



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Prevention and Early Intervention

**Progress Report on Implementation of
Five-Year Strategic Plan
Fiscal Year 2022**

September 2022

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This report is required by Senate Bill 206, 84th Legislative Session,
Texas Family Code §265.005.

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Executive Summary

The Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) division of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is committed to building a continuum of flexible services that are effective, evidence-based, responsive, and rooted within the communities where families live. This fiscal year, PEI began implementation efforts of its new five-year strategic plan, building upon these community-based prevention programs to maximize the potential of families, preserve the parent-child bond, and promote thriving communities in Texas.

This year, PEI launched a new [webpage](#) dedicated to its 2022-2026 strategic plan. The interactive page outlines Texas' five-year vision for prevention, using seven objectives to support the creation of safe, stable, and nurturing environments for Texas children, youth, families, and communities.

PEI initiated efforts to launch the Texas Prevention Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to invest in innovative, consistent ways to engage youth and families and to receive feedback from youth, parents, and caregivers. The Prevention PAC will focus solely on upstream prevention policies, procedures and programming and assist the division in identifying best practices to engage and support Texas children and families.

PEI released updated community maltreatment risk maps to scale and grow prevention programs and target limited resources to highest-risk Texas communities. The updated maps now assess indicate risk down to the zip code level to more precisely indicate geographic areas in need of support services.

This fiscal year, PEI piloted monthly Grantee Webinars as a new approach to foster grantee professional development. These monthly trainings consisted of topics specific to PEI grantees and addressed different components of how PEI supports providers through training opportunities. Additionally, PEI piloted the Partners in Prevention (PIP) Learning series to provide training opportunities for the wider prevention partners community.

To promote state and community-driven efforts to address the root causes of family vulnerability and make systemic improvements in the environments where children, youth, and families live, learn, work, and play, PEI funded seven new Family Resource Centers (FRCs) through existing prevention providers. These FRCs serve as hub to connect Texas families to supports, services, and opportunities that reflect the needs of each community.

In Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21), the most recent year for which data is available, PEI's network of grantees continued to see a demand for services and served 57,608 unique families and youth. Data shows that more than 97% of children remained safe during services; 99% of youth served have no involvement with the juvenile justice system; and approximately 93% of families showed an increase in at least one protective factor after completing services. All these efforts

strengthen PEI’s central goal of helping children, youth and families live safe, healthy and productive lives.

Introduction

In September 2016, DFPS released the first [five-year strategic plan](#) for prevention and early intervention services in Texas. The plan was developed by DFPS PEI in collaboration with hundreds of stakeholders. Subsequently, in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), PEI published its second [five-year strategic plan for Fiscal Years 2022-2026](#). PEI’s parent and youth partners, community stakeholders, researchers, advocates, and staff all provided input to aid in the creation of this plan.

As exemplified by PEI becoming a stand-alone division of DFPS in 2014, this strategic plan continues to reflect DFPS's shift to including a public health approach aimed at strengthening families. The plan includes seven high-level objectives to make measurable progress on the Department’s prevention strategy over the next five years. These objectives are intentionally broad to allow for continued partnership and collaboration within the agency and Texas communities to meet the needs of children and families over the next five years. This document is the first annual progress report on the new strategic plan, as required by Senate Bill 206, 84th Legislative Session, Texas Family Code §265.005.

Progress Toward Objectives in Fiscal Year 2022

In its five-year strategic plan for prevention and early intervention, DFPS established seven overarching objectives that further PEI’s mission to “create opportunities for children, youth, and families to be strong and healthy by funding community-level, evidence-informed programs and systems of support upstream from crisis and intensive interventions”. PEI’s progress toward those objectives and its vision of “a Texas where all children thrive in their families and communities” is summarized in the following pages.

Objective: Incorporate Parent and Youth Voice.

Parent and Youth Involvement

PEI believes that including and amplifying the voices of individuals with lived experience is critical to the success of its mission and vision. This fiscal year, the division built off our previous work with the Children’s Trust Fund Alliance to hire a PEI staff member with lived experience within the Policy and Prevention Strategy team. Once onboarded, the PEI parent partner began efforts to launch the Texas PEI Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The PEI PAC is uniquely set up to operate separate from other parent councils within DFPS, as it focuses on upstream prevention policies, procedures, and programming as well as assist the division in identifying best practices to engage and support Texas children and families. Currently the

planning committee, comprised of three external parent delegates, is in the process of outlining the PEI PAC's purpose statement, crafting its structure, identifying roles and responsibility, handbook, and identifying necessary trainings to support the parent delegates with the plan of recruiting more parent delegates from across the state to participate in the first ever Texas PEI PAC at the start of the next fiscal year.

Additionally, this fiscal year PEI entered the early stages of planning for a youth ambassador initiative that will mirror the structure of the parent advisory council, and as such, will elevate youth voice in prevention policy and programming efforts.

In FY 2023, PEI will work in collaboration with its youth partners to develop the Youth Ambassador Initiative's structure, processes, manuals, handbooks and trainings to assist in its successful implementation.

Fatherhood Summits

This fiscal year, Fatherhood EFFECT programs across Texas planned and facilitated multiple fatherhood summits in their own communities. These summits brought together fathers, providers, and community stakeholders to discuss and celebrate the importance of fatherhood involvement in overall family wellbeing.

The Motivation, Education, and Training, Inc. (MET) Fatherhood Summit provided community leadership opportunities for fathers and set the stage for better fatherhood services through developing partnerships with community organizations. Several local fathers and close to 50 stakeholders, including social service providers, faith-based organizations, and school districts, were in attendance.

The Family Service Center of Galveston's Father Advisory Committee hosted approximately 225 fathers, families, community partners, board members, and volunteers for their summer Father Fest. During this celebration, attendees participated in numerous games and activities. Each activity required fathers to work collaboratively with their children, with the goal of assisting fathers to feel empowered about the role they play in their children's lives.

STARRY's Father Fest brought together educators, service providers, civic leaders, policy advocates, researchers, and others with a professional interest in child and family well-being. Attendees heard from multiple speakers on topics ranging from engaging military fathers to the importance of father's rights, access, and visitation.

The DePelchin Dads Make a Difference Summit hosted close to 100 in-person and numerous virtual attendees. DePelchin fatherhood specialists polled fathers and community members prior to the conference and worked to secure speakers to address them. Speakers presented attendees with sessions on fatherhood and legacy, co-parenting, and fatherhood from a mental health lens. The event closed with a panel on father's rights and advocacy. Additionally,

throughout the event, in-person attendees had access to a vendor fair with pertinent information for fathers and families.

In June, Buckner Children and Family Services hosted the South East Texas Fatherhood EFFECT 2022 Summit. The summit planning team made up of former fatherhood program participants and fathers in the community, intentionally selected speakers and events to ensure attendees felt welcomed and supported throughout the event. The two-day summit was filled with presentations, food, and a day at the park for father's and their families.

Youth Summit

In June of 2022, PEI convened the highly anticipated in-person Community Youth Development (CYD) Youth Summit. Throughout the fiscal year, the Youth Summit planning committee, comprised of both PEI staff and representatives of youth advisory councils from across Texas, met monthly to plan for a summit that would amplify the work being done by young people all over Texas to strengthen the fabric of their community. Additionally, PEI coordinated with DFPS communications, the University of Texas, and CYD providers to produce a [video](#) for the summit highlighting the positive impacts youth had on their communities.

This year's summit, Discovering Your Purpose, Knowing Your Identity, provided an opportunity for over 100 young leaders in the CYD program to convene with their peers across the state to learn from engaging speakers and workshops, showcase their personal and group achievements in their community, and be encouraged and empowered to activate the positive change they want to see in their community.

Objective: Maximize Investments in Prevention.

PEI uses the following key measures of success to track progress towards the objectives established in the [five-year strategic plan](#):

- Achieve positive contract outcomes for children, families and communities.
- Maximize Funds.
- Create transparency through timely, objective, high quality reports to the state legislature and federal partners.
- Demonstrate a culture of quality and accountability with staff, grantees and partners.

These measures provide PEI with the framework needed to monitor its foundational work and serve as the compass for the division to identify where to prioritize its work.

Achieving Outcomes

PEI manages nine programs that offer free, voluntary, community-based services to children, youth, and families throughout Texas. In FY22, PEI delivered these services through approximately 131 grants, 42 contracts, and an operating budget of \$112,438,021. This fiscal year, PEI funded services met or exceed all required benchmarks. The impact of PEI funded

programs lead to 97% of children remaining safe during services; 99% of youth served having no involvement with the juvenile justice system; and approximately 93% of families showing an increase in at least one protective factor. PEI will publish the Fiscal Year 2022 Outcome Report in December of 2022, detailing the performance metrics of PEI services.

Maximizing Investments

The ability to effectively and efficiently project spending and allocate funding to prevention programs across Texas is crucial to optimizing the effectiveness of grantee's service provision to Texas children, youth, and families. Therefore, PEI continues to report, update, forecast, and track the activity of program budgets by evaluating expenditure data and make projections to maximize PEI's state and federal funds.

PEI created a project work plan that guides staff in high-level contract management as well as establishes the efficient use of appropriated funds throughout the fiscal year. As part of these efforts, our contract management team delivered staff training specific to funds maximization and budget-project alignment. Most notably, PEI expended almost 100% of the FY21 operating budget and is on track to do the same for FY22.

To maximize its investments, PEI strives to maintain effective communication with both its grantees and the DFPS budget office regarding grantee level expenditures and lapse projections. PEI continues to track and report investments monthly to the DFPS budget office through a Budget Issues and Financial Dashboard.

PEI continued to support and manage existing Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) federal grants. This fiscal year, PEI used funding to provide home visiting in 15 communities at-risk for poor maternal and child health outcomes, as identified in the most recent needs assessment. The evidence-based models used included: Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), Parents as Teachers (PAT), Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI), and Healthy Families America. PEI also supported the continued implementation of Family Connects in seven Texas communities. Additionally, PEI worked to develop a Request for Application (RFA) for the Texas Home Visiting (THV) program, which includes MIECHV- and state-funded home visiting programs. Through the RFA PEI hopes to expand MIECHV home visiting serve to more families and communities in Texas and to increase the number of families participating in MIECHV-funded programs.

In addition, PEI continued managing new and existing Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding. Over the last year PEI utilized CBCAP funds to continue supporting Family Resource Centers; Fatherhood EFFCT programs; Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) innovation; and Service Members, Veterans, and Families Programs. PEI also used

CBCAP funds to continue its universal prevention campaign, parent education strategies, public awareness campaigns, and the Partners in Prevention conference.

Contract Oversight

PEI's Contract Management and Oversight (CMO) team successfully managed 131 grants, 42 contracts, 203 subgrantees, and successfully completed the annual risk assessments for all PEI contracts and grants. Additionally, CMO staff completed 25 monitoring throughout FY22 to ensure grant funds were utilized as intended to meet program goals; secured three procurements and one new funding opportunity; completed five work orders; and paid 1,278 invoices.

To establish uniformity; reduce error; streamline workloads; and support cross-training, orientation, and succession planning, PEI continued the process of user testing and building out the contract and grant handbook to establish clear processes, policies, and functions; and provide staff with a consistent source of contract management and monitoring steps. This year, PEI reviewed all staff feedback gathered during the previous fiscal year related to the revised the handbook and began incorporating feedback on recommended policy and procedure changes.

In order to improve the overall infrastructure, PEI brought on a consultant to analyze the current grant oversight infrastructure; identify gaps in any policies, procedures, and staff support; and recommend improvements. The contractor worked within the division to collect feedback from PEI staff (including leadership and managers) and reviewed internal processes and clarify roles and responsibilities. Their assessment lead to division-wide recommendations that PEI leadership will review and assess for how to best implement in the coming fiscal year.

PEI continues building upon our work during the previous fiscal years to strengthen our relationships with community partners and streamline our grant agreement processes. PEI developed and strengthened policies and procedures to build on efficiencies within the division and streamlined the invoice submission process for timely bill processing. As in previous fiscal years, the CMO team provided ongoing technical assistance regarding grantees monthly and quarterly reports as well as any invoicing issues. Additionally, when staff identified the need for amendments, almost all were processed prior to the effective date, and within 30 days of finalizing all required documentation. Lastly, PEI continues to liaise with the Contract Oversight and Support Division and external oversight entities in their quality assurance efforts, implementing all recommended action items based on the timely review of all grants and contracts and complied with all relevant requirements.

Community Work

The most important work of PEI is happening with children, youth, and families in communities. The following highlights some successes of PEI's programs for the fiscal year:

Community Youth Development (CYD)

The Children's Center - Galveston County

The Odyssey LIFT Coffee Program provides an opportunity for youth in Galveston to develop numerous skills as they prepare for adulthood. Youth from the LIFT program were invited to serve coffee at local events, including at their local library. The program recently partnered with the owner of a successful restaurant in the area to mentor participants regarding entrepreneurship. This year, program participants presented a summary of the LIFT Coffee Cart business at a local Rotary Club meeting. These youth were able to use the public speaking and leadership skills developed during the CYD Summer Work Experience program to clearly communicate the business design and recent successes to local community leaders. Facilitators of the program reported that through participation in this innovative program, youth were able to secure jobs in local restaurants after listing their coffee cart work experience on their resume.

Family and Youth Success (FAYS)

ACCESS – Da

The Rogers family entered the FAYS program due to a recent increase in family conflict. The family, consisting of the grandfather, step grandmother, two teenage granddaughters and a 12-year-old grandson, have been together since Child Protective Services removed the children from their mother and placed them with their grandparents. The family conflict escalated after the grandfather passed away and the grandmother's mental and physical health subsequently began to decline. To address the issues within the family, the grandmother participated in and completed Parenting Wisely, a parenting program offered through FAYS. Through the skills learned through this program, the grandmother was able to support the oldest granddaughter when she found out she was pregnant; something she does not think she would have been able to do prior. Program facilitators noted during a recent family visit that the family's communication skills and empathy for one another improved significantly after completing the program.

Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)

SAFE Alliance - Travis County

Martin elected to participate in SAFE's parent support programming to assist him in his new role as a stepfather of two. Martin was in the foster care system as a child due to suspected abuse in his home. At the beginning of the parenting program, Martin justified the physical punishment he received as a child since he was "just a bad kid". The parent educator was able to help Martin unpack his childhood and realize there is no such thing as a "bad kid". Martin was also able to identify alternatives that could have been used instead of the physical

punishment he received as a child. After discussing physical punishment during various Nurturing Parenting lessons, Martin has learned alternatives to physical punishment and how to connect with his young children and actively support their well-being and happiness.

Service Members, Veterans, and Families (SMVF)

Child Crisis Center – El Paso

In September of 2021, Grace joined her local SMFV program after hearing information about it through an outreach coordinator at an event in her community. At the time, Grace was pregnant, parenting two children, and feeling overwhelmed at her husband's upcoming deployment. She mentioned wanting to participate in program classes to sharpen her parenting strategies. As an Active-Duty spouse, Grace was far away from her family and friends. Through her eager participation in group classes, she was able to become part of the community of parent participants and was even able to set up a play date for her children with other group members. When it was time to have her baby, Grace was able to access childcare through the program so that her husband was able to attend the birth of their baby. After the baby's birth, Grace continued to attend classes until she completed the STEP curriculum and is looking to enroll in wraparound services through the program. Grace stated that through the SMFV program she was able to both learn parenting strategies and develop a system of support to help her not feel so alone.

Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP)

Wellness Pointe –Gregg County

When Monica first enrolled with Nurse Family Partnership she told her nurse her goal of obtaining her college degree. Monica's pregnancy was very difficult and caused her to have to leave her job for the duration. The sudden loss of income, as well as increasing medical and baby expenses, caused tension between her and the father of the baby, with whom she was living. Just after baby was born, the father of the baby left, making Monica a single parent. With the help of her nurse home visitor Monica was able to navigate and use several government and community resources to secure housing, employment, and stable childcare. When Monica was ready, she worked with her nurse home visitor to enroll in a local community college, where she eventually earned her degree. This past December, Monica was hired as a medical assistant and used her nurse as a personal reference. She is on track to graduate from the TNFP program in two months with a thriving child and having reached all her goals.

Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN)

Big Brothers Big Sisters – El Paso

Lucas' mother referred him to Big Brothers Big Sisters after witnessing him struggle to cope after his father left and started a new family. His mom witnessed her son begin to lack confidence and feel ashamed as his relationship with his father deteriorated. Lucas began to avoid interacting with other adults and youth, including no longer attending school. However,

when Lucas was assigned a Big Brother the change in him was evident. Lucas' Big Brother intentionally would take Lucas to places where he could practice his conversation skills with others. Lucas was able to talk to his Big Brother about things he didn't feel comfortable expressing with his mother, including his relationship with his dad and going back to school. Lucas' relationship with his Big Brother even encouraged him to begin a sport through the YMCA so that he could have more interaction with his peers. Lucas' mother loves seeing her son grow and change through his involvement with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Texas Home Visiting (THV)

University of Texas Permian Basin - Midland Counties

Cara, a mother currently enrolled with the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI) program, was suffering from severe depression. Because of this, her home visitor provided Cara with extra activities that promoted self-care and would check in on her multiple times per week, in addition to the normal curricula. After receiving this intentional support Cara's text to her home visitor sums up the support provided by THV, "I don't think I've told you enough how much I appreciate you. I'm so happy that I signed up for this program and that it put you in our path. My kids have benefitted so much from this program, and me too!! I've gotten closer with them and it's helped me evolve into a better parent and teacher. You're a great home visitor. I appreciate you so much! I just wanted to let you know that you've made a difference in my life, and my kids' lives."

Fatherhood EFFECT

DePelchin Children's Center – Harris County

Jason joined his local 24/7 Dad program in September of 2021. The virtual format allowed Jason, a truck driver who worked long hours, the opportunity to participate in groups from highway rest stops. It was clear to the facilitators that Jason was going through a hard time. During his first few sessions, he struggled to open up; however, as Jason attended more sessions, he began to progressively share more about his life and thoughts on fatherhood. Slowly, Jason revealed to the group more about his parents and what it was like growing up with a physically abusive father. Both the facilitators and other group members validated Jason's experience and offered their support. During one of his final sessions, Jason shared with the group that due to his job, his relationships with his wife and children had been neglected. During group, Jason committed to making the necessary adjustments at work in order to prioritize being there for his loved ones. Program facilitators stated that through his participation in the group, Jason made notable progress in expressing his feelings and eventually became a leading voice in his group.

Grant Opportunities

PEI achieves prevention service delivery by releasing grant opportunities to partner with organizations. These grant opportunities allow PEI to serve children, youth, and families within communities that could benefit from additional resources. PEI developed a plan to outline

opportunities for programs through Fiscal Year 2026 (see Table 1). In addition, PEI holds weekly meetings with key staff to forecast service needs and develop grant opportunities. These grant opportunities are formally offered to communities through the Request for Application (RFA) process. PEI continued to execute all relevant grant agreements timely to continue critical service provision across the state of Texas.

Table 1: Grant Opportunity Schedule

Program	Grant Start Date	Grant End Date	Next Application Opportunity
FAYS (Formerly STAR)	December 2017	August 2023	Applications due October 6, 2022
Fatherhood EFFECT	September 2019	August 2024	Fall 2023
HOPES	September 2019	August 2025	Summer 2024
SMVF	September 2021	August 2025	Fall 2024
TNFP	September 2021	August 2026	Spring 2025
CYD	September 2021	August 2026	Fall 2025
THV	September 2022	August 2027	Fall 2026
SYSN	September 2022	August 2027	Summer 2026

PEI Staff Professional Development

PEI leadership is committed to ensuring that staff develop the skills necessary to support prevention programming. Leadership encourages staff to seek out internal and external opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills. Specifically, staff are encouraged to capitalize on the internal trainings offered through PEI's Learning Hub. The hub is updated quarterly with content that provides staff with a variety of engaging, web based, professional development opportunities.

PEI continuously takes steps to hire and retain qualified staff dedicated to its mission. As part of PEI's staff recruitment and retention efforts, job descriptions, annual work plans, and staff performance evaluations are updated routinely. The PEI division is also working to establish metrics and performance goals to evaluate staff performance related to grantee support. In addition, PEI is working to develop a comprehensive new employee orientation that spans a new employees first 90 days of employment to effectively introduce new staff to their role within the division. PEI staff also participate in regular, ongoing supervision. This allows both new and seasoned employees ongoing, protected time to staff work-related situations, celebrate accomplishments and participate in individual professional development with their supervisor.

Embracing Healthy Accountability

PEI believes it is critical to the integrity of its work to solicit feedback from our grantees and other relevant stakeholders. This fiscal year, PEI grantees completed an online annual satisfaction survey as part of the continuous quality improvement work within the division. While responses were collected anonymously, respondents could provide contact information if they wanted follow-up on their responses from PEI staff. Overall, on average grantees rated PEI 4.5 out of 5. PEI's staff's communication and responsiveness were also rated 4 out of 5, overall. On individual items, staff and PEI's printed information were rated consistently high by respondents. To provide a more direct line of communication with PEI grantees, the Chief Prevention and Community Well-Being Officer, and the Deputy Chief of PEI formed a Grantee Roundtable comprised of representation from across the state that represented all of PEI's funded program. This allowed executive leadership to gather input, information, and hear about real-time concerns from PEI funded programs.

American Rescue Plan Act

Over the past few years, PEI was awarded federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to combat the challenges of a global pandemic which compounded the struggles children and families were already facing. This fiscal year, PEI used supplemental ARPA funding awarded to CBCAP lead agencies to fund activities that include:

- Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Intervention Services program expansion;

- Texas Nurse Family Partnership program expansion;
- Community Youth Development program expansion;
- Innovative Funding Opportunity for current grantees;
- Family Resource Centers;
- Expansion of Youth Helpline to include a Parent Helpline;
- PEI program capacity and infrastructure; and
- Improved tracking and reporting of PEI outcomes.

PEI also used ARPA funding supplemental to the Maternal Infants and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant for approved activities. PEI prioritized use of funds to support recruitment and retention of the home visiting workforce through incentive payments. These payments went a long way to support staff as they managed the challenges of working during the pandemic and their responsibilities to their own families, and to help them feel valued for their important front-line work. Grantees described incentive pay as a great morale booster. In one example a home visitor decided to use the funding towards college classes at a local community college, “It was such a blessing for the extra money we’ve gotten each month, now I’m back at school!” Funding also went toward training for home visitors and grocery cards, emergency supplies, and technology supports for families enrolled in home visiting services.

Furthermore, this fiscal year, DFPS was allocated a portion of the pandemic Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars to aid specific programs in providing emergency basic needs assistance for families served in PEI programs. PEI awarded \$5,325,000 to grantees to assist families with non-recurrent, short term benefits based on family need. One PEI CYD grantee was able to utilize basic needs funding for a family that needed assistance with their utility payments. The family had no running water in their home for a while. When campus counselors notified CYD staff, they immediately completed the proper documentation needed for to allocate funds to the CYD student's household. The family gained their services due to the outstanding bill being paid in full.

Additionally, PEI allocated the majority of round one of supplemental ARPA funding for Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MECHV) grants directly to MIECHV local implementing agencies. Agencies primarily used funds for incentive retention payments.

Helping through Intervention and Prevention Program Transition

The Family First Prevention Service Act (FFPSA) aims to divert children from entering foster care by allowing federal match for evidence-based in-home parenting programs, substance abuse treatment, and mental health services; reduce the number of children in congregate care; and support Kinship Placements in lieu of non-familial substitute placements. This fiscal year,

the broader Prevention and Community Wellbeing (PCW) division identified the Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP) program as an established PEI program that could readily meet the FFPSA requirements for future draw-down of Title VI-E funds. The HIP program provides voluntary, in-home parent education using evidence-based or promising practice programs and other support services to families who are experiencing adversity, have a newborn, and have been involved with the child welfare system, including current and former pregnant or parenting foster youth.

Beginning in fiscal year 2023, PEI will incorporate the HIP program into the HOPES grants in order to strengthen capacity to serve pregnant and parenting youth in care. Project HOPES is a flexible community grant that funds a wide variety of innovative initiatives and supports for families with children 5 years old and younger.

TNFP Program Expansion to Serve Pregnant and Parenting Youth

This fiscal year, the Department used \$3,560,000 of CBCAP American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) supplemental funding of 2021 to expand the TNFP program in five communities and an additional \$1,300,000 each year in Family First Federal Transition Act (FFTA) funds for NFP to expand capacity as allowed by the FFPSA.

DFPS' PEI division is in the process of finalizing contract updates to incorporate FFTA funds into four existing TNFP contracts to serve pregnant and parenting youth in foster care. PEI is also in the process of adding mental health consultation services to the contract with the NFP National Service Office (NSO) to better support NFP sites providing services to pregnant and parenting youth in foster care.

Objective: Utilize Research to Inform the Most Effective Prevention Strategies

Research and Evaluation Projects

In line with PEI's new strategic plan, the division continues to prioritize data-driven decision making, based on community need and programmatic capacity, to strategically deploy funding for service expansion. The table in [Appendix A](#) summarizes PEI-commissioned research that was started or completed in FY22 and any upcoming reports. Reports are available either on [PEI's website](#) or can be made available upon request.

Enhancing Program Quality

PEI continues to evaluate, expand, and support innovative prevention practices utilizing data, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts. In FY22, in line with and expanding on federal requirements, PEI enhanced CQI initiatives by leading ongoing learning

collaboratives and providing CQI training to individual and teams of grantees. During FY22, sites focused on developmental screenings, referrals, and well-child visits. Within these initiatives, PEI worked with grantees to develop a variety of information briefs highlighting the importance of well-child visits. These briefs include information relevant to a variety of intended audiences including caregivers, service providers, and home visitors.

PEI also collaborated with home visitors to test a script to increase home visitor's comfort level in having difficult conversations with caregivers when their child requires a developmental screening. Additionally, PEI continues to encourage grantees to include parent and youth voice as part of their CQI efforts.

PEI continues state level CQI work on the statewide safe sleep project, to better understand and work with families to practice safe sleep with their infants. This fiscal year, PEI focused efforts on training home visitors on how to effectively encourage safe sleep. The CQI Coordinator utilized a course developed by Michigan Public Health: Helping Families Practice Infant Safe Sleep.

PEI utilized past evaluation findings and continue to develop both internal and external surveys to enhance division strategy. The research and evaluation team disseminated evaluation findings from previous fiscal years to PEI staff and grantees during the Partners in Prevention Conference. In addition, PEI began developing information briefs and infographics detailing the evaluation results to disseminate to grantees to guide conversations surrounding program impact.

National Family Support Network's (NSFN) Standards of Quality

PEI broadened the use and endorsement of the NSFN Standards of Quality and accompanying assessment tool both internally and with grantees. This fiscal year, PEI trained over 350 grantees in the assessment and implementation of the NSFN Standards of Quality and the NSFN Program Self-Assessment Tool.

According to NSFN, the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support are designed to be used by public departments, foundations, networks, community-based organizations, and families as a tool for planning, providing, and assessing quality practice. The Standards operationalize the Principles of Family Support Practice and the Strengthening Families Framework and Approach with its research-based evidence-informed five Protective Factors.

This fiscal year, PEI began using this assessment as part of its internal continuous quality improvement process. The Special Projects team guided staff through the task of completing the initial PEI Self-Assessment Tool to assess agency alignment in the five standards of quality domains.

Promoting the Use of the Evidence-Based Spectrum

PEI continues to focus efforts to support the use of the evidence-based spectrum when selecting and evaluating programs. This spectrum includes models and interventions designated as evidence-based; which now incorporates evidence-informed promises and practices into its definition; and promising practices depending on the rigor and volume of research supporting their efficacy. Currently, 100% of PEI early childhood programs and approximately 85% of youth and family programming utilize evidence-based models. PEI staff continuously provide technical assistance and training to grantees related to model implementation, fidelity, appropriate data entry, and quality assurance efforts. Additionally, this fiscal year PEI revised, updated, and implemented our grantee program monitoring process and tool. These processes will assist PEI in future promotion and monitoring of evidence-based service provision.

Legislatively Required Reports

Table two outlines PEI's legislatively required reports that are published to the [public website](#) annually between August 31st and March 1st.

Table 2: Legislatively Required Reports

Date	Description	PEI Lead
September 1	Annual Strategic Plan Update	Policy and Prevention Strategies
October 1	Coordination for Youth Prevention and Intervention Services (Annual Rider 17 Report)	Youth and Families
October 30	Annual MIECHV Discretionary Grant Information Systems (DGIS) Performance Data Report	Research and Evaluation
December 1	Biennial PEI Outcomes Report (Includes: Home Visiting Program Biennial Report requirement; Prevention Programs for Veterans and Military Families requirement; Parenting Education Programs Biennial Report requirement)	Research and Evaluation
December 1	Annual Texas Nurse-Family Partnership Grant Recipient Performance Evaluation	Research and Evaluation
December 28	Annual MIECHV Final Report and Evaluation	Research and Evaluation, Policy and Prevention Strategies and Early Childhood
January 31	Annual CBCAP Report	Policy and Prevention Strategies
February 28	Annual MIECHV CQI Plan	Research and Evaluation
March 1	Child Maltreatment Fatalities and Near Fatalities Annual Report	Office of Child Safety
October 31, January 31, April 31, and July 31	MIECHV American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Supplemental Grant Quarterly Reporting	Policy and Prevention Strategies and Early Childhood

Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS)

PEI continues to use PEIRS in all of its programs as part of an ongoing effort to streamline data collection, organization, and analysis. The PEI Research and Evaluation team provides technical assistance to internal and external PEIRS users regarding correct systems usage and timeliness of data entry on an ongoing basis. This fiscal year, research and evaluation staff collaborated with the Department's Information Technology division to create a PEIRS report to identify data entry, system usage, and timeliness issues.

The team continues to support the development and refinement of several PEIRS outcome reports in the data analysis and visualization system, Tableau, as part of ongoing expansion efforts. These reports assist PEI in effectively reporting data regarding home visiting services to relevant stakeholders. PEI research and evaluation staff created and rolled out a training plan to assist staff in understanding and utilizing the available data in PEIRS and within DFPS data warehouse reports.

Data and Monitoring

PEI is committed to ensuring provider program's data collection is both efficient and correct. PEI continues to utilize a data dashboard to assist with internal monthly and quarterly briefings that tracks target output and outcome measures for each grantee as a tool to validate that each program is meeting their performance measures. The Research and Evaluation team continues to serve as subject matter experts and stewards of data to certify both internal and external stakeholders have proper agreements in place to share and match data. Currently, PEI has memoranda of understandings with both state agencies (including the Department of State Health Services and Health and Human Services Commission) and external partners (University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler, University of Texas at Austin, and University of Texas Medical Branch).

Internal Quality Assurance

PEI continues to improve quality assurance efforts and good stewardship of program data, funding, and relationships with grantees using dashboards, budget reviews, and technical assistance. PEI's dashboards organize information regarding critical aspects of our services. Examples include:

- The PEI financial dashboard - allows the team to stay informed of the division's financial pulse, year-end expenditures and ways to maximize available funding.
- The DFPS executive dashboard - assists leadership in fostering a culture of accountability and data-informed decision making for key agency priorities.
- The PEI internal dashboard - keeps the division's leadership informed of staff turnover and workload, and performance metrics.
- The PEI contracting dashboard - holds all critical information about our contracts in a central location.
- The PEI data dashboard - tracks target output and outcome measures for each PEI grantee to provide a tool for both grantees and PEI to validate that programs are meeting their performance measures that are reported both to the Legislature and PEI's federal partners.
- Quality Incentive Project – PEI tracks performance that exceeds grant requirements through the utilization of individualized grantee scorecards.
- Quarterly Performance Reports - PEI assists grantees track their contract requirements and report on performance target variances.

PEI continues to have success utilizing the above listed dashboards to maintain quality assurance measures.

Think Tanks

This fiscal year, PEI began efforts to convene Think Tanks to assist the division to develop and implement strategies in real time over the next five years. These think tanks are intended to stimulate dialogue, draw upon the experience and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders, and make recommendations for addressing the issues related to its assigned topic to grow prevention programming in Texas. During FY21, PEI identified five focus areas of interest for these think tanks, which include:

- Researching Child Maltreatment and Evaluating Prevention Efforts
- Designing Prevention based on Lived-Experience
- Addressing Racial Inequities in Strengthening Families
- Promoting Positive Community Norms
- Maximizing and Sustaining Financing

During FY22, PEI worked with community stakeholders to identify which of these Think Tanks they would like to participate in, as well as which areas PEI should focus on in the coming fiscal year. At the close of the fiscal year, PEI staff began the process of scheduling kick off meetings for both the Researching Child Maltreatment and Evaluating Prevention Efforts and Addressing Racial Inequities in Strengthening Families Think Tanks.

Objective: Utilize a Public-Health Framework

PEI's five-year strategic plan is rooted in a public-health framework to prevent the behaviors that lead to child maltreatment and fatalities by supporting positive child, family, and community outcomes. PEI continuously works to identify how to strengthen families through a public health perspective that includes health equity strategies.

Growth Strategy Based on Community Need

In FY20, PEI contracted with The University of Texas Health Science Center-Tyler to develop the [community maltreatment risk maps](#); a tool that is used to meet PEI's statutory requirement for increasing the number of families receiving prevention and early intervention services. At the close of FY21, PEI collaborated with various community partners to begin updating the data set used within the mapping tool. This fiscal year, PEI release the updated version of the community maltreatment risk maps. The maps show community risks based on the following variables: health and disability, income level, family poverty, safety, childcare enrollment, formal education enrollment, assaults resulting in medical care, and infant mortality.

The updated maps indicate risk down to the zip code level, and grouped by child age, to more precisely indicate geographic areas in need of support services. PEI will continue to use these maps to inform program design and strategic planning as well as target areas for PEI programming and to inform and develop all relevant RFAs.

Preventing Child Fatalities

In March 2022, the Office of Child Safety (OCS) published the [Fiscal Year 2021 Child Maltreatment Fatalities and Near Fatalities Annual Report](#) in accordance with Texas Family Code §261.204. This report supports internal and external efforts to provide awareness on and address risk factors associated with child maltreatment fatalities and near-fatalities. In addition, the report encourages the ongoing work of PEI to promote positive outcomes for Texas children within their established communities and families.

The OCS team serves on the State Child Fatality Review Team Committee. This committee aims to reduce the number of preventable child deaths in Texas through establishing a knowledge base surrounding the causes of child fatalities in Texas, recommending policy changes, and identifying gaps in state agency practices that could lead to unintentional child deaths. Through OCS' participation, the team offers insight and expertise to identify and implement effective prevention strategies that decrease the incidence of preventable child deaths throughout the state. In addition, OCS provides training and technical assistance to community stakeholders regarding trends and patterns in child fatalities as well as ways Texas communities can address the associated risk factors.

Training and Technical Assistance

PEI offers year-round training opportunities and technical assistance calls for grantees and a variety of stakeholders to increase their professional knowledge, understanding, and competency within their respective roles. Through the development of our annual training plan, PEI continued to strategically provide extensive training opportunities, in various instructional formats, for grantees, staff, and the community at large.

This fiscal year, PEI provided grantee professional development through PEI grantee specific webinars. These trainings consisted of topics specific to PEI grantees and addressed different components of how PEI supports providers through training opportunities. PEI also launched Prevention Updates with PEI – a quarterly series designed to keep PEI grantees informed of prevention activities across Texas. PEI also provided training to our entire prevention community through engaging discussions on broader prevention programming, innovations, and initiatives. PEI began offering micro-chats for the prevention community. These chats align with the social media toolkits to help keep the conversation going around each particular topic. The first micro-chat launched in May focusing on maternal mental health, followed by one in June focused on water safety. PEI will continue all training opportunities in FY23.

PEI continued utilizing the PEI Learning Hub as the centralized point for stakeholders to access engaging webinars, video courses, and handouts for a range of professional development topics. PEI updated the hub quarterly with new, innovative training topics, as requested by division and program provider staff to provide learning opportunities to parents, youth, and the grantees who serve them. The PEI Research and Evaluation team continues to provide training surrounding the PEIRS database and quality data entry to support prevention quality improvement work. Using the FY22 Training Plan PEI continued offering various learning opportunities to support our various community partners.

PEI's Partners in Prevention Conference (PIP) brings together the largest group of prevention and early intervention professionals in Texas. The 21st annual PIP Conference, which took place November 2 - 4, 2021, pivoted to hybrid as the division continued to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift allowed for over 700 virtual and 300 in-person participants for a total of over 1,000 parent educators, youth service providers, civic leaders, policy advocates, researchers, and other child and family wellbeing professionals to participate in three days of leaning and networking. The conference theme was: Forging Forward Together: Nurturing Families and Communities and consisted of three keynote speakers and multiple breakout sessions.

Towards the end of the fiscal year, PEI made strides in the planning and promoting of the upcoming PIP Conference. In September 2022, PEI will host the FY23 PIP Conference, Anchored in Purpose.

Public Awareness and Communication

PEI is committed to supporting community-based agencies in their communication efforts. As part of the FY22 communications and outreach strategy the PEI communications team continued rolling out a variety of PEI social media toolkits. These toolkits offer materials and messaging around a variety of topics relevant to prevention and early intervention that both support grantees with their own social media efforts and promote links to online resources through [GetParentingTips.com](https://www.getparentingtips.com), our parenting support site for the general public. Toolkits were planned and promoted in sync with national and global observances. This year, PEI offered toolkits regarding Suicide Prevention month (September), Bullying Prevention month (October), Strengthening Families month (January), Healthy Relationships month (February), Safe Sleep Awareness week (March), Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), Mental Health Awareness month and Water Safety month (May), and Breastfeeding Awareness and Promotion month (August). These toolkits are currently available on the DFPS Prevention and Early Intervention [Grantee Information Hub webpage](#).

This fiscal year, PEI continued promoting the rebranded public awareness campaign [GetParentingTips.com](https://www.getparentingtips.com). The website was rebranded and launched on December 15th, 2020 and continues to provide up-to-date tips, articles, information, and resources for handling the

challenges of parenting, managing stress, and keeping children safe and healthy at all stages of development, from prenatal to adolescent years. PEI and DFPS Communications continued to develop video resources for parents on the GetParentingTips.com platform, with topics covering [How to Manage Parenting Stress](#), [how to help your children handle anxiety](#), and [Building a Family Support System](#). The PEI communications team continues to curate innovative content on diverse topics, organized by different age groups. The division continues buying adds in order to promote the redesigned website, which has shown an increase in engagement and website traffic since the December 2020 launch.

In addition to the website, PEI continues to establish a presence on social media through Facebook and Instagram. PEI's Facebook page is liked by over 37,000 followers in addition to our over 2,000 Instagram followers. PEI staff continue to update the social media sites in accordance with the revolving website content. This fiscal year, the team developed written content regarding communications related topics to community partners via ongoing division and provider newsletters, updates, and through hosting a social media meeting for our grantees. Additionally, all PEI information, including communications and outreach material, can be found on the newly updated [PEI Grantee Information Hub](#) found on the DFPS website.

Community Toolkit

At the start of the fiscal year PEI, with support from Casey Family Programs, launched a public-facing [Community Toolkit](#). This toolkit offers a range of resources for community members, whether an individual, an organization, or an existing coalition, who are searching for ways to support a collaborative approach to creating a local prevention strategy that promotes protective factors in children, youth, and families and reduce the need for costly intervention later.

The PEI Community Toolkit:

- Provides tools to develop a foundational framework for prevention efforts;
- Catalogues existing tools and resources that diverse communities and community partners can use to address a continuum of specific needs, deploy a prevention strategy, and successfully meet families where they are in their parenting journey; and
- Compiles publicly available data that communities can use to develop data driven, community-level prevention strategy.

The toolkit is a one-stop resource hub that supports communities in various stages of developing a prevention strategy. Over the next fiscal year, PEI will continue building out the Community Toolkit with additional resources to provide community members up to date resources to support ongoing prevention efforts in all Texas communities.

Pediatric Brain Summit

This fiscal year, PEI continued our collaboration with the University of Texas Population Health, the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Episcopal Health Foundation, and the St. David's Foundation to hold the 2022 Pediatric Brain Health Summit on March 7th and 8th. This year's summit focused on "Working Together to Support Relational Health in Families."

The summit was attended by approximately 1,000 professionals and stakeholders and included sessions regarding:

- Mandatory Reporting Versus Mandatory Supporting;
- The Role of Pediatrics in Promoting Safe Stable Nurturing Environments;
- Building the Ecosystem to Take the Science of the Positive to Scale;
- Plan of Safe Care: Giving Families Control Over Their Health/Treatment;
- Healthy Communities and Thriving Families: Role of Pediatrics;
- Modeling in the Clinic and Community;
- Optimizing and Supporting Food Bank/Health Care Partnerships in Texas; and
- The Help Me Grow Initiative.

This virtual event is part of the larger Texas Pediatric Brain Health Initiative, a multi-sector, multi-agency collaboration focused on the prenatal to three-year-old developmental window. The initiative uses the current science on pediatric brain development to help inform and support programs that promote community resilience and optimal development in Texas' children.

Objective: Promote Equitable Access for all Texas Children and Families

Disaggregate Data

In FY22, PEI continued participation in a Casey Family Program collaborative to assist PEI increase providers' understanding of the varied needs of children and families being served across Texas. Through this collaborative, PEI disaggregated data to garner a better understanding of who is seeking prevention services in Texas and the factors that led them to seek support. PEI's disaggregated data looked at the different referral paths of program participants, length of time served, reason for discharge or service termination, and different outcomes for children and families, including but not limited to child welfare and juvenile justice involvement.

At the close of the fiscal year, PEI began conducting virtual listening sessions with grantees across six Texas communities to review and participate in intentional conversations around the disaggregated data for their community. In FY23, PEI will hold focus groups in the same communities with parents with the goal of overlaying the findings of this analysis with the community maltreatment risk maps. Through this, PEI hopes to review service provision through community data related to level of risk and determine the extent to which we are effectively serving Texas children and families.

Objective: Address the Root Causes of Family Vulnerability

Family Resource Centers

This fiscal year, PEI funded seven new Family Resource Centers (FRCs) through existing prevention providers. These FRCs serve as hub to connect Texas families to supports, services, and opportunities that reflect the needs of each community. This initiative supports the development of strong communities for the families that live there and ultimately helps keep children safely at home with their families.

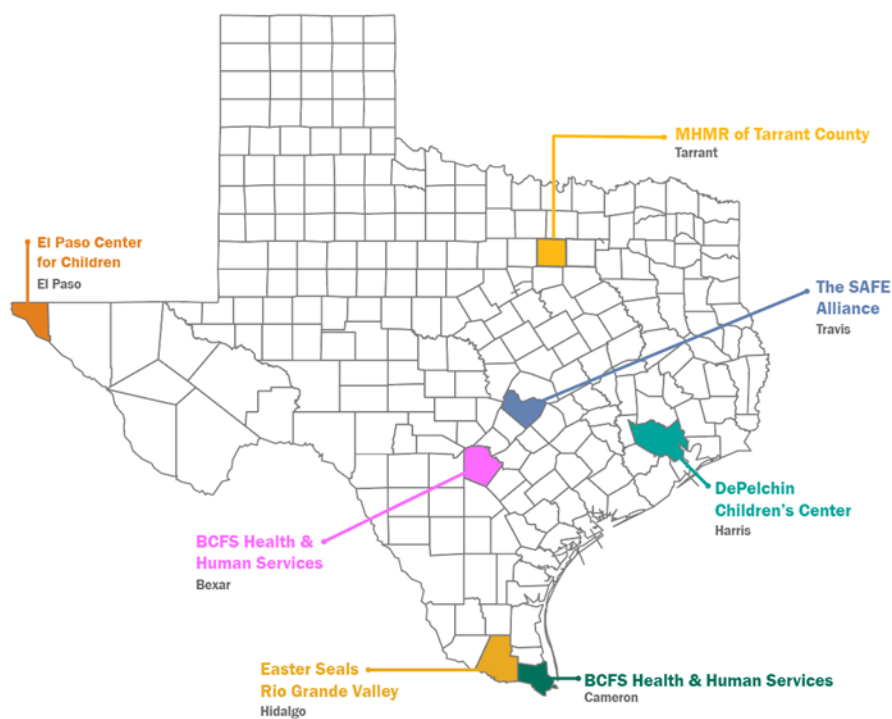


Figure 1: Map of FRC Locations

All Texas FRCs are required to include resource navigation in their service delivery and allow for families to engage in services at varying levels of intensity, based on service type. Compared to FRCs that primarily offer case management, Texas FRCs offer other service activities which include parent education, child development education and/or screening, parent leadership opportunities, skill-based workshops, and/or basic needs assistance; depending on specified community needs. An overview of the services provided at each FRC is outlined in the following table.

Table 3: Family Resource Center Grantees and Services

County	Grantee	Service Area Highlight
Bexar County	BCFS Health and Human Services	Organization will target high needs areas to provide resource navigation as well parent advisory committees and other family voice initiatives.
Cameron County	BCFS Health and Human Services	Local headquarters offering group therapeutic workshops; caregiver support groups; parent advisory committees; group connection events; skill-based workshops.
Harris County	DePelchin Children’s Center	Community center offering parenting education and money management courses; caregiver support groups, drop-in services; child development resources.
El Paso County	El Paso Center for Children	Community center in a public housing location offering parenting education; basic needs assistance; life skills classes; family health and wellness activities; caregiver support groups; drop-in services.
Hidalgo County	Easter Seals Rio Grande Valley	Community center offering counseling; diaper/basic needs pantry; legal assistance; group connection events; development screenings; drop-in play.
Tarrant County	MHMR of Tarrant County	A Help Me Grow site offering Parent Cafés; Trust-Based Relational Therapy (TBRI); Nurturing Parenting; story times; health eating workshops; and parent-child groups.
Travis County	SAFE Alliance Travis County	School-based program offering parenting groups; life skills classes; parent-child STEAM classes; leadership development.

Beginning in FY23, PEI will work with service providers to evaluate the impact of FRCs in Texas communities. Through this, PEI will assess the benefits of expanding these services in the coming years.

Kinship Navigator

PEI believes that kinship caregivers play a critical role in fostering the safety and wellbeing of children and assists the Department in their mission to keep children safely together with their families, within their own communities. In 2019, Congress appropriated funds under Title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Social Security Act to support the development, implementation, enhancement, or evaluation of evidence-based kinship navigator programs. Kinship navigator programs are designed to support the many informal kinship placements that occur outside the child welfare

system. In general, these programs assist kinship caregivers in accessing programs and services to meet their needs, as well as the children in their care.

This fiscal year select PEI grantees began implementing plans for their perspective kinship navigator programs.

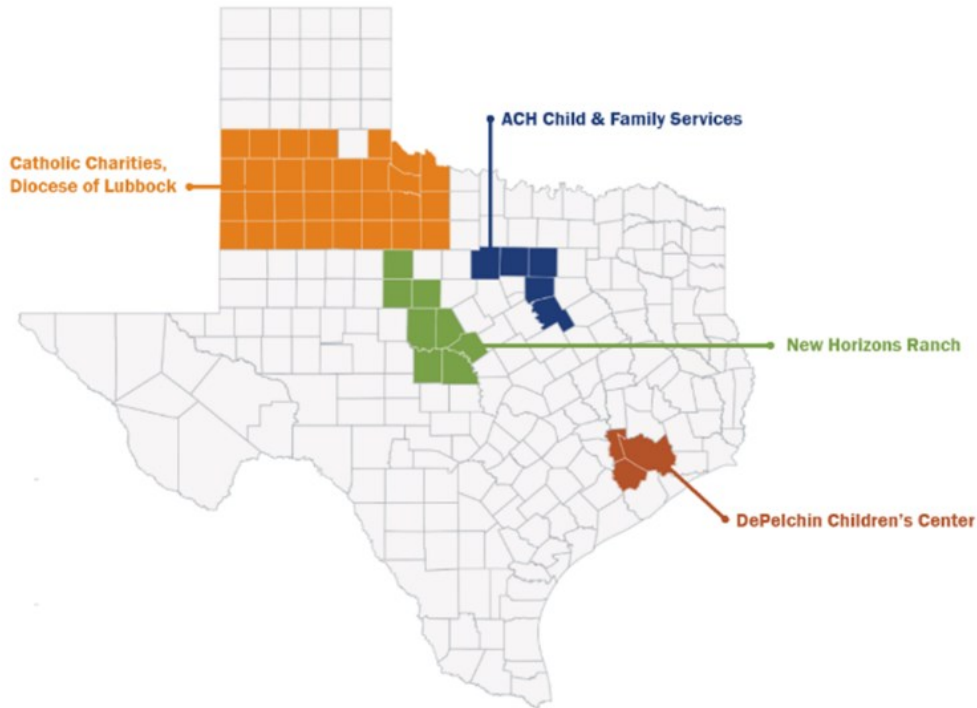


Figure 2: Kinship Navigator Grantees and Counties Served

Grantees and their service counties include:

- ACH Child and Family Services – Hill, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Tarrant
- Catholic Charities – Lubbock, Crosby, Hale, Hockley, and Lynn
- DePelchin Children’s Center – Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller
- New Horizons, Inc. – Brown, Jones, and Taylor; and virtual services to Callahan, Coleman, McCulloch, Mills, and San Saba

In the following fiscal year, grantees will take part in an implementation evaluation conducted by The Center for Violence Prevention at the University of Texas Medical Branch to inform further implementation and potential expansion.

Innovation Grants

In Fiscal Year 2022, PEI released a funding opportunity to select program grantees to apply for an innovation grant. This funding opportunity assisted the Department to resource innovative ideas, both as a continued response to the challenges families and communities face due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and as part of continuous efforts to further effective prevention programming.

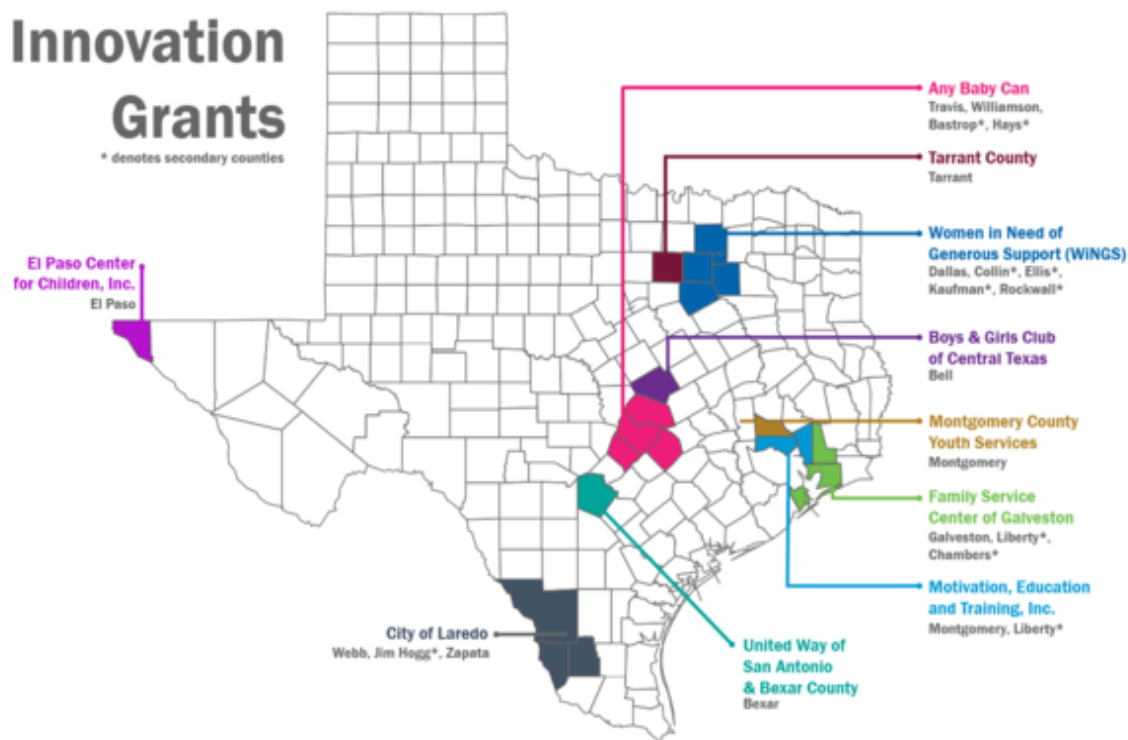


Figure 3: Innovation Grant Grantees and Counties Served

Proposed innovations were required to address one or more of the following four priority areas: elevating parent and youth voice and leadership; meeting families’ basic needs; and providing crisis support to families.

In April of 2022, PEI released a notice of award to selected grantees. Proposals selected focus on:

- Providing mental health and support services to first-time mothers and their families;
- Expanding youth programs to include new curriculum, Youth for Unity program;
- Implementing a Parent Crisis Support Project that provides women and parents behavioral health support;
- Implementing a Latinx traditional support model to support family well-being and safety;

- Piloting an organizational model to advance service availability to all Texans through leveraging parent and youth advisory groups;
- Piloting a new approach to assist FAYS participants through coaching and navigation of community assistance resources;
- Expanding direct support for basic and wellness needs in rural communities through a Partnership for Thriving Families project;
- Launching the Help Me Thrive Framework to support families of adolescents with service navigation and supports;
- Enhancing evidence-based support programs through a parent advisory committee, increased crisis supports, and training on cultural responsiveness, and
- Providing programming to increase economic security and basic needs support for first-time mothers

Objective: Support Effective Cross-Sector, State-to-Local, and Faith Based Collaborations

PEI continues to foster relationships with local, state, federal, and philanthropic partners to align trainings, share information, expand services, and coordinate systemic work. PEI staff led several cross-agency initiatives and participates in various other committees, coalitions, advisory boards, and teams across the state so that Texas prevention work remains rooted in, and supported by, communities.

Early Childhood Systems Integration Group

Throughout FY22, PEI continued to provide leadership and support to the Early Childhood Interagency Work Group. This collaboration of Texas state agencies works together to identify, coordinate, and implement cross-sector initiatives for young children. Membership includes: DFPS, Texas Education Agency (TEA), Department of State Health Services, Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Texas Head Start, and the Office of the Attorney General. The group's efforts are driven by the goals outlined in the [Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan](#) and seven strategic priorities established by the workgroup related to data, funding, and information. Inter-agency work includes establishing an early childhood integrated data system to combine data across programs that serve young children and increase data-driven decision making.

In March 2022, the collaborative work group launched the [Early Childhood Texas](#) website. A team of staff from each agency guided the development of this website with direct input from Texas parents and families. This website serves as a one-stop-shop to connect Texas parents with access to a variety of free or low-cost services and resources available through different state agencies. The Early Childhood Texas website offers Texans information and resources in the following areas:

- Health & Development: child development including resources for children with special needs, nutrition, health tips, and healthcare;
- Parenting: child safety, parenting tips and support, and at-home learning activities;
- Child Care & Education: childcare and after school programs, pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and Early Childhood Special Education; and
- Eligibility Programs: state sponsored programs and assistance opportunities for Texas families.



Texas Youth Helpline

PEI continues to support the agency's statewide Youth Helpline's outreach efforts to reach youth and their families during a crisis. Established in 1973, the Helpline is a prevention and early intervention program and operates 24/7, 365 days a year, to provide confidential crisis intervention services for youths, parents, families, and professionals.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DFPS expanded the scope of the Texas Youth Helpline to provide supports and resources specifically to parents of young children. In July 2022, DFPS launched the Texas Parenting Helpline to provide support to parents with children of all ages to provide crisis management and resource navigation to maximize a family's potential.

Youth Focused Workgroups

Juvenile Justice Prevention Group

DFPS, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Military Department continued to participate in an inter-agency workgroup to coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency and dropout prevention and intervention services. The workgroup's collaborative goals are to increase members' understanding of state juvenile delinquency and dropout services; identify key considerations in service provision; and to identify strengths and gaps in current programming. Over the fiscal year the workgroup met to discuss these goals quarterly. As required by the Texas Legislature, the workgroup prepared and submitted the annual Agency Coordination for Youth Prevention and Intervention report.

Adolescent Health Workgroup

PEI provides voice to the Adolescent Health Workgroup, an inter-agency group comprised of representatives from the Department of State Health Services, the Health and Human Services Commission, and PEI. This workgroup convenes stakeholders who are committed to the well-being of youth, collaborate where there are intersections of service activities, and share information as applicable.

Texas Fatherhood Workgroup

This fiscal year, PEI and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) collaborated to on a project to create father-focused curriculum for parents of young children and integrate it into their Parenting and Paternity Awareness (PAPA) program. This program is for young adults and teaches them the benefits of waiting to become a parent until they have completed their education, started a career, and are in a stable relationship. PEI and OAG are now working together to establish new direction for the Fatherhood Workgroup to identify more opportunities for cross-collaboration and to improve father inclusion within PEI-funded and other programs.

Texas Prevention Framework Workgroup

The Texas Prevention Framework Workgroup, established in 2019, is comprised of representation from the Department, Health and Human Services, Department of State Health Services, the Texas Workforce Commission, Texas advocacy leaders, judicial representation, foundation and philanthropic representatives, research partners, and parent partners. The workgroup's top priorities include:

- Transforming the child welfare system into a child and family well-being system through elevating cross-sector prevention efforts;
- Expanding who is at the table in the prevention of child abuse and neglect; and
- Developing Texas's model of a public health approach to child welfare framework.

As part of the Texas Prevention Framework Workgroup, four members represent Texas in Round II of the Thriving Families, Safer Children initiative. This initiative aims to reimagine child welfare as a broader set of services helping families further upstream from child protective interventions. Through participation in Thriving Families, Safer Children the workgroup is working to build off the work of the prevention framework workgroup to develop and implement a cross-system plan to:

- Integrate family, community, and youth voice into its efforts to develop a prevention framework designed to make a positive difference in the lives of Texas families;
- Ensure the diverse array of Texas families have equitable access to supports and resources; and
- Assure all children have the supports they need to thrive in safe, stable, nurturing families and environments.

Through PEI's participation in this initiative, Texas continues to learn from the successes of other states and build on current innovation. PEI is committed to continuing partnerships with families and communities to create an infrastructure that provides the necessary supports locally to safely keep children at home with the adults that care for them.

Appendix A: Research and Evaluation Projects Completed or Underway

The table below summarizes PEI-commissioned research started or completed since 2014. Reports are available either on [PEI’s website](#), hyperlinked below in the chart or can be made available upon request.

Table 4: Research and Evaluation Projects Completed or Underway

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Texas Home Visiting	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Child and Family Research Partnership	Father Participation Evaluation, May 2014 Process Implementation Evaluation, Final Report, Fall 2016 Father Participation and Retention Evaluation Report May 2017 Systems-Level Change Evaluation, Final Report, December 2017 Describing Home Visiting’s Value Evaluation Preliminary Findings, Summer 2018	DHVVE-IV Final Report, Winter 2022 Coordinated State Evaluation Initial Report, Winter 2022 (University of Texas at Tyler) Basic Needs Study Upcoming Report, Summer 2023

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
		<p>DHVVE-II Evaluation Plan, Winter 2018</p> <p>DHVVE Final Report, Fall 2019</p> <p>DHVVE-III Evaluation Plan, Winter 2020</p> <p>CQI Project Report, Summer 2020</p> <p>COVID-19 Lessons Learned Report, Fall 2020</p> <p>Policy Brief on Prenatal- 3 Research, Summer 2020</p> <p>Policy Brief on Home Visiting for Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth, Summer 2020</p> <p>Policy Brief on Serving Dads in DFPS Conservatorship, Summer 2020</p> <p>DHVVE-IV Evaluation Plan, Winter 2021</p> <p>DHVVE-III Final Report, Fall 2021</p>	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP)	SUMA	Focus Group Report	
Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)	The University of Texas at Austin, Steve Hicks School of Social Work, Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing	FY15 HOPES Evaluation Report - Brief HOPES Evaluation Report, December 2016 Child Maltreatment Prevention in Texas - Infographic Literature Review: Evaluation of Child Maltreatment Prevention Developing Strategies for Child Maltreatment Prevention: A Guide for Community Needs Assessments, June 2015 Analysis of Ten Years of Prevention Outcomes, Fall 2016	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
		Preliminary Effectiveness Report on HOPES I, Fall 2016 HOPES FY16 Final Report, Fall 2018 HOPES Final Evaluation Report, Summer 2019	
Service Members, Veterans and their Families	SUMA	Literature Review Focus Group Report	
Service Members, Veterans and their Families	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Child and Family Research Partnership	Preliminary Report, Fall 2016 Final Report, Fall 2017	
Fatherhood Programs	SUMA	Literature Review Focus Group Report	
Fatherhood Programs	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Child and Family Research Partnership	Literature Review, Winter 2016 Fatherhood Evaluation Report, Summer 2017 Fatherhood Evaluation, 2018	
Safe Sleep Public Awareness	SUMA	Literature Review	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
		Focus Group Report	
Youth Programs - Recruitment and Branding	SUMA	Focus Group Report, Fall 2017	
Family and Youth Success (FAYS) Formerly Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)	Texas A&M University, Department of Recreation and Tourism	Review of programs for STAR population, Fall 2016 Review of assessments related to measuring outcomes, Fall 2016 STAR Report, December 2017	
Community Youth Development (CYD) Program	Texas A&M University, Department of Recreation and Tourism	Literature Review for CYD, Fall 2016 CYD Evaluation Plan, Summer 2017 CYD Evaluation Preliminary Report, Fall 2018 CYD Evaluation Final Report, Summer 2019	
Special Projects			Kinship Final Implementation Report, Spring 2023 Kinship Outcomes Evaluation Report, Fall 2023
Safe Babies Project	The University of Texas Health	Community Health Workers Early Child	Evaluation of Community Health

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
	Science Center at Tyler	Development Training, Fall 2021 Engaging Healthcare Toolkit, Fall 2021 Parenting Action Plan App, Fall 2021 Plans of Safe Care Training, Fall 2021	Workers Early Childhood Development Training, Fall 2022 Evaluation and Launch of Parenting Action Plan Standalone App, Fall 2022 Provider Evaluation of Plans of Safe Care, Fall/Winter 2022
Growth Strategy Project	UT Tyler	Maltreatment Modeling and Mapping, Summer 2018 Growth Modeling and Projections, Winter 2019 Client Perception of PEI Services, Summer 2021 Risk Map Update, Summer 2021	
Needs Assessment Project	UT Tyler	MIECHV Needs Assessment, Fall 2020 MIECHV Needs Assessment, Fall 2021	