



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Capacity Strategic Plan

Region 6A and 6B

November 4, 2019

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Foster Care Placement Forecast and Assessment of Capacity Need	1
Regional Plan to Increase Capacity	2
Goal 1: Increase Basic/Moderate Foster Home Capacity	2
Objective 1.1: Improve Utilization of Existing Placements.....	4
Goal 2: Increase Specialized/Intense Foster Home Capacity	3
Objective 2.1: Improve Transitions from Residential Treatment Centers (RTC) into a least restrictive placement.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Objective 2.2: Child Placing Agencies will identify currently licensed homes that could expand their service provision to include Specialized/Intense placements.....	3
Goal 3: Increase Siblings Placed All Together	4
Objective 3.1: Evaluate each sibling group that is currently separated for possibility of reunification in the same home	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Objective 3.2: Promote the importance of frequent and on-going parent/child and sibling contact	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 264.1261, of the Texas Family Code, “appropriate management personnel from a child protective services region in which community-based care has not been implemented, in collaboration with foster care providers, faith-based entities, and child advocates in that region, shall use data collected by the department on foster care capacity needs and availability of each type of foster care and kinship placement in the region to create a plan to address the substitute care capacity needs in the region.”

The statewide foster care needs assessment was completed in August 2019 and helped to inform the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, which specifically addresses the needs of each Catchment/Region.

Each region, led by regional DFPS leadership, has met with their regional stakeholders to develop a strategic plan. In addition, each region has partnered with a local provider contracted by CPS, to continue oversight and recommend changes as needed based on progress of goals established.

Foster Care Placement Forecast and Assessment of Capacity Need

The Foster Care Needs Assessment can be accessed at the below DFPS link

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Reports_and_Presentations/CPS/documents/2019/2019-08-06_Foster_Care_Needs_Assessment.pdf

A stakeholder/provider meeting for Regions 6A and 6B occurred on October 16, 2019 where the Foster Care Needs Assessment was reviewed and a Power Point of regional data was presented focusing on historical analysis and forecasted capacity needs through Fiscal Year 2021.

On October 16, 2019, a Capacity Think Tank was created to address the regions’ foster care needs and to develop the regional strategic plan. While DFPS is honored to submit this plan on behalf of the community, the goals and strategies contained herein belong to us all. DFPS would like to thank the following organizations for participating:

Arms Wide Adoption Services, Arrow Child & Family Ministries of Texas, Benchmark Family Services, Boys and Girls Country, Depelchin Children’s Center, Embracing Destiny Foundation, Family to Family Adoptions, Forever Families, Good Hearts Youth & Family Services, Guardian Angels, Hands of

Healing, Homes with Hope, Parental Guidance Adoptions and Family Services, Pathways Youth and Family Services, Safe Haven Community Services, Sheltering Harbour, The Payton Foundation Everyday Life, Today's Harbor for Children, Upbring – Foster in Texas.

In collaboration, all the participants committed to dedicating the necessary resources to implementing the Regional strategic plan.

As a Region we have identified the following barriers in building and successfully utilizing capacity:

- The frequency and location of parental, child, and sibling visits
- The potential underutilization of all available foster homes within the region
- The ever changing face of foster families (two parent working homes, increase in licensed kinship homes, etc.)
- Increased training requirements
- Recruitment challenges in rural areas within Region 6, which border other regions.
- Caregivers are not adequately prepared to care for youth with higher levels of care.

The following strategies were identified by stakeholders and the DFPS regional leadership team in order to address identified barriers:

Regional Plan to Increase Capacity

Goal 1: Increase Basic/Moderate Foster Home Capacity

The current supply of Basic and Moderate foster homes meets the forecasted demand in Region 6 (Region 6A/6B Combined); however, there is a lack of homes that can support basic/moderate children age 14 and over. It is projected that Region 6 will require an additional 50 beds for basic/moderate youth (age 14 and older) by the year 2021.

Objective 1.1: Improve Utilization of Existing Placements

- CPS staff will begin utilization of the placement matching system in the Spring of 2020. Providers will ensure that correct information on capacity is input into the provider portal. CPS will obtain feedback from providers and staff at quarterly Provider Meetings.
- CPS and Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) will review the current practices of their placement teams to ensure all appropriate placement options are considered within their legal county and/or region first.

- Region 6 Child Placing Agency (CPA) Collaborative Meetings will continue quarterly, and will include an update on the strategic capacity building plan.
- CPS will hold a monthly staffing to include the CPS Child Placement Unit (CPU), program staff, and CPAs to identify existing basic/moderate foster homes for separated siblings, children placed outside of the region, and children ready to transition into a less restrictive environment.
- Providers expressed that they are not familiar with the other placement options and resources in Region 6. As such, the providers will develop a plan to learn more about each other and the available resources that surround their placements. They will use this information to better support caregivers and children.
- Providers will be able to access the monthly DFPS Data Book at www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book beginning in February 2020. The Regional Systems Improvement Team will support providers and the community in their ability to access and utilize the Data Book by providing training webinars in the Spring of 2020.

Goal 2: Increase Specialized/Intense Foster Home Capacity

The current supply of Specialized/Intense foster homes meets 57% of FY21 forecasted demand in Region 6 (Combined Region 6A/6B).

Objective 2.1: Improve Transitions from Residential Treatment Centers (RTC) into a Least Restrictive Placement

- Communication between CPS and RTC providers will be improved through quarterly meetings to identify gaps and formulate solutions.
- RTC Providers and CPS will collaborate to increase the number of youth that transition from RTCs into a least restrictive placement.
- Meet with RTC providers to discuss discharges and how together we can better prepare children for subsequent placements.
- The Capacity Think Tank will be used to improve the communication and partnership between Shelters, RTCs, and CPAs.
- Providers/placements will share information prior to placement changes.

Objective 2.2: Child Placing Agencies will identify currently licensed homes that could expand their service provision to include Specialized/Intense placements

- CPAs will develop and provide specialized training to comply with Minimum Standards for placing treatment needs children within a family setting.
- CPS and CPAs will develop additional opportunities to provide supportive respite for families caring for children with higher needs.
- CPAs will increase recruitment efforts for children with higher needs.
- Existing therapeutic homes will be willing to support newly licensed therapeutic homes by allowing them to shadow the family and reach out for coaching/support.
- CPS will hold a monthly staffing to include CPU, program staff, RTCs and CPAs to identify existing foster homes children ready to transition into a least restrictive environment.

Goal 3: Increase Siblings Placed All Together

Among sibling groups in Region 6, 61% were placed all together at the close of FY18. The Regions (6A/6B) are committed to evaluating all separated siblings for potential reunification and increasing the number of sibling groups with all siblings placed together.

Objective 3.1: Evaluate each sibling group that is currently separated for possibility of reunification in the same home

- CPS staff and providers will identify siblings who are in separate placements and need to be reunified.
- CPS will hold a monthly staffing to include CPU, program staff, and CPAs to identify potential placement options for separated siblings to transition into the same home.

Objective 3.2: Promote the importance of frequent and on-going parent/child and sibling contact

- Providers and CPS will work collaboratively to address visitation and transportation issues.
- Providers will ensure foster families are adequately informed and trained on visitation and transportation expectations.
- CPS Faith-Based Specialists will explore utilization of faith based partners to identify possible visitation locations and support for children and families.

- CPS Faith-Based Specialists and Community Initiative Specialists will explore recruitment of volunteers to support transportation needs of parents.