



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Capacity Strategic Plan

Region 3 West and East (Catchments 3A and 3C)

October 1, 2018

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Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 264.1261, of the Texas Family Code, “appropriate management personnel from a child protective services region in which community-based care has not been implemented, in collaboration with foster care providers, faith-based entities, and child advocates in that region, shall use data collected by the department on foster care capacity needs and availability of each type of foster care and kinship placement in the region to create a plan to address the substitute care capacity needs in the region.” The statewide foster care needs assessment was completed in August 2018 and helped to inform the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, which specifically addresses the needs of Region 3 West and East.

Foster care placement forecast and assessment of capacity need

The Region 3 West and East Plan was developed using the data from the Aug 2018 DFPS Foster Care Capacity Needs Assessment. The needs assessment can be accessed [here](#).

Regional plan to increase capacity

Building capacity goes beyond recruiting more foster homes for the children in CPS care, even though that remains an important part of our state-wide effort. Decreasing the number of placement disruptions and ensuring children are in the most appropriate placements will allow the catchments to free placement capacity for the children who are in need.

Therefore, our plan to increase capacity starts with the belief that children deserve to be part of a permanent home with a caring committed individual, and children and youth must maintain a positive connection with their family and supports in the community. Positive outcomes including reunification, permanent placement with relatives or adoption are more likely when we strengthen family supports, including supports to our kinship families throughout the process of verification.

Capacity Strategic Plan: Region 3 West and East (Catchments 3A and 3C)

A stakeholder/provider meeting for Region 3 West and East on August 29, 2018 where the Foster Care Needs Assessment was reviewed and a Power Point of regional/catchment data was presented focusing on historical analysis and forecasted capacity needs for Fiscal Year 2019.

While DFPS is honored to submit this plan on behalf of the community, the goals and strategies contained herein belong to us all. DFPS would like to thank the following organizations for participating in the development of the Regional capacity strategic plan: Our Community Our Kids, CK Family Services, Upbring, Children's Hope, Pathways Youth and Family Services, Nothing Just Happens Inc., Buckner, CASA Wise/Jack Counties, Texas Family Initiative, Faith Works Inc., Jonathan's Place, Hope Cottage, Texas Baptist Home for Children, The Honorable Tiffany Haertling (442nd DC), Arrow, CASA Denton County, A World For Children, Kids First Inc., TGIF, The Bair Foundation, Presbyterian Children's Home, Athletes for Change, HHSC Residential Child Care Licensing and ACH.

The following strategies were identified by stakeholders and the DFPS regional leadership team:

Regional Plan to Increase Capacity

Goal 1: Support children and youth transitioning to family settings

Positive outcomes including reunification, permanent placement with relatives, or adoption are more likely when we strengthen family supports.

Objective 1.1: Support the transition of youth from paid foster care to kinship or other placements

- Ensure we inform staff of the need for wrap around services and pre-placement visits
- Encourage quicker referrals to Child Placing Agencies/FAD for kinship families
- Connect kinship families with supports provided by the Kinship Development Worker
- Have foster parents create a paper profile with pictures, child "likes," what a typical day looks like for child before the placement and for child to take to home when placed in subsequent placement.
- Educate regarding the creation of safety plans with the child's support network if there are any issues
- Keep the child involved in planning
- Explore the feasibility of creating "FADship" units in Region 3 East and West

Quick Wins

- Notifying CPS if child is discharging from a paid placement to get Kinship Homes identified and licensed more quickly.
- Quicker referrals to Kinship Unit
- When child is accepted for placement, send worker a photo/video of home, pets, and other things to make child more comfortable

Goal 2: Maintain sibling groups, building capacity for sibling groups and older youth to be placed closer to home

Children deserve to be part of a permanent home with a caring committed individual, and children and youth must maintain a positive connection with their family and supports in the community.

Objective 2.1: Ensure Centralized Placement Unit (CPU) searches remain active until siblings are placed together and close (within 50 miles) to home or with relatives.

- Staff will coordinate visits with siblings

- Communicate to providers the need for targeted recruitment and the need for increasing sibling placements
- Inform of respite for caregivers with two or more siblings
- Educate and understand the needs and barriers for staff completing pre-placement visits
- Emphasize to foster parents, Child Placing Agencies (CPA), CPU, and caseworkers the critical importance of sibling connection. Discuss importance of transition planning when working on placing siblings together and discuss realities of change in role dynamics within a foster family once a separated sibling joins the family where other sibling has been living.

Quick Wins

- Keep siblings within the same CPA if not all in same home
- Conduct pre-placement visits
- Ensure sibling visits and willingness of caregivers to allow siblings to spend the night
- CPS will meet with the new placement prior to the placement being made and communicate how that child(ren) can be supported.

Objective 2.2: Inform the provider community on performance

- Request a regularly updated report on sibling placements
- Provide information quarterly at the provider meetings
- Have continuous conversations with the provider community on capacity needs
- Receive information from providers regarding plans for increasing capacity

Goal 3: Identify supports to caregivers to meet children's needs

Our goal is to increase capacity by supporting our caregivers and children to ensure they have the best opportunity to be in the least restrictive placements and providing appropriate transitions to placements.

Objective 3.1: Cross-provider education and information sharing

- Cross provider education and information sharing including how to overcome barriers regarding transportation, therapies, doctor's appointments, daycare, etc.
 - Therapy in Homes

- YES waiver
- ECI/ECI Hopes
- Staff Nurse Practitioners
- Network doctors
- Transportation-some CPA's have hired transporters
- This conversation will be included in our quarterly provider meetings
- Letting caregivers know what to expect i.e. children being upset after visits, parents not showing up for visits

Objective 3.2: Support transition of youth from RTCs to less restrictive settings

- Encourage the foster parent to meet the children/youth before they go to the home (Face-to-Face, Skype, Facetime)--This could help reduce fear on both ends
- Critical reviews of the common applications to ensure they still accurately depict the child's needs
- Critically reviewing the current local curriculum on completing common applications
- Utilizing respite services, YES waivers, therapy, psychological evaluations
- Utilizing safety plans if there are any issues
- Keeping the child involved in planning
- When a child reaches moderate or basic level begin conversations regarding how we will prepare the needs for transition.
- Inform legal stakeholders of the importance of normalcy and least restrictive placements
- Implement step-down visits prior to placement
- Have the foster parents create a paper profile with pictures, likes, what a typical day looks like to send to the child.

Quick Wins

- Pre-placement visits/communication
- Talking to therapist or mentor

Goal 4: Keeping the provider community informed of CPS capacity needs

Collaborating with providers and allowing opportunity for dialogue, discussion, and identifying trends and progress will ensure we are engaging, planning, and progressing towards meeting our objectives.

Objective 4.1: Ensuring communication from CPS is relayed on what is needed. Allowing provider to relay to CPS what the plan is for growth while allowing opportunity for questions and concerns

- CPS will provide information at the quarterly provider meetings regarding capacity need
- Identify what information would be helpful to provide on a regular basis
- Regional Director will request a regularly updated report on sibling placements to be provided as well
- Have continuous conversations with the provider community on CPS capacity needs
- Receive information from providers regarding plans for increasing capacity
- This meeting will also provide an opportunity for providers to share information and strategies with each other