

2017

Annual Report & Data Book



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services

2017 Annual Report & Data Book

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TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

“The mission of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is to protect children and people who are elderly or who have disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by involving clients, families, and communities.”

Agency Overview

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) provides protective and prevention services and processes reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children and adults who have disabilities or are 65 years of age or older. DFPS also regulated childcare in FY (fiscal year) 2017, but no longer does so. In FY 2017, DFPS accomplished this through six major programs:

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

In FY 2017, DFPS was a part of the Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) system and its commissioner was hired by the HHS executive commissioner. The DFPS commissioner oversees approximately 13,000 employees in 268 local offices located in 11 regions and a state headquarters in Austin. You can learn more about the agency at www.DFPS.state.tx.us.

DFPS experienced major changes in FY 2017, which laid the groundwork for even greater changes in FY 2018 and beyond. The 85th Texas Legislature passed several laws that have already had a significant effect on DFPS.

House Bill 5

On May 31, 2017, Governor Greg Abbott signed HB 5 into law at a ceremony at DFPS headquarters in Austin, which made DFPS an independent state agency, separate from the Health and Human Services system. Effective September 1, 2017, DFPS became an independent agency, reporting directly to the Governor of Texas.

HB 5 recognized that DFPS needed independence to be able to act quickly to make the changes and improvements needed to better protect children and adults from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. HB 5 creates a direct line of communication and accountability from DFPS to the Office of the Governor.

Agency Reorganization

In November 2016, Commissioner H.L. “Hank” Whitman moved special investigators and their leadership out of CPS and into the newly created Special Investigations program under the leadership of Director Jim Sylvester. These special investigators are required to have law enforcement experience, and this change was made to promote high quality investigations while utilizing the talent of these former officers and their criminal justice expertise. This change was related to Whitman’s ten-point plan for improving DFPS that he unveiled in FY 2016

In response to HB 5 and to further the goal of increasing the quality and effectiveness of child abuse and neglect investigations, DFPS laid plans and began a much larger reorganization in the summer of 2017. This included moving all child abuse and neglect investigation duties and staff from Child Protective Services, Child Care Licensing, and Special Investigations into a consolidated DFPS Investigations program, led by Associate Commissioner Jim Sylvester.

On September 1, 2017, the regulatory functions of the Child Care Licensing program as well as the Adult Protective Services Provider Investigations program transferred to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

Staff Retention and Recognition

DFPS has historically had very high turnover, especially in Child Protective Services (CPS). In FY 2017, DFPS made



significant strides in retention. CPS turnover fell from 25.4 percent in FY 2016 to 18.4 percent by August 2017. As a result, CPS investigation caseloads declined 32.5 percent, conservatorship caseloads by 12.1 percent, and family-based safety services caseloads by 29.6 percent. Lower caseloads and increased tenure improve the overall quality of casework and the safety of children. One example is in the percentage of children seen timely in priority 1 cases, which increased from 77.6 percent in January 2017 to 91.3 percent in August 2017. Several factors led to this turnaround, including:

- Commissioner Whitman's request for more investigators and caseworkers and for a salary increase for CPS direct delivery staff, which the Legislature approved and funded.
- The focus on accountability in the commissioner's Ten-Point Plan, which resulted in new CPS leadership, improved training, and higher standards for supervisors, including competency exams for applicants.

While DFPS holds its staff accountable, it also recognizes those who go above and beyond to keep children and vulnerable adults safe. DFPS began the Commissioner's Proud to Protect Award Program in FY 2017, consisting of three ways to recognize DFPS staff and partners:

- The Commissioner's Award of Excellence is awarded to DFPS staff or partners who do extraordinary work to protect Texans and show a strong dedication to DFPS and its work.
- The DFPS Team Integrity Award recognizes a program, unit, or team that demonstrates exceptional teamwork and produces an extraordinary outcome.
- The DFPS Award of Distinction is a regional award that recognizes staff members from each DFPS program across the state.

DFPS began holding monthly employee recognition ceremonies for winners of the Commissioner's Award of Excellence and staff promoted to supervisor or above. Honorees can invite their families to see them receive awards or certificates and take pictures with the commissioner and other leaders, and their accomplishments are celebrated in the agency's employee newsletter. DFPS recognized 233 promoted

staff and bestowed the Commissioner's Award of Excellence on 30 DFPS staff and 12 partners in FY 2017. DFPS also created an inspirational video that reminds DFPS employees why they do their jobs. Together, these awards and activities created enthusiasm, increased job satisfaction, and supported staff retention.



Senate Bill 11

Another key piece of legislation that was signed into law in FY 2017 was Senate Bill 11, which directs DFPS to expand Community Based Care (formerly Foster Care Redesign). SB 11 requires a community-based approach to meeting the individual and unique needs of children, youth, and families. Within a geographic service area, a single contractor (officially a single source continuum contractor or SSCC) will be responsible for securing placement in foster homes, or making other living arrangements for children in state care, and providing them a full continuum of services.

The SSCC will be responsible for developing new foster care capacity, building a network of providers, engaging the community, finding homes and placements for children, providing case management, and coordinating and delivering services to children in foster care and their families. Community Based Care will serve both children in foster care and those in kinship care (children in state legal custody who live with extended family).

As Community Based Care takes shape statewide over a number of years, the focus of the DFPS Child Protective Services program will shift to ensuring quality oversight of foster care and services for children and families.

The SSCC will be responsible for case management and services that move children from foster care or kinship care into a permanent home. It is also important to note that DFPS retains all investigative functions, while placement and case management will become the responsibility of the SSCC.

Human Trafficking

In June 2017, DFPS created the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation team in accordance with the commissioner's ten-point plan. This team began work creating a training curriculum and other tools to empower DFPS staff to better recognize human trafficking and help children who have experienced it, while also educating children on how to avoid human trafficking. Led by Kim Grabert, the former human trafficking prevention director for the Florida Department of Children and Families, the team also builds relationships with law enforcement and community leaders to develop and expand services for children who have experienced sex trafficking.

Office of Consumer Relations

As a state agency that serves hundreds of thousands of children and families each year, DFPS carefully reviews complaints from clients and concerned parties. The Office of Consumer Relations (OCR), formerly the Office of Consumer Affairs, resolves complaints and responds to inquiries about DFPS programs in a fair and unbiased way. These concerns may come from DFPS clients, their families, stakeholders, and the public. OCR responded to 10,486 general inquiries and 954 legislative inquiries in FY 2017. OCR validated 47 percent of the 5,658 complaints that it reviewed and shared the results of its reviews with DFPS managers to help them continually improve the quality of services.

OCR also actively approached foster parents and youth who were formerly in foster care to make them aware of its services. As a result, OCR received 267 complaints from foster parents and 14 from youth. While OCR handles complaints from former foster youth, the Foster Care Ombudsman Office at the Health and Human Services Commission reviews complaints and concerns from youth currently in foster care. OCR partners with this office to ensure that all complaints are handled in an appropriate manner.

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

DFPS Volunteers

DFPS caseworkers rely on communities to help families struggling with abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and volunteers play a critical role in helping DFPS accomplish its mission. Eleven thousand, five hundred and ninety-six (11,596) trained volunteers and 284 volunteer groups worked with DFPS to help families. Volunteers logged 11,885 hours doing a variety of important things to help Texans who are least able to protect themselves. Examples include answering phones and text messages at the Texas Youth Hotline and building community resources for families. DFPS volunteers donated time worth \$2,813,907.75 based on the hourly rate of volunteer time in Texas. You can learn how to become a [DFPS volunteer](#).



Statewide Intake (SWI)

What We Do

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

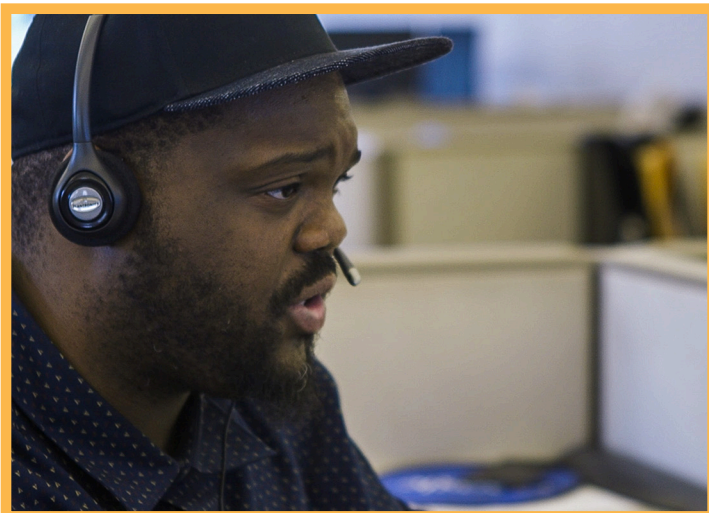
- Child abuse and neglect at home.
- Abuse and neglect of children in childcare.
- Abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people who are elderly or have disabilities and are living at home.
- Abuse of adults and children in state facilities and programs for people with mental illness or intellectual disabilities.

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

2017 Accomplishments

Greater Collaboration

SWI continued to expand the collaboration with Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas to better coordinate investigations by law enforcement agencies, Child Protective Services, and Child Care Licensing. Everyone has a single point of contact to make communication



easier and to make investigations and interviews more cohesive. SWI expanded the program in FY 2017 to involve 62 child advocacy centers and more than 540 law enforcement agencies.

Modernized Intake System

SWI worked with other agency areas to complete the first major phase in a multi-year upgrade of IMPACT, the application DFPS uses to record case information about the children and adults the agency protects. The project automated manual processes, including law enforcement notifications and the routing of reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the local field offices for investigation.

Improved Online Reporting System

SWI also redesigned and upgraded the Texas Abuse Hotline website to make it easier for the public and professionals to make online reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The new website allows registered users to save a report to complete later and uses dynamic questioning so users don't deal with questions that don't apply to their situations. After the upgrade in December 2016, online reports increased significantly (10.3 percent) compared to the previous fiscal year.

SWI Services

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

Texas Abuse Hotline

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

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

You can learn more about reporting abuse on the Report Abuse page of the DFPS website.

Texas Youth Hotline

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

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

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



Adult Protective Services (APS)

What We Do

APS investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults in the community who are 65 or older or who have disabilities, and provides or arranges for protective services when needed. APS also investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people living in state facilities and those receiving services in state-contracted community settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities.

2017 Accomplishments

SHIELD

The APS In-Home Investigations and Services program implemented a new casework practice model in 2014 known as SHIELD (Strategies that Help Intervention and Evaluation Leading to Decisions). SHIELD helps APS staff make informed decisions, identify needs, and resolve problems so that clients are less likely to be abused, neglected, or financially exploited in the future. SHIELD includes three assessment tools:

- Safety Assessment
- Risk of Recidivism Assessment
- Strengths and Needs Assessment

In FY 2017, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency completed a recalibration study on the Risk of Recidivism Assessment (RORA). APS evaluated the recommendations in the study and will incorporate accepted recommendations into the RORA tool, use of RORA results, and revisions to IMPACT, the DFPS case management information system.

APS also conducted refresher training on SHIELD tools for all field managers. One session was conducted in each of the five APS districts. Managers took the information presented and trained their staff, and APS set up a schedule to deliver this refresher to new staff twice per year in each district.

Partnership with WellMed

In 2012, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) gave APS a grant to collaborate with the WellMed Charitable Foundation to develop new approaches to identifying and responding to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation (ANE). APS staff trained clinic staff on ANE and risk of ANE, reporting to DFPS, and the workings of the APS system. WellMed incorporated a screening tool and reporting protocols into its primary care process and referred at-risk clients to its social workers. WellMed also gave patients educational materials on ANE and made a stress-reduction program available to caregivers of older adults with dementia. APS specialists were embedded in San Antonio clinics to consult with WellMed staff.

The Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging completed an evaluation of these approaches in 2017. The evaluation found that clinic staff were better able to identify and respond to suspected ANE and risk of ANE and referred more clients who were at risk of ANE to support services. The project also increased reports to APS of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Client staff made more than 500 reports, and APS confirmed more than two-thirds of those reports. The evaluation found that having embedded APS specialists at clinics to work directly with clinic staff was instrumental in improving coordination.



APS Services

In-Home Investigations and Services

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

This program also investigates allegations of financial exploitation of adults living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or adult foster care homes who may be financially exploited by someone from outside the facility. State law requires anyone who believes that an adult who is elderly or has a disability is being abused, neglected, or financially exploited to report it immediately.

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

APS works in partnership with other social service organizations to provide resources to abused, neglected, and exploited adults. APS works closely with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on cases that require guardianship services. APS notifies law



enforcement at any point during an investigation if APS suspects a crime has been committed.

For more information, see [In-Home Investigations](#) in the APS section of Data Book.

Provider Investigations

The Adult Protective Services Provider Investigations (APS PI) program investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people served by certain providers. These include:

- Allegations in state-operated or contracted programs that serve adults and children with mental illness and intellectual disabilities.
- Allegations involving Medicaid providers of home and community-based services and behavioral health services.
- Allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation involving Consumer Directed Services employees and certain Home and Community Support Services Agencies (HCSSA).
- Allegations involving individuals residing in an HCS group home regardless of whether the individual is receiving services under the waiver program from the provider, as well as all children receiving services from an HCSSA.

APS PI does not investigate if the provider is licensed and another agency has authority to investigate the allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

APS starts an investigation after the DFPS Texas Abuse Hotline receives an allegation. APS PI notifies the facility or provider agency within one hour and notifies law enforcement and the Health and Human Services Commission Office of Inspector General (OIG) within one hour if necessary. APS completes the investigation, makes a finding for each allegation, and sends a report to the provider as well as law enforcement and OIG if necessary. The provider is responsible for taking appropriate steps to protect its clients.

APS also determines if the perpetrator should be added to the Employee Misconduct Registry and submits the person's name after all due process and appeals. This registry bars people from certain jobs that involve working with people with disabilities. (This also applies to certain APS In-Home cases.)

Note: APS PI transferred to HHSC as of September 1, 2017. Rule changes as a result of this transition will affect some investigative procedures in FY 2018.

For more information, see [Provider Investigations](#) in the APS section of the DFPS Data Book.

Working with Partners

APS works with many partners to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, and to increase resources and services for adults who are elderly or have disabilities.

Law Enforcement

DFPS intake staff and APS caseworkers contact local law enforcement when they have cause to believe that the alleged neglect or abuse of an adult with disabilities or an elderly person might be a criminal offense. In such cases, APS staff may coordinate investigations with local law enforcement or work with local courts when seeking emergency legal action to protect clients.

Forensic Assessment Center Network

APS contracts with the University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC) in Houston, which manages the Forensic Assessment Center Network (FACN). FACN is a group of geriatricians, pediatricians, and other medical professionals who are experts and assist APS staff in identifying abuse and neglect. FACN provides APS staff with ongoing training in geriatric medicine and the psychological and psychiatric issues of persons with mental illness and cognitive disabilities.

Children's Advocacy Centers

Children's advocacy centers (CACs) work with APS on abuse and neglect investigations. CACs provide a safe environment where community agencies share information and develop coordinated strategies to meet the needs of APS clients. They provide specialized forensic interviews and minimize the need for multiple agencies to interview victims of abuse separately. In 2017, 97 percent of the people in Texas lived in a county served by a CAC.

Texas Partners for APS & Resource Rooms

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services is a statewide non-profit organization that works with APS to help improve the lives of clients by developing resources that support APS clients and staff. Twenty-five non-profit boards from around the state elect members to the Texas Partners for APS board, which works with local boards to raise funds and educate the public and service providers on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation issues. Texas Partners for APS and local boards collect donations to stock emergency resource rooms in APS offices with supplies that APS caseworkers use, 24 hours a day, to help older adults or those with a disability who are being abused or neglected. In FY 2017, there were 44 resource rooms meeting needs in 157 Texas counties. Resource rooms go by several different names such as Bridge Rooms, Silver Star Rooms, and Silver Ribbon Rooms.

Public Awareness Campaign

It's Everyone's Business is an APS outreach campaign which provides resources and information year round, but focuses on the months of May and October to promote ways to protect the elderly and adults with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. The major goals of the campaign are to raise awareness about the problems of adult abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation, increase awareness of APS programs and services, and enlist community support for clients, staff, and resources. In October, the campaign focused on financial exploitation by working with organizations that provide services to vulnerable adults and supplies them with information on financial exploitation. See [EveryonesBusiness.org](#) for more information on how to become involved.



Child Care Licensing (CCL)

What We Do

Child Care Licensing (CCL) works to promote the health, safety, and well-being of children and youth in daycare as well as in foster care and other types of 24-hour childcare. CCL achieves this by:

- Regulating childcare operations and child-placing agencies .
- Issuing permits and checking to make sure operations and agencies comply with licensing standards, rules, and laws.
- Giving technical assistance to help childcare providers meet licensing standards, rules, and laws.
- Investigating reports of violations of minimum standards in daycare and residential childcare.
- Educating parents and others about choosing regulated childcare and how each operation complies with state standards.

On September 1, 2017, the regulatory functions of Child Care Licensing, including licensure of providers, transferred to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Investigative functions of Child Care Licensing remain at DFPS in the Investigations program.

2017 Accomplishments

Serious Injury Tracking

Getting hurt is a natural and inevitable part of childhood, but when a child suffers a serious injury (requiring medical attention other than basic first aid) in childcare CCL requires childcare providers to report the injury to CCL so that CCL can look into what happened. Until this year, CCL did not have a quality system to track the frequency of serious injuries in childcare. DFPS made improvements to the CCL automation system in FY 2017, and CCL now requires its staff to document every serious injury of a child in childcare. Tracking this information over time will help us identify trends and make changes to improve health and safety in childcare operations.

Requiring Fingerprint Checks for Child Care Homes

Doing background checks on people who care for or will be around children in childcare operations is an important part of keeping children safe. A background check consists of a name-based criminal history check, an abuse and neglect check, and, in most cases, a fingerprint check run through the FBI's system. Until 2016, CCL did not require those providing daycare in their homes to get a fingerprint check. After a change in federal and state law, CCL began requiring people who work or live in a childcare home to have fingerprint checks beginning in FY 2017. This gives CCL information about a person's arrest and conviction history anywhere in the nation, not just in Texas. Having more information about a person's criminal history helps keep children safe by making sure people convicted of certain crimes are not around them in childcare.

Comprehensive Review of Minimum Standards

State law requires CCL to conduct a comprehensive review of minimum standards every six years. Minimum standards are the baseline rules that operations must



follow to promote children’s health and safety in child care settings. In FY 2016, CCL concluded its multi-year process to engage stakeholders, research best practices and emerging research, and look for opportunities to streamline and clarify existing minimum standards. CCL continued to work on and draft these changes in FY 2017, which include:

- Restricting infants from sleeping in restrictive devices.
- Banning the use of e-cigarettes and the use of any vapors.
- Deleting approximately 70 redundant minimum standards from the three daycare chapters.
- Clarifying the service planning requirements for the residential childcare operations.
- Modifying minimum standards to improve normalcy for children residing in residential childcare operations.

Increased Inspections & Health and Safety Audits

As required by the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, CCL increased the frequency of inspections of registered childcare homes to once every year (versus every two years) for homes participating in the childcare subsidy program. CCL also conducted a Health and Safety Audit for each licensed childcare operation. A Health and Safety Audit is an annual review of an operation’s compliance in health and safety areas, including:

- Safe sleep practices and sudden infant death.
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and abusive head trauma.
- Building and physical premises safety.
- Prevention and control of infectious disease.
- Storage of hazardous materials and bio-contaminants.
- Prevention and response to food allergies.
- Administration of medication.
- Emergency preparation and response planning.
- Precautions in transporting children.



CCL Services

CCL has two programs (Day Care Licensing and Residential Child Care Licensing) that protect the health, safety, and well-being of children and youth in daycare and residential childcare, including foster care. In FY 2017, both programs did this in two ways: regulation and investigations. Both programs had licensing inspectors and abuse and neglect investigators. Inspectors and investigators worked hand in hand to make sure childcare providers follow state standards and rules and to address allegations of abuse or neglect. Child Care Licensing:

- Develops rules and minimum standards for daycare, child-placing agencies, and residential childcare.
- Takes applications and issues permits to childcare operations.
- Inspects daycare and other childcare operations.
- Investigates alleged violations of licensing laws, rules, or minimum standards.
- Makes sure criminal background checks are done on childcare owners, employees, or anyone who is at least 14 years old and regularly present while children are in care.
- Helps current and potential childcare providers learn to comply with minimum standards.
- Takes enforcement action against operations when necessary.

- Helps parents and others make informed decisions by giving them information about the types and availability of childcare as well as results of inspections and investigations.

In FY 2017, CCL also investigated allegations of abuse or neglect in all types of childcare operations. However, CCL moved to a new regulatory division within the Health and Human Services Commission on September 1, 2017. The responsibility for investigating abuse or neglect in childcare operations remained at DFPS in the new Investigations program.



Who We Regulate

CCL regulates four basic categories of childcare. They are licensed operations (daycare and 24-hour residential childcare), registered childcare homes, listed family homes, and operations with a compliance certificate.

Licensed Operations

CCL routinely monitors and inspects licensed operations. Licensed operations must follow specific minimum standards and they must complete an overview of regulation before they apply and pass background checks. CCL issues a license only after inspecting the operation to ensure the applicant meets minimum standards. CCL also inspects licensed operations at least once a year or more often if there is a report of child abuse or neglect or violations of licensing laws, rules, or standards. Some licensed operations provide daycare and others provide 24-hour residential childcare.

Daycare:

- Licensed childcare homes (group daycare homes) provide daycare in the caregiver's home for 7-12 children under 14 years old for at least two hours a day, three or more days a week.
- Childcare centers (daycare centers) care for 13 or more children (under 14 years old) for less than 24 hours, at least two hours a day, three or more days a week.
- Before and after-school programs provide care before or after school and on holidays for at least two hours a day, three days a week, to children in pre-kindergarten through 6th grade.
- School-age programs supervise children in pre-kindergarten through 6th grade and teach recreational skills or provide other training before or after school for at least two hours a day, three or more days a week. A school-age program may also operate during holidays or any other time when school is not in session.

24-Hour Residential Childcare:

- A child-placing agency is a business that places or plans to place children in foster or adoptive homes that it approves and monitors.
- Foster family homes provide around-the-clock care for six or fewer children under 18 years old. Child-placing agencies screen and approve (verify) foster family homes.
- Foster group homes provide around-the-clock care for seven to 12 children under 18 years old. Under state law, child-placing agencies can no longer approve (verify) new foster group homes.
- General residential operations, which include residential treatment centers, provide around-the-clock care for 13 or more children under 18 years old. They may provide various treatment services, emergency care services, or therapeutic camps.

Registered Childcare Homes

Registered childcare homes provide regular care in the caregiver's home for up to 6 children under age 14 and up to 6 more school-age children. Regular care means "at least four hours per day, three or more days a week, for

three or more consecutive weeks -or- four hours a day for 40 or more days in a period of 12 months.” The number of children allowed in a registered childcare home depends on the ages of the children. No more than 12 children can be in care at any time, including the caregiver’s children.

Applicants must pass background checks and complete an overview of regulation before they apply. CCL issues a registration only after an inspection to make sure the provider is meeting the standards that apply. CCL inspects registered childcare homes every two years (or every one year if the home accepts child-care subsidies from the Texas Workforce Commission). CCL also investigates any allegation of violations of licensing laws, rules, or minimum standards.

Listed Family Homes

Listed family homes provide regular care in the caregiver’s home for one to three unrelated children under 14 years old. Regular care means “at least four hours per day, three or more days a week, for three or more consecutive weeks -or- four hours a day for 40 or more days in a period of 12 months.” Providers must be at least 18 years old and go through an application process that includes a criminal background check and getting a “listing” permit from CCL.

These providers do not have to meet minimum standards or take training. CCL does not routinely inspect listed family homes, but does investigate reports that:

- There is an immediate risk to the health or safety of a child.
- The home is providing childcare for too many children.
- A caregiver gave a child medication without the parent’s or guardian’s written permission.

Operations with a Compliance Certificate

Anyone wanting to operate a shelter care or an employer-based childcare operation must complete an application and get a compliance certificate. CCL conducts an on-site inspection before issuing the permit to make sure laws and minimum standards are met.

Shelter Care

Shelter care is childcare provided at a temporary shelter for children while their parents, who also live at the



shelter, are away. CCL regulates shelter care that involves seven or more children under the age of 14 for at least four hours a day, three or more days a week. Anyone wanting to operate a shelter care must pass criminal background checks and an initial inspection. CCL does not regularly inspect shelters, but does investigate allegations of violations of licensing laws, rules, or minimum standards.

Employer-Based Childcare

Employer-based childcare cares for up to 12 children of employees (under age 14) for less than 24 hours per day in the same building where the parents work. CCL issues a compliance certificate only after the operation passes the application process, which includes criminal background checks and an inspection. An employer-based childcare doesn’t have to meeting minimum standards and is not inspected after it gets a certificate. As always, CCL will investigate allegations of a violation of licensing laws or rules.

Violations and Technical Assistance

Our goal is to correctly and consistently enforce minimum standards for all types of childcare and to help them improve their compliance. Consistent understanding and enforcement of minimum standards is a challenge for all involved. That’s why CCL analyzes violations trends to check for consistency and to learn what technical assistance it can give providers to help them meet or exceed minimum standards in the future.

For more information see [Child Care Licensing](#) in the DFPS Data Book.

Child Protective Services (CPS)

What We Do

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates reports of child abuse and neglect to protect children from harm now and in the future. CPS works to strengthen and stabilize families so that they can safely care for their children at home. When that is not possible, CPS works with the courts and communities to find permanent homes or other places for children to live. CPS works to ensure appropriate placements for children and comprehensive services for families in an effort to stabilize and reunite families when possible.

On September 1, 2017, the investigative function of CPS transferred to the new Investigations program, along with Special Investigations and Child Care Licensing abuse, neglect and exploitation investigations.

2017 Accomplishments

Stabilizing and Training the CPS Workforce

The Texas Legislature gave CPS the funding to hire more than 800 additional employees and substantially increase the salaries of direct-delivery staff in FY 2017. The salary increase, in conjunction with other agency initiatives, helped CPS cut its overall turnover rate from 25.4 percent in FY 16 to 18.4 percent in FY 17.

CPS also improved training for caseworkers and supervisors, emphasizing field-based learning, mentoring, and individualized training and supervision. The new training, CPS Professional Development (CPD), replaced the Basic Skills Development (BSD) training. A University of Texas evaluation found caseworkers who completed the new training were 18 percent less likely to leave within their first year compared to caseworkers who had the old training. Three hundred and forty (340) fewer CPS caseworkers left the agency, saving about \$18 million a year.

CPS also hired new regional leaders, bringing fresh ideas and novel ways of doing its work.

Permanency

CPS placed more children in state care with relatives in FY 2017 – 44 percent compared to 43 percent the previous year. CPS also reduced the time it took to find a permanent living arrangement (permanency) for children from 18.3 months in FY 2016 to 17.9 months in FY 2017.

On September 1, 2016, CPS began using the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA). This tool helps CPS prioritize services in the family plan of service to identify and address the most critical needs. CPS uses the tool to measure changes in family functioning over time. CPS also began using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment. CANS is a comprehensive, trauma-informed behavioral health assessment of a youth's strengths and needs. The information helps with making decisions and service planning, facilitates quality improvement, and allows for monitoring of outcomes. CPS completed more than 7,700 CANS assessments during FY 2017.

Faith-Based Efforts

As part of the commissioner's ten-point plan, CPS continued to boost its faith-based effort and relationships by hiring a state faith manager and reorganizing so that all the faith specialists report to one manager. Over 183 new churches joined Care Portal in FY 2017. Care Portal is an online clearinghouse that connects churches with children and families involved with CPS to help meet their needs. CPS has 866 active church partnerships, adding over 500 of those in FY 17. CPS also started a new effort called



“Clergy in the Court” in Harris, El Paso, Williamson, and Bell counties, which gives faith groups opportunities to attend court hearings to support youth and families.

Capacity Building

CPS published the first Foster Care Needs Assessment in January 2017. It was posted on the DFPS website and shared through the DFPS Facebook page. The assessment allows CPS to more strategically build Texas’ foster care capacity by analyzing historical trends and forecasting for FY 17-18. CPS also hired a capacity-building specialist who works with providers around the state to identify barriers to capacity and expansion, negotiate additional capacity, and follow up with providers that do not have a current DFPS contract. In FY 2017, CPS also contacted providers in neighboring states and contracted with facilities in Arizona and Oklahoma.

CPS Services

Investigations of Child Abuse and Neglect Reports

State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected to report it so CPS can investigate. CPS interviews children, parents, and others who know about the family to help determine if abuse or neglect happened, if children are safe, and to gauge the risk of further harm. CPS investigators also consider physical evidence such as injuries, illegal drug use, and other factors such as lack of food or medical care. If needed, CPS investigators may refer families to services to help stabilize the family and address their needs. However, if services are not enough to make a child safe, CPS may ask a judge to remove the child from the parents’ custody and place the child in a relative’s care or foster care. On September 1, 2017, the new DFPS Investigations program began conducting child abuse and neglect investigations on September 1, 2017. This includes investigations formerly handled by the CPS, Special Investigations, and Child Care Licensing program.

Alternative Response

In FY 2015, CPS started using an alternative to traditional investigations in a few parts of the state. Alternative Response lets CPS handle less serious allegations of abuse or neglect in a more flexible way – engaging families



while still focusing on the safety of the children. CPS provides services and support to help families resolve safety issues and reduce future involvement with CPS. In FY 2017, CPS added Alternative Response in three additional regions (Regions 4, 5, and 10) for a total of eight regions. Regions 1 and 11 started in fiscal year 2015, and Regions 3, 7, and 9 began in FY 2016. The Alternative Response program transferred to the DFPS Investigations program on September 1, 2017. DFPS will continue to expand the Alternative Response approach with a goal of using it statewide by December 2018.

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

Family Based Safety Services

CPS provides services to help stabilize families and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Family Based Safety Services, sometimes called in-home or family preservation services, can help avoid removing children from their homes. These services often make it possible for children to return home by helping families understand and protect their children from danger. Services include family counseling, crisis intervention, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, and daycare. Most children receiving these services live at home while CPS works with their families. In some cases, children may live elsewhere until they can safely return home, usually with relatives or family friends.

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

Children in State Care

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

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

Foster Care

Children live in foster care when kinship care is not an option. Foster families are reimbursed for the costs of caring for children. Together, CPS and foster parents arrange all the child’s educational, medical, dental, and therapeutic services. Some children with emotional or other needs that are difficult to address in a foster home may live in specialized group homes, residential



treatment centers, or other facilities. CPS provides services to the parents until the family is reunited or a judge approves another permanent living arrangement for the children. A judge has ongoing oversight while a child is in foster care.

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

Permanency

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

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

Goals of the Permanency Strategic Plan created in 2015 are to:

- Safely reduce the average time to achieve positive permanency by 25 percent by 2020.
- Achieve positive permanency for children under six years old who have been in DFPS conservatorship for more than two years.



- Reduce the number of youth exiting care without a permanent home.
- Create a sense of urgency to achieve positive permanency.

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

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

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

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

Youth Transitioning to Independence

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

The Transitional Living Services (TLS) program provides various services to help these youth learn to live successfully on their own. Preparation for Adult Living services help youth ages 16 to 18 years of age prepare for the future. Programs for older youth include Education and Training Vouchers, College Tuition and Fee Waivers, Extended Foster Care, and more.

Extended Foster Care

Foster youth who don't achieve permanency usually leave state care after their 18th birthday. However, they

can stay in foster care or return to foster care through age 21 or 22, depending on their situation. Unless they have a medical condition that prevents it, youth must do one of the following to stay in extended foster care:

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

Education and Training

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

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



Health Care Benefits

Texas provides healthcare to children in foster care and youth who reach adulthood in foster care up to the month of their 26th birthday. These youth get healthcare through STAR Health, a form of Medicaid that is overseen by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and administered by Superior HealthPlan. STAR Health includes a medical home for each child, service coordination and management, 24-hour nursing and behavioral health helplines, and psychotropic medication monitoring.

When a youth aging out of DFPS care needs long-term care or support due to an intellectual or developmental disability, DFPS refers them to the [local intellectual and developmental disability authority](#). If a court makes HHSC the youth's legal guardian, that agency takes responsibility for the youth. However, DFPS may continue to provide placement in foster care for young adults even if they receive guardianship services.

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment is a comprehensive, trauma-informed behavioral health assessment of a youth's strengths and needs. The information helps decision-making, drives

service planning, facilitates quality improvement, and allows for outcomes monitoring. CPS also is working to ensure that every child DFPS removes from a home gets a comprehensive Texas Health Steps physical checkup to identify his or her unique health care needs. By getting this thorough medical checkup soon after removal, CPS and caregivers can use the information to ensure that the child's needs are met.

Working with Partners

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

Foster Parents and Other Providers

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

DFPS has been expanding the community's role to meet the challenges of serving children in foster care through Foster Care Redesign, now known as Community Based Care. Under Community Based Care, a single source continuum contractor is responsible for building foster care capacity and a network of providers, engaging the community to help, placing children in foster care, and coordinating and delivering services to children in foster care and their families.

In 2017, the Texas Legislature directed DFPS to expand this model and rename it Community Based Care. It includes both foster care and relative or "kinship" placements. Community Based Care gives the contractor sole responsibility for case management – rather than sharing that responsibility with DFPS. CPS will contract for a single source continuum contractor in four additional catchment areas through 2019.





Children's Advocacy Centers

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

Forensic Assessment Center Network (FACN)

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

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

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

Child Welfare Boards

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

Law Enforcement

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

Community Partners Programs

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



Special Investigations

What We Do

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

On September 1, 2017, Special Investigations transferred to the new Investigations program, along with the investigative function of Child Protective Services and Child Care Licensing.

2017 Accomplishments

Timely Contact with Families

When Special Investigations became its own program in November 2016, the immediate goal was to improve face-to-face contacts in child abuse and neglect investigations and to help CPS investigators locate children and families who were hard to find or trying to avoid CPS. Within eight months of the newly formed program, face-to-face contact compliance increased from 77.6 percent to 90.3 percent, which was an all-time high. This timely contact is the first major step in an investigation and timeliness increases the safety of children.



Workforce Development

Special Investigations provided forensic interview training to all CPS investigators in FY 2017. In this training, special investigators taught specific techniques for conducting insightful interviews that help the investigator get to the truth. Building the interviewing skills of CPS caseworkers makes them better able to protect children from abuse or neglect.

Special Investigations Services

Investigations

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

- Conducting all child death investigations where there are no surviving children.
- Conducting all investigations of abuse and neglect involving school personnel.
- Handling cases involving law enforcement.
- Working with the Texas Department of Public Safety to place a missing family on the Child Safety Check Alert List.
- Assisting CPS investigators in their investigations as needed.

Missing Children

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

Prevention & Early Intervention (PEI)

What We Do

PEI takes a public health approach to preventing child abuse, neglect, and child deaths. This approach includes supporting better outcomes for children and families by addressing challenges related to poverty, family instability, poor health, drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, and more.

PEI supports the healthy social, emotional, and mental development of children living in safe and stable families and nurturing communities. PEI does this through public education and contracts with community organizations that provide services to children, youth, and families, and by promoting decisions and actions that improve the lives of children and families.

PEI helps communities develop and improve prevention programs to strengthen families so they can live better lives. This can mean families don't get involved with CPS and their kids stay in school, avoid risky behavior, and don't get in trouble with the law. PEI makes prevention services available to families at no charge around the state. You can search for PEI programs available in your county under Prevention Services on the DFPS website.

The Office of Child Safety within PEI focuses on programs that work to reduce fatal and serious child abuse. This office does critical-case reviews, examines data and trends, and works with other agencies to provide a safety network across Texas. The Office of Child Safety develops recommendations and works together with non-profit, private sector, and government programs to achieve these outcomes.

2017 Accomplishments

More Served and Better Outcomes

In FY 2017, PEI served more than 64,000 youth and families, including 15,964 families through evidence-based home visiting programs, parent education, counseling and support services. Nearly all (99 percent) of children and youth remained safe while enrolled in PEI services, and their parents who were at risk of child abuse and neglect did not become confirmed perpetrators

in a DFPS abuse or neglect investigation. PEI prevention programs also provided mentoring, youth-employment programs, career preparation, and alternative recreational activities to prevent delinquency for 48,313 youth.

- 98.5% of youth between ages 10 and 16 who were served by PEI-funded programs did not enter the juvenile justice system in FY 2017 (STAR & CYD).
- 99.4% of parents who were served and at risk of child abuse or neglect did not become confirmed perpetrators in a DFPS abuse or neglect investigation during Fiscal Year 2017

More Counties Benefit from PEI Services

Three PEI programs – Community Youth Development (CYD), Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP), and Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES) – significantly expanded their reach during FY 2017. CYD added six ZIP codes in Hidalgo (78577), Lubbock (79403, 79404), Webb (78046), and Willacy (78580, 78569) counties to its previous 17-ZIP code service area. HIP expanded from 18 primary and 50 surrounding counties to 24 primary and 76 surrounding counties, and with its third cohort of providers, HOPES added five contractors covering nine additional primary counties. HOPES is now available through 21 contractors in 25 primary counties and 34 surrounding counties for a total coverage area of 59 counties or 23 percent of the state's counties and 79% percent of the state's child population.

Better Data

In FY 2017, DFPS launched a new data system that is already transforming the way data is collected, captured, and analyzed at PEI. While the previous PEI and STAR data systems allowed users to enter data for reporting purposes, they were not user-friendly and lacked systemic checks on the validity of data. The new Prevention Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS) uses systematic checks on data quality, tasks, and reminders to collect assessments. It also applies real-time reports that include data visualizations and detailed client breakdowns. The new system will help PEI ensure

the data it collects is valid, reliable, and transparent. An added bonus of PEIRS is the flexibility it allows for data analysis and outcomes reporting. The real-time nature of PEIRS will enable PEI and its providers to analyse data to continuously improve the quality of services.

Greater Outreach

As part of its public health approach, PEI partnered with the Texas Public Broadcasting Association to help normalize parents seeking help for the challenges they face and to drive viewers to PEI's parenting resources on Facebook, YouTube, and PEI's campaign websites. PBS affiliates ran an empathetic 30-second television spot more than 1,500 times in Amarillo, Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas/Fort Worth, Killeen/Temple/Waco, Lubbock, the Rio Grande Valley, and San Antonio, promoting PEI's online parenting resource HelpandHope.org. In addition, PEI and Texas PBS co-hosted family-oriented events and stakeholder forums in multiple communities.

In FY 2017, PEI also invested in a statewide media campaign that included more than 14,000 commercial TV ads in all Texas media markets in the month of April, as well as an online/mobile/social media advertising campaign that spanned eight months of the year. This resulted in 289,805 visits to the campaign website and prompted Texans to watch PEI's animated educational videos to completion nearly one million times.

Innovation at Work

LENA Home

Scientific research indicates interactive talk is essential to early brain development and school readiness. So, in FY 2017, PEI partnered with LENA Research Foundation to launch LENA Home in five communities (Gregg, Harris, Hays, Hidalgo, and Wichita counties). LENA Home uses wearable technology to measure the verbal development of children and gives feedback and encouragement to parents and caregivers to promote positive interactions with infants and young children. During its first phase, PEI providers enrolled 56 families to collect recordings of child speech to gauge vocabulary. Early results showed parents interacted with children more and had higher quality interactions. PEI providers will continue to enroll families and collect data in FY 2018.

Accountability Tools

In FY 2017, PEI funded four early childhood coalitions (in Hidalgo, Willacy, Cameron, and Starr counties; Ector and Midland counties; Tarrant County; and Bexar County) that began using accountability tools and methods to plan, track, and monitor progress toward their goals. This approach helps coalitions set and strengthen priorities, assess and forecast performance, identify factors that help or hurt their efforts, define clear strategies, and develop and execute action plans that lead to measurable success.

So far, the coalitions have identified their priorities – health, safety, and school readiness – and determined the steps to reach them. The next steps are to align individual providers' programming and benchmarks and execute action plans. These tools and methods will give coalitions a measurable and sustainable path to improving communities. PEI is using the same approach to gain traction on interagency initiatives as well.

Program Flexibility

PEI changed the way it contracted with STAR providers to better serve youth and families. PEI worked with HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services to develop the Request for Application (RFA) approach to procuring providers rather than the more prescriptive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. An RFA is more like a grant, which gives PEI and STAR providers more flexibility and opportunities to innovate. In addition to STAR's core services (counseling, parent skills, and youth skills classes), STAR providers can offer additional services that communities want such as fatherhood services, grandparent support groups, mentoring, and parent advocacy sessions.

PEI Services

PEI contracts with community-based organizations, local governments, and school districts to provide services to prevent the abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas children. Services are voluntary and provided at no cost to participants. However, not all services are available in all Texas communities. To find out if services are available in your community, search for programs available in your county in the PEI section of the DFPS website or HelpandHope.org.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)

This program funds community-based organizations that provide child abuse and neglect prevention services. CBCAP services include parent education, fatherhood services, parent leadership, home visitation, and various special initiatives. In FY 2017, 1,105 families received services in Cameron, Concho, Denton, El Paso, Fort Bend, Harris, Runnels, Tarrant, Taylor, and Tom Green counties.

CBCAP also supports primary prevention efforts such as public awareness campaigns and outreach. This includes the DFPS child abuse prevention campaign, Help for Parents, Hope for Kids.

Community-Based Family Services

This program serves families that CPS investigates and either does not confirm abuse or neglect or does confirm an allegation but the situation is low risk. Services include home visitation, case management, parent education and additional services that contribute to a safe and stable home environment. This program served 420 families in Bexar, Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Guadalupe, McCulloch, Mills, Runnels, and San Saba counties in FY 2017.

Community Youth Development (CYD)

PEI contracts with community-based organizations to develop juvenile-delinquency prevention programs in 17 ZIP codes that have high juvenile crime rates. Communities tailor services to their needs. Some of the approaches include mentoring, jobs programs, career preparation, and recreational activities. CYD includes youth leadership development and a youth advisory committee. CYD served 15,538 youth in Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Galveston, Harris, Hidalgo, Lubbock, McLennan, Nueces, Potter, Tarrant, and Travis counties.

Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)

HOPES is a community-based program started in FY 2014 to provide child abuse and neglect prevention services that help families with children between zero and 5 years of age in high-risk counties. Community organizations provide home visiting programs along with other positive parenting, health, and child development learning opportunities. Project HOPES also supports

community collaboration through participation in community coalitions.

In FY 2017, HOPES served 4,132 families, primarily in Cameron, Ector, El Paso, Gregg, Hidalgo, Potter, Travis, Webb, Dallas, Harris, Jefferson, Lubbock, McLennan, Nueces, Taylor, Wichita, Bell, Bexar, Brazos, Denton, Ellis, Galveston, Johnson, Montgomery, and Tarrant counties.

Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP)

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

The program helps:

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

There were 190 foster youth referred to HIP in FY 2017.



Military Families and Veterans Pilot Prevention Program

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

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

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

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

This program benefits the entire family unit and provides necessary supports to our military veterans and families.

Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)

The STAR program is available in all 254 Texas counties. PEI contracts with community agencies to offer crisis-counseling for families, individual and family counseling, emergency short-term respite care, as well as youth and parent skills classes. STAR serves families with youth through 18 years old who are dealing with conflict at home, school attendance issues, delinquency, or have a youth who has run away from home. In FY 2017, the STAR program served 24,974 youth and 19,498 parents or other primary caregivers. STAR contractors also provide prevention material and educational presentations that serve everyone in the community.

Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN)

The SYSN program makes community and evidence-based juvenile delinquency prevention programs available to youth ages 6-17 in each DFPS region. Services include school and community-based mentoring programs such as Big Brothers Big Sisters and Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs. The program served 4,015 clients in FY 2017.

Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS)

Texas Families: Together and Safe funds community-based parent education programs in many areas of the state that have been shown to relieve stress and promote better parenting skills and behaviors to help families become self-sufficient and successfully nurture their children. The goals of TFTS are to help children stay in their own homes, and help local programs, government agencies, and families work together.

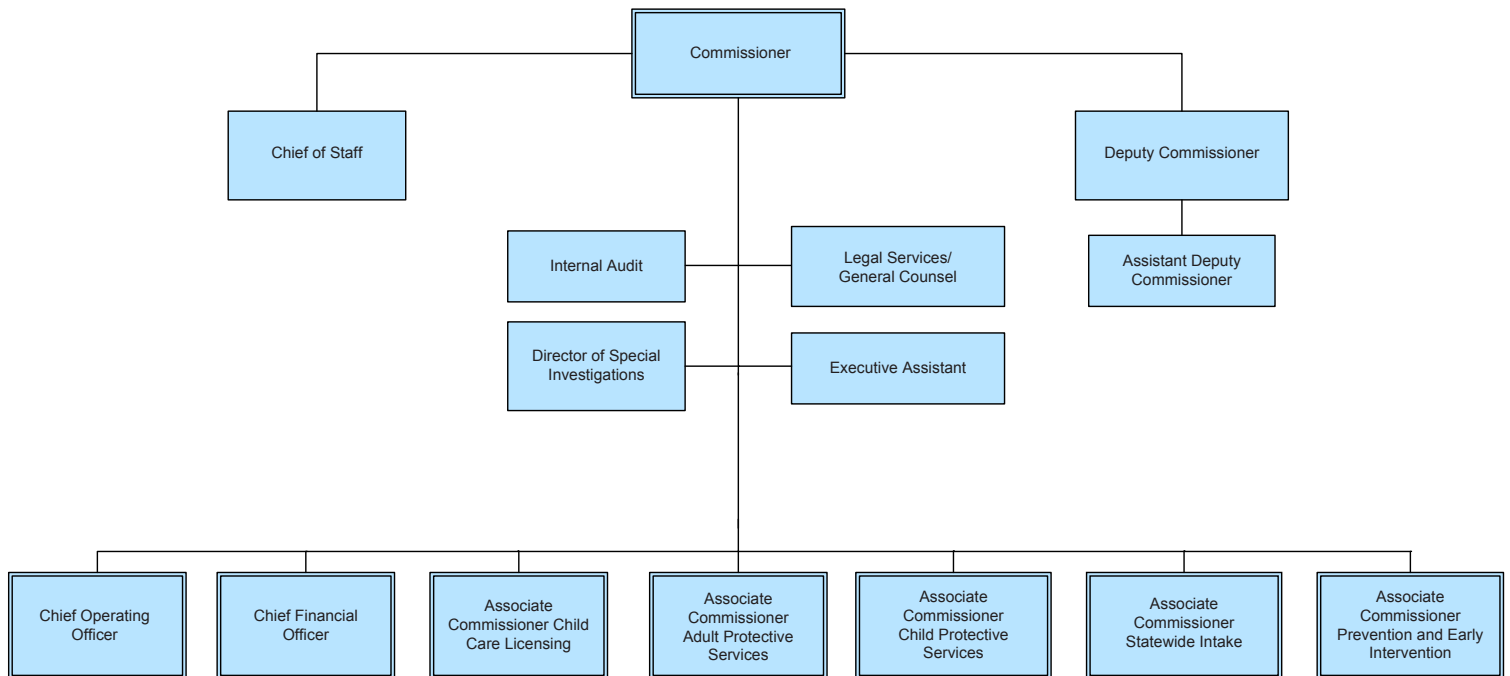
This program served 2,592 families in FY 2017.

Texas Home Visiting

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

Texas Home Visiting funds evidence-based home visiting services to at-risk pregnant women and the parents (or caregivers) of children up to age 5. It also funds early childhood coalitions that work to coordinate services and address broad community issues that affect young children and families. In FY 2017, Texas Home Visiting supported programs in 40 counties and reached a total of 7,766 families.

DFPS Organizational Chart



General Information & Resources

DFPS Hotlines

[Hotlines and Information Lines](#)

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

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

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

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

Child Care Information: 1-800-862-5252

Information about child care in Texas

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

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

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

Make an inquiry or complaint about an existing DFPS case

DFPS Websites

dfps.state.tx.us

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

TxAbuseHotline.org

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation

TxChildCareSearch.org

Find childcare in your area

AdoptChildren.org

Adopt children through the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

HelpandHope.org

Child abuse prevention and positive parenting

AyudayEsperanza.org

TexasYouth.org

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotline

EveryonesBusiness.org

Adult Abuse Prevention

TexasYouthConnection.org

Resources for current and former youth in foster care

DontBelInTheDark.org

Choose regulated child care

NoEsteAOscuras.org

BabyRoomToBreathe.org

Safe sleeping tips for babies

BebeEspacioParaRespirar.org

dfps.state.tx.us/volunteer

Become a DFPS Volunteer

Department Address

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

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

Phone: 512-438-48000