



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

**Capacity Strategic Plan**

**Region 11**

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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 of 2018 and helped to inform the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, which specifically addresses the needs of region 11.

## **Foster Care Placement Forecast and Assessment of Capacity Need**

The Foster Care Needs Assessment can be accessed [here](#).

A stakeholder/provider meeting for Region 11A and 11B occurred on September 6, 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 agencies:

Benchmark, The Ark Emergency Shelter, Giocosa, Arms Wide, Beacon of Hope, Valley Haven Emergency Shelter, Jameson Center, Circles of Care, Upbring, Children’s Hope, A World For Children, Buckner, South Texas Children’s Home, CASA of Cameron/Willacy Counties and Residential Child Care Licensing.

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

## **Regional Plan to Increase Capacity**

### **Goal 1: Increase the number of Basic Foster Homes that accept children who have a basic service level ages 0 to 17**

Table 5 of the Region 11 Needs Assessment indicates that the greatest need in both catchment areas; 11A and 11B, is Basic Foster Homes for children ages 0 to 17. Although there are some data points that indicate that we need additional shelter placements in catchment area 11B, this need should be met by two shelters that have opened since this data was collected or are in the process of opening.

#### **Objective 1.1: Foster Angels of South Texas (FAST) will consider sponsoring an advertising campaign to raise awareness for the need for foster families in Region 11**

Foster Angels of South Texas Foundation is in the process of researching effective types of media that can be utilized to raise awareness of the need for foster families. DFPS will provide data and demographic information to FAST.

- CPS and Child Placing Agencies will work collaboratively to create a user friendly way to receive inquiries from prospective families.
- CPS, with input from all of the regional Child Placing Agencies, will create a handout that can be provided to all prospective foster families. This handout will have a brief description of each agency so that prospective families can choose which agency the family would like to select to take them through the foster home screening and approval process.
- CPS and regional Child Placing Agencies will continue to have collaborative informational meetings to provide information to prospective families in a face to face meeting. Collaborative meetings allow perspective families the ability to choose which agency they would like to work with.

#### **Objective 1.2: Child Placing Agencies employees will work to increase the number of available beds for Region 11 children**

Regional Child Placing Agency employees agreed to begin working together to set up various ways to recruit new foster families.

- Child Placing Agency employees will hold recruitment fairs throughout the region.

- Child Placing Agency employees will reach out to current respite care providers and inquire as to whether or not they would consider taking placements of basic service level children.
- Arms Wide Adoption Agency will take the lead on creating an Inter-Agency Coalition.

**Goal 2: Increase the likelihood that a CPA/GRO will accept a child when they have open beds and are able to meet the child's needs**

Delay in daycare availability may impact a caregivers' decision to take a child.

**Objective 2.1: Streamline Daycare Process**

Examples were provided where there was lengthy delays for foster families placing child in daycare, at times more than two weeks.

- The Regional Daycare Coordinator has created a log that will allow her to track where the delays are occurring, thus increasing timely daycare initiation. The Regional Daycare Coordinator will alert the regional chain of command in real time of delays that were caused by a failure to act by a CPS employee.
- A Region 11 daycare mailbox will be set up so if there is a delay in daycare the CPA employee can follow up directly with the Regional Daycare Coordinator. The Regional Daycare Coordinator will reach out to the caseworker and supervisor and request the required steps be completed.

**Objective 2.2: Child Placing Agency employees will review internal policies**

Some CPA policies may be unnecessarily screening children from being accepted.

- Each CPA will review internal processes and consider changing any policies that negatively impact placement matches unnecessarily.

**Objective 2.3: Improve comfort level while interacting with Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL)**

There is an expressed concern from Child Placing Agencies that interacting with RCCL can be intimidating for foster parents and CPA employees.

- RCCL employees who were present at the meeting stated that they would make themselves available to give presentations and provide

general information about the inspection process. Attendees will be given an opportunity to ask questions in a more comfortable setting in an attempt to make the inspection process less intimidating.

- CPA employees agreed to invite RCCL staff to trainings, meetings and other events.

**Objective 2.4: CPS management will allow staff to work outside of normal business hours in order to better accommodate the schedules of foster families**

When foster families have multiple placements with different CPS caseworkers they struggle to be able to meet with the caseworkers at the times caseworkers request.

- Both in writing and during face to face meetings, CPS supervisors will be reminded that CPS employees should be encouraged to set up visits with foster children and families at times that work for everyone. This may include after hours and on the weekends. CPS employees will be encouraged to flex their schedules to accommodate these visits and meetings.