



Texas Department of  
Family and Protective Services

# Annual Report 2019

*"We promote safe  
and healthy families  
and protect children  
and vulnerable  
adults from abuse,  
neglect, and  
exploitation."*

# 2019 Annual Report

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# Agency Overview

## Agency Overview

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) works with communities to promote safe and healthy families and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We do this through investigations, services and referrals, and prevention programs

DFPS has five major programs that do this work:

- Statewide Intake
- Adult Protective Services
- Child Protective Investigations
- Child Protective Services
- Prevention and Early Intervention

The DFPS commissioner oversees more than 12,000 employees in 328 local offices located in 11 regions and a state headquarters in Austin. You can learn more about the agency at [www.DFPS.state.tx.us](http://www.DFPS.state.tx.us).

## *DFPS Volunteers*

Volunteers play a critical role in supporting our mission and assisting our families. The number of trained DFPS volunteers increased by 21 percent in FY 2019. More than 4,200 trained volunteers and 329 volunteer groups worked with DFPS to help children, families, and older adults. Examples of volunteer activities include sitting in the hospital with sick children, answering phones for the Texas Youth Hotline, and organizing emergency resource rooms. Volunteers served a total of 124,041 hours which equates to \$3,154,363 of donated time. To learn more about how to become a DFPS volunteer, visit [www.dfps.state.tx.us/volunteer](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/volunteer).

## *Office of Consumer Relations*

The Office of Consumer Relations (OCR) carefully reviews and resolves complaints and responds to inquiries about DFPS programs in a fair and unbiased way. These concerns may come from DFPS clients, their families, stakeholders, and the public.



In FY 2019, the Office of Consumer Relations (OCR) received 22,911 contacts, representing a 12 percent increase over the previous year. These contacts included 4,738 case-specific complaints, 931 inquiries from elected officials, and 17,242 general inquiries. OCR substantiated 1,826 issues related to case-specific complaints. OCR also:

- Worked closely with DFPS data analysis and other staff to identifying trends in complaint data.
- Gave presentations to DFPS regional program administrators about complaint data, including substantiated complaints.
- Educated new CPS supervisors during training about the services OCR provides as well as the data it collects.
- Promoted its services to foster parents by giving presentations at the fall and winter Foster Parent Association conferences.
- Updated posters and tip sheets that are displayed in DFPS office to notifying DFPS clients and others of their right to contact OCR to file case-specific complaints or to ask general questions about DFPS policy and procedure.

You can contact the [Office of Consumer Relations](#) toll-free at 800-720-7777, by email ([OCR@dfps.state.tx.us](mailto:OCR@dfps.state.tx.us)), or through the [DFPS website's Contact Us](#) page.

## ***Major Accomplishments***

### ***Adoptions and Foster Care***

In FY 2019, a record number of children in state care found permanent homes as DFPS completed 6,107 adoptions. That compares to 5,678 adoptions in FY 2018 and 5,413 adoptions in FY 2017. Relatives adopted more than half of these children and teens. Also, for the first time in a number of years, more children left foster care than entered it. In FY 2019, 18,615 children entered care and 20,343 children left foster care or other forms of DFPS legal responsibility, including those who were adopted.

### ***Texas Abuse Hotline***

The DFPS Statewide Intake program operates the Texas Abuse Hotline, which includes a 24/7/365 call center and an online reporting website. SWI assessed 772,206

contacts during the fiscal year, while achieving an average hold time of 7.8 minutes. This average hold time was a 34% improvement over the previous year.

SWI achieved this through an efficiency initiative called LEAN that streamlined the intake process, allowing SWI to handle more calls in less time. Shorter hold times allowed DFPS to help more clients. Learn more about the LEAN Initiative in the [Statewide Intake section](#) of this report.

### ***Community Based Care***

The 85th Texas Legislature directed DFPS to expand [Community-Based Care \(CBC\)](#), which is a community-based approach to meeting the individual and unique needs of children, youth, and families. A single contractor within each designated geographic service area is responsible for providing foster care and kinship care (care provided by family members or close friends). This contractor is responsible for expanding foster care capacity, building a network of providers, engaging the community, finding homes or other placements for children, and coordinating and delivering services to children and their families, and case management. CBC was active in Bexar County, seven North Texas counties, and all counties in Region 2 by the end of FY 2018.

In FY 2019, DFPS expanded CBC by releasing a Request for Applications for the 27 remaining counties in Region 8 and awarding a contract to Saint Francis Ministries in Region 1 to expand CBC into 41 counties in the Texas Panhandle.



DFPS also released an implementation plan for future expansion of CBC. This blueprint includes goals and expectations, roles and responsibilities, and monitoring to assure the highest quality care for the children. See the [Child Protective Services section of this report](#) for more information as well as the [CBC webpage](#).

## ***Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation***

DFPS created the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Division (HTCE) works to strengthen compliance with federal and state mandates, develop best practices for preventing trafficking. It also works to improve DFPS's ability to identify and report trafficking, as well as help recover victims and support them in restoring their lives. HTCE, a part of Child Protective Investigations, works with all DFPS programs to improve outcomes for victims of trafficking. The division also builds relationships with law enforcement and community leaders to develop and expand services for children who are victims of trafficking.

FY 2019 accomplishments include the following:

- More than 7,000 DFPS staff (7,159) completed human trafficking awareness training, bringing the total number of staff that have been trained to more than 14,000. All new Child Protective Investigations and Child Protective Services caseworkers also receive information about trafficking during professional development training.
- DFPS launched Light the Way to Freedom to End Human Trafficking: Sunday Prayers, an annual awareness campaign to unite communities of faith during Human Trafficking Awareness Month. DFPS also developed a flier called Five Ways Faith-Based Organizations Can Help in the Fight against Human Trafficking.
- DFPS hosted the Light the Way to Freedom to End Human Trafficking 2019 Summit, a statewide conference for DFPS staff, key partners, and stakeholders who help fight against the trafficking of the children and youth that DFPS serves. More than 850 people from across the state participated and collaborated on increasing awareness, prevention, identification, and supporting survivors to restore their lives and receive justice.

In March 2019, DFPS also implemented the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool and the Human Trafficking (HT) Response Protocol in Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis counties. The tool helps in detecting risk of sexual exploitation by prompting caseworkers to gather more information when they note certain problems or concerns. The HT protocol outlines the agency's response when:

- Someone responsible for a child's care is accused of trafficking the child.
- A case of trafficking involves children in DFPS conservatorship who are 12 years or older and have five or more placements.
- Children in DFPS conservatorship who are 10 years or older are missing or on runaway status.

## ***APS Mentor Program***

Adult Protective Services (APS) started a mentor program for new caseworkers in FY 2019. The goal of this program is to support and retain new caseworkers by leveraging experienced APS staff to help prepare incoming caseworkers and directly contribute to their success. Trained mentors meet at least biweekly with new caseworkers to provide a supportive learning environment that gives each caseworker the best chance of success. This program is available statewide. By the end of the fiscal year, 138 new APS caseworkers had participated in the mentor program. The turnover rate for this group improved by declining 6.5 percentage points compared to the FY 2018.

Learn more about this program in the APS section of this report.



# Statewide Intake (SWI)

## What We Do

SWI operates the [Texas Abuse Hotline](#) to take reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and route them to the right program for investigation. These reports include allegations of:

- Child abuse and neglect at home.
- Abuse and neglect of children in childcare.
- Abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of people who are elderly or have disabilities and are living at home.
- Abuse of adults and children in state facilities and programs for people with mental illness or intellectual disabilities.

SWI also operates the [Texas Youth Hotline](#), which provides counseling, resources, and referrals to youth and their parents in an effort to prevent abuse, neglect, truancy, delinquency, and running away from home.

## 2019 Accomplishments

### LEAN Initiative

Texas Legislative Budget Board (LBB) sets strict performance measures for SWI. SWI must maintain an annual average hold time of 8.5 minutes or less on the English queue. In fiscal year 2019, SWI assessed



772,206 contacts (more than 2,100 per day), while achieving an average hold of 7.8 minutes. That was a 34% improvement over the previous year.

SWI achieved these significant improvements through an efficiency initiative known as "[LEAN](#)". LEAN streamlined the intake process, allowing SWI to handle more calls in less time. Most importantly, lower hold times allow DFPS to help more clients. LEAN included:

- Quick win policy updates/clarifications.
- A redesigned interview process.
- Tools to help staff track and plan their work.
- A toolbox of resources and skills to reduce call-handling time.

April 2019 was the first month where all LEAN processes were used. It's also the busiest month of the year, yet SWI was able to post the lowest hold time in 15 years while handling 4,593 (8.7%) more contacts than in April 2018. Since April, SWI has continued to see lower hold times with increased contacts assessed. SWI broke the all-time (since 2002) record for shortest hold times for June, July, and August 2019. LEAN has been widely recognized for its success and other states (Illinois, Connecticut, and Michigan) have explored if LEAN can help improve their processes as well.



## Continuity of Operations

SWI strives to be as efficient as possible, while supporting its staff. SWI has two satellite offices (El Paso and Texarkana) and secure telework accounts for about 50% of all work performed. This provides better continuity of operations if a weather event, for example, should affect operations at the main contact center in Austin. It also gives SWI staff flexibility and savings from not commuting to headquarters. Plus, it reduces traffic congestion and pollution in the Austin. In FY 19, about 20 SWI employees were moved to satellite offices with a goal to add another 40 satellite staff by the end of FY 20

## SWI Services

State law requires anyone who believes that a child or an adult who is 65 or older or who has a disability is being abused, neglected, or financially exploited to report it. SWI's primary job is to evaluate these reports and route them to the right local office.

## Texas Abuse Hotline

The Texas Abuse Hotline accepts reports of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation from across the state on the phone at 800-252-5400 and on its secure website, [TxAbuseHotline.org](https://www.txabusehotline.org). The hotline also accepts reports of violations of childcare standards as well as reports of abuse in facilities operated by other state agencies or community providers that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities.

The Statewide Intake (SWI) program assigns a priority to all reports that meet the legal definitions of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. SWI bases the priority on the safety of the alleged victim and sends each report to the right DFPS or HHSC program to investigate. SWI also notifies law enforcement agencies in cases that involve children. SWI operates around-the-clock every day of the year, including nights and holidays.

You can learn more about reporting abuse on the [Report Abuse](#) page of the DFPS website.

For more information, see [Statewide Intake](#) in the DFPS Data Book.

## Texas Youth Hotline

This toll-free hotline provides 24-hour confidential crisis guidance, advocacy, and information and referrals to runaways, at-risk youth, their families, and other adults. Volunteers talk, text, and chat with callers who are facing a variety of problems such as family conflict, abuse and neglect, sex trafficking, and youth who skip school, commit crimes, or run away from home.

The Texas Youth Hotline serves youth and their families, school employees, youth-care workers, law enforcement agencies, and anyone in need of community services. Hotline staff and volunteers are available by phone, online chat, and text. Learn more by visiting the Texas Youth and Runaway Hotline website at [TexasYouth.org](https://www.texasyouth.org).



# Adult Protective Services (APS)

## What We Do

APS investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of adults in the community who are 65 or older or who have disabilities, and provides or arranges for protective services when needed.

## 2019 Accomplishments

### APS Mentor Program

APS developed a mentor program for new caseworkers that it put into practice during FY 2019. The goal of the program is to support and retain new caseworkers by allowing experienced APS staff to help prepare incoming caseworkers and directly contribute to their success.

This is how the APS mentor program works. Tenured staff and subject matter experts apply to become mentors. Once accepted, the new mentors attend six months of training to prepare them for their new roles before they are assigned to caseworkers. Mentors help caseworkers with training activities, office procedures, and in the field (once they are assigned their own caseloads). Mentors meet weekly or biweekly with new caseworkers to provide a supportive learning environment that gives each caseworker the best chance of success.

APS rolled out the mentor program in phases across the state from October 2018 through August 2019. By the end of the fiscal year, 138 new APS caseworkers had participated in the new mentor program. Compared to the previous year, the turnover rate for new caseworkers fell from 50.2% to 44.3%.

### Tarrant County Financial Exploitation Partnership

Tarrant County experienced an increase in financial exploitation cases of adults 65 and older in FY 2019. In response to this increase, Adult Protective Services partnered with the Tarrant County District Attorney office to fight the exploitation of elderly residents. This

partnership was expanded to include the Financial Exploitation Prevention Center and Guardianship Services Inc. APS also entered into an agreement with the Texas Wesleyan Forensic Accounting Program to help review the more complex financial documents. As of August 2019, these collaborative efforts led to \$1.6 million of financial restitution to victims of financial exploitation in Tarrant County.

### APS Go Team

APS formed a rapid response team, called the APS Go Team, to help clients after catastrophic weather events. APS activates the Go Team after major events such as flooding, tornadoes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters that affect Texas. Assistance to clients may include help with groceries, medicine, utility bills, and shelter.

### Partnership with WellMed

In 2019, APS continued its partnership with WellMed Charitable Foundation and the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging. A project from 2012 to 2016 demonstrated increased collaboration between clinicians and APS, as well as increased reporting of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by clinicians. Since then, APS staff has continued to provide WellMed staff with training,





consultation, and help with case coordination. In 2018, the partners began a new project focused on preventing self-neglect by adults 65 or older or who have disabilities. Both projects were funded by grants from the federal Administration on Community Living. In 2019, the self-neglect project completed its intervention phase and finished collecting data for a randomized, controlled study to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. These interventions were designed to prevent or minimize the risk of self-neglect and included:

- Screening primary care patients who were at high risk of self-neglect.
- Providing home visits, needs assessments, and service plans.
- Follow up by clinical social workers over a four-month period.

The study continues and is expected to make an important contribution to research on adult abuse interventions.

## **APS Performance Management**

APS continues to perfect its efforts to improve the quality of its work. The APS Quality Assurance (QA) team checks performance by reading and scoring two cases per caseworker and completing an analysis of each unit in the state about every three months. This lets supervisors see how each worker and unit is performing, including strengths and areas for improvement. The QA team also offers face-to-face meetings with field staff and managers.



APS uses what it calls “target zones” in its management approach. Target zones are acceptable variations in key performance metrics that help define “healthy casework.” APS gives managers at all levels monthly data and a more in-depth quarterly analysis. Managers use this information to ensure APS is doing quality work consistently across the state, to improve practice, and to track progress on meeting program expectations.

## **APS Services**

### **Investigations and Services**

APS investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of adults age 65 and older and adults age 18-64 who have a substantial physical or mental disability and live in their own homes or other community settings.

APS also investigates allegations of financial exploitation of adults living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or adult foster care homes when the person allegedly exploiting them is from outside the facility. State law requires anyone who believes that an adult who is 65 or older or has a disability is being abused, neglected, or financially exploited to report it immediately.

APS begins an investigation by contacting someone who has reliable and current information about the alleged victim within 24 hours of receiving a report. APS can make the initial contact in person or by phone. APS may also provide or arrange for emergency services to prevent further abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation. These services may include short-term shelter, food, medication, health services, financial help with rent and utilities, transportation, and minor home repair.

APS works in partnership with other social service organizations to provide resources to adults who are abused, neglected, or exploited. APS works closely with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on cases that require guardianship services. APS notifies law enforcement at any point during an investigation if APS suspects a crime has been committed.

For more information, see the [APS section of the DFPS Data Book](#) on the DFPS website.

## **Working with Partners**

APS works with many partners to protect adults from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation and increase the resources and services available to them.

## **Law Enforcement**

DFPS Abuse Hotline staff and APS caseworkers contact local law enforcement when they have cause to believe a crime has been committed. In such cases, APS staff may coordinate investigations with local law enforcement or work with local courts to seek emergency legal action to protect clients.

## **Forensic Assessment Center Network**

APS contracts with the McGovern Medical School at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, which manages the [Forensic Assessment Center Network](#) (FACN). The FACN is a group of Texas doctors (geriatricians and pediatricians) and other medical professionals who help APS identify abuse and neglect. FACN provides APS staff ongoing training in geriatric medicine and the psychological and psychiatric issues of persons with mental illness and cognitive disabilities.

## **Children's Advocacy Centers**

Children's advocacy centers (CACs) work with APS on abuse and neglect investigations. CACs provide a safe environment where community agencies share information and develop coordinated strategies to meet the needs of APS clients. They provide specialized forensic interviews and minimize the need for multiple agencies to interview victims of abuse separately. In 2019, 98 percent of Texas counties are served by one of the 71 programs in Texas.

## **Texas Partners for APS and Resource Rooms**

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services is a statewide non-profit organization. It works with APS to improve the lives of clients by developing resources that support APS clients and staff. Twenty-five non-profit boards from around the state elect members to the Texas Partners for APS board, which works with local boards to raise funds and educate the public and service providers on abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation

issues. Texas Partners for APS and local boards collect donations to stock emergency resource rooms in APS offices with supplies that APS caseworkers use, 24 hours a day, to help older adults or those with a disability who are being abused or neglected. In FY 2019, there were 41 resource rooms in 157 Texas counties. Resource rooms go by several different names such as Bridge Rooms, Silver Star Rooms, and Silver Ribbon Rooms.

## **Banfield Foundation**

Adults receiving APS services also can get health and veterinary care for their pets thanks to the Banfield Foundation Veterinary Assistance Grant. APS caseworkers use grant funds to buy items such as pet food, veterinary care and services, grooming, flea and tick treatments, heart worm medication, and short term shelter until the pet can reunited with the owner.

In some cases, pets may be the only companion in a client's life. APS caseworkers can improve a client's wellbeing by securing pet care services on their behalf. Having a pet benefits older adults by decreasing loneliness, providing companionship, stimulating some degree of exercise, and most importantly, maintaining a daily routine. APS caseworkers secured pet care services for 61 pets using grant funds from the Banfield Foundation in fiscal year 2019.

## **Public Awareness Campaign**

*It's Everyone's Business* is an APS outreach campaign that provides resources and information year around, but focuses on May and October to promote ways to protect adults from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

The major goals of the campaign are to:

- Raise awareness about the problems of adult abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.
- Increase awareness of APS programs and services.
- Enlist community support for clients, staff, and resources.

In October, the campaign focuses on financial exploitation by working with organizations that provide services to vulnerable adults, and supplies them with information on financial exploitation. See [EveryonesBusiness.org](http://EveryonesBusiness.org) for more information on how to become involved.

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# Child Protective Investigations (CPI)

## What We Do

The Child Protective Investigations (CPI) program investigates reports of child abuse and neglect at home, in child care, and in public schools to protect children from harm now and in the future.

Most of the cases involve children living at home with parents or guardians. We work with parents to help them find the resources they need to resolve their issues and prevent future harm in less serious cases. In more serious cases where we determine a child was abused or neglected at home, we transfer the case to Child Protective Services for ongoing services. If a child is at risk of immediate harm, we remove the child from the home. CPI also works to recover missing children and combat human trafficking.

For child care and school investigations, our job is to determine what happened and coordinate with other responsible programs or departments. We report our findings on childcare investigations to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services and findings from public school investigations to individual school districts.

Child Protective Investigations has three main divisions: Investigations (INV), Special Investigations (SI), and Child Care Investigations (CCI). Except for CCI, Child Protective Investigations was formerly part of Child Protective Services and still works hand in hand with CPS.



## 2019 Accomplishments

### Alternative Response (AR)

Alternative Response is a more engaging approach to working with families than a traditional investigation. While available in most of Texas, CPI continued to expand Alternative Response during the fiscal year by beginning to use the process in Region 2, which includes 30 North Texas counties. CPI plans to expand AR to Harris County in FY 2020, which will make this service available statewide.

Also in FY 2019, DFPS developed a refresher training for caseworkers and managers who have been practicing AR for some time. This training helped reinforce Alternative Response's foundational principles of achieving child safety through meaningful family engagement.

In addition, AR managers from across the state attended the Alternative Response Leadership Conference in November 2018. The conference, *Leading with Passion and Purpose*, focused on refreshing and enhancing their Alternative Response leadership skills.

Learn more about [AR in the Services section of this report](#).

### Workforce Development

Leadership development has been a particular focus for CPI. A four-day leadership training was provided multiple times through the past year and available to all managers. CPI and CPS leaders held a joint leadership conference in July 2018. The conference, *Your Leadership, Your Legacy*, focused on providing leaders of the two sister programs additional skills to enhance their leadership ability.

In June of 2019, Investigations applied for and received a Children's Justice Act (CJA) Grant to advance the Adaptive Coaching Program in Texas. Adaptive Coaching challenges leaders to elevate their existing skillset by intentionally modeling effective engagement strategies with their staff. Caseworkers can then use these same practices in working with families.

## Enhancing Child Care Investigations

CPI took a number of steps to enhance child care investigations during FY 2019. The Child Care Investigations (CCI) division began to develop two new units to improve the quality and efficiency of investigations. As a result, the Quality Assurance and Screening units will begin their work in FY 2020.

- The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit consist of one lead analyst and five specialist. The unit will develop tools and conduct qualitative case readings to monitor, track, and report items related to CCI policy. The staff will also conduct quality assurance case reviews to drive program improvement and identify any future quality assurance processes.
- The Screening Unit consist of one supervisor and five screeners. It will be responsible for screening intakes for residential child care investigations
- to determine the open intakes for investigation, downgraded them to non-abuse/neglect status, or administratively close them. Screeners prioritize cases by assessing safety and risks, and determining whether allegations meet the legal definition of abuse or neglect. The Screening Unit will also be responsible for notifying Child Protective Services (CPS) of investigations and initial screening for Complex Investigation Division referrals.

During FY 2019, CCI also took the following key steps to improve the skills and knowledge of its investigators:

- Developed the CCI Basic Skills Development training to transition new investigator training from Texas Health and Human Services to DFPS.
- Conducted the Support for Policy and Required Knowledge training tour to train all CCI staff on abuse, neglect, and exploitation rules, the new CCI policy, as well as program improvements and development.
- Held the Supervising with Intention and Mastery annual supervisor conference. The conference focused on:
- Advanced training for fatality and physical abuse investigations.



- Training on working with medical examiners by the Travis County Medical Examiner's Office.
- Advance training in forensic investigations.
- Training on background check enhancements.
- Leadership development and training on building high performance teams.

Also, CCI developed and published a resource guide to help supervisors or their designees with decision-making when prioritizing abuse and neglect intakes. It gives staff a consistent model for best practices and task-specific details to help them follow policies and improve risk assessment.

## Investigation Services

### Investigations

State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected to report it so DFPS can investigate. Child Protective Investigations (CPI) caseworkers interview children, parents, and others who know about the family to help determine if abuse or neglect happened, if children are safe, and to gauge the risk of further harm. CPI caseworkers also consider physical evidence such as injuries, drug abuse, and other factors such as lack of food or medical care. If needed, CPI caseworkers may refer families to services to help stabilize the family and address their needs. However, if services are not enough to make a child safe, CPI may ask a judge to remove the child from the parents' custody and place the child in a relative's care or in foster care.

For more information, see Child Protective Investigations in the [CPI Section of the DFPS Data Book](#).

## Alternative Response

Alternative Response (AR) is a type of intervention that provides services and support to help families resolve child safety issues and reduces future reports of abuse or neglect. Unlike a traditional investigation, an AR intervention does not name the parent or guardian as a perpetrator (the person who commits abuse or neglect), which can affect future employment. This approach intentionally supports parents by building on existing strengths and family supports to ensure child safety. An AR intervention requires CPI to apply a rigorous screening process to lower priority cases to identify families that may benefit from this approach. Alternative Response was available in most of Texas in FY 2019 with the exception of Harris County.

For more information, see Alternative Response in the [CPI section of DFPS Data Book](#).

## Special Investigations

Special investigators are former law enforcement officers and have expertise in criminal investigations. They assist in high-profile or high-risk abuse and neglect cases that may require joint investigation with law enforcement. Special investigators take the lead on school investigations, DFPS employee investigations, and child fatality cases when there are no surviving children in the home. They also participate on local boards and multi-disciplinary teams.



Special investigators handle or assist in investigations of abuse and neglect in situations when law enforcement experience is crucial or when their skill set is more appropriate than that of a CPI investigator.

Special investigators play a large role in locating and recovering children that have gone missing from foster care or other forms of DFPS conservatorship (legal custody). They are liaisons in missing children cases to the National Crime Information Center and National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and they provide recovery interviews and services and assist with the Governor's human trafficking initiatives. Special investigators work closely with the DFPS Human Trafficking Team to develop tools to help in investigations involving missing children and victims of sex or labor trafficking.

## Child Care Investigations

Child Care Investigations (CCI) investigates allegations of abuse and neglect in daycare and in foster care to ensure the safety of children. CCI reports its findings to the Child Care Licensing (CCL) program at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. CCI investigators also share information with CCL inspectors when they identify possible violations of child care minimum standards so that CCL can address them with the daycare or foster care provider. CCI also coordinates with Child Protective Services if the allegations involve a child in foster care.

## ***Working with Partners***

Child Protective Investigations works with many partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and provide services to children and their families. Some of those partners include child welfare boards, law enforcement agencies, children's advocacy centers, the Forensic Assessment Center Network, and various providers and community partners.

### **Child Welfare Boards**

Many counties provide additional resources to help DFPS meet the needs of children in state care. In Texas, 192 counties have child welfare boards appointed by commissioners' courts. These boards provide significant support to enhance care and services for children in foster care and their families and help with child abuse prevention efforts. CPI staff regularly sit on child welfare boards as non-voting members.

### **Law Enforcement**

DFPS and law enforcement jointly investigate when there are allegations that children are crime victims and are at immediate risk of death or serious harm. DFPS and law enforcement also work together on cases when children are exposed to the selling or making of drugs. Law enforcement notifies DFPS if they plan to raid a home so DFPS can protect the children. DFPS contacts law enforcement if it finds evidence of a possible crime. DFPS and law enforcement also work together closely on cases involving human trafficking.

### **Children's Advocacy Centers**

Children's advocacy centers (CACs) provide a safe place where law enforcement officers, DFPS caseworkers and investigators, and other professionals can obtain a forensic interview of children who may be victims of sexual abuse or severe physical abuse, or who witnessed a violent crime. Many CACs also offer services such as counseling, medical exams, and classes for abuse victims and their families. CACs have also partnered with DFPS to train caseworkers on child welfare topics.

### **Forensic Assessment Center Network (FACN)**

CPI works with the Forensic Assessment Center Network to ensure that caseworkers have access to the

most current information about abuse and neglect so they can make sure children are safe. The network ensures that pediatric doctors with specialty training in child abuse and neglect are available to review incidents of abuse or neglect, and offer advice and expertise to caseworkers.

### **Community Partners Programs**

Rainbow rooms help meet the critical needs of abused and neglected children and their families. These resource rooms supply a variety of items such as car seats, clothing, shoes, underwear, baby formula, school supplies, and safety and hygiene items to families and children who need them. This service promotes the well-being of children and often helps caseworkers engage parents.



# Child Protective Services (CPS)

## What We Do

Child Protective Services (CPS) works to strengthen and stabilize families so that they can safely care for their children at home. When that is not possible, CPS works with the courts and communities to find permanent homes or other places for children to live. CPS works to ensure appropriate placements for children and comprehensive services for families in an effort to stabilize and reunite families when possible. CPS works closely with the Child Protective Investigations program, which conducts all child abuse and neglect investigations.

## 2019 Accomplishments

### Adoptions

In FY 2019, a record number of children in state care found “forever” homes as CPS completed 6,107 adoptions. Relatives adopted 50.7 percent of those children and youth. That’s compared with 5,678 adoptions in FY 2018 (49.1 percent by relatives) and 5,413 adoptions in FY 2017 (50.2 percent by relatives).

### Community-Based Care

CPS continued to expand Community-Based Care (CBC) in FY 2019. The goal of CBC is to improve the overall well-being of children in state care, find them permanent places to live, and keep them closer to home and connected with their communities and siblings. A single contractor is responsible for foster care and kinship care services within each geographic area. The single source continuum contractor (SSCC) is responsible for finding foster homes or other places for children in state care to stay, and providing them and their families with a full continuum of services.

In FY 2019:

- DFPS awarded a contract on July 1, 2019 to St. Francis Community Services to serve as the SSCC for Region 1. Stage I, where St. Francis will begin providing services, is expected to begin January 2020 following a six-month start-up phase.

- DFPS released a Request for Application (RFA) for Region 8b on May 2, 2019. The RFA closed on August 2, 2019. Stage I implementation is expected to begin in the spring of 2020 following a six-month start-up phase.
- 2INgage, the SSCC for Region 2, began placing children in FY 2019. Implementation of stage I will continue in FY 2020 with a focus on building the local network of foster care and services. 2INgage is a partnership between the Texas Family Initiative LLC and New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc.
- Family Tapestry, a division of the Children’s Shelter in San Antonio, is the SSCC for Region 8a. Family Tapestry began placing children on February 1, 2019. Implementation of stage I will be ongoing during FY 2020, with a focus on building the local network of foster care and other services.
- DFPS renewed its contract with ACH Child and Family Services in Region 3b. ACH will continue to provide placement, preparation for
- adult living, and adoption services, as well as case management services in the future.

See [Community-Based Care](#) on the DFPS website for more information.



## Faith-Based Initiatives

CPS significantly expanded faith-based initiatives by supporting congregations in Texas that wanted to participate in the CarePortal. The CarePortal is an online platform that allows churches to provide goods and services to children and families who are in need in their own communities. By August 31, 2019:

- 1,929 congregations were partnering with DFPS.
- 535 of our faith partners were enrolled in the CarePortal and helping to meet the needs of children and families.
- The CarePortal had given aid to 7,645 children with an estimated economic impact of
- \$2,381,487.

In communities where the CarePortal was not available, CPS expanded the Adopt a Family initiative to faith partners that want to support youth and families in need. Adopt a Family was available in regions 1, 3, 5, 6a, 6b, 9, and 11.

In addition, CPS expanded the Clergy in Court for Kids program. This program allows clergy members to attend court hearings and support youth and families. CPS expanded this initiative to Hutchison County (Region 1), Wichita and Taylor counties (Region 2), Dallas and Hunt counties (Region 3), and Fort Bend County (Region 6b).

## Nurturing Parent Program

CPS started the Nurturing Parent Program (NPP) in five FBSS units across the state (Lubbock, Potter, Val Verde, Burnet, and Smith Counties). NPP is a trauma-informed, evidence-based program to prevent, intervene in, and treat child abuse and neglect. The Nurturing Parenting Program helps parents:

- Better understand what constitutes abuse and neglect.
- Better identify, talk about, process, and manage feelings such as anger, stress, loss, grief, and guilt.
- Better understand the stages of child development and what behavior is appropriate at each stage. This includes safety, emotional, and relational aspects.



- Better understand varied approaches to positive parenting including discipline, conflict resolution, and problem-solving strategies.
- Be aware of their children's emotional and physical needs and respond appropriately and consistently with empathy, caring, and respect for their children, themselves, and others.

The program also increases community resources that help build the capacity of parents to care for and nurture their children.

## Treatment Foster Family Care Program

CPS began the Treatment Foster Family Care program to increase capacity in the foster care system and reduce the number of young children (under the age of 10) in residential treatment centers. At end of July 2019, there were 53 TFFC homes and 39 children placed in those homes. Here are the number of TFFC homes by region:

- Eight in Region 1
- 10 in Region 3e
- 13 in Region 6
- Nine in Region 7
- Seven in Region 8a. (Community-Based Care)
- One in Region 8
- Five in Region 11



## Domestic Violence

In FY 2019, CPS enhanced how it works with and engages families when domestic violence is a safety and risk factor. CPS created the Domestic Violence Best Practice Resource Guide and nine web-based domestic violence training videos. These resources focus on effective practice and addressing common challenges in CPS cases when an adult is not only harming children but also the adult caretaker of the children. CPS released the first of these web-based trainings in FY 2019. CPS will release additional trainings every other month in FY 2020 to provide ongoing education on the subject.

## CPS Services

### Family Based Safety Services

CPS provides services to help stabilize families and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Family Based Safety Services (FBSS), sometimes called in-home or family preservation services, can help avoid the need to remove children from their homes. Often, these services also make it possible for children to return home by helping families understand and protect their children from danger. Services include family counseling, crisis intervention, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, and daycare. Most families who benefit from FBSS services have their children living at home. In some cases, children may live elsewhere, usually with family or family friends, until they can safely return home.

For more information, see Family Preservation in the [CPS section of DFPS Data Book](#).



## Children in State Care

DFPS looks for every reasonable alternative to keep children safe from abuse and neglect at home. But, when children cannot live safely with their own families, DFPS Investigations may ask the court to remove them from their homes and temporarily place them with relatives or foster families or in an emergency shelter or foster-care facility. DFPS and the courts must consider relatives and others with close ties to the child or family as an option. DFPS asks parents to name relatives and family friends who might care for their children. DFPS contacts relatives and explains their options and the state support that is available to them. Kinship caregivers may adopt or accept legal responsibility for children when they cannot return home safely. Kinship care gives children more stability and keeps them connected to family when they cannot live with their birth parents.

For more on kinship care, see Placements in Substitute Care in the [CPS section of DFPS Data Book](#).

### Foster Care

Children live in foster care when kinship care is not an option. Foster families are reimbursed for the costs of caring for children. Together, CPS and foster parents arrange all the child's educational, medical, dental, and therapeutic services. Some children with emotional or other needs that are difficult to address in a foster home may live in specialized group homes, residential treatment centers, or other facilities. CPS provides services to the parents until the family is reunited or a judge approves another permanent living arrangement for the children. A judge has ongoing oversight while a child is in foster care.

See more on foster care in Placements in Substitute Care in the [CPS section of DFPS Data Book](#) on the DFPS website.

### Permanency

Permanency means leaving state care to live in a permanent home. This usually means children go home to their parents, go to live permanently with relatives, or get adopted. This is known as positive permanency. Planning for positive permanency starts as soon as DFPS removes a child from a home and ends when the child leaves CPS' legal custody.

The goal is to reunite children with their parents when possible, and CPS provides reunification services to families immediately before and after a child returns home.

Goals of the Permanency Strategic Plan are to:

- Safely reduce the average time to achieve positive permanency by 25 percent by 2020.
- Achieve positive permanency for children under the age of six years who have been in DFPS conservatorship for more than two years.
- Reduce the number of youth exiting care without a permanent home.
- Create a sense of urgency to achieve positive permanency.

When a child cannot return home safely, the court may give permanent custody to a relative or make the child available for adoption. DFPS approves adoptive homes and contracts with licensed, private child-placing agencies to increase the number of parents available to adopt children from foster care.

The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) website ([AdoptChildren.org](http://AdoptChildren.org)) is an important tool for recruiting foster and adoptive parents and also promotes adoption with photo listing and profiles of children awaiting adoption. TARE also has a toll-free nationwide Adoption and Foster Care Inquiry Line.

CPS offers services to children and their families to help adopted children overcome the trauma of abuse or neglect and the loss of their birth families. These services include counseling, crisis intervention, parent training, and support groups.

For more information, see Adoption in the [CPS section of DFPS Data Book](#).

### ***Youth Transitioning to a Successful Adulthood***

In some cases, CPS cannot find someone to take permanent custody of a youth. These youth may stay in state care until age 18. CPS works to connect these youth with adults who are committed to them and can provide support to them. These youth or young adults may stay in foster care until the age of 21 or 22 while they seek an education or a job.

The Transitional Living Services (TLS) program provides various resources, services, and benefits to help youth learn to live successfully on their own. Preparation for adult living (PAL) services help youth ages 16 to 21 years of age prepare for the future. Programs for older youth include Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), College Tuition and Fee Waivers, Extended Foster Care, and more.

### ***Extended Foster Care***

Youth in foster care who don't find a permanent home with a family may leave state care after their 18th birthday. However, they can stay in foster care or return to foster care through age 21 or 22, depending on their situation. Unless they have a medical condition that prevents it, youth must do one of the following to stay in extended foster care:

- Attend high school or a program to get a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate (GED).
- Attend college or other institutions of higher learning.
- Take part in a program or activity to help them get a job.
- Work for at least 80 hours a month.

Extended Foster Care also includes the Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program. SIL lets young adults live in a less-restrictive settings while CPS provides services and support to help them get ready to become successful adults. SIL settings include apartments, college dorms, other dorms, shared housing, and host homes.



## Education and Training

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program gives financial help to youth and young adults before and after they leave CPS care while they go to college or attend other educational programs after high school. ETV helps with expenses such as rent, computers, books, daycare, and transportation. This voucher is for youth and young adults who are or were in foster care, youth who were adopted from state care, and some other youth whose guardians are not their parents. Youth who get Permanency Care Assistance after age 16 are also eligible. Former foster youth also get free tuition and fees at state-supported universities, colleges, junior colleges, and vocational schools.

You will find more about services for youth at [TexasYouthConnection.org](http://TexasYouthConnection.org) and the DFPS website.

## Health Care Benefits

Texas provides healthcare to children in foster care and youth who reach adulthood in foster care up to the month of their 26th birthday. [STAR Health](#) is the statewide Medicaid program that provides comprehensive healthcare services for children and youth in DFPS care. It is a managed care program that also covers youth in Extended Foster Care up to the month of their 22nd birthday, as well as youth in the Former Foster Care Children and Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth programs until the month of their 21st birthday. Young adults eligible for Medicaid for Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) continue to be covered by the STAR Medicaid managed care plan of their choice from age 21 through the month of their 26th birthday.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission oversees Star Health, which is administered by Superior HealthPlan. STAR Health benefits includes:

- Quick enrollment for immediate benefits.
- A medical home for each child with coordinated medical and behavioral healthcare.
- 24-hour nursing and behavioral health helplines.
- A Health Passport for online access to a child's health information.

Children and Youth who enter DFPS custody must get three assessments in the first 30 days to determine their

medical, behavioral, and developmental strengths and needs. The components of this 3 in 30 approach are:

- A checkup in the first three days by a STAR Health medical provider to check for injuries or illnesses and get any treatments the child or youth needs right away.
- A Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment, which checks for behavioral health needs including the effects of trauma. CANS identifies needs and strengths and makes recommendations for services and supports.
- A Texas Health Steps medical checkup, which is a complete head to toe evaluation of a child to ensure medical issues are identified early,
- children are growing and developing as expected, and caregivers know how to support growth and development.

These three tools help CPS understand the needs and strengths of children entering care in order to provide better services to children and youth and achieve better outcomes.

## Working with Partners

CPS works with many partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and provide services to children and their families. Some of those partners include foster parents, child placing agencies, congregations, CASA volunteers, child welfare boards, law enforcement agencies, children's advocacy centers, health and human services agencies, and various providers and community partners.

## Foster Parents and Other Providers

Foster parents, private child-placing agencies, residential treatment centers, and other providers work with CPS to care for and support children. DFPS also supplies funds to the Texas Council on Adoptable Children and the Texas Foster Family Association to support foster and adoptive parents. DFPS also funds local foster parent associations to help them educate, train, and retain foster and adoptive parents.

DFPS has also been expanding the community's role to meet the challenges of serving children in foster care. With [Community-Based Care](#) (CBC), a single contractor is responsible for building foster care capacity and a network

of providers, engaging the community to help, placing children in foster care, and coordinating and delivering services to children in foster care and their families.

CBC includes both foster care and relative or “kinship” care. CBC gives the contractor sole responsibility for case management – rather than sharing that responsibility with DFPS.

## Faith-Based Efforts

DFPS partners with faith-based communities of all denominations and religious affiliations to:

- To promote positive outcomes for children and families.
- Enhance the well-being of children by shortening their stay in the foster care system.
- Decrease the time for children to achieve permanency.
- Improve community relationships.

The child welfare system alone cannot meet the needs of children and families. DFPS provides information to local congregations about the needs of children and families in their area and local congregations decide what type of ministries they want to develop. Learn more about the [Texas Faith-Based Model](#) on the DFPS website.

## Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

CASA volunteers are court-appointed advocates for children in CPS cases. They are independent voices for children and an important part of the legal process that helps ensure children’s best interest are served.

## Child Welfare Boards

Many counties provide additional resources to help CPS meet the needs of children in state care. More than 200 counties have child welfare boards appointed by commissioners’ courts. These boards provide significant support to enhance care and services for children in foster care and their families and help with child abuse prevention efforts.

## Law Enforcement

CPS and law enforcement jointly investigate where there are allegations that children are crime victims



and are at immediate risk of death or serious harm. CPS and law enforcement also work together on cases when children are exposed to the selling or making of drugs. Law enforcement notifies CPS if they plan to raid a home so CPS can protect the children. CPS contacts law enforcement if it finds evidence of a possible crime. CPS and law enforcement also work together on cases involving human trafficking.

## Children’s Advocacy Centers

Children’s advocacy centers (CACs) provide a safe place where law enforcement, CPS, and other professionals can interview children who may be victims of sexual abuse or severe physical abuse, or who witnessed a violent crime. Many CACs also offer services such as counseling, medical exams, and classes for abuse victims and their families. CACs have also partnered with CPS to train caseworkers on child welfare topics.

## Forensic Assessment Center Network (FACN)

CPS works with the Forensic Assessment Center Network to ensure that caseworkers have access to the most current information about abuse and neglect so they can make sure children and adults are safe. The network ensures that doctors and other experts are available to offer advice and expertise to caseworkers.

## Community Partners Programs

Rainbow rooms help meet the critical needs of abused and neglected children. These resource rooms supply a variety of items such as car seats, clothing, shoes, underwear, baby formula, school supplies, and safety and hygiene items to children entering foster or relative care as well as children receiving CPS services at home.

# Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI)

## What We Do

PEI takes a public health approach to strengthening families and promoting positive outcomes for children, youth, families, and communities. We support the healthy social, emotional, and mental development of children and help develop safe and stable families and nurturing communities. We do this through:

- Contracts with community organizations to provide prevention and early intervention programs to children, youth, and families that encourage decisions and actions that improve their lives.
- Public education and programs that work to prevent risk factors that lead to child abuse or neglect or other childhood adversities.

PEI also helps communities develop and improve prevention programs to strengthen families so they can live better lives. This can mean families don't get involved with Child Protective Investigations or Child Protective Services and are able to stay together. It may also mean their kids stay in school, avoid risky

behavior, and don't become involved with the juvenile justice system. PEI makes free prevention services available to families all around the state. You can search for [PEI programs available in your county](#) on the DFPS website.

PEI's Office of Child Safety focuses on programs that work to reduce fatal and serious child abuse. This office performs critical-case reviews, examines data and trends, and works with other agencies to provide a safety network across Texas. The Office of Child Safety develops recommendations and works together with non-profit, private sector, and government programs to help keep children safe.

## 2019 Accomplishments

### *Outcome-Based Programs Serve More People*

Service provided by PEI programs are evidence-based and promising practices. This means they rely on the best available research, professional expertise, and input from youth and families to deliver services that have been shown to be effective.

In FY 2019, PEI served 48,391 youth and 10,356 families through evidence-based home visiting programs, parent education, counseling, and support services. This is an increase from the 47,013 youth and 9,369 families served in FY 2018.

Nearly all (99.65%) of children and youth remained safe while enrolled in PEI services, and their parents who were at risk of child abuse and neglect did not become confirmed perpetrators in a DFPS abuse or neglect investigation. PEI prevention programs also provided mentoring, youth leadership development, recreational activities, and youth-based curriculum to prevent delinquency for 48,391 youth.

- 96.4% of youth between ages 10 and 16 who were served by PEI-funded programs did not enter the juvenile justice system in FY 2019 (STAR, SYSN & CYD).



- 99.65% of parents who were served and at risk of child abuse or neglect did not become confirmed perpetrators in a DFPS abuse or neglect investigation during FY 2019.

## ***Serving the Most Vulnerable***

HB 1549, passed by the 85th Texas Legislature, required PEI to develop a growth strategy to gradually increase the number of families receiving PEI services each year. PEI contracted with Population Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler (UTHSCT) to develop a series of tools to achieve this goal. These tools use risk-mapping and geographically-based risk and resiliency models to illustrate the distribution of maltreatment rates in the state by zip code. The project produced [community maltreatment risk maps](#) in FY 2019, giving PEI powerful new tools to identify and allocate resources in communities with the highest need and help families before they are in crisis.

Using the new risk maps as guidance and funding increases by the 86th Texas Legislature, PEI expand two programs in FY 2019: Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support and the Texas Nurse Family Partnership.

## ***Quality Improvement***

### **Evidence Driven Programming**

PEI uses three types of evidence-driven programming when selecting and evaluating programs both internally and with providers.

- Evidence-based (proven effective by the highest quality of research and cannot vary from the model)
- Evidence-informed (components are proven effective but the model can be customized)
- Promising practice (measurable results and positive outcomes, but needs more or higher quality research)

PEI produced a series of infographics to visually explain this “evidence-based spectrum” to a variety of audiences.

### **Evidence-Based Programing Tool**

PEI also developed and implemented an evidence-based programming tool for providers of the Services

to At-Risk Youth (STAR) program to use. It helps STAR providers analyze the suitability, strength, and effectiveness of particular models when used with target populations. PEI’s evidence-based programming tool received national attention when presented at the American Evaluation Association Annual Conference and the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Fiscal Year 2019.

## **Youth Program Quality Assessment**

To evaluate the quality and strengthen PEI’s youth programs, PEI began implementing a new tool in FY 2019 called the Youth Program Quality Assessment. It helps after-school programs (serving grades 4-12) assess how well their programs provide an environment that is safe, supportive, focused on youth, and that encourages youth participation. This tool allows Community Youth Development program staff, PEI, or external specialists to observe interactions between program staff and youth during regular program sessions and to interview staff about how the program operates. These observations and interviews are used to create a quality profile for a program that identifies areas for improvement especially where staff may need professional development to meet program goals.



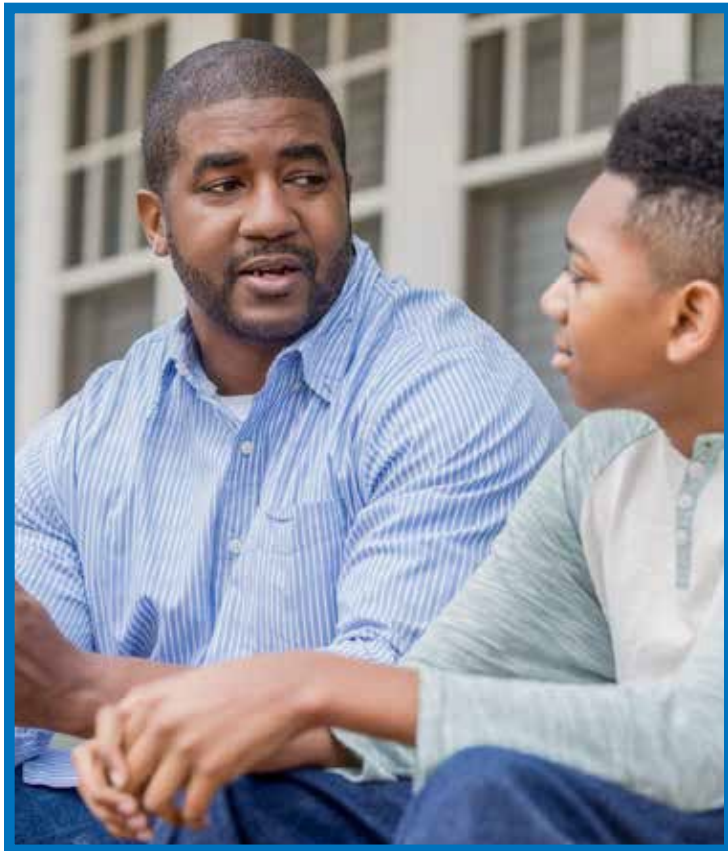
## Efforts to Engage Fathers

### ***Fatherhood EFFECT***

PEI re-procured a contract in FY 2019 for the Educating Fathers for Empowering Children Tomorrow (Fatherhood EFFECT) program. The procurement was open to all PEI contractors who serve families because the goal was to incorporate strong fatherhood efforts into existing family supports. Fathers and their healthy engagement in the lives of their children play an important role. This contract will help communities do a better job of recruiting, supporting, and retaining fathers in programs that help them overcome challenges and stay involved in their children's lives, especially fathers who are not married to their child's mother.

### ***Father's Playbook***

PEI paid for the development of a mobile application for fathers, the Father's Playbook, which was developed by UT Health Science Center Tyler. The Father's Playbook provides fathers with education and information about pregnancy, ways to prepare for baby, delivery, and postpartum issues. The app launched in the Google Play store early in Fiscal Year 2019 and there are plans to launch in Apple's App store in Fiscal Year 2020.



### ***Fatherhood Summit***

In FY 2019, PEI collaborated with the Child and Family Research Partnership (CFRP) to hold quarterly meetings of stakeholders across state agencies to work toward addressing the needs of fathers through programs and services across the state. This collaboration helped inform the direction of the popular Fatherhood Summit.

The Fatherhood Summit toured the state to give regional public and private sector professionals a chance to learn current research-based best practices and innovations to best support fathers, mothers, and their children. PEI held these summits in the Rio Grande Valley, Houston, Dallas and Lubbock and offered a full agenda about the importance of healthy father involvement, the impact of father absence, and how communities can improve their system of services to support fathers in their communities. Lessons learned from these regional summits will be incorporated into online trainings launching in the coming fiscal year.

### **Prevention Task Force**

The Prevention Task Force issued a report in August 2018 identifying five strategies for advancing child abuse prevention in Texas. They were:

- Developing a community tool kit to empower communities.
- Exploring the financial potential of the children's trust fund and other financing opportunities for communities.
- Developing a prevention framework.
- Elevating early brain development.
- Expand prevention programming.

The task force held three meetings during Fiscal Year 2019 to develop two of their five recommendations: the community tool kit and elevating early brain development.

The Task Force created an outline for a community toolkit that consists of resources to support communities in their collaborative efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect and promote positive outcomes for children. DFPS started production on the toolkit in FY 2019 and it will be published in FY 20 in a web-based format for communities in various stages of implementing collaborative efforts to use.

During Fiscal Year 2019, DFPS partnered with the Department of State Health Services, the University of Texas System, Casey Family Services, and the Episcopal Health and St. David's foundations to host a two-day Pediatric Brain Health Summit. Due to the success of the first summit and the Task Force's continued emphasis on elevating early brain development, DFPS began convening monthly workgroups in late 2019 to plan for the second Summit.

Due to the legislative increases in funding for two of PEI's programs, PEI was able to implement the task force's recommended strategy to expand prevention programming using its data-driven, risk-based growth strategy as discussed earlier in this report.

The Prevention Task Force was dissolved (Legislative Sunset) on August 31, 2019.

## Provider Feedback

In Fiscal Year 2019, PEI used feedback gathered through its 2018 Spring Listening Tour to improve and streamline its work with communities. The community input encouraged PEI to reassign early childhood program specialists by communities instead of program so communities with multiple PEI early childhood programs would have one program specialist. This helps to improve relationships between PEI staff and contractors and streamline the communication process, to help ensure families get the services they need.

In April 2019, PEI hosted a two-day focus group to gather specific input from providers on the launch of the expanded Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS) database. These sessions allowed home visitor staff and other PEI contractors and stakeholders to learn about upcoming changes to the PEIRS system and offer their input regarding how to make it more useful and efficient.

## PEI Services

PEI contracts with community-based organizations, local governments, and school districts to provide services to promote positive outcomes for children, youth, families, and communities. Services are voluntary and provided free to families around the state. However, not all services are available in all Texas communities. To find out which services are available in your community,



search for programs available in your county in the [PEI section of the DFPS website](#) or at [HelpandHope.org](http://HelpandHope.org).

## Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

This program funds community-based organizations that provide child abuse and neglect prevention services. CBCAP services include parent education, specifically fatherhood programs, professional education, and various special initiatives. In FY 2019, 929 families received services in Andrew, Bexar, Brazos, Burleson, Caldwell, Cameron, Collin, Cooke, Cuberson, Dallas, Denton, Ector, El Paso, Ellis, Fannin, Fort Bend, Grayson, Harris, Hidalgo, Hudspeth, Johnson, Leon, Lubock, Maddison, McLennan, Midland, Montague, Nueces, Palo Pinto, Parker, Pecos, Rains, Reeves, Robertson, Rockwall, Tarrant, Taylor, Travis, Wichita, Williamson, and Wise counties.

CBCAP also supports primary prevention efforts such as public awareness campaigns and outreach. This includes the DFPS positive-parenting campaign, [Help for Parents, Hope for Kids](#).

## Community Youth Development (CYD)

PEI contracts with community-based organizations to develop juvenile-delinquency prevention programs in 15 targeted ZIP codes that have high juvenile crime rates. Communities tailor services to their needs. Some of the



approaches include mentoring, youth leadership, youth skills classes, and recreational activities. CYD also includes a youth advisory committee. CYD served 19,619 youth in Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, El Paso, Galveston, Harris, Hidalgo, Lubbock, McLennan, Nueces, Potter, Tarrant, Travis, Webb, and Willacy counties.

## Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)

HOPES is a community-based program that provides child abuse and neglect prevention services that help families with children between birth and 5 years of age. HOPES serves counties where data shows a greater need. Community organizations provide home visiting programs along with other positive parenting, health, and child development learning opportunities. Project HOPES also supports community collaboration through participation in community coalitions.

In FY 2019, HOPES served 7,312 families in Atascosa, Bastrop, Bell, Bexar, Bosque, Brazoria, Brazos, Callahan, Cameron, Clay, Coryell, Dallas, Denton, Ector, El Paso, Ellis, Fort Bend, Galveston, Gregg, Harris, Harrison, Hidalgo, Hudspeth, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Kleberg, Lampasas, Liberty, Lubbock, McLennan, Medina, Midland, Montgomery, Nolan, Nueces, Potter, Randall, San Patricio, Shackelford, Tarrant, Taylor, Travis, Upshur, Waller, Webb, Wichita, Williamson, and Wilson counties.



## Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP)

The goal of HIP is to help families ensure the safety and well-being of their children and prevent abuse and neglect by providing in-home education and support services through providers in their communities.

The program helps:

- Current and former foster youth who are pregnant or are parenting a child up to 2 years old.
- Single teen fathers who are current or former foster youth.
- Youth who have aged out of foster care are receiving Preparation for Adult Living services or are in Extended Foster Care.
- Families with a child up to 2 years old, who previously lost parental rights to another child because of abuse or neglect within two years of the birth month of the new child.
- Families with a child up to 2 years old, who previously had a child die because of abuse or neglect within two years of the birth month of the new child.

There were 320 foster youth referred to HIP in FY 2019.

## Military Families and Veterans Pilot Prevention Program

The purpose of the Military Families and Veterans Pilot Prevention Program is:

- To improve the well-being of Texas military and veteran families by promoting positive parental involvement in their children's lives.
- To educate, facilitate, and otherwise support the abilities of parents to provide continued emotional, physical, and financial support for their children.
- To build a community coalition of local stakeholders who are focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
- To prevent child abuse and neglect occurrences in military communities.



## Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN)

The SYSN program provides evidence-based programming through a statewide network of youth programs aimed at juvenile delinquency prevention and positive youth development. Programs are available to youth ages 6-17 in each DFPS region. Services include school and community-based mentoring programs such as Big Brothers Big Sisters and Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs. The program served 3,964 clients in FY 2019.

## Texas Home Visiting

The primary goals of the Texas Home Visiting program, including the Texas Nurse-Family Partnership program, are to support community-driven approaches to enhancing maternal child health, parent and child attachment, child development, child safety, family stability, and school readiness. Texas Home Visiting uses a multi-layer approach that supports direct services as well as development of early childhood systems in eligible communities.

Texas Home Visiting funds evidence-based home visiting services to at-risk pregnant women and the parents (or caregivers) of children up to age 5. It also funds early childhood coalitions that work to coordinate services and address broad community issues that affect young children and families. In FY 2019, the Texas Home Visiting program reached a total of 8,796 families in Bastrop, Bexar, Cameron, Collin, Dallas, Ector, Gregg, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, Midland, Montgomery, Nueces, Potter, Randall, San Patricio, Smith, Starr, Tarrant, Tom Green, Travis, Victoria, Wichita, and Willacy counties.

These prevention services are free to eligible military and veteran families that:

- Include a “primary caregiver” who is an active duty or former military member, National Guard member, Ready Reserve member, veteran, military retiree, or their dependents.
- Include a child (who is zero to 17 years of age).
- Are expecting a child who will be identified as the “target child” for services.

This program benefits the entire family unit and provides necessary supports to our military veterans and families. In FY 2019, this program served 1,616 families in El Paso, San Antonio, and the Killeen-Belton area.

## Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)

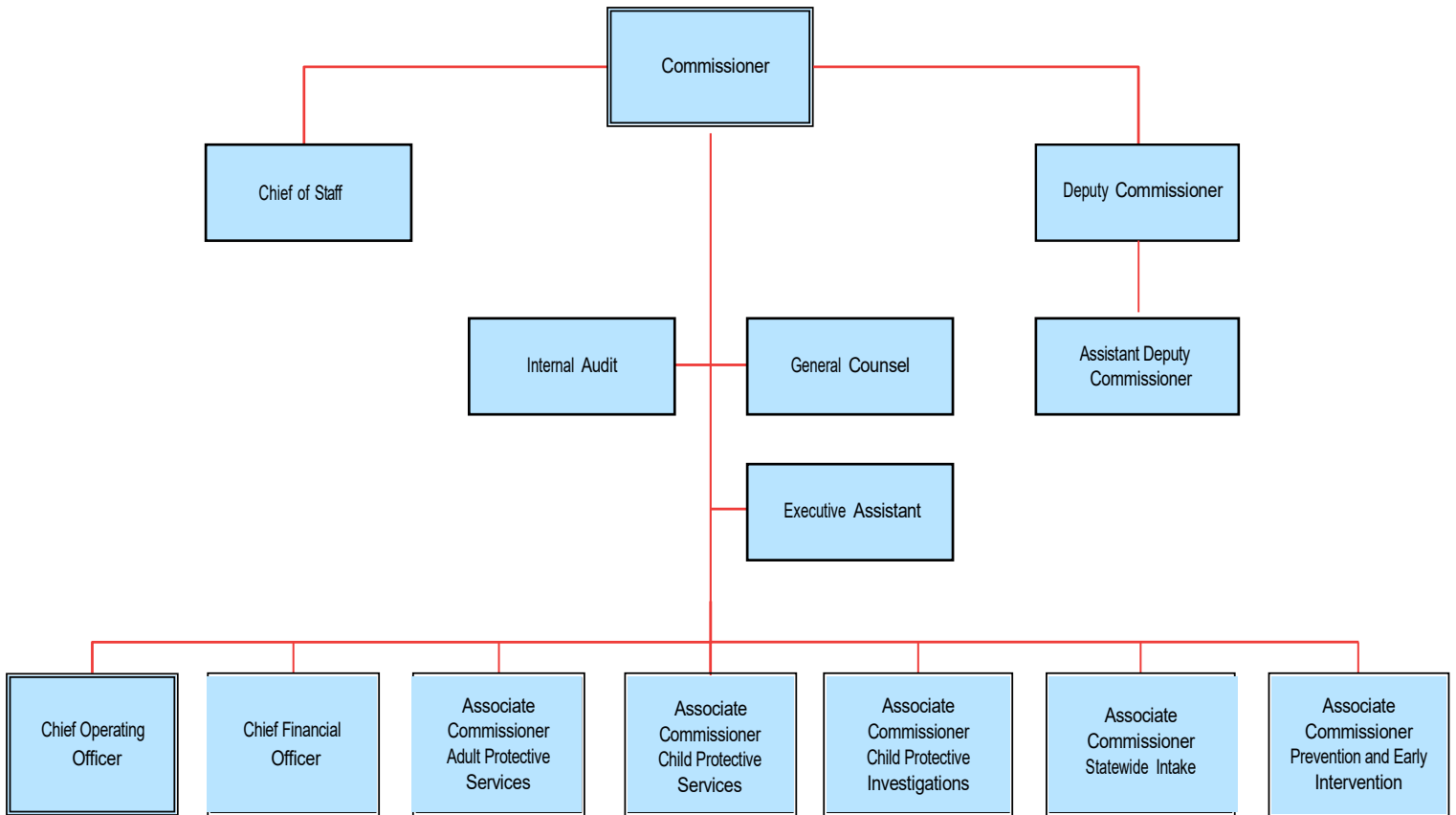
The STAR program is available in all 254 Texas counties. PEI contracts with community agencies to offer crisis-intervention for families, individual and family counseling, emergency short-term respite care, as well as youth and parent skills classes. STAR serves families with youth through 18 years old who are dealing with conflict at home, school attendance issues, delinquency, or have a youth who has run away from home. In FY 2019, the STAR program served 25,208 youth. STAR contractors also provide prevention material and educational presentations that serve everyone in the community.



# General Information & Resources

## DFPS Organizational Chart

### Executives



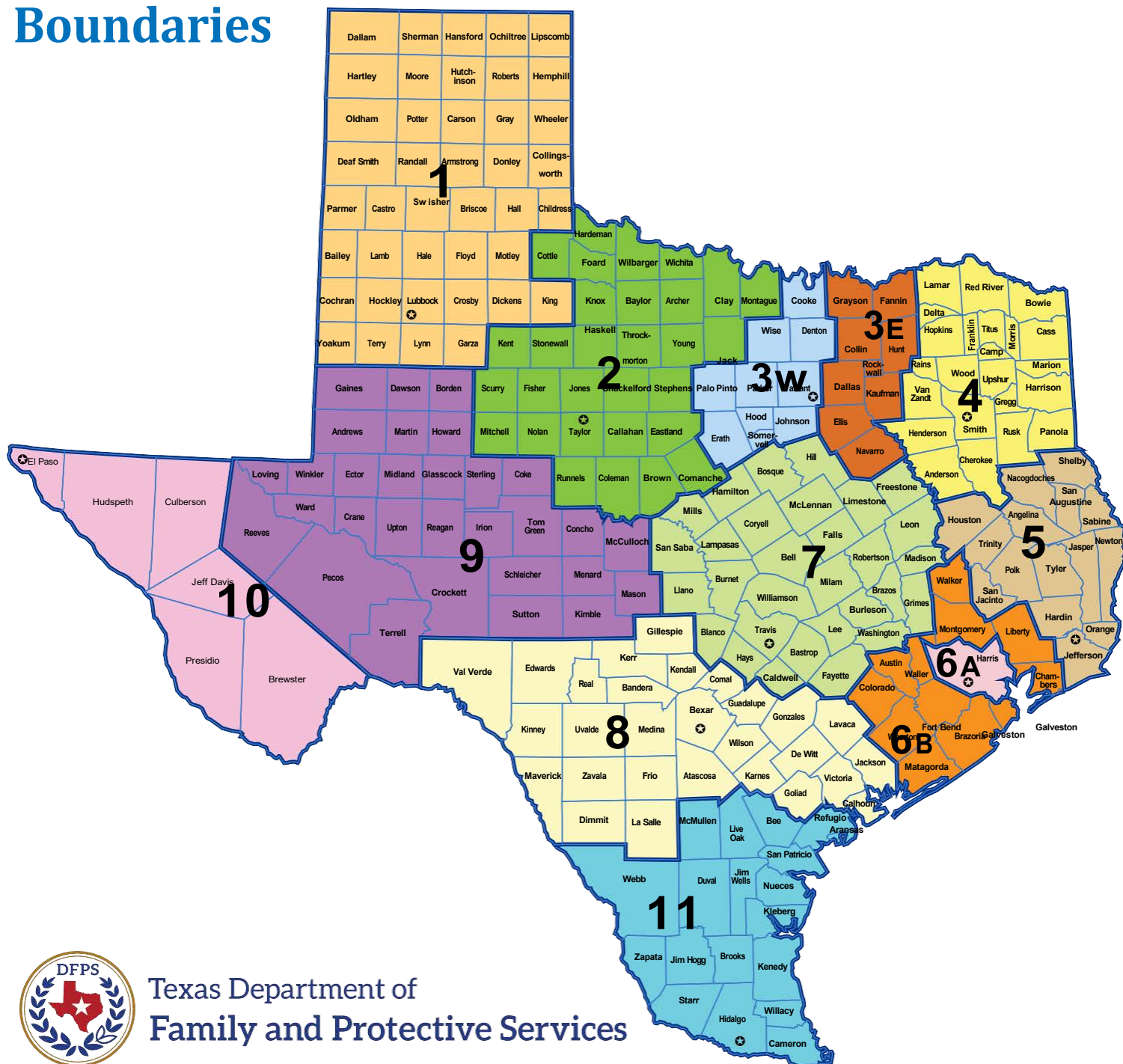
# General Information & Resources

## DFPS Regional Boundaries

Links to:

[DFPS Offices by County](#)

[DFPS Offices by Region](#)



Texas Department of  
Family and Protective Services

# General Information & Resources

## DFPS Hotlines

### Hotlines and Information Lines

**Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline:** 1-800-252-5400

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, people who are older, people with disabilities or violations of minimum standards in a child care operation. 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Foster Care and Adoption Information:** 1-800-233-3405

How to become a foster or adoptive parent and information for current foster or adoptive parents.

**Child Care Information:** 1-800-862-5252

Information about child care in Texas

**Texas Youth Hotline:** 1-800-989-6884 (chat & texting also available)

Provides peer counseling to youth and family members for family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, abuse and neglect, and running away

**Office of Consumer Relations:** 1-800-720-7777

Make an inquiry or complaint about an existing DFPS case

## DFPS Websites

[dfps.state.tx.us](https://dfps.state.tx.us)

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

[TxAbuseHotline.org](https://TxAbuseHotline.org)

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation

[AdoptChildren.org](https://AdoptChildren.org)

Adopt children through the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

[HelpandHope.org](https://HelpandHope.org)

Child abuse prevention and positive parenting

[TexasYouth.org](https://TexasYouth.org)

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotline

[EveryonesBusiness.org](https://EveryonesBusiness.org)

Adult Abuse Prevention

[TexasYouthConnection.org](https://TexasYouthConnection.org)

Resources for current and former youth in foster care

## Department Address

**Mailing:** P.O. Box 149030 Austin, TX 78714-9030

**Physical:** 701 W. 51st St. Austin, TX 78751

**Phone:** 512-438-4800

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