

**2014 Impact Report**

# **Jane's Due Process**

**Ensuring legal representation for pregnant teens in Texas**

# About Us

## Who we are

Jane's Due Process is the only organization ensuring legal representation for pregnant minors in the state of Texas. Over the last 15 years, Jane's Due Process has helped thousands of our most vulnerable Texans make safe and informed choices about how and when to become a parent.



## What we do

### 24/7 Legal Hotline

Jane's Due Process' 24/7 legal hotline is a free, confidential resource for teens facing unplanned pregnancies. Young women turn to us when they need accurate and reliable information about their legal rights from a source they know they can trust.

Our hotline offers information on the following topics:

**Emancipation - Title IX & Education Access**  
**Confidential Family Planning - Judicial Bypass**  
**Teen Dating & Family Violence - Protective Orders**  
**Adoption, Parenting & Abortion**

### Attorney Referral Program

A judicial bypass is a legal alternative if a teen is unable to locate or safely obtain consent from a parent or legal guardian to have an abortion. After a minor has received pregnancy counseling from a trusted clinic and decides she wants to seek a judicial bypass, Jane's Due Process refers her to an experienced attorney among our statewide network. The attorney guides the teen through the legal obstacle course with respect, compassion, and expertise.

**“A 17 year old called wanting help getting emancipated. She aged out of foster care. She was living with friends and taking care of her brother. Until she got emancipated, her mother would keep her SSI checks for herself.”**  
- Hotline Volunteer

# News From the Legislature & Courts

## Effects of HB2

Since HB 2, the sweeping omnibus legislation that closed the majority of abortion clinics throughout Texas, and the dismantling of the family planning providers, young women are caught in the middle, often unable to obtain either contraception or abortion services.

Challenges to HB 2 are making their way through the courts. As of early April, the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals is reviewing the merits of the case challenging the law after the Supreme Court upheld an injunction against one of the requirements and allowed clinics in McAllen and El Paso to remain open. Even if the 5th Circuit were to rule in favor of the clinics, the few remaining clinics are in the urban centers, leaving rural teens without access to services.

*80% of our clients are referred through abortion providers; with fewer and fewer clinics, we fear that many minors don't know they can count on us.*

## 84th Legislature

After regulating the clinics out of existence last session, this year's legislative spotlight is on abused and neglected teens seeking a judicial bypass. The current law provides a rare yet critical safety net for a few hundred teens each year. These teens do not have a stable adult in their life, yet lawmakers are attempting to make judicial bypass practically inaccessible.

Lawmakers have introduced six bills that would either dismantle or amend the judicial bypass process, which is required by U.S. constitutional law.

The bills would have the following impact:

- Risk the anonymity and confidentiality of minors
- Jeopardize the safety of minors by second guessing their assessment of threats or abuse in their homes
- Publicly identify judges ruling on judicial bypass cases, putting judges and courthouse staff in danger
- Drastically lessen the expediency of the process, forcing teens to continue unwanted pregnancies while they navigate additional logistical challenges
- Place a greater burden on CPS workers, a system that is already strained

# Who is Jane?

In 2014, Jane's Due Process fielded close to 1,000 calls from Texan teens seeking information about their legal rights and pregnancy options. Of those callers, 281 young women from 55 different counties needed legal assistance with a judicial bypass.

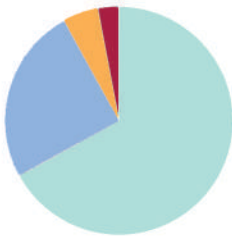
Our 2014 judicial bypass clients, at a glance:

**39% did not live with a parent or legal guardian. Most of their parents were deceased, missing, incarcerated, deported, or living abroad**

**16% had been pregnant before**

**11% were already parenting one or more children**

## Age of Jane



## Reason a parent cannot be notified

Teen is an orphan de facto



Teen will be kicked out of home



Parent will force teen to continue pregnancy



Parent in personal or family crisis



Teen is in danger of physical or emotional abuse



"I already have two children. I want to be on birth control but I don't know how to get it without my parents. I have nowhere to live. I sleep on couches with my babies. I don't want more kids."

- Jane

# Judicial Bypass Outcomes

Minor referred to JDP network attorney program	143
Minor referred to court appointed attorney	34
Minor referred to explore pregnancy options- outcome unknown	78
Minor indicated intent to seek consent from parent	5
Minor indicated intent to seek consent outside of state	8
Minor indicated intent to seek abortion after 18th birthday	6
Minor indicated intent to continue pregnancy after discussing abortion option through hotline screening	5
Minor had miscarriage before participating in judicial bypass process	2
<b>Total minors screened for judicial bypass:</b>	<b>281</b>



The most common reasons that Janes did not use birth control at the time they became pregnant were: lack of parental consent, cost and transportation, and misunderstanding the effectiveness of condoms.

**"I first visited a crisis pregnancy center and they scared me so bad that I put off calling. My parents will kick me out if they find out I am pregnant. I am really scared to tell them because I will have no place to live."  
- Jane**

# We've Got Work to Do!

## District Clerk Report

*"Both of my parents are in prison and my aunt is emotionally abusive. I do not have anyone to ask to sign the medical consent form."*

*- Jane*

Every few years, we conduct a survey to ensure that district clerks are in compliance with the law requiring them to provide accurate information and paperwork to any minor calling to apply for judicial bypass. This year, our results were overwhelmingly disappointing and highly concerning. Teens calling district courts directly are facing an onslaught of misinformation and unfiltered indifference.

Here are our findings:

- 26% of counties provided entirely accurate information
- 81% of counties had no immediate knowledge of the existence of judicial bypass
- 37% of counties denied their office's involvement in judicial bypass
- Certain clerks gave unsolicited religious advice and judgment, referred the caller to crisis pregnancy centers, or even just ***hung up the phone***



**These findings remind us why our services are so vital for pregnant teens in Texas.**

We will continue working to ensure that every teen understands and can exercise her legal rights. As our work grows more challenging, so too it becomes more important. Thank you for supporting the only organization ensuring the legal rights of pregnant teens in Texas.

# Thank you to our supporters, volunteers, and friends



Clockwise from left: Board President Aletha Huston with longtime hotline volunteer Kacy O'Hare; UTSA Medical Students for Choice at our San Antonio fundraiser; Board Members Amanda Stevenson, Marilyn Robertson, & Amie Rodnick; Vicki Law, Susan Kennedy, & Gloria Lopez at Houston fundraiser.

The work of Jane's Due Process would not be possible without our dedicated hotline volunteers, attorneys, board members, and donors. A special thanks to those who opened their homes to host our 2014 fundraisers: Kacy & Scott O'Hare, Julie & Michael Lowenberg, and Joyce Townsend.

## Foundation Support

The Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation, Dallas Women's Foundation: Kaleta Doolin Advised Fund, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers, Educational Foundation of America, Ettinger Foundation, The Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation, The Lalor Foundation, Lebowitz-Aberly Family Foundation, Mithoff Family Charitable Foundation, Susan Vaughan Foundation, Travis County Women Lawyers' Foundation, and The Winkler Family Foundation

## In Memory of Lisa Benitez



This past year, Texas lost a fierce advocate for civil and reproductive rights, and Jane's Due Process lost a treasured friend and board member of four years. Lisa's upbeat personality and willingness to take on tough causes will be forever missed.

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