



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Prevention and Early Intervention

**Progress Report on Implementation of
Five-Year Strategic Plan
Fiscal Year 2019**

September 2019

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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) assists communities in identifying, developing and delivering high quality prevention and early intervention programs designed to address risk factors and build protective factors within families in order to promote positive outcomes for children, youth, families and communities. The community maltreatment risk maps developed by Population Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler (UTHSCT) were released this fiscal year providing PEI with new opportunities to utilize state-of-the-art risk mapping and geographically-based risk and resiliency models to identify and allocate resources within communities of highest need.

PEI provides year-round training and technical assistance opportunities for providers, stakeholders and staff to increase the knowledge, understanding and competency of these professionals in their respective roles. In addition, PEI had multiple opportunities to showcase its innovative work through presentations at several national conferences during Fiscal Year 2019.

Staff continue to work to foster relationships with local, state, federal and philanthropic partners to align trainings, share information, expand services and coordinate systemic work through leading or serving on various workgroups, task forces, coalitions and committees. PEI sits on multiple new workgroups both internal to DFPS and external for the Health and Human Services (HHS) system to outline the resources needed to support DFPS as a standalone agency, required by House Bill 5, 85th Legislative Session. PEI also coordinates a newly formed workgroup that is exploring the possibility of DFPS utilizing a grant-awarding business model.

PEI reprocured three programs this fiscal year: Fatherhood EFFECT, Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP) and Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES). PEI received additional funding from the Texas Legislature for two programs, HOPES and the Texas Nurse-Family Partnership program (NFP).

All of these efforts are secondary to PEI's central goal of helping children, youth and families live safe, healthy and productive lives. In Fiscal Year 2018 (most recent year for which data is available), PEI's network of providers served over 67,000 unique families, an 11 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2017. Data indicates that more than 99 percent of children and youth remained safe from maltreatment while receiving services and more than 95 percent of youth who engaged in services did not become subsequently involved with the juvenile justice system. In addition, families involved with evidence-based home visiting services had better overall health outcomes than the general Texas population and individuals served by comparable programs. This includes lower preterm births in Fiscal Year 2018, higher breastfeeding rates and increased self-sufficiency through educational programs and/or employment.

During Fiscal Year 2019, PEI leadership identified four areas of foundational work that serve as the compass for the division to identify where to focus energy and prioritize its work to achieve the goals in its five-year strategic plan. The four areas are:

- Achieving Contract Outcomes.
- Maximizing Funds.
- Meeting Federal and State Requirements.
- Embracing Healthy Accountability.

Using these foundational areas to prioritize its work, PEI will continue implementing its five-year strategic plan with special emphasis placed on the following five strategic plan goals:

1. **Review and evaluate long-term and emerging trends through the Office of Child Safety, as well as current community and programmatic needs related to preventing child maltreatment and fatalities** (*Goal 1.2*). PEI will convene a state-wide safety summit with stakeholders, community providers and other state agencies to identify ways PEI can partner with communities to address child fatalities and near fatalities, including those caused by physical abuse, unsafe sleep practices and preventable drownings. Utilizing a public health approach, PEI will focus resources on equipping communities with tools and resources specific to suicide prevention for teens. Additionally, ongoing safety trainings will be provided to increase awareness and safety practices both within communities as well as with providers and home visitors.
2. **Promote a culture of care that places a high value on the well-being of families and children along the life course toward adulthood** (*Goal 1.6*). PEI will leverage resources to enhance and support local efforts to promote positive outcomes for children, youth and families.
3. **Require that parent and youth voices be included in community-needs assessments** (*Goal 3.1.4*) **and continue engaging internal and external stakeholders, including parents and youth, to inform strategic planning** (*Goal 7.1.1*). PEI will actively incorporate parent and youth voice and leadership both internally and externally to impact services to children, youth, families and communities.
4. **Employ multiple methods for measuring the impact of prevention efforts and continually explore improvements to evaluation methodologies so as to provide contractors with continual feedback that will improve service delivery** (*Goal 4.3*). PEI will create a culture and expectation for utilizing continuous quality improvement (CQI) both internally and externally to improve efforts.

5. **Pursue funding and other resources from federal grants, private foundations, businesses and other charitable organizations to expand programming and increase capacity of effective programs** (*Goal 2*). PEI will explore grant innovations to enhance outcomes and maximize funding.

Introduction

In September 2016, DFPS released its five-year strategic plan on child abuse prevention and early intervention. The plan was developed by DFPS's Prevention and Early Intervention division in collaboration with hundreds of stakeholders. This document is the third annual progress report on that plan, required by Senate Bill 206, 84th Legislative Session, Texas Family Code §265.005.

Progress toward Goals in Fiscal Year 2019

In its five-year strategic plan for prevention and early intervention, DFPS established seven overarching goals. Progress toward those goals is summarized in the following pages.

Goal 1

PEI will adopt a public health framework to prevent child maltreatment and fatalities and support positive child, family and community outcomes.

Growth Strategy

HB1549, passed in the 85th Legislative Session, requires PEI to develop a growth strategy to gradually increase the number of families receiving PEI services each year. To achieve this goal, PEI contracted with Population Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler (UTHSCT) to develop a series of tools that utilize risk mapping and geographically-based risk and resiliency models to map the geographic distribution of maltreatment rates in the state by residential zip code. The [community maltreatment risk maps](#) were released during Fiscal Year 2019 and PEI began using them to more effectively allocate resources and provide support to communities with the highest need to help families before they are in crisis.

Preventing Child Fatalities

In March 2019, the Office of Child Safety published the FY2018 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 and address risk factors associated with child maltreatment, as well as encourages ongoing work to increase resiliency within communities and families to produce positive outcomes for Texas children. The Office of Child Safety continues to promote public outreach campaigns utilizing a public health approach to reduce child fatalities and wide-scaled prevention messaging to address both child and adolescent safety. March 25th -29th PEI hosted "Safe Sleep Week" promoting safe sleep practices for parents with infants. PEI hosted webinars for providers about safe sleep practices and provided tip cards for programs to order to promote safer sleep practices with the families they serve. Additionally, the Office of Child Safety held regular safety webinars on topics ranging

from selecting the best caregiver for ones family to tips on keeping teens safe (covering topics including suicide prevention, teen dating violence and bullying).

Promoting the Use of Evidence-Based, Evidence-Informed and Promising Practices

PEI continues to focus efforts both internally and with providers to support the use of the evidence-based spectrum when selecting and evaluating programs. This spectrum includes models and interventions designated as evidence-based, evidence-informed and promising practices depending on the rigor and volume of research supporting their efficacy. As part of this effort, PEI produced a series of infographics to visually convey the evidence-based spectrum and make it accessible to a variety of audiences. PEI also developed and implemented an evidence-based programming tool for use by providers of the Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) program. The tool supports providers in analyzing the suitability, strength and evidence base for particular models when used with target populations and has received national attention. The evidence-based programming tool was presented at the American Evaluation Association Annual Conference and the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Fiscal Year 2019.

Training and Technical Assistance for Providers

PEI offers year-round training opportunities for providers and a variety of stakeholders to increase the knowledge, understanding and competency of professionals in their respective roles. Through the development of an annual training plan PEI strategically provides extensive training opportunities, in various instructional formats, for providers, staff and the community at large.

PEI's annual Partners in Prevention Conference (PIP) brings together providers, practitioners, researchers, advocates, administrators, students and other participants for three days of learning and networking. In November 2018, nearly 900 attendees convened for the 18th annual PIP conference in Arlington, Texas to participate in over 50 breakout sessions and three keynote sessions. The 2018 theme — Teaming Up for Texas Families — embodied both the goal and the spirit of the many individuals and organizations collaborating to reduce child abuse, enhance school readiness, improve social-emotional and physical health and strengthen families and communities.

In February 2019, PEI hosted the Community Impact Meeting. Over the two day meeting, participants had the opportunity to hear from a series of keynote speakers and attend multiple sessions supporting providers and coalitions in creating systems-level change in their local communities. The conference featured Paul Schmitz, CEO of Leading Inside Out, as well as consultants from Clear Impact, a performance management consultant group, and researchers from the Child and Family Research Partnership, which has conducted evaluations for three PEI programs.

PEI held its regional mini-conference series this year in six cities across the state: Houston, Dallas, Lubbock, San Antonio, McAllen and El Paso. Each two-day conference afforded participants the opportunity to become certified in Mental Health First Aid as well as learn about the impact of trauma on children and caregivers, how to apply a trauma-informed approach to services and the principles of Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), an evidence-based, trauma-informed framework.

PEI facilitated this fiscal year's STAR provider meeting in Austin in April 2019 and hosted multiple train-the-trainer opportunities for PEI providers on the National Family Support Network Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support Certification Training.

In addition to the in-person training opportunities described above, PEI launched a new web-based, interactive learning management system for staff, community providers and other partner agencies serving children, youth or families through PEI contracts. This training hub provides centralized access to self-paced, engaging webinars, video courses and handouts on a variety of topics for professional development.

Marketing and Outreach

During Fiscal Year 2019 PEI developed content for a new Toolkit designed to support community-based agencies in their communication efforts. The Marketing/Outreach Toolkit was developed based on provider feedback and equips organizations with resources to develop and implement a strategic communications plan, ultimately broadening their reach and strengthening their cross-sector partnerships.

As part of its Help and Hope Campaign, PEI continues to work with the Sherry Matthews Group, a local advertising agency, and DFPS Communications to produce [new videos](#) on co-parenting, post-partum depression, screen time and developmental screenings. The Help and Hope Campaign aims to provide tips for handling parenting challenges, managing stress and keeping children safe and healthy at all stages of development, from prenatal to adolescent years.

Goal 2

PEI will maximize the impact of current investments and seek additional resources to serve more children, youth and families and strengthen communities.

In October 2018, PEI held a leadership retreat in which the leadership team identified four areas of foundational work that is central to achieving its Fiscal Year 2019 strategic priorities. These four areas are used by the PEI division to identify where to focus energy, prioritize projects and function more efficiently as a team. The foundational work is:

- Achieving Contract Outcomes.
- Maximizing Funds.

- Meeting Federal and State Requirements.
- Embracing Healthy Accountability.

Achieving Contract Outcomes

Robust contract monitoring leads to optimizing the fiscal health and effectiveness of contractors providing quality programming and services in Texas' communities. PEI's ability to effectively and efficiently conduct this type of work is crucial to utilizing appropriated funds as intended through its contracts. In order to do this, PEI established a project work plan that enhances staff's ability to achieve effective and efficient contract monitoring and effective and efficient use of appropriated funds throughout Fiscal Year 2019.

Maximizing Investments

PEI continues to explore ways to expand and maximize the impact of its investments in communities. PEI partnered with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Workforce Commission, Department of Agriculture, State Health Services and the Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office to secure new funding to align resources to strengthen early childhood education opportunities across Texas. Through co-hosted events, presentations and continued conversations with the United Ways of Texas – an impactful grantor for family and early childhood supports in communities – PEI has been able to further strengthen early childhood work across Texas.

Through collaborations with Casey Family Services, Episcopal Health and St. David's Foundations PEI stimulated like-investments to host a Pediatric Brain Health Summit. Episcopal Health and St. David's Foundations are supporting the Family Connects program in Central Texas. Episcopal Health Foundation is supporting PEI's exploration of outcomes based contracting work and Casey Family Programs provided on-going support to the Prevention Task Force's work to advance its recommendations to the DFPS commissioner.

Grants Workgroup

DFPS currently awards grants through a Request for Application (RFA) process managed by Health and Human Services Procurement and Contracting Services (HHS-PCS). DFPS developed a workgroup to capture input from all divisions on questions, challenges and issues that need to be addressed as this workgroup explores how to improve efficiencies when awarding grants. To capture all key information that will need to be considered before recommendations to the DFPS commissioner are formulated, this workgroup organized its exploration of utilizing a grant business model into three overarching categories: technology, policy and procedures and resources.

PEI Staff Professional Development

PEI leadership is committed to ensuring its staff have the skills necessary to support all prevention programming and efforts and encourage staff to seek out opportunities to further

develop their skills and knowledge. Since not all training requests can be approved, PEI leadership encourage staff to capitalize on the trainings offered through its web-based, interactive learning management system. PEI's learning hub was launched in Fiscal Year 2019 and provides engaging, web-based professional development on a variety of topics.

Goal 3

PEI will make and share decisions about investments in families and communities based on an analysis of community risk and protective factors as well as community-developed needs assessments.

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 2019.

Community Youth Development (CYD)

One of the goals of the CYD program is to develop young leaders. A Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is developed within each CYD program to provide a youth voice into the CYD programming at the community level. Through the community needs assessment, the United Way of Amarillo and Canyon County YAC identified youth homelessness as a pressing issue they could take action on to address. The homeless youth initiative led by YAC offers outreach and peer education to the local youth shelter in order to engage homeless youth, build trusting relationships, provide healthier alternatives to being on the streets and assist youth in developing skills needed to support their well-being. The YAC conducted sessions with homeless youth living at the Youth Shelter and provides critical information and referral to services, health and safety education and crisis intervention. This exemplifies innovative youth-led community action and leadership to directly support peers and impact change.

Fatherhood EFFECT

"John" is a participant in the Nurturing Fathers class offered by NewDay Services for Children and Families which serves families in Denton and Tarrant County. He stated that he and his family have had a complete turnaround since completion of the Nurturing Fathers program, specifically his ability to process and resolve his feelings of anger in a healthy way. "John" indicates his parenting has improved, he is open to learning new concepts and implementing them in his family. He shared that because of the skills he has learned, he has been able to help his son become more emotionally stable and happy with the previously strained relationship they share with the boy's mother.

Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)

When "Mary" started receiving services from Any Baby Can she acknowledged she was impatient with her 28 month old child, "Joey", and disclosed some unresolved issues of childhood abuse that was impacting her ability to effectively parent her son. Along with

“Mary’s” impatience, she indicated that her husband was not firm with “Joey”. This combination made it difficult for the parents to discipline him.

“Joey” is an active child and even though he has great communication skills he has difficulty listening and concentrating. “Mary” actively participated in the program for a year and gained an understanding about the developmental milestones her son is reaching, that most of her child's behaviors are appropriate and that her child is smart and needs to be busy learning new things in order to avoid negative behaviors. She learned and adopted positive discipline techniques, shared them with her husband and they have been more successful in managing “Joey’s” unwanted behaviors.

Through Any Baby Can “Mary” received counseling services to address the abuse she experienced as a child, received financial assistance and was referred to AVANCE, a program that assists under-resourced families of young children in overcoming isolation and lack of opportunity. This referral has provided “Mary” additional opportunities to learn new skills and expand her social support network.

Helping Through Intervention and Prevention (HIP)

A Parent Educator was working with a teen mother, “Veronica”, who resides at the SAFE Children’s Shelter in Travis County. At the beginning of the program, “Veronica” identified that she did not feel that she had properly bonded with her child because she never really talked to her baby. “Veronica” was reassured that she can work to strengthen the bond between her and her child through interactive activities. The Parent Educator created a safe space where she modeled and taught “Veronica” how to relate to and bond with her child with sensory activities, art and meaningful discussion. Currently, she is about halfway through the program and has taken the information she learned and applied it to her everyday interaction with her child. These small activities have positively changed the relationship between this teen mother and her child by building and strengthening a solid bond. “Veronica” indicates she feels more connected to her child, more competent as a mother and has creative techniques she can use as the child grows and develops. As “Veronica” feels more confident, the child is experiencing emotional support and connection that will have a lifetime of positive effects - physically, emotionally and cognitively.

Military Families and Veterans Prevention Program

The University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio provides STRONG STAR, a program that supports military families and veterans at Fort Hood. Recently, the “Smith” family started the STRONG STAR program while the father was deployed. They knew very little about military family life and the resources available to them. The “Smith” children were having a difficult time coping with their father’s deployment and “Ms. Smith” had difficulty managing her children’s concerns. The “Smith” family enrolled in the STRONG STAR program where “Mrs. Smith” learned techniques for discussing deployment with her children. Through the program’s support, she was able to convey to her children, in age appropriate ways, “Mr.

Smith's" job and as a result the children began feeling less anxious about his deployment and being away from their mother during the day.

Due to their positive experiences with the program during "Mr. Smith's" deployment, the family decided to reengage with the program to work through the new challenges they were facing after his return.

Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP)

The NFP program at Doctors Hospital Renaissance in Edinburg provided services to a young, teenage mother, "Ashley", for nearly a year. "Ashley" had a healthy pregnancy and birth and began working on parenting goals. Throughout her service with the NFP program she continuously focused on advancing her personal and life goals. With the support and encouragement of her Nurse Home Visitor, this young mother returned to high school after taking several months off to focus on her child. Since returning to high school "Ashley" graduated, enrolled in courses at a local community college and is in the process of completing a four-year bachelor's degree program.

Services to At-Risk Youth and Families (STAR)

"Phillip" was referred to the Twin City Mission's STAR program after his close friend took their own life. "Phillip" struggled with self-harm and depression following the event. When the Family Support Specialist (FSS) began seeing "Phillip", he was suffering from nightmares that plagued his sleep and he could not remember the last time he had slept through the night. "Phillip" and the FSS worked on developing a relaxing and calming bedtime routine. Within two months of practicing the routine, "Phillip" began to sleep through the night again. By the end of services, he developed healthy coping skills and has decided to study psychology in college. "Phillip" hopes to eventually become a counselor so he can help kids, like himself, through sharing his story.

Texas Home Visiting (THV)

A Parent Educator with Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas started home visits and parent education with "Amber" who was seven months pregnant with her first child. "Amber" was living with her baby's father and his parents. Her partner was abusive and she experienced resulting depression and challenges. She had quit her job, was on probation and owed court fees. However, she was excited to be a mother and looked forward to learning how her baby was growing. After the baby was born the Parent Educator was invited to come to the house as soon as they got home. With support from her Parent Educator, "Amber" applied for the Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) and learned to navigate other resources with very little help. She was happy to learn about her child and quickly became familiar with the needs of her infant. "Amber" asked thoughtful questions and asked for help when she needed it. She also started talking about the stresses of her relationship with the baby's father. After a few months, she chose to make a life change to ensure her safety, and that of her baby. "Amber" left her abusive partner of five years, and started going to a domestic violence

outreach center for counseling through a referral made by her parent educator. She received a grant for legal representation to handle custody issues that arose with the baby’s father. “Amber” currently works full time as a manager for a local restaurant. Her baby is thriving in a loving environment.

Procurements

In order for PEI to achieve prevention service delivery, the division is required to “procure” services. Procuring services allows PEI to serve children, youth and families within communities of identified need. In an effort to support its procurement needs, PEI developed a five-year procurement plan that outlines solicitation activities for anticipated reprocurments through Fiscal Year 2022 (see following table). PEI began holding weekly program procurement meetings with key staff in order to forecast procurement needs.

Table 1: Procurement Schedule

Program	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Next Application Opportunity
CYD	6/1/2017	8/31/2021	FY 2021
Fatherhood EFFECT I	2/3/2014	8/31/2019	FY 2019
Fatherhood EFFECT II	5/1/2016	8/31/2019	FY 2019
HIP	9/1/2018	8/31/2023	FY 2023
HOPES I	8/1/2014	8/31/2019	FY 2019
HOPES II	1/1/2016	12/31/2020	FY 2020
HOPES III	9/1/2016	8/31/2021	FY 2021
Military Families and Veterans Prevention Program	2/1/2016	8/31/2020	FY 2020
STAR	12/1/2017	8/31/2022	FY 2021
SYSN	9/1/2017	8/31/2022	FY 2022
THV/MIECHV	9/1/2017	8/31/2022	FY 2022
THV 426	9/1/2016	8/31/2022	FY 2022
TNFP	9/1/2015	8/31/2021	FY 2020

Goal 4

Utilize research findings to improve program implementation, to direct program funding toward the most effective programs and ultimately to achieve better results for children and families.

PEI continues to place an emphasis on utilizing data to determine where there is need and programmatic capacity in a community to strategically deploy funding to expand services.

Research and Evaluation Projects

The table on the following pages 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 2: 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 DHVVE Preliminary Findings, Summer 2018 DHVVE-II Evaluation Plan, Winter 2018	DHVVE Final Report, Fall 2019
Helping through Intervention and Prevention (HIP)	SUMA	Focus Group Report	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
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 Preliminary Effectiveness Report on HOPES I, Fall 2016 HOPES FY16 Final Report, Fall 2018 HOPES Final Evaluation Report, Summer 2019	Continuous Quality Improvement Meta-Analysis, Fall 2019
Military and Veterans Family Program	SUMA	Literature Review Focus Group Report	
Military and Veterans Family Program	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Child and Family Research Partnership	Preliminary Report, Fall 2016 Final Report, Fall 2017	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
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 Focus Group Report	
Youth Programs - Recruitment and Branding	SUMA	Focus Group Report, Fall 2017	
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	

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Safe Babies Project	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler	Legislative report, Fall 2017 PURPLE Plus Study, Spring 2018 Paternal PURPLE Study, Fall 2018	Implementation Review of Postnatal Depression Prevention Programs, Fall 2019 Trauma Informed Care and Pediatric Capacity Survey Report, Fall 2019 Final Report, Summer 2020
Growth Strategy Project		Maltreatment Modeling and Mapping, Summer 2018 Growth Modeling and Projections, Winter 2019	Client Perception of PEI Services, Fall 2019

PEI had the opportunity to showcase its innovative work through presentations at multiple national conferences during Fiscal Year 2019. PEI staff have presented at the American Evaluation Association Annual Conference, National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, the Child Welfare Evaluation Summit and the National Afterschool Association Convention on topics covering PEI’s Evidence-Based Practice Tool, PEI’s use of data matching to provide services to vulnerable populations, the utilization of evaluations to improve practice, Continuous Quality Improvement, PEI’s newly released Growth Strategy maps and building affirming spaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth.

Program Expansion

PEI continues to scale, expand and support innovative practices in our portfolio of programs. The providers that were selected to engage in a quality improvement pilot using the National Family Support Network (NFSN) Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support to create a common framework for STAR providers across the state began this fiscal year. PEI also developed an evidence based programming tool and implemented it with STAR providers to assist them in selecting evidence-based programs appropriate to their target populations and desired outcomes. In addition to increasing the quality of family strengthening services, practice and policy within the STAR program through the aforementioned quality framework and use of the evidence-based programming tool, this fiscal year PEI embarked on the process of rebranding the STAR program as recommended in the report produced by SUMA Social

Marketing, Inc. (SUMA). Announcement of the new name and logo for this program is expected by the end of the fiscal year.

The Community Youth Development (CYD) program, through community-based providers, provides an array of services such as mentoring, youth leadership development, skills classes for youth and recreational services to promote protective factors in youth and prevent negative outcomes. In an effort to evaluate the quality of PEI's youth programs PEI is in the process of implementing a structured quality framework, the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA), to assess and strengthen the program. The YPQA was developed to help afterschool programs serving grades 4-12 to assess the extent to which their program provides a participatory, safe, supportive and youth-centered environment. This tool allows program staff (CYD or PEI or external specialists) to observe interactions between program staff and youth during regular program sessions and to interview staff about how the program operates. These observations and interviews are used to create a quality program profile, to identify areas of improvement and especially identify areas where staff may need professional development to meet program goals.

Through initial readiness conversations with local housing authorities interested in piloting innovative projects, PEI was able to implement its second pilot program within a local housing authority. The Family Self-Sufficiency and Support Pilot focuses on increasing resiliency and well-being of vulnerable families in the housing authority's financial stability and self-sufficiency program in the City of Bryan. The Family Self-Sufficiency Clients receive various supports from parent education groups to basic needs support and monthly Parent Cafes where parents and caregivers are provided a peer-to-peer learning opportunity to discuss the challenges and victories of raising a family, explore their strengths and create strategies from their own wisdom and experiences to help strengthen their families.

The Texas Home Visiting programs expanded by allowing communities to select a new program model, Family Connects, to implement in their communities in Fiscal Year 2019. The Family Connects program is an evidence-based, universal home visiting program for families with newborns. The program provides between one and three nurse home visits to every family with a newborn beginning at about three weeks of age, regardless of income or demographic risk. Using a tested screening tool, the nurse measures newborn and maternal health and assesses strengths and needs to link the family to community resources. Four Texas Counties (Bastrop, Bexar, Travis and Victoria Counties) chose to use this universal program and began serving clients this fiscal year but have not scaled to full model implementation.

Efforts around Engaging Fathers

PEI reprocured the Fatherhood EFFECT: Educating Fathers for Empowering Children Tomorrow (Fatherhood EFFECT) contract this fiscal year. The goal of this procurement is to expand PEI's current fatherhood work by building strong fatherhood efforts into existing family supports so the procurement was opened to all current family-serving PEI contractors. By

underscoring the importance of healthy father engagement and the role it plays in the lives of their children, families and communities, PEI is providing an opportunity for communities to remedy any deficiencies they have in supporting, recruiting and retaining fathers in programs that aim to mitigate any challenges they may face to participating their children’s lives, especially for those fathers who are not married to their child’s mother.

A mobile application for fathers, Father’s Playbook, was developed to provide fathers with education and information about pregnancy, ways to prepare for baby, delivery and postpartum issues, such as parenting challenges. This application was launched in the Google Play store early in the fiscal year with plans to launch in Apple’s App store by the end of the fiscal year.

For Fiscal Year 2019 the popular Fatherhood Summit toured the state to provide an opportunity for regional public and private sector professionals to learn current research-based best practices and innovations to best support fathers, mothers and their children. These summits were held in the Rio Grande Valley, Houston, Dallas and Lubbock and offered a full agenda about the importance of healthy father involvement, the impact of father absence and how communities can improve their system of services to support fathers in their communities. Lessons learned from these regional summits will be incorporated into online trainings launching in the coming fiscal year.

Goal 5

PEI will measure and report on the effectiveness of its programs on an annual basis and will make timely course corrections based on available data.

Legislatively Required Reports

Table three outlines PEI’s legislatively required reports that are published annually between August 31st and March 1st.

Table 3: Legislatively Required Reports

Date	Description	PEI Lead
September 1	Annual Strategic Plan Update	PEI Leadership
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) 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

Date	Description	PEI Lead
December 1	Annual Texas Nurse-Family Partnership Grant Recipient Performance Evaluation	Research and Evaluation
January 31	Annual CBCAP Report	Grants and Special Projects
March 1	Child Maltreatment Fatalities and Near Fatalities Annual Report	Office of Child Safety
TBD*	Annual MIECHV CQI Plan	Research and Evaluation

*PEI will not have this due date until Fiscal Year 2020

Research Roundtable

PEI continues to bring together a group of multidisciplinary researchers and stakeholders through research roundtables to help shape more effective use of prevention services for children and families across Texas. While PEI continues to rely on third party evaluations to examine its program effectiveness, the convening of this group of evaluators to share feedback, suggestions and thoughts on each other's work, including how to expand PEI's reach families in vulnerable communities, has been invaluable in engendering a holistic examination of PEI's programs.

Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS) Expansion

During this past fiscal year, PEI worked diligently to prepare its data system, PEIRS, to incorporate its Texas Home Visiting and Texas Nurse-Family Partnership programs into the same data system that its legacy programs for children, youth and families are currently utilizing. The application is currently in testing and the outcome reports are in development. PEIRS Expansion is on track for its scheduled roll-out in September 2019. In order to ensure all providers are prepared to utilize PEIRS, PEI hosted weekly webinars for providers beginning in April 2019. These webinars will continue into the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2020.

Internal Quality Assurance

PEI continues to take steps to improve the quality assurances in place to ensure good stewardship of funds and relationships with providers through the use of dashboards, budget reviews and continued technical assistance to providers.

PEI utilizes dashboards as a way to organize information on critical aspects of its work. PEI maintains a financial dashboard to stay informed of the financial pulse of PEI, project year-end expenditures and maximize its appropriated funds. PEI worked with other DFPS divisions to develop an executive dashboard this fiscal year to as a way for DFPS leadership to foster a culture of accountability and data-informed decision-making around key agency priorities. PEI's dashboard is designed to keep leadership informed about key staffing issues (turnover and workload), performance metrics (clients served and children remaining safe) and

contracting metrics (timely bill payment). PEI uses a data dashboard to track target output and outcome measures for each of its contracted programs to provide a tool for both contracted providers and PEI to validate that programs are meeting their performance measures that are reported both to the Legislature and PEI's federal partners. And PEI utilizes a contracting dashboard to keep all critical information about its contracts in one centralized location.

PEI continues to have success with the internal budget review with contractors. This review allows PEI to maximize funding across contractors and programs by projecting potential lapsed funding and invest those funds in communities that display a need and ability to expend them. Though PEI staff provide monthly technical assistance to providers, this process allows PEI staff to do a deep dive with contractors and provide focused technical assistance around their spending trends and billing habits.

Contract Oversight

In an effort to create uniformity, reduce error, streamline workloads and support cross-training, orientation and succession planning, PEI began the process of creating a common document to both provide role and responsibility clarifications as well as step-by-step processes for PEI staff. During the past fiscal year PEI focused its efforts on developing a contracting handbook to provide a reliable, consistent central source of contract management and monitoring activity into a written handbook with clear functions, policies and processes. PEI will implement its draft handbook next fiscal year with the goal of finalizing it in Fiscal Year 2021.

House Bill 5, 85th Legislative Session, moved DFPS outside of the Health and Human Services (HHS) system as an independent agency. While this legislation ensured DFPS maintained its legal staff and contracting functionality the procurement function was left with HHS-Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) requiring DFPS and HHS to outline clear responsibilities for each role. PEI continues to support this effort by sitting in on multiple workgroups both internal to DFPS and for HHS. This has included the Procurement & Contracting Improvement Plan (PCIP) workgroups, the Risk Assessment and Monitoring Project (RAMP) work to improve risk management processes, feedback on template and terms and conditions, regular meetings with HHS-PCS, DFPS Contract Oversight and Support and DFPS Contracts Legal. In many cases, PEI led the charge to ensure HHS-PCS allows for the flexibility required for awarding grants, modifying T&Cs, monitoring requirements and most recently insurance requirements. PEI continues to be a proactive force to continue work to improve efficiencies in contracting.

Goal 6

PEI will maximize its impact by collaborating with other state entities and external organizations working with similar populations.

PEI continues to work to foster relationships with local, state, federal and philanthropic partners to align trainings, share information, expand services and coordinate systemic work.

PEI staff leads several cross-agency initiatives and participates in various other committees, coalitions, advisory boards and teams across the state to continue to ensure PEI's work is rooted in and supported by communities. Among these are the Texas Perinatal and Infant Oral Health Quality Improvement Expansion Project, Texas Project LAUNCH and the Texas Behavioral Health Institute's annual conference planning committee, all of which are coordinated by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). In addition, PEI continues to work with DSHS to facilitate data collaboration that will match child welfare data for all confirmed maltreatment with state health records. This level of matching will replicate the original DSHS-DFPS Strategic Plan but also provide a wider assessment of the risk factors and protective factors that can be leveraged to address all maltreatment, not just child fatalities.

PEI participates in meetings of the Cross-Agency Mental Health Liaison Group organized by the Health and Human Services Commission and the Adolescent and Young Adult Health Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network (CoIIN) sponsored by the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and the Health and Human Services System Veterans Initiative and PEI staff participate on local child fatality review teams and prevention coalitions.

Juvenile Justice Prevention Group

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Military Department continue to work together to coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services aimed at preventing academic failure, failure on state assessments, dropout, juvenile delinquency, truancy, runaways and children living in family conflict. The group meets to learn about one another's programming; to identify key considerations in the coordination, planning and delivery of services; and to identify opportunities to enhance the coordination, planning and delivery of prevention and intervention services.

Fatherhood Interagency Workgroup

PEI collaborates with the Child and Family Research Partnership (CFRP) to convene quarterly meetings of stakeholders across state agencies. The aim of the workgroup is to identify the ways in which programs and services across the state are successfully addressing the needs of fathers; apprise peers of any changes or progress on program objectives; share connections and resources; and increase efficiencies to reduce duplication. In addition, the group informs the direction of the annual Texas Fatherhood Summit, also convened by CFRP.

Early Childhood Systems Integration Group

PEI provides leadership and staff support for the Early Childhood Systems Integration Group, a collaboration of six Texas state agencies working together to identify, coordinate and implement cross-sector initiatives for young children. Last fiscal year the Interagency Group elected to work with Clear Impact to implement Results Based Accountability™ (RBA) creating a dashboard to identify specific, intersecting, population measures of success across four

domains: children are healthy, children are safe, children are school ready and children reach their full potential. In Fiscal Year 2019, leadership from these six agencies continued to utilize the visual dashboards to track goals and measures for the state level group and to date six communities have elected to utilize RBA in their communities and are in various stages of the analysis and planning process.

In an effort to provide a coordinated approach to family engagement and school readiness the Texas Education Agency, in partnership with PEI and other agencies including Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Workforce Commission, Department of Agriculture, State Health Services and the Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office, applied for and was awarded the Early Childhood Preschool Development Grant. This grant provides states resources to execute five key activities aimed at strengthening early childhood education opportunities, including a needs assessment, the development of a strategic plan, the promotion of parental choice and knowledge about existing programs and services, the sharing of best practices and overall quality improvement efforts.

Texas Youth and Runaway Hotline

PEI continues to work in partnership with the agency's hotline to support outreach efforts in reaching youth and their families at vulnerable times. The Texas Youth Hotline provides prevention services to youth, parents, siblings and other family members who are in need of crisis intervention, advocacy, referral information or simply someone to listen. Services are provided over the phone, via text and chat. To date, staff and volunteers have answered more than one million calls.

Pediatric Brain Health

In its 2018 recommendations to the DFPS Commissioner, the Prevention Task Force underscored elevating early brain development as a critical area of focus for PEI during this fiscal year. Understanding that early brain development is a crucial pillar of child health, DFPS, the Department of State Health Services, the University of Texas System, Casey Family Services, Episcopal Health and St. David's Foundations partnered to host a two-day Pediatric Brain Health Summit in November 2018 in Austin. The summit brought together state agencies, direct service providers, advocacy groups, academia and philanthropy to decipher common language and identify what can be done at the local, regional and state level to promote pediatric brain health.

The summit featured internationally-recognized experts in the field and showcased innovative work happening in Texas. Attendees discussed the unique needs in Texas, how the state can help support and promote optimal development in its youngest children and had the opportunity to participate in the Brain Architecture Game. This hands on activity simulates the development of the basic architecture of a child's brain. Through the use of pipe cleaners, straws and weights, participants "build" a developing child's brain as tall as possible

(representing functionality) and as sturdy as possible (representing one’s ability to withstand stress) based on the resources they’re given through life experience cards. Nearly 100 people participated in this activity and at the conclusion had the opportunity to debrief on the experiences that strengthened or weakened the architecture of their developing brains.

Social Finance

Based on a desire to ensure vulnerable children, youth and families are receiving the supports they need, PEI contracted with Social Finance to explore how to incentivize providers to increase quality and attain outcomes that exceed what is currently required by their contract. PEI is exploring the use of quality incentive payments as one potential incentive tool to pilot in the coming fiscal year.

Texas Policy Lab

The Texas Policy Lab at Rice University works with state and local agencies to improve programs using data and evidence. Leveraging cutting-edge scientific methods and independent and timely evaluations, the lab connects Rice’s top economists and social scientists to government agencies to improve service delivery through data-driven insights.

This past fiscal year, PEI embarked on a partnership with the Texas Policy Lab to study the return on investment (ROI) of both the Texas Nurse-Family Partnership (TNFP) and Community Youth Development (CYD) programs at the community level. Specifically, the Policy Lab will examine the cost-effectiveness of these two programs for improving community health outcomes, child maltreatment rates, educational success and attainment and other key measures of wellbeing. Results from the Texas Policy Lab should be available in Fiscal Year 2020.

Goal 7

PEI will be transparent and inclusive in its planning and operations and will proactively publish its strategic plan and progress towards its goals.

PEI believes it is critical to keep its stakeholders informed and involved in agency planning and operations and takes a number of steps to ensure they are included in and kept aware of these efforts. In addition to the major initiatives described below, PEI regularly conducts surveys and hosts conference calls, webinars and in-person meetings with providers, advocates, researchers and other stakeholders. These points of contact are used to guide policy decisions, identify training needs and address implementation issues.

Provider Input

In Fiscal Year 2019, PEI used feedback gathered through its 2018 Spring Listening Tour to improve and streamline its work with communities. The community input encouraged PEI to

reassign the early childhood program specialists by communities instead of program so communities with multiple PEI early childhood programs would have one program specialist. This helps to improve relationships between PEI staff and contractors and streamline the communication process, ensuring that the families receive the supports they need.

In April 2019, PEI hosted a two-day provider focus group to gather specific input from providers regarding the launch of the expansion of the Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS) database. These sessions allowed home visitor staff and other PEI contractors and stakeholders to learn about upcoming changes to the PEIRS system and offer their input regarding how to make it most useful and efficient.

Prevention Task Force

The Prevention Task Force held three meetings this fiscal year working to advance the recommendations in the report submitted to the DFPS Commissioner in August 2018. In order to focus its efforts this fiscal year the Task Force elected to work on developing two of their five recommendations: a community tool kit to empower action at the local level and elevating early brain development and early childhood as the premium opportunity for prevention efforts.

The Task Force created an outline for a community toolkit that consists of resources to support communities in their collaborative efforts to align around child maltreatment prevention and the promotion of positive outcomes for children. PEI plans to outsource the toolkit in Fiscal Year 2020 for development into a web-based format for use by communities in various stages of implementing collaborative efforts.

During Fiscal Year 2019, DFPS partnered with the Department of State Health Services, the University of Texas System, Casey Family Services, Episcopal Health and St. David's Foundations to host a two-day Pediatric Brain Health Summit. Due to the success of the first summit, and the Task Force's continued emphasis on elevating early brain development, DFPS began convening monthly workgroups in late 2019 to plan for the second Summit.

Due to the legislative increases in funding for two of PEI's programs, discussed below, PEI was able to implement the task force's recommended strategy to expand prevention programming using its data-driven, risk-based growth strategy.

The Prevention Task Force sunsets August 31, 2019.

Outcomes of the 86th Texas Legislature, Regular Session

PEI's budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 includes increases for two programs (shown below) and flat funding for all other programs. Table four outlines the increases in funding and how the funding will be used.

Table 4: Funding Increase for FY20-21

Program	Additional Allocation FY20-21	Implementation Plan
HOPES	\$1,455,749	Expansion of this program will blend geographic and programmatic expansion, reaching additional counties across the state and increasing the number of families to be served.
Texas Nurse-Family Partnership	\$2,890,129	Expansion of this program will blend expansion of capacity in existing communities with expansion into new areas of the state where an assessment identifies both readiness and community risk in the targeted growth counties.

The following table compares funding from the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 biennia by strategy.

Table 5: Funding by biennia

Strategy	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21
C.1.1. STAR	\$24,312,362	\$24,312,359	\$24,312,361	\$24,312,360
C.1.2. CYD	\$8,422,559	\$8,422,559	\$8,422,559	\$8,422,558
C.1.3. CBCAP*	\$3,607,158	\$3,607,157	\$3,287,393	\$3,287,393
C.1.4. Other At-Risk	\$29,589,697	\$29,589,697	\$30,295,798	\$30,297,011
C.1.5. THV	\$31,490,335	\$31,490,335	\$33,009,782	\$33,009,782
C.1.6. Support	\$7,560,572	\$7,489,707	\$7,761,350	\$7,758,251
TOTAL	\$104,982,683	\$104,911,814	\$107,089,243	\$107,087,355

* Federal funds for FY20 and FY21 are estimates as the final amounts have not been released.

PEI also received a new directive for the upcoming biennia in the form of Rider 39. This Rider directs PEI to use existing funds in strategy C.1.4. to implement a pilot program focused on improving outcomes for children at the highest risk of re-entry into the child protective services system.

Strategic Plan Priorities for Fiscal Year 2020

PEI has prioritized the following five goals of the strategic plan for prioritization in Fiscal Year 2020.

- 1. Review and evaluate long-term and emerging trends through the Office of Child Safety, as well as current community and programmatic needs related to preventing child maltreatment and fatalities** (*Goal 1.2*). PEI will convene a state-wide safety summit with stakeholders, community providers and other state agencies to identify ways PEI can partner with communities to address child fatalities and near fatalities, including those caused by physical abuse, unsafe sleep practices and preventable drownings. Utilizing a public health approach, PEI will focus resources on equipping communities with tools and resources specific to suicide prevention for teens. Additionally, ongoing safety trainings will be provided to increase awareness and safety practices both within communities as well as with providers and home visitors.
- 2. Promote a culture of care that places a high value on the well-being of families and children along the life course toward adulthood** (*Goal 1.6*). PEI will leverage resources to enhance and support local efforts to promote positive outcomes for children, youth and families.
- 3. Require that parent and youth voices be included in community-needs assessments** (*Goal 3.1.4*) **and continue engaging internal and external stakeholders, including parents and youth, to inform strategic planning** (*Goal 7.1.1*). PEI will actively incorporate parent and youth voice and leadership both internally and externally to impact services to children, youth, families and communities.
- 4. Employ multiple methods for measuring the impact of prevention efforts and continually explore improvements to evaluation methodologies so as to provide contractors with continual feedback that will improve service delivery** (*Goal 4.3*). PEI will create a culture and expectation for utilizing CQI both internally and externally to improve efforts.
- 5. Pursue funding and other resources from federal grants, private foundations, businesses and other charitable organizations to expand programming and increase capacity of effective programs** (*Goal 2*). PEI will explore grant innovations to enhance outcomes and maximize funding.