



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

DFPS Rider 15 Report for Community-Based Care

March 2020

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Introduction

As required by the General Appropriations Act, 86th Texas Legislature, DFPS Rider 15, the agency shall, on March 31st and August 31st of each year of the biennium, "Report selected performance measures identified by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) that will allow for comparative analysis between the legacy foster care and the Community-based Care systems". The report, "shall contain the most recent data for the selected comparative performance measures, an analysis of the data that identifies trends and related impact occurring in the Community-based Care system, identification and analysis of factors negatively impacting any outcomes, recommendations to address problems identified from the data, and any other information necessary to determine the status of the Community-based Care system".

Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) changes the way DFPS procures, contracts, and pays for foster care services. Under CBC, a single contractor provides a full continuum of services to children and families within a designated catchment area. In Stage I, this Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing them with services to meet identified needs. In Stage II, the SSCC expands services to include unverified relative or "kinship" placements, and the SSCC has responsibility for the provision of legal case management. The model requires competitive procurement of performance-based SSCC contracts with financial incentives and disincentives for permanency outcomes and additional performance measures for child safety and well-being.

DFPS is currently CBC in five catchment areas. In September 2019, the 86th Texas Legislature appropriated funding for the department to expand CBC to Stage I (placement) in two catchment areas (Regions 1 and 8b) and Stage II (case management) in three catchment areas (Regions 3b, 2 and 8a). Stage transition is based on the SSCC's demonstrated readiness.

- **3b (Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Region 3)** - DFPS executed a SSCC contract with ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) on January 1, 2014 for DFPS catchment area 3b. Our Community Our Kids (OCOK), the catchment area 3b SSCC operating under ACH, began placing children on September 1, 2014. In 2018, DFPS renewed its contract with OCOK to continue services under Stage I (foster care and services for children) and add requirements for Community-Based Care and transition of kinship and legal case management services. DFPS and OCOK formally announced start up for stage II in October 2019 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. DFPS certified stage II readiness on March

27, 2020 and OCOK successfully began providing case management and all other stage II services on March 1, 2020.

- **Region 2 catchment area (Abilene/Wichita Falls)** - DFPS awarded a contract to Texas Family Initiative, LLC to serve as the SSCC for the Region 2 catchment area in May 2018. They formed a partnership with New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc. and created 2INGage. 2INGage began placing children on December 1, 2018. Implementation of Stage I has been ongoing during fiscal year 2020, with a focus on building the local network of foster care and services. DFPS and 2INGage officially announced start up for Stage II in December 2019 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. Stage II services are anticipated to begin in catchment area 2 in June 2020.
- **Region 8a catchment area (Bexar County in DFPS Region 8)** - DFPS awarded a contract to The Children's Shelter in San Antonio to serve as the SSCC for the Region 8a catchment area in August 2018. The Children's Shelter created Family Tapestry, which began placing children on February 1, 2019. Implementation of Stage I is ongoing during fiscal year 2020, with a focus on building the local network of foster care and services. Stage II start-up activities will begin in fiscal year 2020. In October 2019, DFPS conducted an on-site monitoring of The Children's Shelter and noted concerns with the SSCC's fiscal management processes and system, which were also cited in the organizations recent single audit. The Children's Shelter submitted a plan to correct identified issues and the department has been monitoring progress with the implementation of the needed systems controls and improvement. The Children's Shelter is working toward resolution and has indicated that by May 2020 they will have refined fiscal management processes and systems fully in place, at which point DFPS will verify through on-site monitoring. The Children's Shelter leadership has indicated, and the department agrees, that until this is in place, negotiations to begin Stage II implementation in 8a cannot occur.
- **Region 1 catchment area (Amarillo/Lubbock)** - DFPS awarded a contract to St. Francis Community Services, Inc. to serve as the SSCC for the Region 1 catchment area on July 1, 2019. St. Francis began serving children in Region 1 on January 6, 2020. Implementation of Stage I is ongoing during fiscal year 2020, with a focus on building the local network of foster care and services. DFPS will report performance data for St. Francis in the September 2020 Rider 15 report. Stage II transition is dependent on future legislative appropriation.
- **Region 8b catchment area (DFPS Region 8 counties excluding Bexar)** - DFPS released a Request for Application for the Region 8b catchment area on May 2, 2019. The procurement closed on August 2, 2019. The procurement remains open with a contract award expected in the spring of 2020. Implementation is anticipated to begin in early fall 2020, after a six-month start up period, and confirmation of readiness.

See the latest CBC [Implementation Plan](#) for additional details.

Evaluation of Community-Based Care

Evaluation of Community-Based Care is on-going to support Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and includes both process and outcome components. DFPS and the Public Provider Partnership (PPP), which continues as the guiding body for Community-Based Care, define the key elements to be evaluated (guiding principles and logic model). Process and outcome evaluation findings help determine whether these elements are being implemented with fidelity to the model and are yielding the desired outcomes. DFPS uses findings to assist in assessing performance, trends, design changes, and any problems or issues in the CBC catchment areas.

Texas Family Code, chapter 264, subchapter B-1 requires DFPS' evaluation of Community-Based Care to include "an independent evaluation of each contractor's processes and fiscal and qualitative outcomes." DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University in fiscal year 2019 to conduct the process evaluation of implementation of Community-Based Care in each established catchment area. The evaluation includes assessment of change processes and collaboration in each catchment area. Texas Tech completed site visits for evaluation of Stage I in catchments areas 3b, 2, and 8a and will conduct a site visit to Region 1 in summer 2020. Texas Tech will complete its evaluation of CBC stage I by the end of fiscal year 2020. Texas Tech will begin its evaluation of the stage II implementation process with a site visit to Region 3b in summer 2020. DFPS continues to work with Chapin Hall affiliated with the University of Chicago to provide independent data analysis of each SSCC's performance on placement within 50 miles and paid foster care days, which is the basis for incentive payments in Stage III.

The results of independent process evaluation will be reported separately from the Rider 15, in a report prepared by Texas Tech University in advance of the 87th Legislative Session.

Using the Rider 15 Report to Evaluate Performance

Section A of the Attachment includes select LBB performance measures for children in DFPS conservatorship. Performance calculations include children in foster care and in other substitute care settings, not currently served by SSCCs, in each catchment. These measures will reflect SSCC performance in Stage II. No SSCC was operating in Stage II in quarter one, the time frame for this report. Section B of the Attachment reports CBC contract performance measures specific to the population of children served in Stage I, which is children in contracted foster care placements. Future reports will include contract performance measures specific to Stage II for catchments reaching that stage.

The format identified by the LBB for reporting data supports comparative analysis of performance trends for the state as a whole, for non-CBC catchments, and for individual SSCCs.

DFPS defines performance populations for Section B as follows:

- **Statewide Population** - The statewide population shows the performance of the entire state population of children in paid foster care settings identified as “SSCC eligible.” “SSCC eligible” placements are foster care placements that would be within the scope of an SSCC contract.
- **Statewide Non-CBC Population** - The statewide “non-CBC” population aggregates data for children in “SSCC-eligible” placements in catchment areas where DFPS has not implemented CBC.
- **SSCC Population** - The performance of each SSCC is reported individually. The “SSCC population” shows performance during the fiscal year in which the SSCC transitioned, and ongoing performance. Transition year performance includes performance for children who entered foster care under the SSCC and children already in foster care placements that were transitioned to the SSCC. Each SSCC transferred foster care providers to their network over a period of up to 6 months following the go-live date. *For new SSCCs, performance in the transition year reflects a partial population and cannot be compared to the historical performance of all eligible children in the catchment.*
- **Eligible Population** - The “eligible” population shows the historical performance for children in foster care placements in the catchment prior to implementation and the population of children not yet transferred once implementation began. Ongoing, any children who remain in legacy contracts outside of the SSCC network are represented here. This population will decrease over time as children in DFPS homes, adoption homes, and placements with providers not in the catchment area and SSCC network, exit foster care. *The performance of this small number of remaining children can no longer be compared to historical performance.*

Once most of the foster care population has transferred, and as Community-Based Care progresses through staged implementation, the data can be used to answer the following questions. *Note: the comparison is trends over time and not performance, which varies by catchment based on their unique resources and history.*

1. **Are there statewide changes affecting SSCC performance?** Compare state and state “non-CBC” performance trends to SSCC catchment trends. Similarities may point to statewide factors influencing performance in CBC catchments.
2. **Is the redesigned system doing better than the legacy system?** Compare SSCC performance to the performance of the non-CBC population. If the SSCC catchment areas are improving over their historic baseline more than the legacy catchment areas are improving over theirs, the changes made to the foster care system under CBC are effective.

3. **Is a particular SSCC improving performance over time?** Compare individual SSCC performance across fiscal years. Improvement may take time as DFPS transitions services to each SSCC and the SSCC works to build the network of services in the area.
4. **Are some SSCCs performing better than others?** Compare SSCC performance one to another. While each area has unique strengths and challenges, if a specific SSCC is improving outcomes compared to historical performance at a faster rate, the strategies implemented by the SSCC may be more effective.

Limitations of SSCC Performance Data in the Stage I Transition Year.

Performance data reported for SSCCs during the transition and before most of the children in foster care are transferred has several significant limitations.

1. Some children are duplicated, meaning they are represented in both the “eligible” and “SSCC” populations during the transition as a result of time spent in each population during the performance period. This means their full experience may be captured only partially for each population.
2. The population “mix” is influenced by the specific transition plan implemented by the SSCC. “Mix” may refer to the proportion of children in foster homes and children in other foster care settings. It may also be geographic given the trend of SSCCs to begin by transferring local providers to the network.

This makes interpreting specific performance measures during the time children are transitioning to the SSCC difficult as outlined below:

- Least restrictive placement – to the extent that an SSCC transfers more children in foster homes earlier or later in the process, the percent of care days that are least restrictive will be increased or decreased. In addition, start dates after September 1 will represent fewer care days compared to an annual baseline.
- Proximity – to the extent that a provider transfers “in area” providers before providers located farther away, the percent of children placed close to home will be increased or decreased. Because children in foster homes are more likely to be placed closer to home, this measure is also influenced by the pace at which Child Placing Agencies transfer under the SSCC.
- Stability – this measure is based on the number of placements experienced by children over the course of a fiscal year. Separating placement experience into time spent in legacy and time with the SSCC lowers the rate for both populations.
- Siblings placed together – sibling groups that are separated across legacy and SSCC populations may not be counted as placed apart for either population.

- Preparation for Adult Living - Children who began taking PAL classes prior to transfer complete their program under the legacy DFPS contract, although they are now reported as placed with the SSCC.

Assessing performance for new SSCCs requires time. DFPS and the SSCC transition foster care resources and children in existing placements to the SSCC network over a period of approximately six months. Time is needed for the SSCC population to represent the full population of children in foster care. Once the transition is complete, SSCCs need time in the role of network provider to continue work begun in start-up to assess local needs and to make the changes they think will lead to improved outcomes.

SSCC Performance

In addition to tracking formal contract performance measures, DFPS uses a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Through this process, DFPS and each SSCC review both performance measures along with other data that may highlight potential performance drivers,ⁱ including areas of strength and areas to target for improvement. DFPS compares annual performance to an established baseline target. The baseline target is an average of fiscal year performance for years prior to the contract start. DFPS requires formal performance improvement plans when trends show sustained performance below the contract baseline. DFPS may request improvement plans at any point in the fiscal year. The SSCC develops goals and action steps to address issues and concerns.

The performance measures referenced below reflect performance in FY20Q1 which is preliminary and subject to change.

Our Community Our Kids (OCOK)

OCOK sustained or improved upon performance gains in fiscal years 2018 and 2019 compared to the contract baseline (FY16-17 average) in FY20Q1.ⁱⁱ

- **Safety** – 100% of children were safe in foster care placements with no investigation findings of abuse or neglect.
- **Placement Stability** - 1.13 placements per child in FY20Q1 shows improved stability compared to 1.18 placements per child in FY18Q1 and is consistent with 1.13 placements per child in FY19Q1.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** - 79% of foster care days spent in foster family or kinship foster homes compared to 75% baseline.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 77% of children were placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter, compared to 74% baseline.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** - 66% of sibling groups were placed together on the last day of the quarter compared to 63% baseline.

- **Preparation for Adult Living** - 92% of youth turning 18 completed PAL compared to 86% baseline.

The DFPS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process reviews additional data to understand trends and potential performance drivers. The following factors may have contributed to performance:

- Decreased shelter use (a contributor to placement changes), fewer repeat residential treatment (RTC) stays, and improved foster home stability (fewer moves from a foster home to another paid care setting).ⁱⁱⁱ
- An increase in the percent of care days spent in home settings for both teens (age 14 and older) who are more likely to spend time in residential settings, and younger children.^{iv}
- An increase in foster home placements within 50 miles.^v

OCOK reports the following efforts and innovations to support positive outcomes:^{vi}

- Foster homes for children with therapeutic needs – OCOK increased Therapeutic Foster Care capacity for stepping children down out of residential care into the appropriate level of therapeutic care in foster homes. OCOK continues to provide in-home behavioral health, in-home parenting skills training and wraparound services at intensive levels which have proven to support placement stability and healing.
- Professional foster parent support for the highest need children - OCOK's Professional Home-Based CARE (PHBC) program, which serves children who have had multiple residential treatment stays, psychiatric hospitalizations, and/or runaway episodes, has been in operation for 1.5 years. The program provides children intensive home-based care and wraparound behavioral health services that include the biological family alongside their PHBC foster parents. The program has grown to 30 homes and has served 27 children.
- Foster home stabilization efforts – OCOK continues disruption mitigation practices, implementation of provider reviews, and attention to low performing Child Placing Agencies.
- Local residential capacity building initiative – OCOK opened two new facilities in FY19 (Gladney General Residential Organization and ACH Residential Treatment Center) and has begun placing in two facilities in phase I of development this fiscal year (Camp Worth and Hidden Cove). While the focus remains placing more children in least restrictive settings as capacity for PHBC and Therapeutic Foster Care continues to grow, the need for residential services for some children is now being met in the community.

2INgage

As of FY20Q1, 2INgage was serving 97% of children in foster care in Region 2.^{vii} At one year into the contract, 2INgage performance shows positive trends and areas for improvement compared to the contract baseline (FY17-18 average).^{viii}

- **Safety** - 100% of children were safe in foster care placements with no investigation findings of abuse or neglect.
- **Placement Stability** – 1.09 placements per child in FY20Q1 shows improved stability compared to 1.14 FY17-18Q1 baseline.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 76% of foster care days spent in foster family or kinship foster homes compared to 78% baseline.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 48% of children were placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter compared to 47% baseline.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** – 57% of sibling groups placed together compared to 66% baseline.
- **Preparation for Adult Living** – 83% of youth turning 18 completing PAL compared to 91% baseline.

The DFPS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process reviews additional data to understand trends and potential performance drivers. The following factors may have contributed to performance:

- Decreased shelter use (a contributor to placement changes) and improved foster home stability.^{ix}
- An increase in the population of teens / proportion of care days used by teens and decrease in the percent of time spent in least restrictive settings for these teens (age 14 and older). For younger children, there was an increase in the percent of care days spent in foster family homes.^x
- A decrease in both sibling groups of 2 and larger sibling groups placed together. DFPS recognizes that time is needed to build local sibling group capacity and will continue to closely monitor.^{xi}
- Data reflects 1 youth out of 6 not completing PAL. 2INgage reports that this youth completed PAL and will show as lagging data entry when updated in the next quarter.

2INgage reports the following efforts and innovations to support positive outcomes:^{xii}

- Placement matching - 2INgage utilizes an empirically validated placement matching tool called Every Child a Priority (ECAP), which generates the best match placement for children and youth based on their unique characteristics and the profiles of potential foster homes.
- Foster home stabilization efforts - 2INgage strengthened a partnership with Mosaic, an organization offering in-home counseling and skills training to children and foster families. Since December 2018, Mosaic expanded their coverage area from Taylor County to include all of Region 2. They also expanded the staff in their local program from 3 to 21.

- Community engagement efforts - 2INgage has been strategic and effective in engaging stakeholders across a very rural and large region (distance) to address gaps in services and placement capacity.
- Incentives for expanding placement capacity within the region - 2INgage, in collaboration with region 2 Child Placing Agency (CPA) providers, has restructured the foster care rates for CPA's. The new rates incentivize agencies to keep siblings together, recruit homes for placement of teens, and help children/youth transition to less restrictive setting (foster home placements) after they successfully complete residential treatment.

Family Tapestry

As of FY20Q1, Family Tapestry was serving 94% of children in foster care in Region 8a/Bexar County.^{xiii} At ten months into operation, Family Tapestry performance shows positive trends and areas for improvement compared to the contract baseline (FY17-18 average).^{xiv}

- **Safety** – 100% of children were safe in foster care placements with no investigation findings of abuse or neglect.
- **Placement Stability** – 1.17 placements per child in FY20Q1 shows sustained performance compared to the FY17-18Q1 baseline, also 1.17.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 72% of foster care days spent in foster family or kinship foster homes compared to 70% baseline.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 86% of children were placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter compared to 75% baseline.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** – 66% of sibling groups placed together compared to 64% baseline.
- **Preparation for Adult Living** – 73% of youth turning 18 completing PAL compared to 88% baseline.

The DFPS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process reviews additional data to understand trends and potential performance drivers. The following factors may have contributed to performance:

- An increase in the percent of care days spent in a foster home setting for both teens (age 14 and older) and younger children.^{xv} The improvement occurred even with a slight increase in the teen population and care days used by teens (with teens more likely to be placed in residential facilities.)^{xvi}
- An increase in both foster home placements and other foster care setting placements within 50 miles.^{xvii}
- Data reflects 4 youth out of 15 not completing PAL. These youth were served by the DFPS PAL contractor with Family Tapestry taking over PAL classes for youth turning 16 after February 1, 2019. Future performance will reflect youth served by Family Tapestry.

Family Tapestry reports the following efforts and innovations to support positive outcomes: ^{xviii}

- Short-term placement capacity - Family Tapestry created the Whataburger Center for Children and Youth to provide short-term care for children/youth who have historically been without placement while a longer-term placement option is located. Common characteristics of children and youth placed at the Whataburger Center are children who are a part of large sibling groups, and adolescents and young adults with behavioral and emotional issues. The Whataburger Center offers a trauma-informed environment with low child to staff ratios, and onsite medical care.
- Targeted foster care recruitment campaign - The Family Tapestry #FosteringTruth foster care home recruitment campaign yielded a conservative 11% increase in foster home capacity, with national foster care campaigns yielding a 4-6% increase.
- Community events in support of foster care and adoption - A partnership with *Telemundo 60 San Antonio* to host an adoption phone bank yielded 56 adoption inquiries in the span of two hours. Other community events have included a first of its kind “Foster Family Town Hall”, a Foster Parent Listening Tour, and Adoptive Family Day at a local theme park.
- Provider training - Family Tapestry is delivering network training to improve quality of care and build consistency throughout the provider network. Family Tapestry is partnering with Texas A&M San Antonio and University of Texas to provide training at no cost to providers on a quarterly basis on topics they suggest. Recent topics have included TBRI, Motivational Interviewing, Human Trafficking, Cultural Diversity & Compassion Fatigue.
- Support for safety as a guiding principle - Family Tapestry has contracted with Praesidium, a research-based risk and safety assessment and training organization, to conduct its “Know Your Score (KYS)” assessment with providers. The assessment produces a safety score and recommendations to improve on practice and policy. Assessments began in August 2019.
- Support for placement stability - Family Tapestry is implementing Disruption Mitigation Staffings for child specific and extended and return to care youth.

ⁱ The CQI analysis is based on preliminary data that is subject to change and may be different from how the agency generally calculates and reports on such measures in other contexts.

ⁱⁱ All quarter 1 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report March 2020 Submission - log 95026, published as an attachment. This attachment, however, does not include the baseline measures as those are calculated separately as part of each SSCC’s contract.

ⁱⁱⁱ Data Source: Open Foster Care Placements FY20Q1 - log 97160, FY20Q1; SSCC 1.3 - Care Days in FFH - FY20 Q1- log 95970. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{iv} Data source: SSCC 3 - Care Days in FFH -FY14-FY18 YTD log 94172; FY20Q1; SSCC 1.3 - Care Days in FFH - FY20 Q1- log 95970. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^v 90% of foster home placements within 50 miles compared to 88% baseline. 28% of other paid placement settings within 50 miles compared to 27% baseline. Data source: Chapin Hall, University of Chicago, January 2020

^{vi} Information reported by OCOK on March 16, 2020.

^{vii} Data Warehouse Report SA_82, November 2019. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{viii} All quarter 1 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report March 2020 Submission DRIT #95026, published as an attachment.

^{ix} Data Source: Open Foster Care Placements FY20Q1 – log 97160; SSCC 1.3 - Care Days in FFH - FY20 Q1- log 95970. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^x Data Source: Open Foster Care Placements FY20Q1 - log 97160. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{xi} Data Source: SSCC 1.5 - Siblings All Placed Together FY20 Q1 - log 95971. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{xii} Information provided by 2INGage, March 13, 2020.

^{xiii} Data Warehouse Report SA_82, November 2019. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{xiv} All quarter 1 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report March 2020 Submission DRIT #95026, published as an attachment.

^{xv} Data source: SSCC 3 - Care Days in FFH -FY14-FY18 YTD log 94172; FY20Q1; SSCC 1.3 - Care Days in FFH - FY20 Q1- log 95970. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{xvi} Data Source: Open Foster Care Placements FY20Q1 - log 97160. This data is preliminary and subject to change.

^{xvii} 90% of foster home placements within 50 miles compared to 88% baseline. 28% of other paid placement settings within 50 miles compared to 27% baseline. Data source: Chapin Hall, University of Chicago, January 2020

^{xviii} Information reported by Family Tapestry, March 13, 2020.