



# **Quarterly Report**

## **Office of Community-Based Care Transition Implementation Status**

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March 2022

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# Introduction

As required by Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, Section 264.172 (f), 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, the Office of Community-Based Care Transition (OCBCT) “shall report to the legislature at least once each calendar quarter regarding the implementation of community-based care in the state.” Status reports shall be provided on September 30<sup>th</sup>, December 31<sup>st</sup>, March 31<sup>st</sup>, and June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year to the Texas Legislature.

## Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) changes the way the Department of Family and Protective Services (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 “catchments”). 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. For information and data on the performance of SSCC contractors, see the DFPS Rider 15 Report.

## Office of Community-Based Care Transition Organizational Structure

The 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, as part of Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, Section 264.172, formally established the OCBCT. The OCBCT is a state agency independent of, but administratively attached to DFPS. The OCBCT and DFPS, along with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), will work together to implement CBC. The Statewide CBC Director, Theresa Thomas, has four directors who will have key roles in moving CBC forward in Texas: Contracts Director, Community Outreach and Legislative Relations Director, and two Directors of Implementation and Operations. Below you will see an update for initiatives, accomplishments, and opportunities in each CBC Community throughout the state.

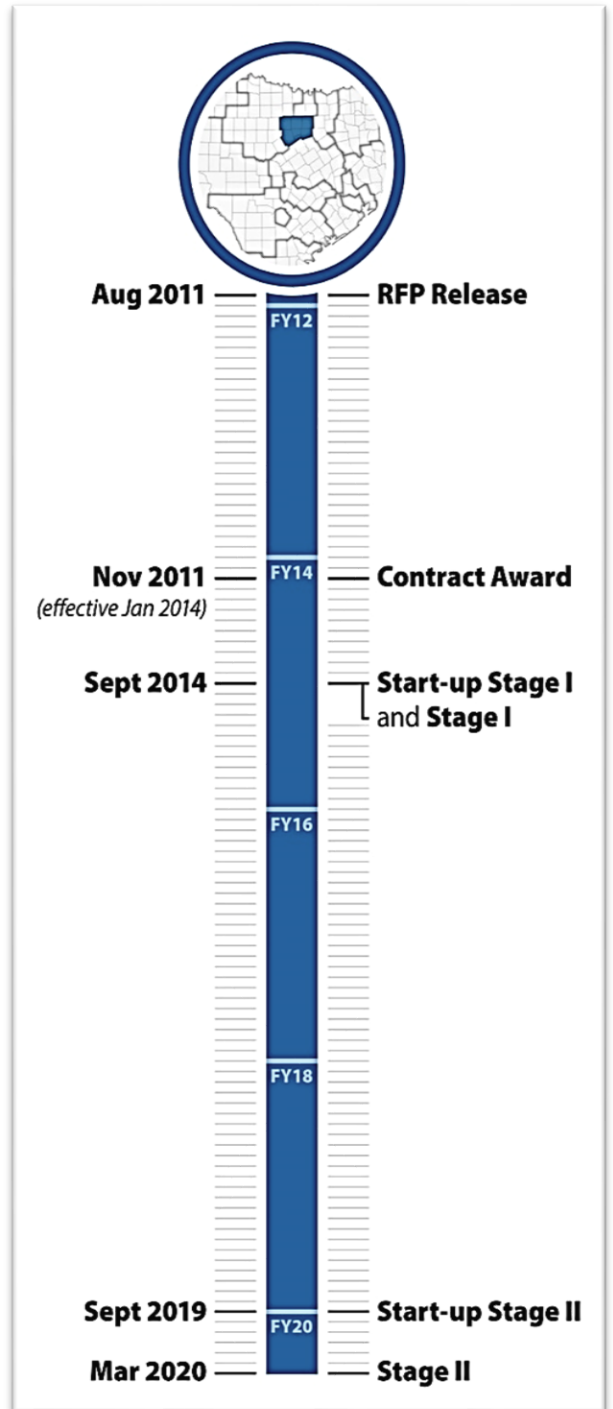


# Update for Metroplex West - Our Community, Our Kids (OCOK)

The Metroplex West (previously known as Region 3B) area is comprised of Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Metroplex West. The visual to the right depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.

## Kinship

OCOK engaged with A Second Chance, Inc. (ASCI) based out of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to perform a community assessment focused on determining strengths, weaknesses, biases, and other impacts on kinship in the community. ASCI garnered community input from local stakeholders such as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), lawyers, child welfare board representatives, judges, and permanency specialists. Utilizing ASCI’s findings, the OCOK Kinship Team has partnered with the Rees-Jones Foundation to add more positions to perform family finding, home studies, and other duties to place children in kinship homes quickly and safely. Additionally, several pilot projects are taking place or will soon launch, focused on finding family from the point of removal through a collaborative deep-dive effort. Great efforts are being made to not only locate kinship families and safely place youth with them, but also to support those families while the children are in their homes. OCOK kinship staff continues to partner with communities and programs such as ACH’s Kinship Connections program to ensure each family’s concrete and emotional needs are met while youth are residing in their homes.



## **Preparation for Adult Living (PAL)**

The PAL Program recently introduced a series of life-skills training programs called “Life Lemons—You Bring the Lemons; We’ll Make the Lemonade.” This monthly series will kick off with its first installment titled “Let’s Get to Work—Navigating the Workforce During a Pandemic!” and will focus on bringing life skills to youth aged 16-21 with an open PAL stage. The goal is for youth to learn, have a little fun, and prepare for success as adults. Youth will also receive themed incentives that will help them further the skills they learn at each seminar.

## **Local Capacity Building**

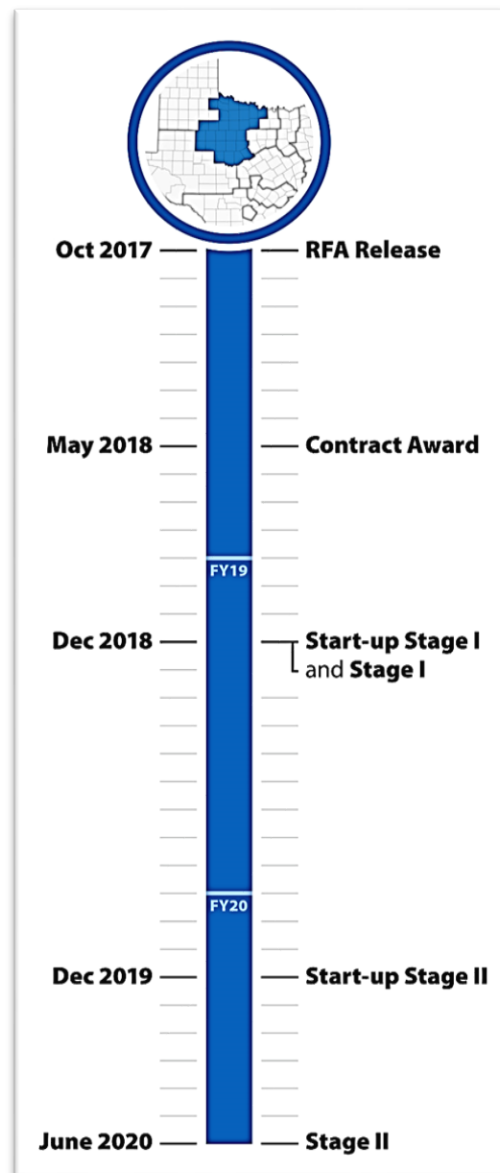
OCOK began hosting in-person events with partner Hope Local in the local communities focused on foster home recruitment, with a heightened focus on therapeutic foster homes. Held in churches, these events are designed to not only recruit quality foster parents, but to build the community who cares for the children in the community. Local partners such as CASA, clothing closet representatives, and other community supports attend to share the work they do for children. Therapeutic foster parents highlight their experiences and share the joy of helping children as they progress through their journey of healing with the end-goal of bringing more parents willing to take children with potentially challenging behaviors into our local network.



## Update for Big Country & Texoma- 2INgage

The Big Country & Texoma (Previously known as Region 2) area is comprised of 30 counties in northwest Texas around Abilene and Wichita Falls. The visual to the right depicts the timeline of this community's CBC progress.

2INgage (Texas Family Initiative) has a successful ongoing collaboration with the Big Country & Texoma provider network and has not had any children without placement since May 1, 2021. 2INgage implemented an innovative new system of recruiting, hiring, and training new permanency case managers, in addition to the DFPS Professional Development model, thereby decreasing turnover and maintaining an average daily caseload of 14.4 for permanency case managers. Through the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Program, 100% of Big Country & Texoma youth aging out of foster care have successfully completed Life Skills Training Classes over the past year. 2INgage has maintained an active Youth Leadership Council of 20 youth in foster care who meet six times a year to reach out to other youth in the community to participate in normalcy activities.



### Adoptions

The Placing Us in Safe Homes (PUSH) List is created by DFPS and is taken from data entered into the DFPS Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas (IMPACT) system. The PUSH list includes children who are in DFPS conservatorship with the 'Permanency Goal of Adoption,' 'Parental Rights Terminated,' and 'Placement is Intended to be Permanent.' For the duration of the monthly reporting period, no names can be added or deleted. Each community sends in a monthly report indicating the children that reached permanency that month



either by adoption consummation or through the granting of PMC to the caregiver.

**QPI: Quality Parenting Initiative– Texoma Launch**

2INGage successfully launched Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) in the Texoma community. QPI transforms foster care systems by focusing on excellent parenting for all children in care and is rooted in three principles: the prioritization of excellent parenting and meaningful relationships; the use of research, and putting those with lived experiences at the center of policy change. Attendees at the launch in Wichita Falls included Representative James Frank, (R-Wichita Falls), approximately 15 active foster parents, representatives from two child placing agencies in the community, local childcare providers, a local Supervised Independent Living (SIL) provider, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and 2INGage staff.

**Pan Aid Funding Distributed to Youth**

In the fall of 2021, 2INGage was awarded the Pan Aid contract with the Center for Child and Family Services and Monarch Family Services to distribute coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) relief funding to young adults who have aged out of the Texas foster care system. 2INGage distributed just under \$97,000 to 32 young adults in Big Country & Texoma to ease the burden caused by COVID-19. Funding covered items such as auto expenses, rent, groceries, utilities, cell phones, and laptops.

**Kinship Support**

In an effort to support local kinship families, 2INGage kinship specialists extended their skill set to assist local Child Placing Agencies with education on the home study process and helped to leverage grant funding opportunities to purchase needed items to support kinship families while they complete the licensing process. As a result of this support, over a three-month period, 17 families were licensed through the local provider network.





# Update for Panhandle- Saint Francis Community Services, Inc



1) area is comprised of 41 counties in the Texas Panhandle around Lubbock and Amarillo. The visual to the left depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.

## Foster Care and Adoption/Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) Recruitment and Retention Efforts

In 2022, Saint Francis Community Services Inc. (Saint Francis) has broadcasted 28 children in the Panhandle that are on TARE via social media, Constant Contact, and through local media and news outlets. Seven TARE profiles have been updated and three new TARE profiles have been created in this CBC area.

## Local Capacity Building

Over the past quarter, Saint Francis has focused on building capacity in the Panhandle while preparing for its Stage II Go Live, which was on March 2, 2022. Saint Francis has increased residential capacity by 450% over the past quarter in standalone capacity and in collaboration with other SSCCs in the Panhandle. This capacity includes an Intense Residential Treatment Program that will meet the criteria as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) and will open this summer. Saint Francis has also worked to create new programs for treatment foster care,

The Panhandle (previously known as Region



initiating a campaign titled, “It Takes Everything” for 41 counties, kinship support for families, and retention and recruitment with local partners. Saint Francis has worked diligently within their local community via child welfare boards, faith communities, and community organizations to establish meaningful connections for Stage II. Saint Francis has received 135 new referrals for

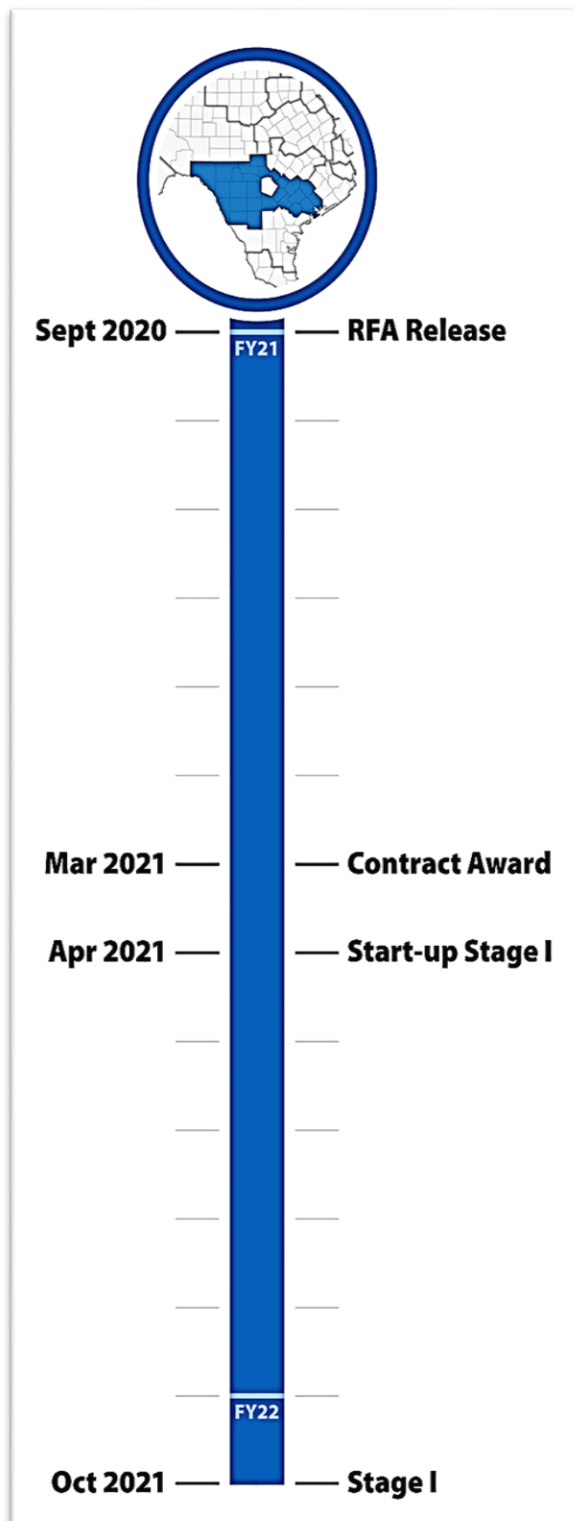
Foster/Adoptive Families in this CBC area over the last quarter. Saint Francis holds two monthly virtual Foster Care/Adoption informational sessions to recruit potential foster families, inviting all local CPAs to present. Additionally, Saint Francis holds monthly virtual Foster Family Town Halls to listen and discuss concerns from the community.

## **Community Engagement and Outreach**

To date, Saint Francis Community Services has met with 25 child welfare boards across 41 counties in the Panhandle, traveling over 2,000 miles to make these connections. In doing so, Saint Francis has garnered support from 11 county Rainbow Rooms across the community. Additionally, in a social media request for community assistance with visitation space, Saint Francis reached 25,192 people with 1,141 of those engaging in the effort to help. Saint Francis Community Services has 46 community partners willing to help with supervised visitations across the community, including local churches, YMCAs and YWCAs, community centers, and community partners of the Central Plains.



# Update for South Central & Hill Country- Belong



The South Central & Hill Country (previously known as Region 8B) area is comprised of 27 counties in the South Central Texas and Hill Country, excluding Bexar County. The visual to the left depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.

## Capacity Building

As of February 24, 2022, there are 520 children and youth placed under Belong’s network. A total of 613 children and youth have received services through Belong’s continuum of care since Stage I was launched on October 27, 2021. In the short amount of time that Belong has been in operation, Belong has engaged in several activities in order to build and preserve capacity, which includes:

- Contracting with Chosen to provide in-home services for kinship, adoptive, and foster families, with a focus on the child reaching permanency,
- Expanding its internal prevention department to serve South Central & Hill Country kinship families at risk of their child entering foster care, or any family needing additional support in order to successfully parent their children,
- Engaging other support services, such as, Renewing Family Strengths and Southwest Key Programs to prevent placement disruption,



- Repurposing its residential campus in New Braunfels to shift service delivery to youth with the highest needs through its partnership with Touchstone Alliance. This will provide 16 beds for youth requiring an acute level of treatment, with the goal of stabilizing them prior to their placement in a less restrictive setting. Estimated readiness to offer these services is in early April 2022,
- Collaborating with Chosen to develop a Treatment Foster Care Model that will be initiated in South Central & Hill Country,
- Monthly foster care and adoption information meetings to educate potential foster/adoptive families and connect them with a CPA to start the licensing process, and
- Regular referrals of kinship families from DFPS, in which Belong helps connect them with a CPA and provides continual follow-up and support to help them successfully become licensed.

## **Community Engagement and Outreach**

Belong has prioritized community outreach and has demonstrated its commitment through a variety of methods:

- Attendance at more than 150 community events,
- Presentations to over 60 community groups including commissioners courts, child welfare boards, community resource coordination group meetings, rotaries, and chambers of commerce,
- Meetings with over 100 churches and assistance with donation efforts for youth in care,
- Connecting providers with more than 75 unique community resources, and
- Regular meetings with providers and stakeholders to share information and demonstrate transparency.

## **Update on Community-Based Care Expansion**

As appropriated by the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, the OCBCT and DFPS, in partnership with HHSC, are preparing to release a new Request for Application (RFA) to expand community-based care to additional communities across the state in Metroplex East, Permian/Concho, Piney Woods and Deep East (see Appendix B for current CBC areas). It is anticipated that these RFAs will be released in Spring 2022, and there will be a staggered implementation approach based on community needs and preference. As discussed above, there are currently four areas in which CBC



has been implemented. Over the next year there will be an additional four SSCCs, resulting in over 50% of the state in a stage of community-based care. See the timeline below for the projected staggered implementation of the next areas.

*Timeline for Proposed SSCC Implementation:*

	FY2022												FY2023												FY2024												FY2025											
	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
<b>Reg. 3E</b>							✓ RFA Process	★																																								
<b>Reg. 4</b>							✓ RFA Process	★																																								
<b>Reg. 5</b>							✓ RFA Process	★																																								
<b>Reg. 9</b>							✓ RFA Process	★																																								

Over the FY2022-2023 biennium, the OCBCT and DFPS will use additional funding from the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature to expand CBC Stage II in the Panhandle and South Central & Hill Country communities, as well as re-solicit the SSCC contract for Metroplex East. Initiation of the solicitation with HHSC will occur within one year before the anticipated award date to develop and implement communication plans, identify resource transfers of staff, determine fiscal allocations and begin community planning.



# Legislation Implementation Updates

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## Senate Bill 1896

The 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1896, which is an omnibus bill that impacts many divisions within DFPS, including the OCBCT in many ways. This bill created the OCBCT and appointed a Statewide CBC Director.

The OCBCT is charged with 10 duties:

1. assess CBC areas in this state where community-based care services may be implemented,
2. develop a plan for implementing community-based care in each catchment area in this state, including the order in which community-based care will be implemented in each catchment area and a timeline for implementation,
3. evaluate community-based care providers,
4. contract, on behalf of DFPS, with community-based care providers to provide services in each catchment area in this state,
5. measure contract performance of community-based care providers,
6. provide contract oversight of community-based care providers,
7. report outcomes of community-based care providers,
8. identify the employees and other resources to be transferred to the community-based care provider to provide the necessary implementation, case management, operational, and administrative functions and outline the methodology for determining the employees and resources to be transferred,
9. create a risk-sharing funding model that strategically and explicitly balances financial risk between this state and the community-based care provider and mitigates the financial effects of significant unforeseen changes in the community-based care provider's duties or the population of the community it serves, and
10. require the annual review and adjustment of the funding based on updated cost and finance methodologies, including changes in policy, foster care rates, and community service usage.

Given the direction of Senate Bill 1896 regarding evaluation of Family Based Safety Services (FBSS), the OCBCT is working with DFPS and the SSCCs to complete the Senate Bill 910 study and to collaborate on the House Bill 3041 FBSS service pilots.



## **Data Access and Standards Governance Council**

Senate Bill 1896 updates the definition and requirements of the existing Data Access and Standards Governance Council, which was established by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 2018. To conform to Senate Bill 1896, the Council established a quarterly meeting schedule, beginning in August and conducted its third quarterly meeting on February 16, 2022. Quarterly Council meetings will continue, and sub-workgroups will be assigned and will meet monthly between quarterly Council meetings. OCBCT continues to partner with DFPS to work on interoperability standards for the information infrastructure in an effort to standardize systems.

## **Mentor Feasibility Study**

Senate Bill 1896 requires the OCBCT, the DFPS, and each SSCC, in collaboration with local governmental entities and faith and community-based organizations, to examine the feasibility of designing a volunteer mentor program for children in congregate care settings. In July 2021, DFPS formed a workgroup with representatives from each SSCC, relevant DFPS stakeholders, the OCBCT, and community providers of mentoring programs in the state. The workgroup meets monthly to develop the mentor feasibility study, which is due to the Legislature by December 31, 2022.

## **Capacity Building**

Senate Bill 1896 requires that HHSC, in collaboration with DFPS, the OCBCT, and each SSCC, develop a plan to increase the placement capacity in each CBC area of the state with the goal of eliminating the need to place a child outside of the child's community. The four current SSCC's submitted a draft Joint Capacity Building Plan to DFPS and have begun working on the plan. The OCBCT and DFPS have begun dispersing the capacity building funds allocated by the Texas Legislature to the SSCCs.

*See Appendix B for graphics depicting the number of residential providers for the SSCCs and a comparison for SSCC/DFPS shared capacity to SSCC-only capacity.*

## **Senate Bill 910**

Senate Bill 910 requires DFPS to develop a comprehensive list of options to implement family preservation services in existing catchment areas and to submit a report to the Governor and Legislative leadership by October 1, 2022.

In September 2021, an interagency administrative contract (IAC) between DFPS and Texas A&M University (Public Policy Research Institute) was executed. The IAC is to provide a comprehensive study of options to help inform the quality implementation of family preservation



services into the existing CBC areas as a part of community-based care, with specific focus on operations, implementation, financial modeling, contract provisions, statutory changes, and service delivery issues. The OCBCT, DFPS, and Texas A&M University continue to work together on this project. Texas A&M University has been timely in meeting their contractual deliverable requirements.

## Conclusion

The Office of Community-Based Care Transition, along with the Department of Family and Protective Services and stakeholder partners, continue to work diligently to implement community-based care in the four current communities (Metroplex West, Big Country & Texoma, Panhandle and South Central & Hill Country), expand community-based care to at least four additional communities this biennium, and to lay the foundation for a successful rollout statewide. After two SSCCs move into Stage II this biennium, there will be four SSCCs moving to Stage I during the next biennium. The next two bienniums would then include four SSCCs in Stage I and four SSCCs in Stage II, all with the goal of statewide community-based care by 2029. View the latest [CBC Implementation Plan](#) for additional details. An updated implementation plan is due to the Texas Legislature no later than the last day of each state fiscal biennium and will include new requirements passed during the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature.

The OCBCT continues to evaluate whether the staged approach is the best approach to implement CBC statewide. The OCBCT and DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University to conduct a process evaluation of each stage of community-based care. The process evaluation is a tool used by OCBCT and DFPS to assess implementation of community-based care in each catchment area, identifying the key successes and barriers, and course correct as needed. The community-based care process evaluation was completed in November 2020 and can be found on the [CBC website](#). On-going process evaluations through Texas Tech University will continue, and work is underway with the DFPS Office of Data and Systems Improvement and the SSCCs, to make a long term sustainable plan for statewide community-based care.

The OCBCT and DFPS continue 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 FY2022, Chapin Hall will begin to evaluate child outcomes in Metroplex West and Big Country & Texoma. OCBCT and DFPS further consults with Chapin Hall on continuous quality improvement processes for oversight of CBC in Stage II.

OCBCT staff have partnered with the SSCCs and Texas Alliance of Children and Family Services

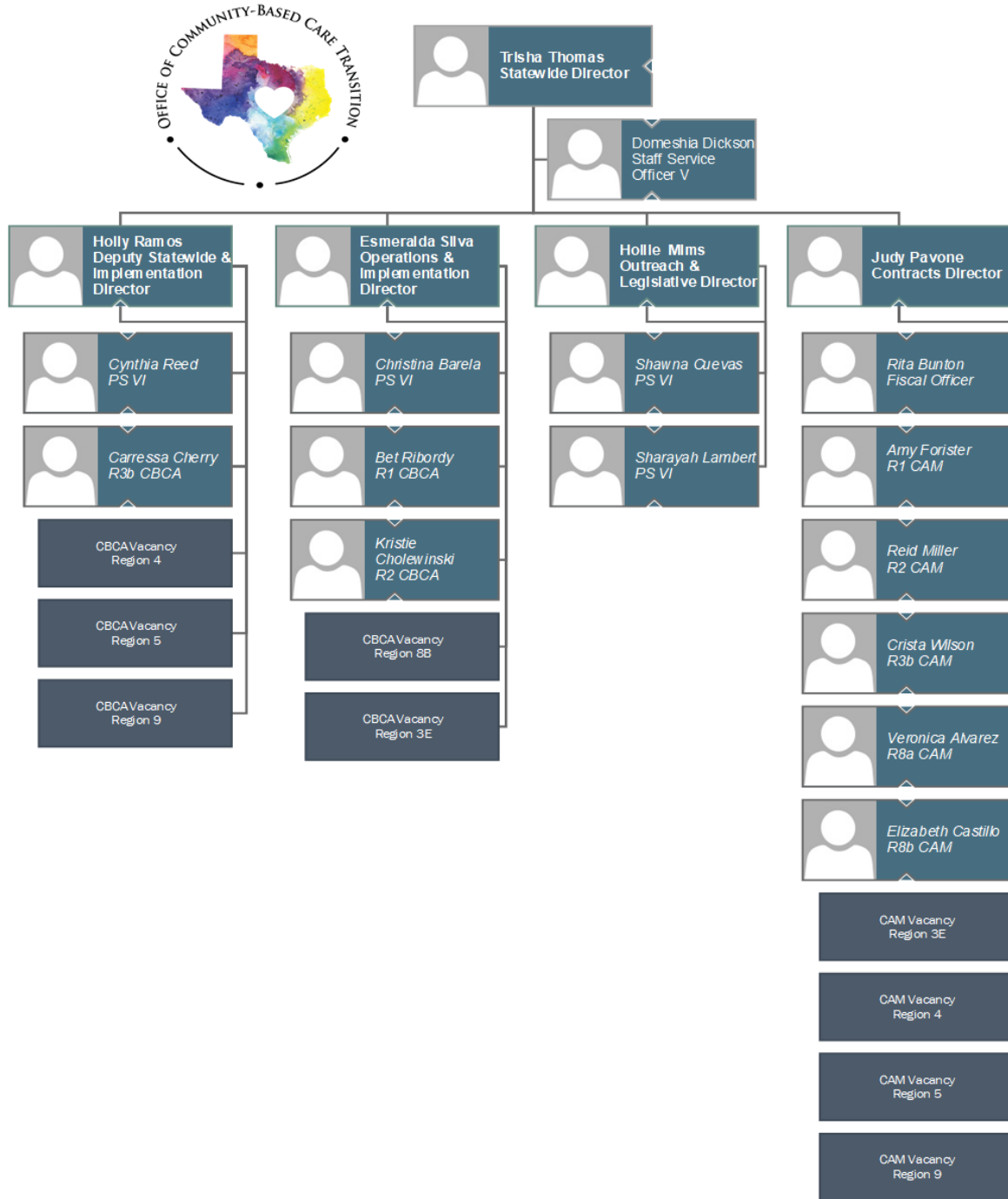




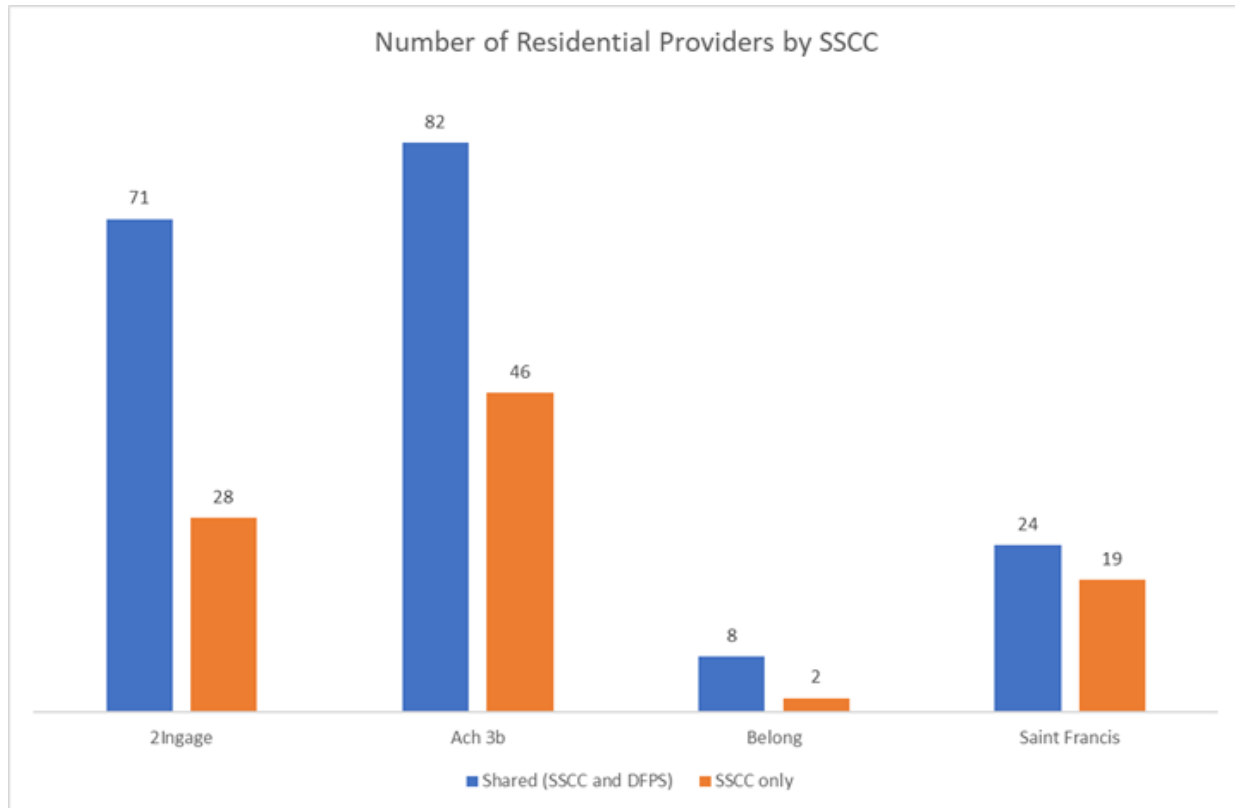
to promote and support the needs of the SSCCs in outreach and communication efforts. OCBCT staff continue to attend conferences and meet with judges, CASAs, experts, community representatives, providers, and other stakeholders to promote CBC. The OCBCT and DFPS are focused on supporting and partnering with the SSCCs to ensure community-based care is successfully implemented statewide by 2029. The OCBCT is committed to transparency and will continue to meet statutory requirements for sharing implementation plans, implementation updates, and performance data.

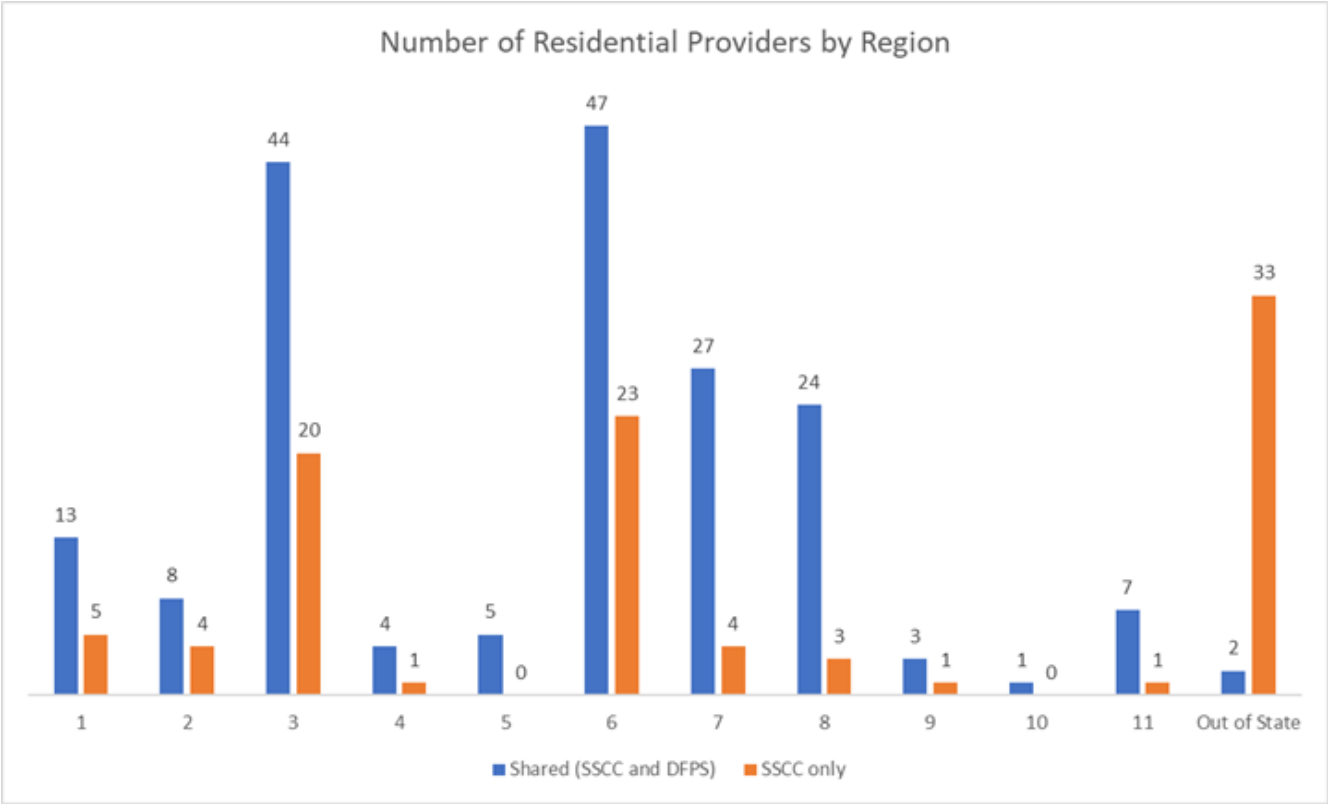


# Appendix A: Organizational Structure for the Office of Community-Based Care Transition



## Appendix B: Capacity Building Graphics

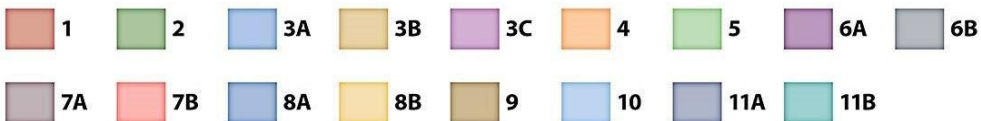
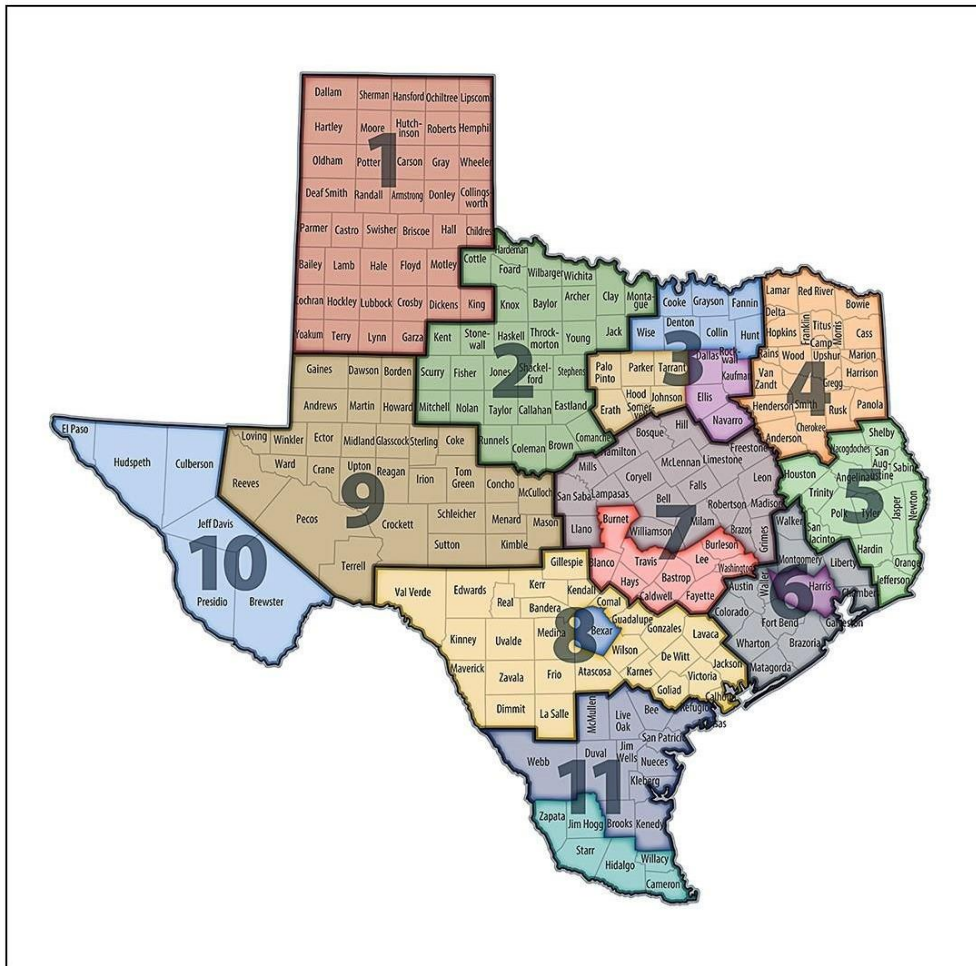




Data Source: DFPS PCS\_13 Report as of 2/23/22



# Appendix C: Current Community-Based Care Communities



\*Note, this map reflects previous DFPS Regional nomenclature. The updated community-based care/catchment names can be found on the following page, Appendix D.



THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY-BASED CARE TRANSITION

## Appendix D: Community-Based Care Catchment/Region Name Table

Region 1	Panhandle
Region 2	Big Country & Texoma
Region 3E	Metroplex East
Region 3B	Metroplex West
Region 4	Piney Woods
Region 5	Deep East
Region 6A	Harris County
Region 6B	Bay Area/Montgomery
Region 7A	Central Texas/Waco
Region 7B	Capital Area
Region 8A	Bexar County
Region 8B	South Central & Hill Country
Region 9	Permian/Concho
Region 10	El Paso
Region 11A	South Texas/Corpus Christi
Region 11B	Rio Grande Valley

