



# **Quarterly Report**

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

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September 2022

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# Introduction

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

## Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) changes the way the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) procures, contracts, and pays for foster care services. Under a performance-based grant agreement, a single contractor provides services to children and families within a designated community (also known as “catchments”). In Stage I, this Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for ensuring the full continuum of paid foster care placements and other services for children in the state’s legal conservatorship. SSCCs also support adoption recruitment, matching, and home studies. In Stage II, the SSCC expands services to include unverified relative or "kinship" placements, services to parents, and the SSCC has sole responsibility for the legal case management function. In Stage III, the SSCC continues the provision of all Stage I and II services and is awarded with financial incentives and disincentives for permanency outcomes and additional performance measures for child safety and well-being. For information and data on the performance of SSCC contractors, see the [DFPS Rider 15 Report](#).

## Office of Community-Based Care Transition Organizational Structure

The 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, as part of Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, Section 264.172, formally established the OCBCT in 2021. The OCBCT is a state agency independent of, but administratively attached to DFPS. The OCBCT and DFPS, along with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), will work together to implement CBC. The Statewide CBC Director, Theresa Thomas, has three directors who will have key roles in moving CBC forward in Texas: Community Outreach and Legislative Relations Director, and two Directors of Implementation and Operations. The contracts division that formerly was housed in the OCBCT is now housed within DFPS Purchased Client Services to better serve the SSCC contractors, however, OCBCT has one Contract Administration Manager on each implementation team to initiate SSCC contracts on behalf of DFPS. See Appendix A for the current OCBCT organizational structure. Below you will see an update for initiatives, accomplishments, and opportunities in each CBC area throughout the state.



THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY-BASED CARE TRANSITION

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

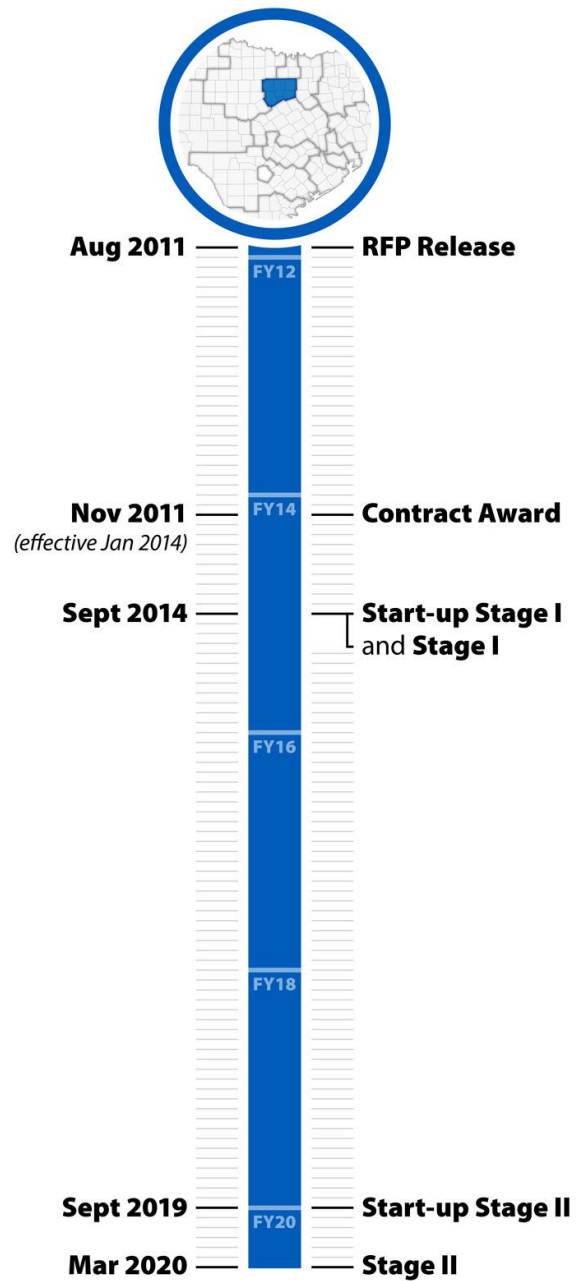
The Metroplex West (previously known as Region 3B) area is comprised of Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Metroplex West. The visual to the right depicts the timeline of this community's CBC progress.

## Supervisor Credentialing

OCOK partnered with the National Certification Board for Child Welfare Professionals and Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services to pilot the initial stage of a national professional certification program in child welfare. Through this partnership, supervisors are in the process of learning to apply for, test and hold the Certified Child Welfare Supervisor credential. OCOK will start with the supervisor credential and the goal is to expand to their permanency specialists.

## A Heightened Focus on Adoption

OCOK has entered a partnership with The Gladney Center for Adoption to enhance recruitment for children waiting for forever homes. Utilizing the Heart Gallery of North Texas, OCOK will feature their children ready for adoption. Additionally, OCOK will further the partnership with The Gladney Center by piloting a program focused on heightened recruitment for children with specific needs.



## **Kinship Innovations**

OCOK continues to partner with A Second Chance Inc. to provide day-long kinship engagement and values enrichment sessions. These mandatory trainings for permanency and kinship staff focus on better engaging with kinship families, identifying cultural sensitivities and biases, and overall best practices when working with families.

## **Community Engagement and Partnership**

For two weeks in June, 34 girls in foster care had the chance to participate in a two-week summer STEM experience, {HER} Code, hosted by Resources Inspiring Success and Empowering (R.I.S.E.) at no cost to them. Led by local female leaders, engineers, and scientists, the camp included a field trip to Texas Christian University (TCU) and a visit from Fort Worth Mayor, Mattie Parker. Additionally, the Community Engagement team geared up for back to school by partnering with local Trinity Valley student, Thomas Boothby, who started Tools to Teach, a nonprofit organization, and the Texas Future Farmers of America (FFA) to hand out over 300 backpacks, filled with supplies, for children starting the new school year.

## **Intensive Permanency Services**

OCOK is entering into a partnership with Alia, who will provide consultation for intensive permanency services for youth who have the greatest needs for trauma healing and permanence. Since 2016, Alia has worked to transform the child welfare system, focusing on better outcomes for children. OCOK leadership is excited about beginning this intensive work to better serve children who need it the most.

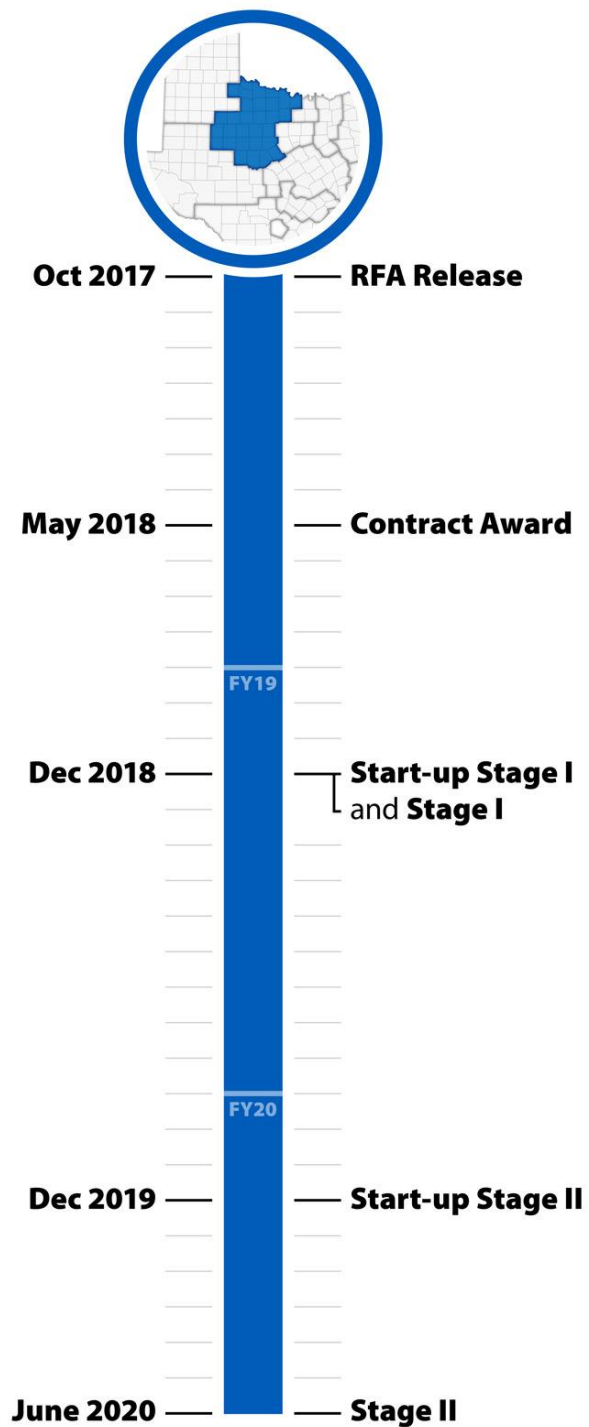


# Update for Big Country & Texoma- 2INgage

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

## Kinship Family Initiative

2INgage received two Marylee Allen COVID Relief grants in 2022. One of the grants has been named the Family Navigator Grant. The focus of the grant is to gather and analyze data to determine daycare needs throughout the region. It will also identify local daycares who may be willing to reserve spots for children in care, while collaborating with the Texas Workforce Commission to educate other daycares on the need to accept Child Care Services payment to increase the overall resources available to foster children. A second focus of the grant is to steer kinship families through the licensing process as well as locate resources to include fingerprinting, minor home improvements, fire extinguishers, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) classes, and other steps of the process. Other needs met included computers to help families navigate virtual trainings and minimum standards paperwork, and reimbursement for health screenings, mattresses, and air conditioning units. Additionally, the family navigator works closely with the kinship and permanency departments to ensure there are no placement disruptions due to unmet daycare needs and has assisted six families who were previously



unable to successfully locate daycare on their own. By assisting these families with securing daycare, children were able to remain in their familial placements. The family navigator also facilitates monthly meetings with each of the licensing agencies in the region and the kinship department. This ensures that the agencies can remove any barriers in the licensing process as soon as possible, which in turn ensures that permanency for the children in their home is not delayed. Through partnership, 2INGage and their agencies have worked to license five families in the month of June and eight in the month of July. There are currently 95 kinship families actively pursuing licensing throughout the region and ten families are projected to be licensed in August.

## **PAL Impact**

2INGage continues to excel in PAL related services and in offering PAL Life Skills training internally. PAL completion by 18-year-old youth is on track to achieve 100% in fiscal year 2022, as quarters one, two, and three were all met at 100% completion rates.

On June 2, 2022 the 2INGage PAL team hosted the region's annual Teen Conference which was blended with their "Celebration of Education" graduation party for Region 2 youth and high school graduates. Forty-four youth attended the conference with eight of those youth being honored as graduates. The event's guest speakers included Baptist Child and Family Services, Texas Workforce Commission, and Phased In, a Supervised Independent Living provider in Big Country and Texoma.

2INGage also continues to support the Region 2 Youth Leadership Council (YLC) which is made up of ten youth in foster care to enhance their leadership and advocacy skills. The YLC operates like a school's student council to promote normalcy activities for all youth in care. The YLC created a survey for all youth in care, 14 years and older, that covered topics such as sibling visitation, contact with their case manager, normalcy activities, and their perception of their time in care. In June 2022, the YLC presented the survey responses to 2INGage staff, community stakeholders, and providers. Based on the feedback received, 2INGage staff are strategizing opportunities for youth to have connections with their siblings and are utilizing their Family Finders staff to assist with identifying family connections. In addition, 2INGage was able to purchase cell phones, laptops, and prepaid data plans, under the House of Representatives (H.R.) 133 funding, to fulfill a wish for youth.

## **Family Reunification Month**

2INGage celebrated National Family Reunification Month in June 2022 with the 2INGage Provider Network. The Provider Network consists of the eleven licensing agencies within the Big Country and Texoma communities: A World for Children, Arrow Child & Family Ministries, Caring Hearts for Children, Children's Hope, Christian Homes & Family Services, Harmony Family





Services, MCH Family Outreach, New Horizons, Pathways Youth & Family Services, Presbyterian Children's Home & Services, and Texas Family Initiative. Each agency was presented with a pinwheel that represented a child that was served by their organization and was able to successfully reunify with their family. From June 2021 to May 2022, there were a total of 327 children that were able to be reunified.

## **TXPOP Implementation**

The Texas Permanency Outcomes Project (TXPOP) develops sustainable best practices utilized by child welfare agencies across Texas to connect children to their birth families, regardless of their permanency outcome. TXPOP is a project of the Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing and the Texas Center for Child and Family Studies, in collaboration with the Federal Children's Bureau, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and the Children's Commission. TXPOP refocuses practice, strengthens the workforce, and transforms how systems treat families within foster care.

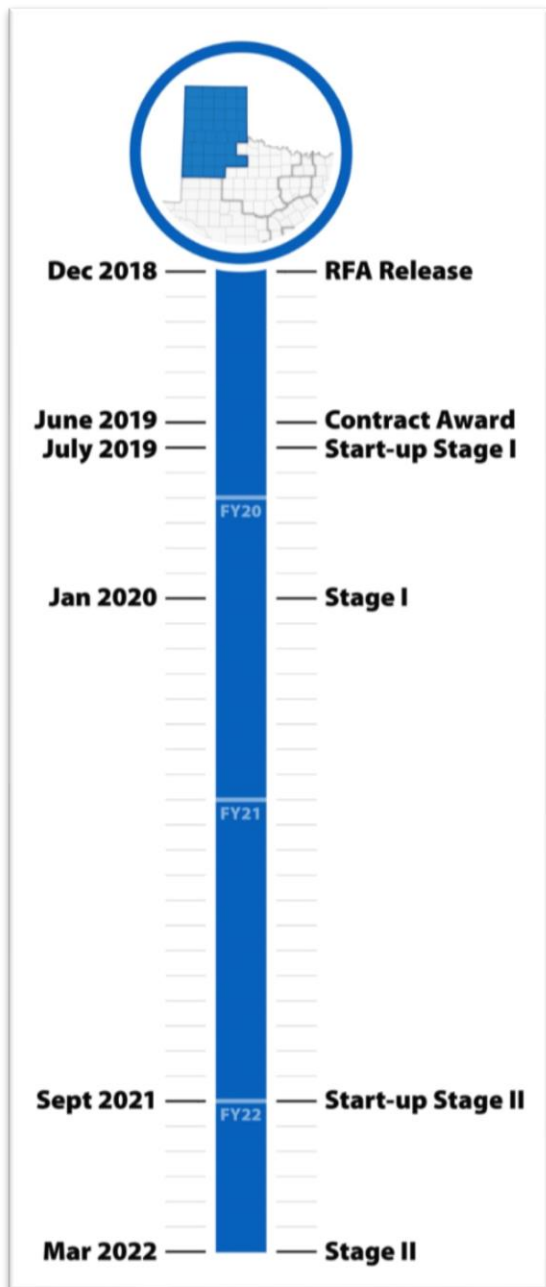
2INGage became a pilot site for TXPOP implementation in 2022. 2INGage's site coordinator is working with internal staff and three child placing agencies, Caring Hearts, Arrow Child & Family Ministries, and A World for Children, to coordinate the delivery of the TXPOP Social Work Child Welfare Academy to help child welfare professionals improve permanency and wellbeing outcomes for children. Through theory and skills-based courses, the Academy prepares professionals to address barriers to positive outcomes for children in foster care. Specifically, the Academy seeks to mitigate the racial and class bias that is inherent in the child welfare system and improve the value that the child welfare system places on family engagement.

## **Human Trafficking**

2INGage is committed to make the fight against human trafficking a priority, and continues to make efforts to improve awareness, connect the community to local resources, and be active in prevention efforts to help eliminate trafficking in Texas. The Big Country Vice President of Permanency serves as Vice President on the Taylor County Care Coordination team, which is a collaborative effort with key stakeholders to promote hope and healing for child sex trafficking victims and provide support for non-offending caregivers. 2INGage staff have also been trained to use the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT) and will be able to enter data directly into the database upon the completion of the CSE-IT.



# Update for Panhandle- Saint Francis Community Services, Inc (SFCS)



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

## Partnership through Community

SFCS held their first ever “Family Matters” National Reunification Month celebrations in Lubbock and Amarillo. A new “Visitation House” was donated by the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo, and SFCS staff obtained donations to fully furnish and decorate the house. Additionally, SFCS has partnered with over 30 churches and community centers in their area that have opened their doors and hearts to children in care for supervised visitations.

## Capacity Building

SFCS will open a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) in Fall 2022. SFCS continues to work on building shared capacity through a “Foster Care Recruitment Blitz”. This includes collaboration with SSCCs, Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services, and Daley Solutions that focuses on statewide recruitment and family-finding, and the creation of the fostertx.org website, social media, and outward channels to drive recruitment. Additionally, SFCS continues to focus on funding kinship support, treatment



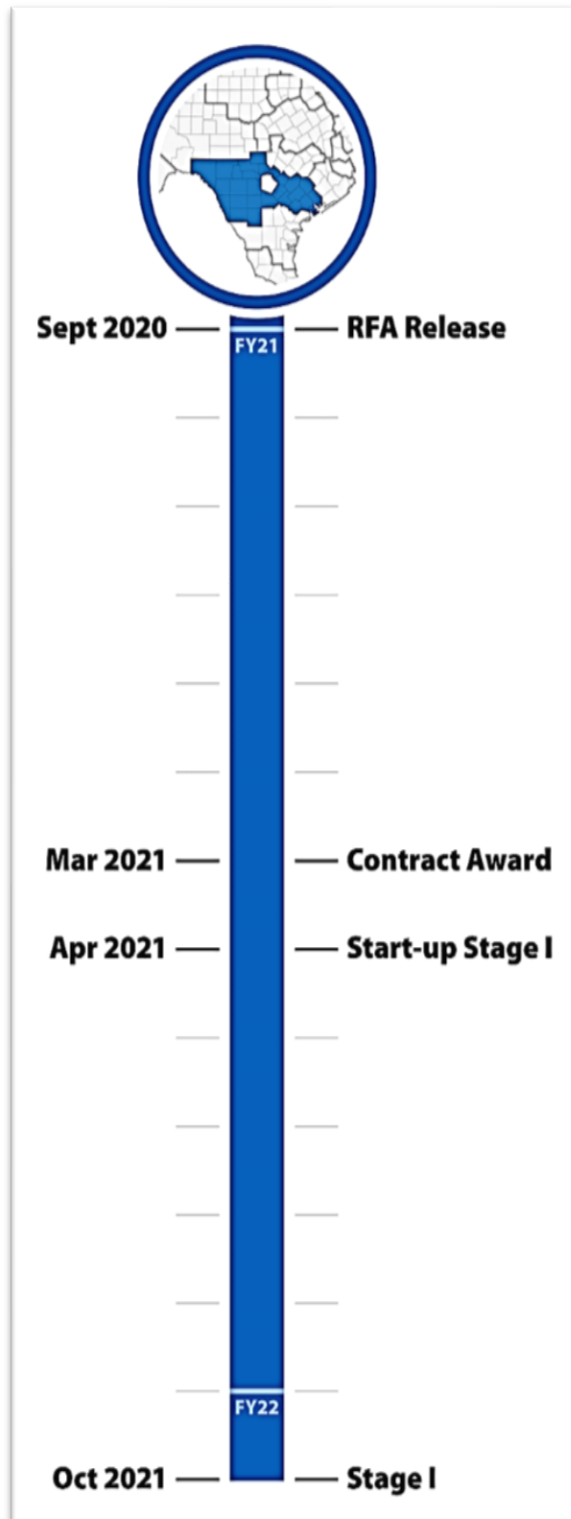
foster care programs, placement incentives, and a targeted marketing campaign, “It Takes Everything”, to bring awareness of the needs in the various counties.

## **FFPSA Primary Prevention Services Pilot**

SFCS was recently chosen to pilot an evidence-based primary prevention program in nine Texas counties: Carson, Gray, Hemphill, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Moore, Ochiltree, Potter, and Wheeler. SFCS will be utilizing the “Family Centered Treatment” Model (FCT) as their tool to preserve the family unit and partner with DFPS and the courts.



## Update for South Central & Hill Country- Belong



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

### **Intervention, Permanency, & Prevention Services**

To assure appropriate behavioral and mental health services are available, Belong is building a holistic treatment model, centered around supportive services for children and families. Belong has connected families to over 80 community resources, has launched their first Parent Advisory Committee and has received more than 50 referrals for in-home or virtual support services. In addition, Belong has enrolled 25 families into its prevention programs that focus on building a strong foundation for families while providing the necessary support and tools for each unique family.

### **Placement Preservation and SSCC Supervision**

Belong has completed disruption mitigation staffings for a total of 39 youth for whom discharge notices had been placed:

- Of these, one-third of these youth remained stabilized in their placement,
- 15 youth were discharged to a more appropriate placement,



- and four youth had their discharge notices extended.

Belong continues to refer families to their in-home parenting services. For Quarter 4, Belong is expected to complete 200+ home visits, receive 20+ referrals for in-home services, and connect families with 60+ community resources. Belong has utilized additional services to preserve placements through their work with their various providers, their exceptional care requests, mentor programs, and assistance with scheduling and transporting families to appointments. There has been only one instance of SSCC Supervision during this reporting period.

## **Capacity Building Efforts**

Belong has contracted with more than 131 providers and 181 programs in-network. Belong has continued its partnership with Chosen to provide in-home support services for families to promote permanency and mitigate disruption of placement. Belong and Chosen are also working to finalize a Treatment Foster Care (TFC) model. In addition, St. Jude's Ranch for Children (SJRC) Texas | Belong is exploring Kinship Treatment Foster Care (KTFC) models through their partnership with Chosen. Belong has continued utilizing the Renewing Family Strengths program to promote change of behaviors that would otherwise result in discharge of youth. Belong has also collaborated with South Texas Alliance for Orphans to target the faith community for recruitment of foster homes for teens.

In collaboration with SJRC Texas | Belong, Touchstone Alliance was selected in 2022 through the Request for Proposal process to expand new capacity in the South Central & Hill Country area. Now fully operational at SJRC Texas's General Residential Operation (GRO) located in Bulverde, Touchstone has begun taking female youth into the Stabilization and Assessment Center (SAC). Within the 2022 calendar year, Touchstone Alliance intends to begin accepting males in the SAC Program followed by initializing the Intensive Residential Treatment Program (IRTP) component in 2023.

## **Community Engagement and Outreach**

Belong has continued to educate the communities it serves on Community-Based Care. Belong's community engagement goal is to establish their presence and educate the community on Community-Based Care, as well as foster care and adoption needs in all of their 27 counties. Belong has engaged with over 340 community groups, businesses, and faith-based organizations. Belong continues to hold monthly in-person and virtual information sessions on fostering and adopting along with providers to share their organizational goals and encourage families to become licensed. Belong has begun planning for listen and learn sessions to be held in September and October throughout its service areas to begin community building activities. In addition, through successful collaborative outreach efforts, Belong is partnering with the Kerr County Child



Services Board and Hill Country Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to designate a community-friendly space for donations, visitations and other opportunities to serve the unique needs of children and families.



# Update on Community-Based Care Expansion

As appropriated by the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, the OCBCT and DFPS, in partnership with HHSC, have pending active procurements for Community-Based Care in the following communities: Metroplex East (Region 3E), Piney Woods (Region 4), and Deep East (Region 5). See the timeline below for the projected staggered implementation of the next areas based on the timeframes set for in the Request for Applications. There were no bids received for Permian/Concho (Region 9).

## Proposed timeline for CBC implementation in new community areas

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

On April 1, 2022, Belong was approved to begin Stage II readiness activities, and contingent upon certification of readiness, Belong is anticipated to go live for Stage II in October 2022. DFPS, OCBCT, and Belong have been working collaboratively to ensure a seamless transition to this next phase of community-based care.

Over the FY2022-2023 biennium, the OCBCT and DFPS will re-solicit the SSCC contract for Metroplex West since OCOK’s current contract term expires August 31, 2023.

## Legislation Implementation Updates

### Senate Bill 1896

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

The OCBCT is charged with 10 duties:

1. assess CBC areas in this state where community-based care services may be implemented,
2. develop a plan for implementing community-based care in each community area in this state, including the order in which community-based care will be implemented in each community area and a timeline for implementation,



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

For charges one through three, OCBCT's outreach efforts help promote and support these charges through interactions with current and potential future CBC providers to plan for CBC in communities across Texas. OCBCT continues to partner with DFPS to plan CBC roll out in the remaining community areas and ensures that innovation in planning the next areas of CBC is supported, as evidenced by OCBCT and DFPS' collaboration with HHSC to develop and post the unsolicited proposal process along with finalizing applicable rules. As of August 20, 2022, the process for unsolicited proposal submission was formalized and posted to the [HHSC webpage](#). Additionally, modification of the CBC timeline for stage I to stage II with a reduction from 18 months to 12 months has been approved and is being implemented in the South Central and Hill Country community through the readiness process, and will also be utilized in all subsequent communities, as appropriate.

For charges four through seven, OCBCT works closely with DFPS and HHSC to ensure that the following are complied with: procurement law; state and federal law regarding the administration of the foster care program; and the federal foster care injunction remedial orders. This collaborative approach ensures that the SSCCs are set up for success. OCBCT collaborates and partners with DFPS and the SSCCs to resolve any case work or contractual concerns. Lastly, this CBC Quarterly Report and the Rider 15 Report help to ensure that outcomes are reported to internal and external stakeholders. This information is also shared in the quarterly public private partnership (PPP) meetings, where the public and private sectors come together to advise DFPS





and OCBCT about CBC. OCBCT's outreach efforts also support the completion of this function of the office. The OCBCT is committed to transparency and will continue to meet statutory requirements for sharing implementation plans, implementation updates, and performance data and measures.

For the final charges, eight through ten, OCBCT continues to work alongside DFPS and HHSC to evaluate financial implications of CBC. OCBCT is working on the Rate Modernization Project with DFPS, HHSC and their contractors. OCBCT continues to work with external partners such as Texas Tech University, Texas A&M University, the University of Texas, and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago to ensure the best methods of supporting the SSCCs and community-based care. The OCBCT has worked with DFPS and the SSCCs to complete the Senate Bill 910 study, more on this effort below. Additionally, OCBCT continues to support DFPS' efforts for the House Bill 3041 Family Preservation service pilots.

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

Senate Bill 1896 updated the definition and requirements of the existing Data Access and Standards Governance Council, which was established by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature in 2019. To conform to Senate Bill 1896, the Council established a quarterly meeting schedule, with the next scheduled meeting set in September 2022. Quarterly Council meetings will continue. OCBCT continues to partner with DFPS and the SSCCs to work on interoperability standards for the information infrastructure to standardize systems.

## **Senate Bill 910**

Senate Bill 910 requires DFPS to develop a comprehensive list of options to implement family preservation services in existing community areas and to submit a report to the Governor and Legislative leadership. In September 2021, an Interagency Contract (IAC) between DFPS and Texas A&M University (Public Policy Research Institute) was executed. The IAC is to provide a comprehensive study of options to help inform the quality implementation of family preservation services into the existing CBC areas as a part of community-based care, with specific focus on operations, implementation, financial modeling, contract provisions, statutory changes, and service delivery issues. The OCBCT, DFPS, and Texas A&M University continue to work together on this project. OCBCT will also continue to support DFPS in the completion of the report which will be submitted by October 1, 2022.

## **CBC Model, Process Evaluation, and Continuous Quality Improvement**

The OCBCT continues to evaluate whether the staged approach is the best approach to implement



CBC statewide. The OCBCT and DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University to conduct a process evaluation of each stage of CBC. The process evaluation is a tool used by OCBCT and DFPS to assess implementation of CBC in each community area, identifying the key successes and barriers, and course correct as needed. The CBC process evaluation was completed in November 2020 and can be found on the [CBC website](#). On-going process evaluations through Texas Tech University will continue, and work is underway with the DFPS Office of Data and Systems Improvement and the SSCCs, to make a long term sustainable plan for statewide community-based care. An updated process evaluation is planned to be released by Texas Tech University in FY23.

The OCBCT and DFPS continue to work with the Center for Child Welfare Data, affiliated with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, to support the outcome evaluation. Chapin Hall provides independent data analysis of each SSCC's performance on placements within 50 miles and paid foster care days, the basis for the fiscal model, and incentive payments in Stage III. OCBCT with Chapin Hall, and the input of the SSCCs, will be finalizing Stage III in the next year.

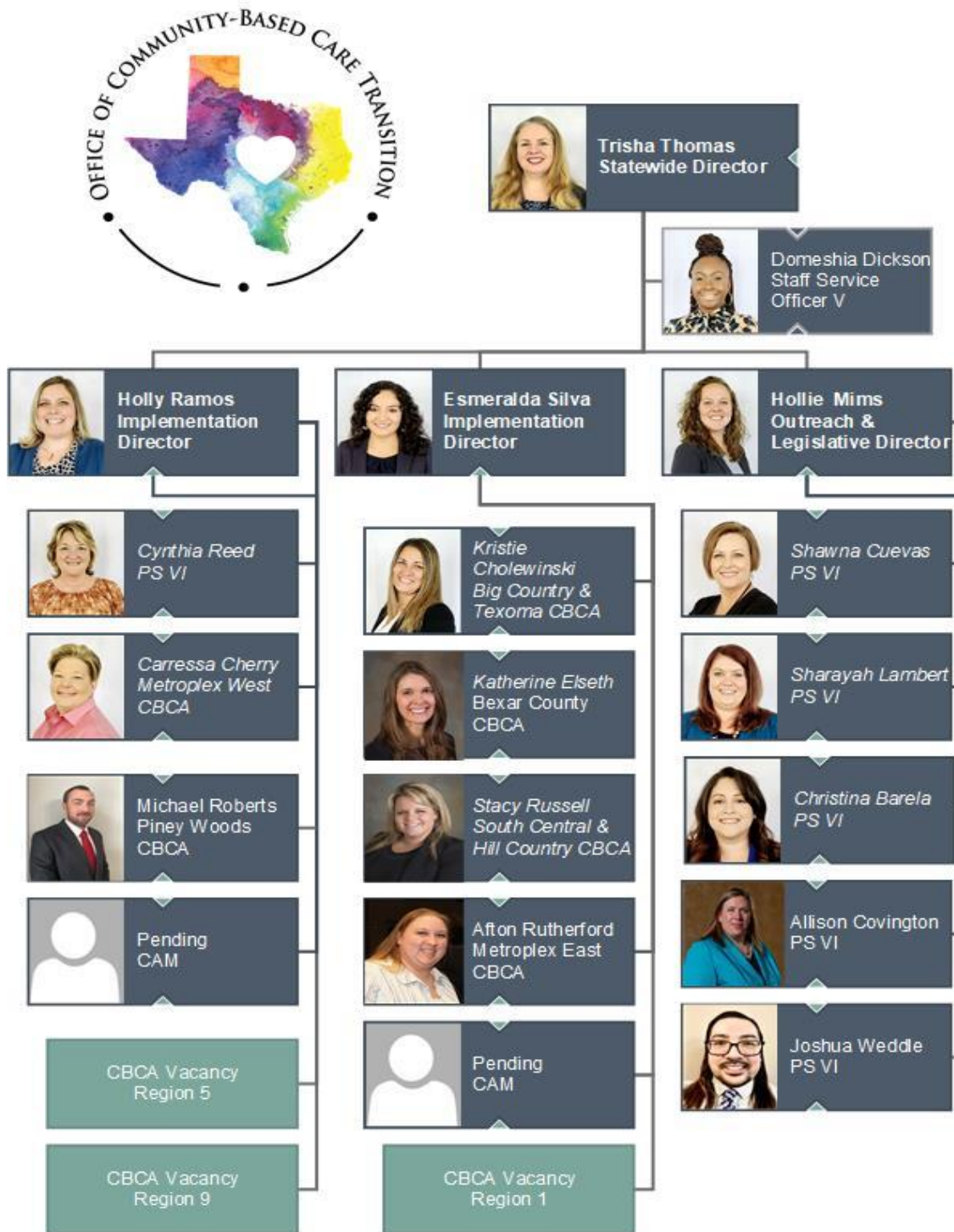
## Conclusion

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The OCBCT, DFPS, and stakeholder partners are committed to successfully implementing and sustaining CBC in the four current communities (Panhandle, Big Country & Texoma, Metroplex West, and South Central & Hill Country). Depending on contract awards, the upcoming three community areas will continue to support CBC implementation. The potential award of unsolicited proposals lays the foundation for a successful rollout statewide. During this biennium, two SSCCs will be moving into Stage II, and at least four SSCCs will move into Stage I. However, this timeline could be accelerated due to unsolicited proposal awards. As requested in DFPS' Legislative Appropriations Request, OCBCT has requested funding for the next biennium to include four additional SSCCs into Stage I and four SSCCs into Stage II, with the goal of statewide community-based care by 2029. View the latest [CBC Implementation Plan](#) for additional details. An updated implementation plan is due to the Texas Legislature no later than the last day of each state fiscal biennium. It will include new requirements passed during the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature.



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



# Appendix B: Current Community-Based Care Communities

