



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

DFPS Rider 15 Report for Community-Based Care

Office of Community-Based Care Implementation

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Introduction

As required by the General Appropriations Act, 86th Texas Legislature, Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Rider 15, the agency shall, on March 31st and September 30th of each year of the biennium, "Report selected performance measures identified by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) that will allow for comparative analysis between the legacy foster care and the Community-Based Care systems". The report, "shall contain the most recent data for the selected comparative performance measures, an analysis of the data that identifies trends and related impact occurring in the Community-Based Care system, identification and analysis of factors negatively impacting any outcomes, recommendations to address problems identified from the data, and any other information necessary to determine the status of the Community-Based Care system".

Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) changes the way DFPS procures, contracts, and pays for foster care services. Under a performance-based grant agreement, a single contractor provides services to children and families within a designated community (also known as "catchment area"). In Stage I, this Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for ensuring the full continuum of paid foster care placements and other services for children in the state's legal conservatorship. SSCCs also support adoption recruitment, matching and home studies. In Stage II, the SSCC expands services to include unverified relative or "kinship" placements, services to parents, and the SSCC has sole responsibility for the legal case management function. In Stage III, the SSCC continues the provision of all Stage I and II services and is awarded with financial incentives and disincentives for permanency outcomes and additional performance measures for child safety and well-being.

Evaluation of Community-Based Care is on-going to support Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and includes both process and outcome components. Texas Family Code, Chapter 264, subchapter B-1 requires DFPS' evaluation of Community-Based Care to include "an independent evaluation of each contractor's processes and fiscal and qualitative outcomes." DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University to conduct a process evaluation of each stage of Community-Based Care in each established community. The process evaluation is a tool the department uses to assess implementation of Community-Based Care in each community, identify the key successes and barriers, and course correct as needed. The CBC process evaluation was completed in November 2020 and can be found on the [CBC website](#). On-going process evaluation through an independent entity will continue as new areas move into CBC Stage I and II.

DFPS continues to work with the Center for Child Welfare Data, affiliated with Chapin Hall of the University of Chicago, to support the outcome evaluation. Chapin Hall provides independent data analysis of each SSCC's performance on placements within 50 miles and paid foster care days, the basis for the fiscal model and incentive payments in Stage III. Moving into fiscal year 2022, Chapin Hall will begin to evaluate child outcomes in Region 3B and 2 as both OCOK and 2INGage continue to be responsible for all substitute care services to children and families in the respective catchment area. DFPS further consults with Chapin Hall on continuous quality improvement processes for oversight of Community-Based Care in Stage II.

The CBC Quality Indicators (sometimes referred to as guiding principles), developed by the DFPS Public Private Partnership (the CBC governing body) provide a shared vision for quality services and outcomes under Community-Based Care. The achievement of quality indicators is the first major deliverable in the SSCC contract and guides the performance-based contract. CBC contract performance measures reported in Sections B and C of the Appendices to this report align to the quality indicators, where aggregate data is available in DFPS' automated case management data system, IMPACT (Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas) for measurement. Contract performance measures are not an evaluation of Community-Based Care, though they may pave the way for future evaluation efforts that connect CBC quality indicators to positive permanency.

DFPS assesses contract performance measures annually as part of formal contract monitoring. DFPS tracks performance measures quarterly using a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. Through this process, DFPS and each SSCC review preliminary year to date performance measure results each quarter, along with other data used to identify potential drivers. Performance drivers may include changes to the population of children, trends specific to those populations, placement utilization practices, and other data. The CQI process enables DFPS to both understand the significance of performance measure trends and assess the strategies each SSCC has in place to maintain or improve performance. DFPS requires formal performance improvement plans when performance measure trends show significant, sustained poor performance. Improvement plans document specific goals and action steps to address concerns.

Using the Rider 15 Report to Assess Performance

Report Sections

The Rider 15 Attachment reports three sets of performance data:

- **Section A** of the Attachment includes select Legislative Budget Board (LBB) agency performance measures for children in DFPS conservatorship. For catchment areas in

Stage II of Community-Based Care, Section A shows how SSCCs are performing on DFPS measures. Performance calculations for Stage I catchments include both children in foster care served by the SSCCs in Stage I and children served in substitute care settings, like kin, not served by the SSCC. For these areas, case management services remained a function of DFPS. The measures are intended to show outcomes of case management activity but are not performance measures for SSCC contracts.

- **Section B** includes CBC contract performance measures that apply to children in foster care. For SSCCs in Stage I, performance is limited to children in SSCC-contracted foster care placements. For SSCCs in Stage II, performance measures include all children from the catchment in foster care, whether the contract is in the SSCC network or with a legacy provider.
- **Section C** reports CBC contract performance measures that apply to all children in conservatorship for catchment areas in Stage II only.
- **Sections D-F** report Community-Based Care actual and projected expenditures for prior and current fiscal years, as additionally required by the Rider.

Performance Populations

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

- **Statewide Population** - The statewide population reports the performance for the entire state population of children. In Section B, the statewide population is limited to children in paid foster care settings identified as “SSCC eligible” to allow for comparison. “SSCC eligible” placements are foster care placements that would be within the scope of an SSCC contract in Stage I.
- **Statewide Non-CBC Population** - The statewide “non-CBC” population reports the aggregated performance for catchment areas where DFPS has not implemented CBC. Again, Section B is narrowed to children in non-CBC catchments in “SSCC-eligible” foster care placements.
- **Catchment SSCC Population (Section B)** – The catchment SSCC population reports the performance for each SSCC individually. *SSCC performance in the first year of Stage I reflects a partial population of children transferred to the network gradually over a six-month period. The performance therefore cannot be compared to the historical performance of all eligible children in the catchment over a full fiscal year (eligible population).*
- **Catchment - Eligible Population (Section B)** – The eligible population reports the performance for children in paid foster care settings identified as “SSCC-eligible” in the catchment prior to implementation. During transition, the eligible population reports performance for children not yet transferred to the SSCC. Ongoing, the eligible

population includes the small population of children not transferred, such as children in adoptive homes or placed with out of area providers who opted not to contract with the SSCC. *The performance of this small number of remaining children should no longer be compared to historical performance.*

- **Catchment Population (Section A and C.)** The catchment population reports the performance for children in conservatorship in both foster care and relative/kinship placements and other “substitute care” settings and is applicable for SSCCs who have implemented Stage II of CBC. The catchment population shows the historical performance, performance during the fiscal year in which the SSCC transitioned to Stage II, and ongoing performance. *For Section C, SSCC performance in the transition year of Stage II reflects shared performance with DFPS since all measures are calculated year to date.*

As Community-Based Care progresses through staged implementation, the data can be used to answer the following questions. *Note: the comparison is trends over time. Performance percentages should not be compared across catchments as starting points vary for each catchment area based on their unique resources and history.*

1. **Are there statewide changes affecting SSCC performance?** Compare state and state “non-CBC” performance trends to SSCC catchment trends, over time. Similarities may point to statewide factors influencing performance in CBC catchments.
2. **Is the CBC system performing better than the legacy system?** Compare SSCC performance to the performance of the non-CBC population over time. If the SSCC catchment areas are improving more than the legacy catchment areas, the changes made to the foster care system under CBC are effective.
3. **Is a particular SSCC improving performance?** Compare individual SSCC performance across fiscal years. Improvement may take time as DFPS transitions services to each SSCC and the SSCC works to build the network of services in the area.
4. **Are some SSCCs performing better than others?** Compare SSCC performance one to another. While each area has unique strengths and challenges, if a specific SSCC is improving outcomes compared to historical performance at a faster rate, the strategies implemented by the SSCC may be more effective.

Limitations of SSCC Performance Data in the Stage I Transition Year

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

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

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

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

Assessing performance for new SSCCs takes time. DFPS works with SSCCs to transition foster care resources and children in existing placements to the SSCC network over a period of approximately six months. Time is needed for the SSCC population to represent the full population of children in foster care. Once the transition is complete, SSCCs need time in the role of network provider to continue to assess local needs and make changes they think will lead to improved outcomes. *Note: all SSCCs reported for FY21-Q3 have completed the Stage I transition year.*

Limitations of SSCC Performance Data in the Stage II Transition Year

For Community-Based Care providers who have transitioned to Stage II and provision of case management and services to families commensurate with DFPS services in the conservatorship

stage of service, *the Stage II transition year reflects shared DFPS and SSCC performance*. Early trends are the continuation of case activity and permanency decisions that began under the legacy foster care system. Performance data to assess SSCC practices and decision-making may not be available until the completion of the first full fiscal year of SSCC operation in Stage II or beyond.

Time is needed to operationalize programs and innovations. DFPS purposefully established Stage II as a “hold harmless” period for permanency outcomes that could earn a financial incentive, with incentives (and remedies) not taking hold until 18 months of implementation in Stage II as required in statute.¹ The agency anticipated that the systemic change of shifting services from state government to private community-based providers would require a transitional learning period as contracted providers developed operational and workforce capacity. During the transition, DFPS and SSCC partners work together to minimize disruption for clients and enact oversight process to identify and address issues. DFPS hosts multiple implementation calls and coordination meetings with SSCCs to address issues and challenges and provide support. Regional DFPS Case Management Oversight and Technical Assistance staff perform case reads for oversight of critical case activity during early implementation and offer technical assistance. DFPS recognizes that some slow-down in case activity and documentation may temporarily occur with workforce changes and the potential for a larger proportion of the workforce made up of new hires early on, dependent on the ability to attract and retain DFPS staff. This stabilizing period is needed before SSCCs can begin to devote resources to improving outcomes.

State of the Community-Based Care System

New Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition and Statewide Director of CBC

The 87th Texas Legislature, as part of Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, section 264.172, formally established the Office of Community-Based Care (CBC) Transition. The Office of CBC Transition is a state agency independent of but administratively attached to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). On June 29, 2021, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Theresa “Trisha” Thomas as the Statewide Director of the Office of CBC Transition. Ms. Thomas reports directly to the Governor. DFPS, along with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), will work together with the Office of CBC Transition on the implementation of Community-Based Care.

Implementation Status

DFPS is working toward full implementation of CBC statewide. DFPS is currently implementing CBC in four catchment areas. In June 2020, the 87th Texas Legislature

appropriated funding for the department to expand CBC Stage I to additional communities across the state with a focus on executing new SSCC contracts in DFPS Regions 3 East, 9, 4 and 5. The anticipated timeframe to release a new Request for Applications (RFA) is the fall of 2021. Future CBC catchment areas may change based on the proposals received through the new RFA.

Further, Over the FY 22-23 biennium, the Office of Community-Based Care Transition and DFPS will use additional appropriations from the 87th Texas Legislature to expand CBC Stage II in the Region 1 and 8b catchment areas, as well as re-procure the SSCC contract for 3W by September 1, 2023. Initiation of the procurement with HHSC will occur within one year prior to anticipated contract award date to develop and implement communication plans, identify resource transfers of staff and determine fiscal allocations and begin regional planning. See the latest CBC [Implementation Plan](#) and Quarterly Report on CBC Implementation for more information.

CBC Communities:

- **Region 3B (Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Region 3 West)** - DFPS executed a SSCC contract with ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) on January 1, 2014 for DFPS catchment area 3B. Our Community, Our Kids (OCOK), the designated community area 3B SSCC operating under ACH, began placing children on September 1, 2014. In 2018, DFPS renewed its contract with OCOK to continue services under Stage I (foster care and services for children) and added requirements for Community-Based Care and transition of kinship and legal case management services.
DFPS and OCOK officially announced start-up for Stage II in October 2019 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. DFPS formally certified readiness on February 27, 2020, and OCOK began providing case management and all substitute care services to children and families in the 3B catchment area. Implementation of Stage II is ongoing during fiscal year 2022, and movement of OCOK into Stage III CBC will be assessed by DFPS and the Office of Community-Based Care Transition.
- **Region 2 (DFPS Region 2 Abilene/Wichita Falls)** - DFPS awarded a contract to Texas Family Initiative, LLC (TFI) to serve as the SSCC for the Region 2 designated community area in May 2018. TFI formed a partnership with New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc. and created 2INgage. 2INgage began placing children on December 1, 2018. DFPS and 2INgage officially announced start up for Stage II in December 2019 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. DFPS certified Stage II readiness and 2INgage began providing case management and all substitute care services to children and families in the Region 2 catchment area on June 1, 2020. Implementation of Stage II is ongoing during fiscal year 2022, and movement of 2INgage into Stage III CBC will be assessed by DFPS and the Office of Community-Based Care Transition.

- Region 1 (DFPS Region 1 Amarillo/Lubbock)** - DFPS awarded a contract to Saint Francis Community Services, Inc. (Saint Francis) to serve as the SSCC for the Region 1 designated community area on July 1, 2019. Saint Francis began serving children in Region 1 on January 6, 2020. The Office of CBC Transition and Saint Francis officially announced start-up for Stage II on September 1, 2021 and began implementing a six-month transition plan. Implementation of Stage II in Region 1 is anticipated in March 2022 following confirmation of readiness.
- Region 8B (DFPS Region 8 counties excluding Bexar)** - DFPS released a Request for Application for 8B on September 1, 2020. The procurement ended in December 2020. DFPS awarded a contract on March 29, 2021 to SJRC Texas. SJRC Texas formed Belong to serve as the SSCC. Implementation of Stage I CBC is anticipated to start begin in the Fall of 2021 following confirmation of readiness.
- Region 8A (Bexar County in DFPS Region 8)** - DFPS awarded a contract to The Children’s Shelter in San Antonio in August 2018. The Children’s Shelter formed Family Tapestry to serve as the SSCC. After a six-month start-up period, DFPS certified readiness and Family Tapestry began accepting placement referrals on February 1, 2019. On April 29, 2021, Family Tapestry gave formal notice to terminate its single source continuum contract with DFPS. DFPS, along with the partnership and cooperation of Family Tapestry, implemented a 60-day contingency plan to allow for the transition of services, subcontracts and human resources to DFPS. Family Tapestry was fully engaged in the transition, and the state provided the resources necessary to make the transition successful. The contingency plan was implemented and executed during the months of May and June (2021).
 As of July 1, 2021, all subcontracts for foster care placement and services were successfully transitioned back to DFPS with no disruption in services to children and youth or payments to providers as a result of the transition. The re-procurement date of the 8A CBC contract is under discussion.

An important factor in assessing the performance of individual agencies is the time each has had to complete the transition process and to establish innovative change strategies to improve performance over historical trends. The first fiscal year periods post transition where the SSCC provided all services (as opposed to shared DFPS-SSCC service provision in the data) are summarized below. OCOK has had 7 years of post-transition Stage I performance data, while Saint Francis has yet to complete one full fiscal year of solo service delivery. Region 2 and 8A have 1.75 fiscal years of Stage I performance data. Fiscal year 2021 will be the first fiscal year that Region 1 will not be in a transition period.

First Fiscal Year Post Transition

<i>Community</i>	Stage I	Stage II
3B (OCOK)	FY15	FY21
2 (2Ingage)	FY20	FY21

8A (Family Tapestry)	FY20	-
1 (Saint Francis)	FY21	-

Current Trends and Impact to Legacy and Community-Based Care Systems

While DFPS anticipated transition and early implementation challenges, DFPS did not anticipate that the first transitions to Stage II would occur just as the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak began. DFPS is also managing the transition during a time in which DFPS and its provider community are implementing systemic changes that have resulted from the federal foster care suit. These external factors may be having an impact on both foster care capacity building (Stage I objective) and the ability to exit children from conservatorship to a permanent placement (Stage II objective) statewide, impacting legacy and CBC providers.ⁱⁱ

Foster Care Capacity (Stage I Objective – Section B)

The performance indicator most reflecting the foster care capacity challenge is the percentage of children placed close to home, defined in the metric as within 50 miles of removal. The percent of children placed close to home decreased for the state as a whole, for non-CBC providers, and for SSCC providers in FY21Q3 compared to FY20 with the exception of Region 8A (Bexar County). DFPS breaks this data down into children in foster homes and children in other settings, which includes residential treatment centers, emergency shelters and basic child care facilities. The data shows that the decrease was largely driven by these non-foster home placements whereas the likelihood of being close to home for children in foster homes remained steadier.

The ability to place siblings in foster care together is another area impacted by system-wide foster care capacity challenges. Catchments in Stage 1 (1 & 8A) show performance improvements in keeping siblings together, averaging a 1.5% increase, while catchments in Stage 2 (2 & 3B) show significant declines in this measure, averaging a decline of -3.4%. Non-CBC areas showed a steadier trend, with less than a 1% decrease in performance in FY21Q3 compared to FY20.

While non-CBC areas of the state saw more children spending time in foster care in a family setting (least restrictive setting), SSCC's experienced mixed results. Region 1 experienced the most volatility with a 4.2% decrease from FY20. Region 3B also decreased, though less so with a -1.4% decline. Regions 2 and 8A saw slight improvements of less than 2%.

All safety performance below 100% is an area to target for improvement. DFPS is working closely with SSCCs to understand some increases in closed investigations resulting in reason to believe findings of abuse and neglect. Fiscal year 2020 increases were in part due to more closed investigations compared to prior fiscal years, but there were also statewide facility closures as a

result of safety concerns that impacted safety across catchment areas and regions. FY21Q3 shows continued decline in performance in all areas, with only Region 2 showing an improvement since FY20.

Permanency (Stage II Objective - Sections A and C)

While turnover and placement with relatives or kin are the Stage II contract performance measures, the ultimate goal of Stage II is to improve exits to permanency, both the number of children exiting to permanency and the speed at which they exit. Placement with kin generally improves child outcomes including permanency, either with exits to kin or by facilitating connections to parents and placement stability, which are positively related to permanency.ⁱⁱⁱ

FY21 non-CBC performance for turnover for conservatorship caseworkers was 20.8% as of quarter three. Turnover has remained high for both catchment areas and continues to be an area of focus.

Texas has historically performed well at placing children in state conservatorship with relatives or kin and finding relatives or kin to permanently care for children when reunification with parents is not possible. The performance measure is important to ensure SSCCs sustain or improve upon these trends. Non-CBC areas of the state improved by 2.4% between FY20 and FY21 year-to-date. OCOK shows improved performance from historical years, while 2INgage has seen a decline during FY21.

With two catchments in Stage II, Section A performance metrics related to permanency become relevant. This report will not, however, give detailed attention to the Section A exit measures for the following reasons. First, the majority of data found in Section A relates to time in care data for children well into their case processes when OCOK and 2INgage took over in FY20Q3 and Q4 respectively. Second, the contract performance outcome to reduce time in foster care will be measured by Chapin Hall using a case mix, risk adjusted entry cohort methodology. Risk adjusting for case mix has the advantage of determining if the change seen in the exit population was due to a process slow down/speed or is attributable to change in the child population characteristics. That said, it is worth noting that there has been a general drop in speed in which children are exiting to permanency statewide, as well as in SSCC areas^{iv}. Of the children who exited during the report period, the percentage of children achieving permanency in less than 12 months decreased, indicating that children are exiting later than in previous years. The COVID 19 pandemic impacted multiple systems supporting child and family services (courts, schools, medical/mental health providers, etc.), staff resources and business processes. This is likely a contribution factor, however, there may be other localized factors which played a role in the decline.

SSCC Contract Performance Measures

Performance measure data referenced below reflects performance through the third quarter of FY21 which is preliminary and subject to change.^v

Our Community, Our Kids (OCOK) – Region 3B

OCOK has contracted with DFPS for services to children in foster care since FY14. On March 1, 2020, OCOK transitioned to Stage II of Community-Based Care and provision of case management and kinship services for all children in conservatorship in catchment 3B. OCOK has been able to maintain performance gains for children in foster care made in Stage I during the transition in terms of placing children in stable settings and preparing children for adult living. The average performance for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 is used as the baseline average for comparison.^{vi}

With Stage II, OCOK assumed responsibility for finding and supporting kinship placements, and serving children in kinship and other non-foster care placements. Performance data shows that OCOK has improved placements to kinship compared to baseline years. Turnover has continued to be a focus throughout FY21 and remains higher than baseline.

- **Safety** – 98.0% of children were safe in foster care placements. There has been a decreasing trend in Safety for OCOK through FY21; a similar trend is being seen throughout the state. Safety below 100% represents an area for improvement.
- **Placement Stability in Foster Care** - 1.37 foster care placements per child in FY21Q3 shows continued strong performance for the quarter, maintaining a slight improvement from the first three quarters of baseline years performance (FY18-19). This metric is cumulative and requires a comparison of like quarters.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 82.6% of placement days spent in a family setting (defined in Stage II as a family foster home, kinship home, adoptive placement, or return to parents) as of FY21Q3 shows relatively steady performance near baseline.
- **Foster Care Placement within 50 miles** – 74.9% of children were placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter. While a higher percentage of children are being placed close to home compared to baseline years, this performance has declined from 77.5% of children in FY20.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together in Foster Care** – 61.5% of sibling groups were placed together on the last day of the quarter. OCOK performance on this metric has been steadily declining each quarter from FY20, which had seen an improvement from baseline.
- **Kinship Placement** – 25.4% of children removed in the prior quarter placed with relatives/kin on the 60th day after removal is nearly a 4% increase in performance since FY20. Region 3B has historically placed fewer children in kinship placements than other areas of the state.

- **Preparation for Adult Living** – 93.2% of youth turning 18 (includes youth in foster care, kinship care, and other settings in Stage II) completing PAL shows continued strong performance.
- **Turnover** - Turnover as a performance measure relates to the overall tenure & experience of the workforce and ability of the agency to maintain low caseloads. While it was expected that there would be an increase in turnover at the start of Stage II, turnover has gradually increased throughout FY21 and is currently nearly double baseline. There were 41 separations from OCOK YTD resulting in an annualized turnover rate of 30.5% YTD. Annualized turnover shows the estimation of the overall turnover for the year assuming the quarterly trend were to continue.

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

- **Joint Capacity Building Plan** - OCOK has joined forces with 2iNgage, Saint Francis and Belong to confront the capacity crisis in Texas. This multi-pronged, coordinated effort includes short-term and long-term strategies designed to address the immediate need while simultaneously building up the necessary capacity to accommodate the long-term need. The joint plan starts with six specific projects, each led by one of the SSCCs and supported by the others. The four SSCCs share a clear and compelling commitment to working together, sharing costs and building services that are needed in each region. This collaborative approach is a targeted, efficient and effective way to fill important gaps in the current continuum of care. OCOK is confident that Texas' current capacity crisis can be resolved with this approach, because a similar CWOP crisis faced Texas in 2014, and OCOK's collaborative, multi-pronged strategic approach proved highly effective at increasing local therapeutic capacity and virtually eliminating CWOP within Region 3b (until the start of this new crisis in September 2020).
- **Kinship Care** - As part of the joint capacity building plan, OCOK is leading the effort to support expansion and development of kinship care. Kinship care is a largely untapped resource for expanded capacity, particularly in Region 3b, and with the right supports in place, high-needs children can thrive in kinship care, with research consistently showing better outcomes relative to traditional foster care. While each SSCC pursues its own efforts at expanding local kinship efforts, OCOK is enhancing this individual work by bringing in expertise to support best practices, shared learning, promotion of stakeholder support for kinship work, and measurement of impact. OCOK has partnered with A Second Chance, Inc. (ASCI), a leading national voice on kinship care for the past 27 years, to implement an evidence-based approach to kinship care in Texas. In consultation with ASCI, OCOK has developed an assessment tool to assist in decision-making and connection-making. OCOK is increasing its resources dedicated to family finding, focusing on reducing time to kinship placement, supporting kinship families in becoming licensed, and through ACH's innovative new Kinship Connections program, providing concrete supports and services to assist kinship families in being able to care for one or more additional children in their household. OCOK recently held a Kinship Summit, a day-long seminar to discuss the benefits of kinship care, how to

improve processes, and how to increase successful kinship placements, including presentations on best practices, resources, and opportunity to hear from kin about their experiences. Well attended and well received, the event resulted in an uptick in kinship placements over the past several months.

- **Data Warehouse** - In support of the joint capacity building plan, OCOK has created a data warehouse designed to pool (de-identified) data across CBC communities. This data warehouse will provide the ability to measure progress of the joint capacity-building efforts, whose overall goal is the reduction of CWOP by 95%. Other key performance indicators include placement stability of high-needs youth, kinship utilization, and percentage of placements within region. Each SSCC, as well as other key stakeholders, will be able to view and drill down into their own region's data and also make comparisons with similar data from other CBC regions through a secure website. This data warehouse project is part of a larger analytics tool set developed this year by OCOK (in close partnership with Five Points Technology Group), called CBC Navigator. The idea behind CBC Navigator is to combine data from multiple systems in one place and provide a comprehensive suite of business intelligence reports to support SSCC operations. It is designed to measure outcomes and make it easy to make comparisons by provider, by worker, by county, etc., with interactive maps and visualizations. CBC Navigator also includes sophisticated tools for clinical classification, prediction and risk modeling. After about 9 months of intense development time, the CBC Navigator "analytics apps" begin roll-out to two SSCCs (OCOK and Belong) in October 2021.
- **Community Engagement** - OCOK has partnered with members of the community to host a series of family-friendly events called Fosters for Fishing. The families in attendance spend the day fishing in the reservoir outside the Cabela's store in North Fort Worth, eating a barbecue lunch, and enjoying various outdoor activities. Cabela's employees help the children bait their fishing poles and teach those who have not fished before how to cast their lines.

This free event for children currently in foster care was imagined by Kelly Biggs, Deputy at Texas Chisholm Trail Crime Prevention Association (TCTCPA), who, as a foster parent, saw the need for fun family events geared directly for kids in temporary care. When he asked to partner with OCOK to make this dream become a reality, the OCOK Community Engagement team knew it was something they wanted to make happen for our kids and families. Biggs said of the event he championed, "There has always been a need for foster kids to be able to enjoy events for families; I am just happy to be a part of it."

Diamond Wishes Children's Charity generously donated the barbecue and helped the youth fish from the docks throughout the day. Each child and adult received a goodie bag donated by Cabela's. The partnership between OCOK, TCTCPA, Diamond Wishes, and Cabela's is one that will continue as the organizations prepare to provide more exciting experiences for youth during the upcoming holiday season and beyond.

2INgage – Region 2

Region 2 comprises all 30 counties of Region 2 covering a large rural area with historical capacity challenges. 2INgage provided Stage I services under the CBC contract for 18 months before successfully transitioning to Stage II on June 1, 2020. FY21Q3 performance saw a continued decrease in children placed close to home, but with more time under the contract providing services to children in foster care, 2INgage was able to begin to realize improvement on stability and least restrictive placements, despite statewide capacity challenges.

The average performance for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the two years prior to Stage I implementation, is used as the historical average for comparison. 2INgage “Catchment 2 SSCC” data for FY19 in the attachment is not comparable as it is the Stage I transition year.^{viii}

As of FY21Q3, 2INgage has operated for four full quarters (12 months) in Stage II. With Stage II, 2INgage assumed responsibility for finding and supporting kinship placements, and serving children in kinship and other non-foster care placements. Performance data shows that 2INgage placement to kinship has dropped in FY21 but remains similar to baseline years. 2INgage was successful in preparing youth for adult living, raising the PAL completion rate well above baseline to a consistent 100% in FY21. Turnover remains a concern during Stage II.

- **Safety** – 99.2% of children were safe in 2INgage foster care placements. Similar to the rest of the state, 2INgage has seen a decline in children safe in care during FY21, although safety thus far remains slightly improved over FY20. Safety below 100% represents an area for improvement.
- **Placement Stability** – 1.33 placements per child in FY21Q3 shows improved stability compared to the historical average for the first three quarters of FY17-18. This metric is cumulative and requires a comparison of like quarters.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 88.2% of placement days spent in a family setting (defined in Stage II as a family foster home, kinship home, adoptive placement, or return to parents) as of FY21Q3 is higher than baseline years average of 87.0%.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 39.2% of children placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter has continued to decline from the 46.9% historical average, with the largest decrease occurring in FY21.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** – 61.4% of sibling groups placed together, a decline from the 67.3% historical average.
- **Kinship Placement** – 46.2% of children removed in FY21 Q1 & Q2 were placed with relatives/kin on the 60th day after removal. While FY19 and FY20 saw an increase from baseline years, kin placement declined slightly below baseline in the first 2 quarters of FY21. This measure is delayed by 1 quarter.
- **Preparation for Adult Living** - 100% of youth turning 18 (includes youth in foster care, kinship care and other settings in Stage II) completed PAL in FY21 Q3, showing

sustained improvement in PAL completion for youth under 2INGage responsibility since baseline years.

- **Turnover** – Turnover as a performance measure relates to the overall tenure & experience of the workforce and ability of the agency to maintain low caseloads. Although there was an expected increase in turnover at the start of Stage II in FY20 Q4, turnover has been gradually decreasing as FY21 has progressed. It does however remain quite high, nearly three times the baseline. There were 43 separations from 2INGage in FY21 Q3 YTD resulting in an annualized turnover rate of 49.7% YTD. Annualized turnover shows the estimation of the overall turnover for the year assuming the quarterly trend were to continue.

2INGage reports the following efforts and innovations to support positive outcomes:^{ix}

- **Reduction in Case Load** - 2INGage has worked over the last year to reduce caseloads for Permanency Case Managers to 14-17 cases per case manager. The average case load in April 2021 was 17.8. Caseloads have declined each month as follows: May- 17.2, June 16.8 and July 16.1. 2INGage implemented the 2INGage Academy by adopting the CPS Professional Development Training Curriculum in March 2021. We also strategically hired additional case managers and implemented a hire ahead model that would prevent any delays of having case assignable staff after workforce turnover. 2INGage has also increased the number of Permanency Supervisors from 25 to 32 to lower the span of control for each Permanency Unit.
- **Building Capacity** - 2INGage worked with a local provider to open a general residential operation (GRO) that has the capacity for 17 youth, girls and boys ages 10 – 18. This provider will also be able to assist us with siblings and emergency placements. 2INGage continuing to develop our provider network by meeting with them individually to share data and also bringing all the providers together monthly to strategize innovate ways to recruit and retain foster families to our region. This effort is helping to secure new foster homes in our region.
- **Life Skills Training** - 2INGage closed FY21 with 100% completion of PAL Life Skills Training for youth turning 18. Deciding to facilitate training in house was a bold decision, with a big payoff as even during a pandemic, services were high quality, streamlined, and no youth fell through the cracks. 2INGage is the only SSCC to deliver life skills training in house and served 90 youth in our first year.
- **Solution-Based Casework** - 2INGage staff have undergone training and are implementing Solution Based Casework (SBC), an evidence informed practice model for assessment, case planning, and ongoing casework. The approach uses a system of milestones to achieve common goals and is designed to help workers focus on the family in order to support the safety and well-being of their children. By implementing the model, family reunification outcomes increased by 14% when comparing June 2019-May 2020 to June 2020-May 2021. Approximately 130 Permanency staff received initial training, and many are nearing their certification status.

- **HR133** - In July 2021, 2INgage received \$275,000 of “Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act (HR133)” funding. With just two short months to spend, the Independent Living team was able to plan, coordinate, and spend the full \$275,000 on Region 2 youth and young adults ages 14-22. Our youth benefited from items such as driver’s education course fees, backpacks, cell phones, laptops, suitcases, sports club payments, specialized camps, tools, beds, and even baby supplies for expecting mothers. This funding allowed us to pay for items we typically cannot due to budget limits, which not only allowed youth’s current needs to be met but has set them up for success for years to come.

Saint Francis Community Services – Region 1

Saint Francis began serving children on January 6, 2020. FY20 was a transition year and FY21 will be the first year reflecting most Region 1 children served by Saint Francis. Region 1 is in an area of the state that faced significant capacity challenges prior to CBC implementation and was only beginning CBC Stage I in FY20. The fact that Saint Francis had less time to transition and to implement change strategies before facing new capacity challenges is reflected in the performance data. The average performance for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, the two years prior to implementation, is used as the historical average for comparison.^x

- **Safety** – 98.4% of children were safe in Saint Francis foster care placements. Similar to the trend seen in the rest of the state, the percent of children safe in care has decreased recently. Performance below 100% is an area for improvement.
- **Placement Stability** – 1.49 placements per child in FY21Q3 is higher than the 1.42 FY18-19 quarter three year-to-date average. Compared to the first three quarters of baseline years, the ratio of moves per child has increased, meaning that there is less stability for children. This metric is cumulative and requires a comparison of like quarters.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 68.9% of children in least restrictive placements is a slight increase compared to 68.8% historical average, though it has been improving throughout FY21.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 42.4% of children were placed within 50 miles of their removal address on the last day of the quarter, which has been an improving measure throughout FY21. It does however remain lower than baseline years 44.6% historical average.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** – 61.7% of sibling groups placed together on the last day of the quarter is approximately the same as the 61.2% historical average, though placements together have been improving throughout FY21.
- **Preparation for Adult Living** – 90.3% of youth turning 18 completed PAL remains lower than the 92.2% historical average.

Saint Francis reports the following efforts and innovations to support positive outcomes:^{xi}

- **Treatment Capacity** - Saint Francis has been able to successfully transition 16 residential treatment beds in Region 1 from a provider who was closing their operation to a new entity to help preserve capacity. Saint Francis began piloting placement into a Qualified Residential Treatment Center (QRTP) with an out-of-state partner to prepare for future plans in Texas. Saint Francis has continued to explore options within Texas and out-of-state providers for additional capacity in Region 1. Saint Francis anticipates through current investment, 16 additional male residential treatment beds in Hale Center, 24 additional beds in Amarillo, and 24 additional beds in Lubbock by late October 2021 and into 2022. These beds will be crucial as one partner agency will be replicating a Qualified Residential Treatment Model (QRTP) in Region 1, which shows to have quality results for children.
- **Foster Home Capacity** – Saint Francis was able to successfully increase in-region capacity in a foster home setting by 4% according to DFPS data. The focus of this capacity has been on licensing kinship homes, treatment foster care, and opportunities that serve older children. Saint Francis has continued with the #BringMeHome campaign in 5 focused areas to increase capacity in those communities. Through collaboration with our in-region partner agencies through social media sponsored ads, Saint Francis has been able to refer 493 potential families to our network for licensing purposes. Saint Francis is looking at ways to efficiently use data to create strategies on how to safely increase the licensing rate of referred homes.
- **Adoption/Legal Risk Recruitment** – Saint Francis is working to find permanent homes for children in placements that are not intended to be permanent, foremost to provide permanency for children and secondarily to open foster care capacity in Region 1 homes. Saint Francis has focused on social media channels over the past year as a means of recruitment to offset challenges during the pandemic. To date, adoption recruitment efforts have resulted in 30 matched placements and 17 children in legal risk homes. The intentional recruitment has led to less children waiting to be adopted than in previous years.
- **Strategic Executive Partnerships** – Saint Francis has engaged the executive leadership team of our partner agencies in Region 1 through the last year in a Strategic Executive Partnership, which completed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis to create a strategic way forward in thinking through placement stability, sibling placements, rates, and capacity growth. This team has created necessary feedback to ensure we are working as one network to support children and families.
- **Community Engagement** – Saint Francis focused on a community engagement team that has brought value to children, families and our teams. The community engagement team at Saint Francis has engaged the faith community, become partners within Region 1 communities, and strengthened work as a collaborative group to focus on children and families. This work has given Saint Francis the opportunity to help lead community initiatives, offer community support, and gain the trust of our partners in Region 1. This community engagement is the foundation of community-based care and allows Saint Francis to bridge a gap within our communities and be a support.

Family Tapestry – Region 8A

Family Tapestry continued to provide Stage I services through FY21Q3. Region 8A is comprised of Bexar county. As an urban area with historical capacity to build on, Family Tapestry was better able to sustain performance improvements compared to historical baseline during FY20.

The average performance for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, the two years prior to Stage I implementation, is used as the historical average for comparison. Family Tapestry (Catchment 8A SSCC) data for FY19 is not comparable as a transition year.^{xiii}

- **Safety** – 98.2% of children were safe in Family Tapestry foster care placements. Safety has declined steadily since FY18, a trend seen in the rest of the state.
- **Placement Stability** – 1.36 placements per child in FY21Q3 is slightly lower than the 1.37 historical average for the first three quarters of FY17-18. This metric is cumulative and requires a comparison of like quarters.
- **Least Restrictive Placement Setting** – 74.3% of foster care days spent in foster family or kinship foster homes shows sustained improvement compared to 70.1% historical average.
- **Placement within 50 miles** – 84.4% of children placed within 50 miles of their removal address in FY21Q3 shows continued strong improvement compared to 74.9% historical average.
- **Sibling Groups Placed Together** – 65.3% of sibling groups placed together is slightly higher than baseline years average of 64.2% and an improvement over FY20 which was below baseline.
- **Preparation for Adult Living** – 93.4% of youth turning 18 completed PAL, an improvement compared to 88.2% historical average though a slight decline from FY20.

Due to Family Tapestry’s termination of its SSCC contract (effective July 1, 2021), there will be a break in the production of data analysis of 8A until re-procurement has been successfully achieved.

ⁱ [Texas Family Code, Chapter 264.155, Required Contract Provisions.](#)

ⁱⁱ All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/relatives/impact>

^{iv} All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

^v All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

^{vi} All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

^{vii} Information reported by OCOK on March 15, 2021

^{viii} All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

^{ix} Information provided by 2INgage, March 16, 2021.

^x All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.

^{xi} Information reported by Saint Francis, March 15, 2021.

^{xii} All FY21Q3 and historical performance data is from DFPS Rider Report September 2021 Submission log 103031, published as an attachment.