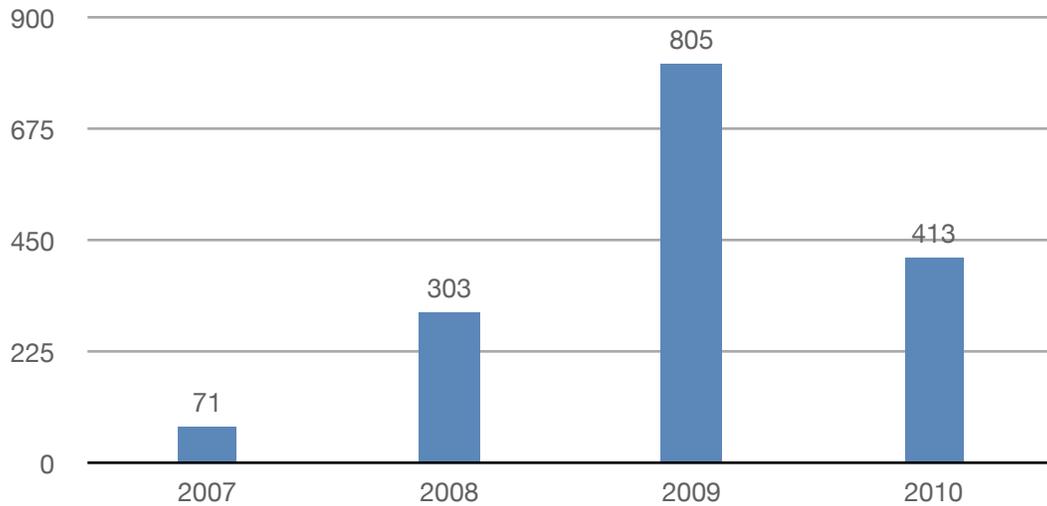
## CONSUMERS BROUGHT TO NPC

(by year)



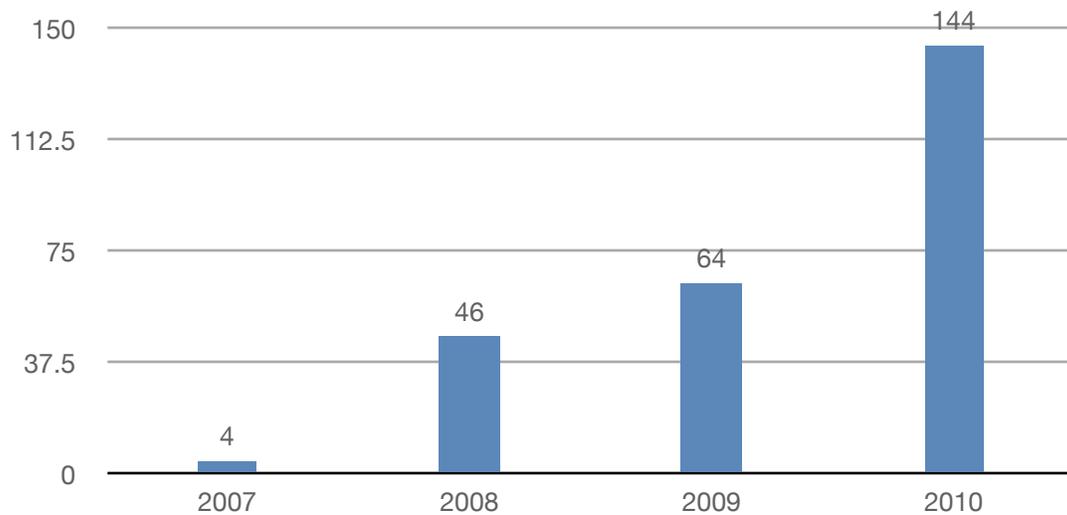
## CONSUMERS BROUGHT TO BEN TAUB HOSPITAL

(by year)



## CONSUMERS BROUGHT TO THE VA HOSPITAL

(by year)





# Conference Presentations

# Conference Presentations 2010

## National Adult Protective Services San Antonio, Texas

Senior Officer Frank Webb and Mr. Larry Wood, Houston CIT role player, gave a four-hour presentation on crisis intervention/de-escalation techniques. The presentation included role playing by the attendees. The presentation was evaluated very high by those attending. This was the only presentation involving role playing.



Mr. Larry Wood, a professional actor and Houston CIT role player, acting the role of a psychotic street preacher at the National Adult Protective Services Conference.



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY

Officer Rebecca Skillern and MHMRA supervisors Kim Kornmayer and Ann McLeod gave a 2-hour presentation on Houston's Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI) program at the American Association of Suicidology Conference in Orlando, Florida.

## International CIT Conference San Antonio, Texas

Senior Officer Frank Webb, Officer Rebecca Skillern, Officer Priscilla Rayon and MHMRA supervisor Kim Kornmayer gave presentations on HIIPA, Keys to the Successful Development and Implementation of a CIT Program, Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI), Investigating Mental Health Cases, Statistics, and Mental Health Databases. Houston gave more presentations than any other agency.



Senior Police Officer Frank Webb giving a presentation titled “Keys to the Successful Development and Implementation of a CIT Program” at the International CIT Conference.



## Center for Problem-Oriented Policing

Lieutenant Mike Lee gave a presentation on Houston’s Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative (CCSI) program. Houston’s CCSI program was one of six finalists for the prestigious Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing.



## NAMI Texas Annual State Conference Dallas, Texas

Lieutenant Mike Lee and Officer Priscilla Rayon gave a presentation titled “Police Response to People in Crisis.” Lt. Lee and Officer Rayon discussed the importance of knowing when to call the police when a person is in mental health crisis and knowing what to say when police arrive. They also spoke about the importance of community resources.



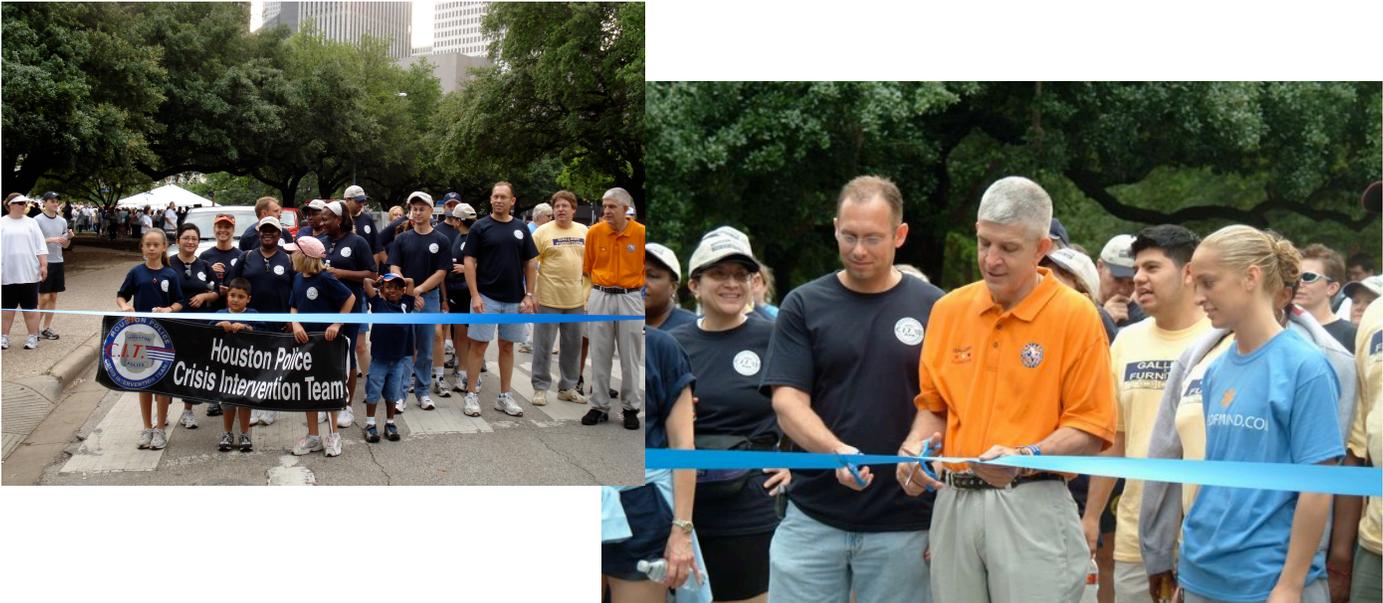
# Community Involvement

# National Down Syndrome Buddy Walk



For the past two years, the Mental Health Unit has volunteered to pass out medals at the annual walk.

# NAMI Walk



For the past four years, the Mental Health Unit has participated in the walk to raise awareness and funds for mental illness.

# Out of Darkness Community Walk to Prevent Suicide



Senior Officer Frank Webb gave the keynote speech at the walk which was sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.



# Media Coverage

# Media Coverage 2010

The Mental Health Unit has received coverage from the following media:

- *Houston Chronicle*
- *Houston Press*
- *Stars and Stripes*
- KHOU TV
- KPRC TV
- KTRK TV
- KRIV TV
- Fault Lines - Al Jazeera
- Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)
- Texas Monthly

# Major Accomplishments

## Expansion of NPC

Strict confidentiality laws mandate that the processing of consumers into mental health facilities must be done in private. Fines can be levied against facilities not adhering to these laws.

The NeuroPsychiatric Center (NPC) was designed with only one interview room in the officer intake area. Thus, only one consumer could be processed at a time. As more consumers are being brought to the NPC for psychiatric evaluation, at times there were lines outside of officers with consumers waiting to be processed. This prolonged the officers' time at the NPC and was an officer safety issue.

Lieutenant Mike Lee discussed this issue with Dr. Steven Schnee, Executive Director of MHMRA. Lt. Lee recommended an expansion of the officer intake area. Dr. Schnee was receptive and the expansion was completed in 2010. The NPC now has three private intake rooms to process consumers. Consumers are being processed quicker resulting in shorter wait times for officers at the NPC. The rooms also provide a safe area for the officers to wait with their consumers.



One of the three private rooms that was built to help facilitate the processing of consumers into the NPC.



Each of the three rooms has a bench bolted to the floor with which officers can safely secure unruly/violent consumers. Each room has safety plexiglass so that staff will be able to see if an officer gets into a physical altercation with a consumer.

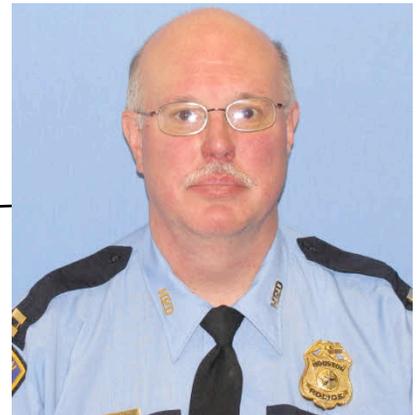


The lobby area was expanded in addition to the three rooms being built.

# Jail Assessment

“A significant percentage of the City Jail population at any given moment is afflicted with some type of mental illness. As the Commander of the City Jails, I came to the realization that our policy regarding the mentally ill had become dated, and reached out to the MHU for assistance. With the cooperative efforts of the MHU, MHMRA, Jail and City Health Department, a three tiered system was implemented in evaluating the specific needs of mentally ill prisoners. CIRT has been invaluable in this effort. This program has proven to be a far superior way of dealing with prisoners afflicted with mental illness.”

Captain Douglas **Perry**  
Jail





# Alert Bulletins



## Information Bulletin Houston Police Department

Crime Analysis / Command Center Division

**Confidential:  
For Police  
Use Only**

Charles A. McClelland, Jr., CHIEF OF POLICE

October 5, 2010, 2010  
Prepared by: Sgt M.A. Loera

ATTN: Special Operations Division  
**MENTAL HEALTH UNIT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN**

Inc # [REDACTED]  
Date: 09/17/10  
Time: 2142  
Location: 1000 Preston (1A10)

### Suspect's Description:

Name: [REDACTED]  
Race: B  
Sex: Male  
DOB: 10/10/64  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 157  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Home Address: Homeless



### Suspect's Identifiers:

TX ID: [REDACTED] FBI: [REDACTED] HPD: [REDACTED]  
SS: [REDACTED] DPS: [REDACTED]

On 09/17/10 at approximately 2142 hrs, [REDACTED] slapped and kicked the complainant for no apparent reason. The complainant was able to hold on to [REDACTED] and called the police. [REDACTED] was not charged for the assault. [REDACTED] was transported to the NeuroPsychiatric Center (NPC) and an Emergency Detention Order (EDO) was filed on behalf of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] has prior arrests for assaults, criminal mischief, possession of marijuana, resisting arrest, and evading detention. He has also been listed as a consumer (complainant) on multiple HPD offense reports due to his mental illness.

[REDACTED] has been diagnosed with Schizophrenia and Bi-Polar Disorder and displays threatening behavior. [REDACTED] has been non-compliant with his medications. If a criminal offense of Class B Misdemeanor or above has been committed, contact the Harris County District Attorney's office for possible criminal charges. Use caution when in contact with the listed consumer and request for a Crisis Intervention Response Unit (CIRT), 66M unit to the scene.

For additional information, Officer R. Skillern, Mental Health Unit, 713-970-4647.  
CA101150

# IACP Community Policing Award



# Problem-Oriented Policing Award



# National Learning Site



# Expansion of CIRT

- Added evening/powershift sergeant
- Added three CIRT teams
- Provided soft impact weapons to CIRT units
- Acquired three CIRT vehicles
- Acquired portable AFIS machines



Sergeant Joe Ramirez  
Evening/Powershift





# Goals for 2011

# Goals for 2011

- Expansion of CCSI program
- Significant expansion of CIT training
- Addition of Harris County Sheriff's Office to CIRT program
- Revise General Order 500-12
- Pursue state legislation to address the confiscation of weapons from individuals in mental health crises
- Develop a city ordinance regulating group homes/assisted living facilities for the mentally ill
- Implement MHMRA/HPD Telecounselor Program to triage and divert CIT calls away from police

# Long-Term Goals

- Development of sobering/detox facility
- Open a second NPC facility
- Continue to expand CIRT