

**From:** [Anthony. Paul](#)  
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**Subject:** Comal County press release: Office aims to prevent truancy  
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**COMAL COUNTY, TEXAS  
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**Juvenile Probation seeks to reduce Comal County truanancies**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, NOVEMBER 20, 2015:**

*NEW BRAUNFELS* — With Sara Adams' help, Kris Johnson is trying to make the Juvenile Probation Office's name obsolete.

Adams is the county's new juvenile prevention services coordinator. She works with Comal County schools to identify and get help for children who are showing signs that they might be headed down the wrong path.

"Juvenile Probation doesn't equal trouble," Johnson said about the department he leads as chief juvenile probation officer. "Probation is just one function of what we do."

And if he has his way, fewer kids will be put on probation – and more will receive the family counseling, homework help and other assistance they need to stay in school, stay on track and stay in good standing as a part of society.

Thanks to a state grant given for prevention initiatives and recent changes in state law, Adams receives truancy referrals from schools, working with children ages 5-11 and their families to get them back into school and break potentially destructive patterns at home that might be contributing to the problem.

The program began when the Business Education Partnership Committee of the Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce began looking for ways to better serve the area's schools. The committee worked with Juvenile Probation to identify and request the state grants that would establish the prevention services coordinator position.

Thus far, the office has served about 100 families, and Johnson and Adams said they hope to work with

schools to eventually begin working with students who might not be truant but are chronically late to class – which is often a first step toward truancy, which itself is a key precursor for more serious legal trouble.

Teachers should work with their schools to make sure referrals get sent to Adams, Johnson said.

“There is a link between truancy and dropouts, and dropouts and substance abuse, and substance abuse and juvenile delinquency,” Johnson said. “Teachers are the experts. When they start seeing behavior they haven’t seen before, there are people there to help. The more people know about it, the better.”

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