



Quarterly Report

Office of Community-Based Care Transition Implementation Status

December 2023

Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 4
- Background..... 4
- Office of Community-Based Care Transition (OCBCT) Organizational Structure 4
- Update on Community-Based Care Expansion 5
 - Community Outreach.....5
 - Update for Metroplex West- ACH Child and Family Services and their SSCC Division, Our Community Our Kids (OCOK).....7
 - Texas Family First Pilot.....7
 - Yes You Kin!7
 - Kinship Resource Fairs7
 - Connections Program.....8
 - Adoption.....8
 - Update for Big Country & Texoma- Texas Family Initiative and their SSCC Division, 2INgag8
 - Texas Family First Pilot.....9
 - Increase in State Identification Cards/Driver’s Licenses9
 - National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) Surveys9
 - Sibling Placements9
 - Yearly Adoptions and National Adoption Day Events9
 - Update for Panhandle- Saint Francis Community Services, Inc (SFCS) and their division, Saint Francis Community Services in Texas, Inc 10
 - Permanency and Reunification.....10
 - Kinship10
 - Texas Family First Pilot.....11
 - Capacity Building.....11
 - Update for South Central & Hill Country- SJRC Texas and their Division, Belong 12
 - SSCC Joint Capacity Building Projects12
 - Treatment Foster Care.....13



Practice Model	13
Supervisor Credentialing Program.....	13
Signs of Safety	14
Permanency Round Tables.....	14
Family Navigator Positions.....	14
Wendy’s Wonderful Kids.....	14
Family Resource Center - New Braunfels.....	14
Family Support Services	15
Texas Family First Pilot.....	15
Hope Center Partnership	15
Update for Metroplex East- Texas Family Initiative and their SSCC Division, EMPOWER.....	16
Stage I Progress Report.....	16
Stage 2 Readiness.....	16
Update for Piney Woods- Arrow Child & Family Ministries and their SSCC Division, 4Kids4Families	17
Community Engagement.....	17
Hiring of 4Kids4Families Team.....	18
Update for Deep East- Pressley Ridge and their SSCC Division, Texas Family Care Network.	18
Readiness, Stage I Start Up, and Stage I Go-Live	18
Leadership Roles and Key Positions.....	18
Preparation for Stage II	19
CBC Model, Process Evaluation, and Continuous Quality Improvement.....	19
Conclusion	20
Appendix A: Organizational Structure for the Office of Community-Based Care Transition	21
Appendix B: Current Community-Based Care Communities	22



Introduction

As required by Texas Family Code, Subchapter B-1, Chapter 264, Section 264.172 (f), 87th 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 30th, December 30th, March 31st, and June 30th 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” or “community areas”). 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 (OCBCT) Organizational Structure

The 87th 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. OCBCT and DFPS, along with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), work together to implement CBC. Based on the current funding methodology, as CBC expands into new areas, OCBCT will receive one Community-Based Care Administrator (CBCA) per new community area, and one Program Specialist VI (PSVI) per four community areas to help assess and develop a plan for implementation. 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.



Update on Community-Based Care Expansion

CBC continues to develop throughout the state. Texas Family Initiative (TFI)/EMPOWER, in the Metroplex East community area, went live in Stage I on September 1, 2023 and began Stage II readiness activities. On November 1, 2023, Arrow Child & Family Ministries/4Kids4Families in Piney Woods and Pressley Ridge/Texas Family Care Network in Deep East went live in Stage I and began Stage II readiness activities. ACH Child and Family Services (ACH)/Our Community Our Kids (OCOK) has been the SSCC in Metroplex West (Region 3W) since 2014, serving seven of the 10 counties in the community. Now, ACH/OCOK has been awarded the SSCC contract and began Stage I readiness on November 1, 2023 to provide CBC services for the other three counties in the region: Denton, Cooke, and Wise counties. They will continue to provide foster care services to their previously established community area in Stage II capacity.

Additionally, with funding received by the 88th Texas Legislature, OCBCT and DFPS, in partnership with HHSC, are preparing to release four new Request for Applications (RFAs) to expand CBC in the Harris County (Region 6a), Bay Area/Montgomery (Region 6b), Bexar County (Region 8a), and El Paso (Region 10) communities. OCBCT is working closely with DFPS on implementation of bills passed during the 88th Texas Legislative session that impact CBC and the SSCCs, which includes supporting the implementation of the Texas Child-Centered Care (T3C), formerly foster care rate modernization.

Community Outreach

OCBCT has placed a lot of focus on community outreach to provide information and awareness of CBC and what it means for the communities across Texas. OCBCT collaborates with community stakeholders and leaders to share information and answer questions regarding the implementation of CBC. In recognition of the informational memorandums released this year by the federal Children's Bureau and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education highlighting the requirements of supporting the educational stability of children in foster care, OCBCT placed special emphasis this quarter on explaining CBC to the Texas Education Agency's Education Service Centers across the state to prepare the groups for working with SSCCs. OCBCT outreach staff participated in CBC readiness and education discussions in the Panhandle, Metroplex East, Piney Woods, Deep East, Bexar County, and South Texas/Corpus Christi communities during the last quarter. Additionally, in an effort to network, educate, and share information, the OCBCT has attended and participated in the following meetings/conferences to gather information and hear other innovative ideas and implementation processes:

- Region 5 Judiciary Townhall, hosted by Texas Family Care Network (TFCN), August 17,



2023

- Fostering Bridges Meeting, hosted by Fostering Bridges and OCBCT, August 23, 2023
- Cherokee County Child Welfare Board Meeting, August 28, 2023
- Region 4 CASA Townhall, hosted by the HELP Center, August 31, 2023
- Meeting with Senator Kolkhorst's Office, hosted by OCBCT, August 31, 2023
- Bexar County Capacity and Foster Care Services Workgroup, hosted by Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services (TACFS), September 19, 2023
- Community-Based Care and CASA meeting, October 4, 2023
- Texas Child Care Administrators Conference, hosted by TACFS, October 10, 2023
- Meeting with Dallas Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM), hosted by OCBCT, October 24, 2023
- OCBCT participated in the following Education Consortia:
 - Region 8 Education Service Center (ESC) Consortium, September 18, 2023
 - ESC- Region 2 Education Consortium, September 29, 2023
 - Region 7 ESC Consortium, October 10, 2023
 - Region 10 ESC Consortium, October 12, 2023
 - Region 16 ESC Consortium, October 12, 2023
 - Region 17 ESC Consortium, October 19, 2023
 - ESC Region 20 Consortium, October 26, 2023

OCBCT continues to provide information and keep DFPS staff informed on CBC implementation updates. OCBCT staff are assigned to each area not currently in CBC to provide outreach, educate, and support community providers to be prepared to move to CBC. The OCBCT Outreach Team is committed to educating and supporting community stakeholders as they move through the readiness process of CBC, and continues to share a [CBC Outreach Request](#) form for stakeholders, community members, staff, or any interested party to be able to request information and presentations on CBC. This form can be found on the external [CBC website](#).

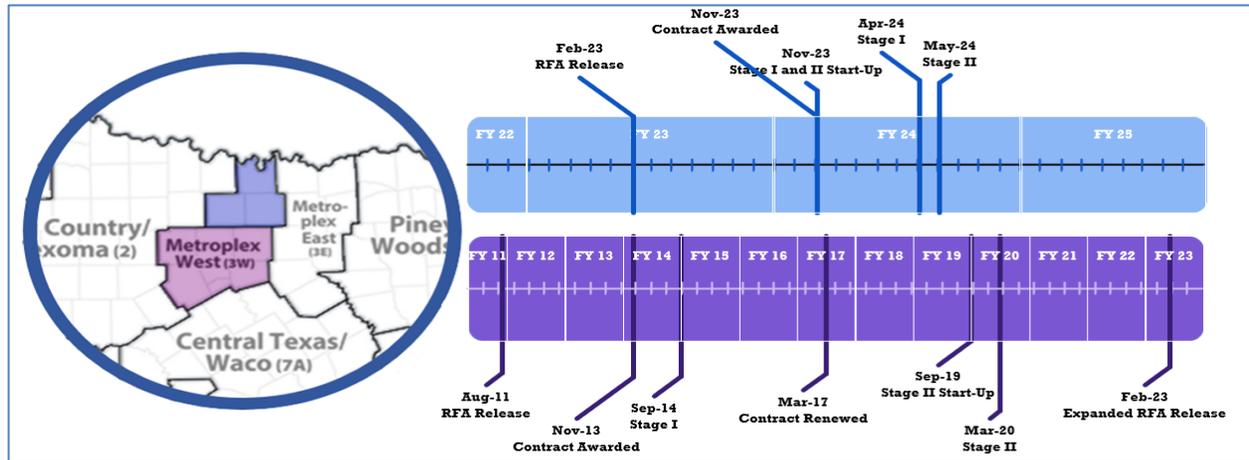
OCBCT has been working diligently to ensure all communities in areas under current procurement are aware of the concept of CBC and what to expect during the implementation process. Newsletters are being sent quarterly to provide CBC implementation updates to external stakeholders. Many presentations have been given to the community in each region to external partners and internal DFPS employees with the most up-to-date information on the procurement



process and next steps.

Update for Metroplex West- ACH Child and Family Services and their SSCC Division, Our Community Our Kids (OCOK)

The Metroplex West community, previously known as Region 3W, is comprised of Palo Pinto, Parker, Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Somervell, Johnson, Denton, Cooke, and Wise counties near Fort Worth. The visual below depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.



Texas Family First Pilot

The Texas Family First (TFF) pilot continues to successfully serve families in Metroplex West. Currently, 38 referrals have been received and 77 children have been served. To date, there have been 13 case closures, and of those 13, 10 were successful discharges leaving families with tools to better navigate their challenges.

Yes You Kin!

ACH/OCOK continues to focus on creating safe and loving placements for youth with families. In October 2023, they launched a new initiative, Yes You Kin. This initiative ensures that kinship is at the forefront of the work they do, as ACH/OCOK knows that coordinated efforts and campaigns that continue to promote kinship at the forefront of their practice, staff will continue to create better outcomes for children. Currently 31.4% of their youth are placed with family.

Kinship Resource Fairs

Partnering with 24 local community resources, ACH/OCOK co-hosted a Kinship Resource Fair with ACH Child and Family Services. The purpose was to directly connect kinship caregivers with



free community resources to support their needs as they care for their family members. They welcomed families with a day of fun, snacks, and helpful information to help support and encourage their great work.

Connections Program

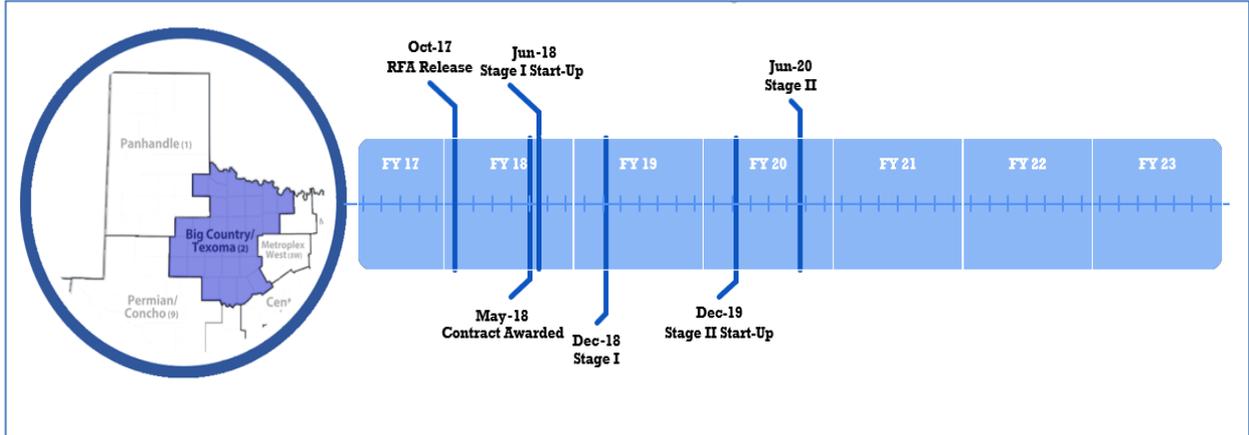
ACH/OCOK Connections Specialists are currently serving 21 youth who have lost connections to family and community. Youth are reporting that they enjoy meeting with their connection specialists, and specialists are seeing positive interactions with youth, working to build strong relationships that result in trust. While this is generally a two-year process, one youth has already connected with family, and they are working to build a strong bond between them to hopefully lead the youth to positive permanency. The creator of this program, Alia, has shown positive outcomes when the model is done to fidelity, and ACH/OCOK looks forward to sharing more positive outcomes for their youth who struggle the most with permanency.

Adoption

ACH/OCOK continues to work with the community to search for adoptive placements for legally-free youth. They continue to grow their partnerships with the Heart Gallery of North Texas, Hope Local and Wednesday’s Child to support this critical activity. Sixty-nine youth have had adoptions consummated in the last quarter of this year, leading up to National Adoption Day that took place on November 17, 2023. Many of these adoptions featured sibling groups and kinship care.

Update for Big Country & Texoma- Texas Family Initiative and their SSCC Division, 2INgage

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



Texas Family First Pilot

The TFF pilot continues to have great success. 2INGage has been a service provider to 58 families. Through evidence-based practices, 2INGage has been able to support families as they navigate the challenges of substance abuse, mental health disorders, and other issues. The team has been able to provide these families with a range of services, including in-home therapy, skill-building exercises, and trauma-focused treatment. Recently a father and daughter overcame an escalating conflict within their home, and through the program, this father learned and applied invaluable Trust Based Relational Intervention tools to navigate difficult situations. He began implementing clear expectations and consequences, creating a safe and nurturing environment for his family.

Increase in State Identification Cards/Driver's Licenses

One of the performance measures that 2INGage is tasked with is retrieving driver's licenses or state identification (ID) cards for all youth over the age of 16. During the last quarter, 2INGage increased this percentage from 37.1% to 56.8%. Through collaboration with the provider network, 2INGage's permanency team worked diligently to obtain the important documents needed to acquire an ID. 2INGage hopes to continue these efforts for all children over the age of 16. This is a critical step in equipping youth for a successful transition to independence.

National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) Surveys

2INGage's PAL team continues to lead the state in completing the NYTD survey with a rate of 90%. The PAL staff work diligently with youth to complete the surveys. PAL staff maintain close communication and relationships with young adults that were in the foster care system to provide ongoing support as they navigate the many responsibilities they face as an adult.

Sibling Placements

2INGage has continued to see an increase in siblings being placed together. The Intake and Placement department collaborates with the provider network to identify new homes in the licensing process that might be interested in taking larger sibling groups. By being aware of homes in the licensing process, 2INGage can be strategic about future placements. The 2INGage Permanency team also evaluates siblings and the need to have them placed back together on a monthly basis.

Yearly Adoptions and National Adoption Day Events

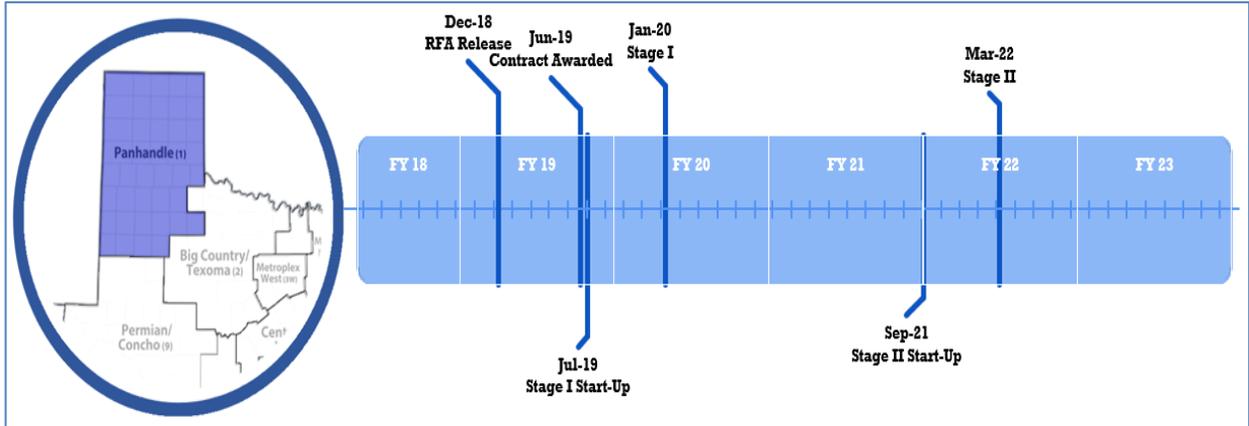
2INGage wrapped up the DFPS Putting Us in Safe Homes (PUSH) list this quarter. 2INGage set out to find permanency for 182 children/youth who had been identified in their intended to be permanent placement. Of those children, 127 or 69.78% of them successfully exited care into permanency. 2INGage's efforts doubled from the previous two fiscal years.



In November 2023, 2INgage also hosted and facilitated several National Adoption Day courthouse celebrations and events. These celebrations were done in partnership with local Child Welfare Boards and DFPS partners.

Update for Panhandle- Saint Francis Community Services, Inc (SFCS) and their division, Saint Francis Community Services in Texas, Inc

The Panhandle community, previously known as Region 1, is comprised of [41 counties](#) in the Texas Panhandle around Lubbock and Amarillo. The visual below depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.



Permanency and Reunification

Saint Francis provides services to parents once they receive a referral from DFPS. At the time of referral, a parent support worker is assigned to assist the parents through perceived barriers and to identify services to rectify issues that caused a child’s removal. The parent support worker is devoted to providing support to parents during the first 90 days of the case. The parent support worker will begin by meeting with parents at least one time per week to assist them in organizing service plan tasks and court orders for completion. The first 90 days are key in building resilience, positive social connections, identifying resources, building rapport, and helping to identify relatives as placement and support options. This position has been a part of the Saint Francis case management model since the beginning of Stage 2 (March 2022). In their continued work with parent/caregivers, positive outcomes have been forthcoming and more positive outcomes are expected as parent/caregivers are receiving the support they need. The next step is to demonstrate how the increased contact with parent/caregivers helps to achieve permanency in a timely manner.

Kinship



During this quarter, Saint Francis kinship specialists completed training to work with kinship families using an evidence-based practice called “Together Facing the Challenge.” Saint Francis kinship specialists will be able to work with kinship/relative families who have accepted higher needs youth into their home. “Together Facing the Challenge” focuses specifically on the in-home intervention elements and creating adequate skill levels to implement these strategies effectively. In addition, the model highlights the important role of supervision and coaching in helping caregivers work effectively with the youth/child placed in their home.

The kinship specialist will meet weekly with youth to work on the following areas to ensure the caregiver and youth can be successful: the basics of social learning theory and how dysfunctional behaviors develop, the impact of trauma on behavior and how to address behavior in a way that does not trigger trauma-based memories and actions, effectively setting limits using positive language, the development of “house rules” that feels natural to family life, conducting daily check-ins for building relationships with youth in care, the use of natural and logical consequences as naturalistic learning tools, techniques for avoiding, escaping from, and recovering from power struggles, effective use of behavior contracts, the impact of individual identity development (coming to terms with cultural differences) in healthy relationships, and the need for caregivers to be pro-active with their self-care.

Additionally, their kinship specialists were able to work with their kinship families, and 93.2% of their children in kinship homes did not have a negative disruption. In their kinship homes, 96.7% of the children had a positive permanency outcome. Saint Francis is excited about the work their kinship specialists and kinship families are doing to help the children in their care.

Texas Family First Pilot

The Texas Family Centered Treatment (FCT) team has received feedback from judges and stakeholders who have noticed progress with the families participating toward positive change, and children being able to remain at home. Each quarter, the FCT consultant continues to spend two days working intensely with staff and the accreditation with FCT. Their program meets bi-weekly with DFPS regional and state leadership to provide weekly progress updates, answer any questions, and explore problem-solving methods of any barriers, needs, or ways to enhance strengths. Referrals have increased significantly, which led to hiring two new staff to open needed slots for referred families. As of November 14, 2023, Saint Francis is working with 34 families, and has two pending cases being assigned to the FCT team. They are currently serving all 41 counties in Region 1 as of April 3, 2023.

Capacity Building

Saint Francis began disbursing funds in August 2023 to their Panhandle network to help preserve and create new capacity in their communities. They recruited an out-of-state provider with a



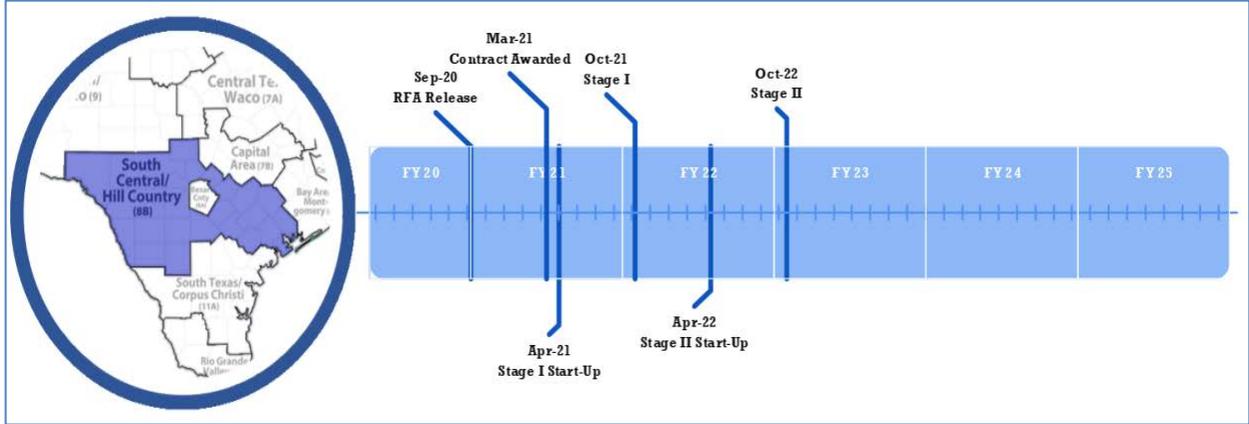
proven evidence-based program for Treatment Foster Care (TFC). In August 2023, Saint Francis licensed two TFC homes.

Saint Francis continues to focus on improving kinship services and keeping sibling groups together. During this reporting period, they disbursed funds to support kinship families. By providing funding to support the licensing process, families were able to acquire necessary items that are often challenges in licensing kinship homes.

Funds were also disbursed to their provider network to enhance treatment services. Through this funding, Saint Francis was able to collaborate with TACFS to provide Medication Management Training for all their providers across Texas. There were over 200 members in attendance.

Update for South Central & Hill Country- SJRC Texas and their Division, Belong

The South Central & Hill Country community, previously known as Region 8b, is comprised of [27 counties](#), excluding Bexar County. The visual below depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.



SSCC Joint Capacity Building Projects

In partnership with the Texas Center for Child and Family Studies, the Ladd Law Firm PLLC, and the other SSCCs, “A Deeper Dive into Oversight” training is now available to view on the TACFS website. The training consists of two components: a virtual training that has been sent out across the state to providers to gain foundational knowledge, and an in-person opportunity, set to occur in March 2024, to interact with attorney Norman Ladd and TACFS to find ways to improve operations across the state. The goal of this resource is to help their provider network when interacting with all the regulatory bodies they encounter.

As a result of the success of the Residential Treatment Center Symposium held on June 7, 2023,

Belong is exploring hosting a Region 8-specific Residential Treatment Center/General Residential Operations Symposium in conjunction with their annual Blue Breakfast in April 2024 where they can dive deeper into best practice models and ways to improve operations.

Treatment Foster Care

SJRC Texas, Inc. through its SSCC Belong, has secured funding to increase Belong's residential capacity for youth from the South Central and Hill Country area. The goal of this funding is to help Belong reduce out-of-region placements. This RFA was released on November 13, 2023, requesting proposals from licensed, or in-process of licensure, residential providers to propose how they will increase capacity in the South Central and Hill Country area. Belong is seeking these proposals to provide residential or child placing services for youth with intellectual developmental disabilities, primary medical needs, older youth with high mental health needs, treatment foster care, and temporary emergency placements. Belong intends to fund awarded projects beginning February 2024 through August 2024.

Practice Model

To support SJRC Texas | Belong, Casey Family Services supported a two-year implementation project, which explored their vision for what their Practice Model should encompass in the work they are mandated to achieve. Casey Family Programs shared specific practice strategies they incorporated in their practice model to ensure improved outcomes for children and families. The purpose of Belong's Practice Model is to deliver child-centered and family-centered practices and services that ensure safety is paramount and emphasizes placements in family care, placement stability, preservation of children's and youth's principal connections, normalcy, well-being, and timely permanency. The goal is to facilitate the emergence of opportunities for ensuring child safety within families and communities. To accomplish this, Belong collaborates with caregivers to empower them in safeguarding their children and youth through new approaches, all while strengthening existing safety measures. Additionally, they endeavor to establish safety networks for children and youth by mobilizing other significant adults to collectively create a secure environment, both in the present and for the future. Currently, SJRC Texas | Belong has formed a steering committee that is working on finalizing their Practice Model. They aim to have their Practice Model published by March 1, 2024.

Supervisor Credentialing Program

Belong is in the process of completing observations to prepare for the supervisor examination. The goal is to improve supervisor proficiency and develop leadership skills to increase staff retention within their units. Staff retention will allow for cases to be closed quicker and more efficiently. Supervisors will take their certification exam on February 6, 2024.



Signs of Safety

SJRC Texas | Belong has invested in Signs of Safety model to address the complex challenges permanency workers face. The goal is for the family's safety network to remain in place during the time Belong is working with them and after the child(ren) have been reunified. They have spent the last year implementing this model with staff. In addition to virtual meetings and trainings, Belong and the Signs of Safety staff held a 2-day in-person training in August 2023 for Belong staff to practice and apply what they have learned. Belong's training team is also working toward certification as train-the-trainers to be able to continue training SJRC and Belong staff moving forward. During this reporting period, Belong's focus was on meaningful measures and creating plans for their second year of implementation.

Permanency Round Tables

Belong is currently training key staff that will eventually facilitate Permanency Round Table meetings internally for children in Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC). Their first round of Permanency Round Tables is tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2024.

Family Navigator Positions

SJRC Texas | Belong is completing second-round interviews for the Family Navigator positions. The Family Navigators will support Temporary Managing Conservatorship cases by wrapping around the parents and assisting them with achieving their service plans, with the goal of getting their children reunified as quickly and as safely as possible.

Wendy's Wonderful Kids

SJRC Texas | Belong has a fully executed contract with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) for the Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) program. SJRC has extended offers to three individuals for the WWK recruiter positions and are working to onboard those individuals. Their next steps will be an implementation meeting with DTFA and sending the new recruiters for in-person training with DTFA in Columbus, Ohio. This initiative will allow SJRC Texas to bring recruiters online under Belong that will be responsible for child-focused recruiting. The recruiters will seek permanency for the youth in their community area that fall into categories that make it difficult to find placement. Belong is hopeful that over the coming years, this initiative will help decrease the time youth spend in care and increase the likelihood of success after foster care.

Family Resource Center - New Braunfels

Utilizing the National Family Support Network Quality Standards, SJRC Texas | Belong's Family Resource Center continues to serve as a community hub for families to be connected to local resources, services, classes, and basic needs assistance. This facility features a donation station, a



recharge zone, a family-child visitation room, and a resource lobby. Classes and services offered from the space include group parenting classes, infant massage, family yoga, community playgroups, and community car seat checks. In addition, SJRC Texas has partnered with the University of Texas (UT) Health to offer a community pediatric clinic that is now open and accepting clients. Clinic services include well child checks, 3-day exams, 30-day assessments, Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessments, hearing and vision screenings, point of care tests, sport physicals and sick visits.

Family Support Services

SJRC Texas offers in-home parenting support services through its blue-ribbon evidence-based Parents as Teachers (PAT) program. They host caregiver support groups and numerous family engagement events throughout the year. In September 2023, SJRC hosted their annual Roll and Read, a free community event, in which families are invited out for a day of fun that combines promoting literacy with keeping families active. SJRC also hosted their first Community Car Seat Day providing community members an opportunity to have their child safety seat properly installed by a certified car seat technician onsite. Families in attendance at both events were provided educational parenting materials and were connected to local community resources. In addition, SJRC Texas continues to lead a community-wide Fatherhood Initiative to provide opportunities for engagement and education to male caregivers and their children. SJRC Texas is also expanding a Parent Advisory Committee that meets quarterly. SJRC Texas places great value on the feedback of those with lived experience and uses this feedback to guide their work within the communities they serve.

Texas Family First Pilot

As part of the TFF pilot, Belong is providing in-home family preservation services utilizing two evidence-based models, Brief Strategic Family Therapy (BSFT) and Parents as Teachers (PAT). To date, 17 families have successfully worked TFF services and had their DFPS case successfully dismissed. On Sept 1, 2023, Belong and DePelchin moved into the second year of the TFF pilot and will continue providing services to court-ordered families in 17 of their 27-county community area.

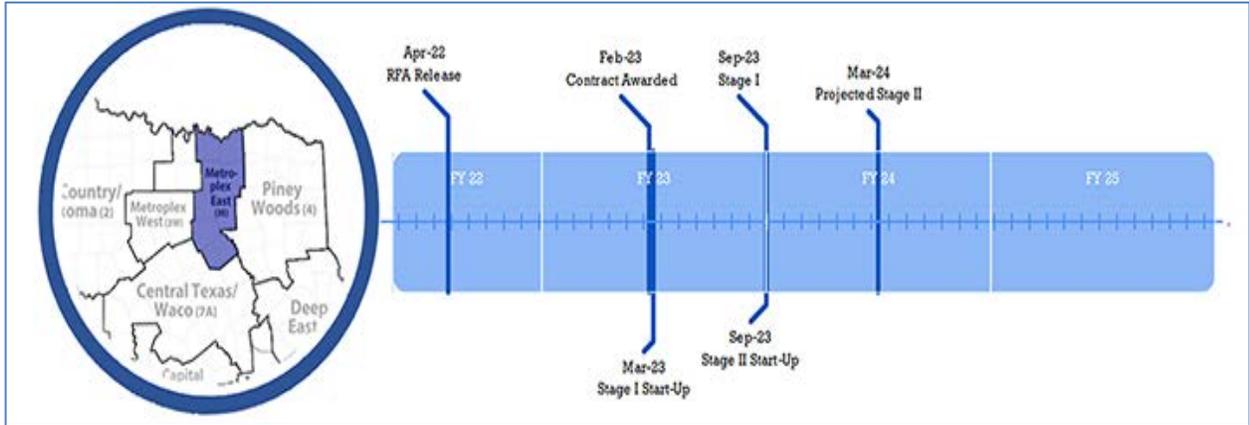
Hope Center Partnership

In September, SJRC Texas finalized a partnership with the Harvey Najim Hope Center to provide free counseling and therapeutic services to families in the following five counties, Comal, Guadalupe, Medina, Atascosa, and Bexar. Services are available to any child aged 0-23 years and any parent/caregiver with a child 0-4 years or 12-19 years. All services are open to the community at no charge.



Update for Metroplex East- Texas Family Initiative and their SSCC Division, EMPOWER

The Metroplex East community, previously known as Region 3E, is comprised of the following 9 counties in and around Dallas: Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, and Rockwall. The visual below depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.



Stage I Progress Report

Placement Activities: As of September 2023, EMPOWER successfully transitioned over 600 children into its network. In the same month, Metroplex East witnessed 112 removals, with 94% of the children placed in a family-like setting. This transition effort is set to continue until all 3E children in foster care are under EMPOWER's care by February 29, 2024.

Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Activities: EMPOWER launched the PAL program, providing vital life skills to young individuals. The program covers budgeting, culinary skills, and social proficiency, which will ensure a seamless transition into adulthood.

Adoption Initiatives: EMPOWER's Community Engagement and Adoptions team actively collaborates with external partners to find forever homes for teens by forming a strategic partnership with Embrace, a faith-based organization in Collin County, facilitates match events, support groups, and other initiatives to support families caring for children from the foster care system.

Media Collaborations: Working with WFAA news station, EMPOWER's Adoption team is raising awareness for teens awaiting forever homes for Metroplex East with bi-weekly segments reaching the North Texas viewing audiences.

Stage 2 Readiness

DFPS Partnership: EMPOWER is partnering with DFPS to ensure a smooth transition for

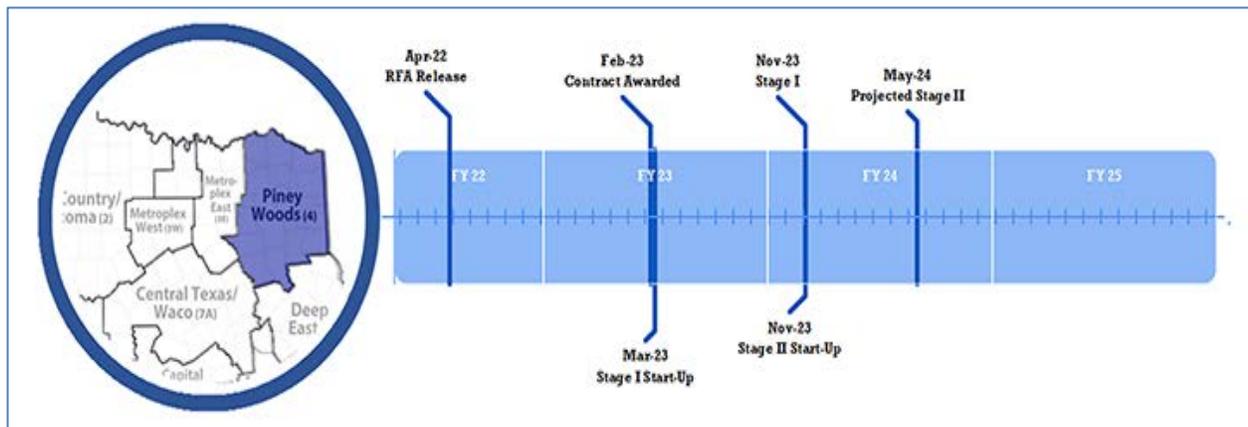
impacted employees. Monthly in-person presentations and virtual sessions are tailored to prospective DFPS employees.

Faith-Based Collaboration: The Community Engagement team is reaching out to faith-based organizations for potential partnerships to support families and recruit foster and adoptive parents. EMPOWER's Community Engagement team continues to connect with organizations working with diverse families to foster diversity and inclusion within the community.

Purchased Services Providers: EMPOWER is in discussions with potential service providers to enhance essential services, providing increased support for parents as the community approaches the Stage 2 go-live date.

Update for Piney Woods- Arrow Child & Family Ministries and their SSCC Division, 4Kids4Families

The Piney Woods community, previously known as Region 4, is comprised of [23 counties](#). The visual below depicts the timeline of this community's CBC progress.



Community Engagement

4Kids4Families held various DFPS staff engagement activities, including a meet and greet with community providers, back to school bashes, national adoption days, and CASA of Texas meetings. Their meet and greet had a successful turnout with several opportunities to network with community providers. Texas CASA held a meeting in Region 4 and invited the 4Kids Directors and CEO to attend and answer questions. This event opened the door for further communication and networking. Additionally, 4Kids community engagement staff collaborated with 31 churches in their region and continue to partner with them for various events and opportunities. 4Kids remains determined to make collaborative efforts with DFPS faith-based representatives, churches, and business leaders.

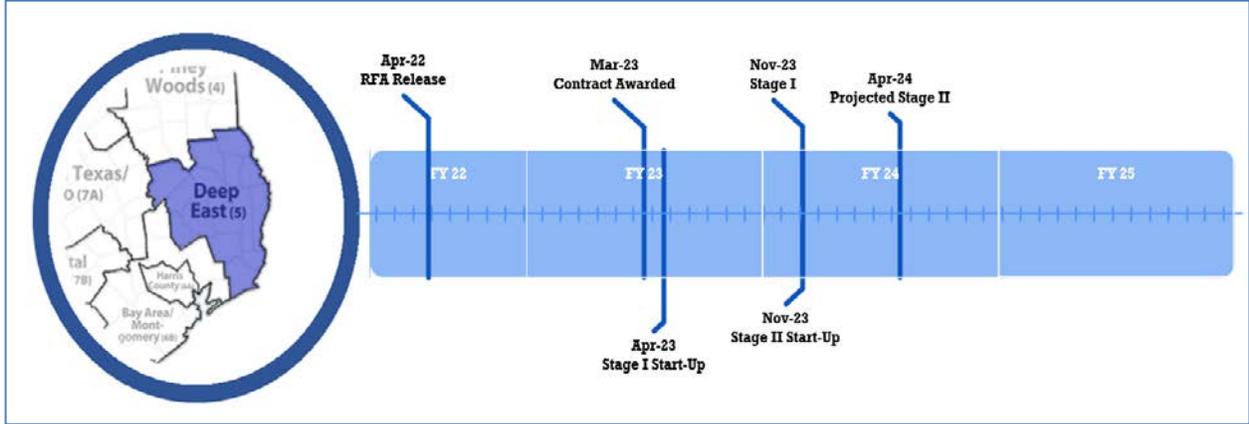


Hiring of 4Kids4Families Team

4Kids has hired 45 staff for various positions. 4Kids has also recently posted several new positions, completed multiple interviews, and is ramping up hiring for Stage II.

Update for Deep East- Pressley Ridge and their SSCC Division, Texas Family Care Network

The Deep East community, previously known as Region 5, is comprised of [15 counties](#). The visual below depicts the timeline of this community’s CBC progress.



Readiness, Stage I Start Up, and Stage I Go-Live

Texas Family Care Network (TFCN), a division of Pressley Ridge Texas, began their SSCC contract on April 1, 2023. TFCN hosted a virtual town hall for affected DFPS staff, where current TFCN employees who recently came from DFPS shared insight on their experience transferring to TFCN. As of November 16, 2023, TFCN moved into their new office in Nederland, Texas and a Hub office in Lufkin, Texas. TFCN intends to hold an open house and ribbon cutting ceremonies in early 2024.

TFCN has continued to engage their communities through constant contact with the judicial community, CASA, their many community partners, school districts, and other stakeholders. TFCN attended the 2023 Judicial Conference in Georgetown, Texas where they had the opportunity to visit with and hear from judges from within the Deep East and other parts of the state. TFCN participated in a PAL Resource Fair with DFPS and the Junior League of Beaumont in early November 2023. Through an activity at the TFCN booth, TFCN staff engaged with PAL youth explaining to them the upcoming changes related to Stage II of Community-Based Care.

Leadership Roles and Key Positions



THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY-BASED CARE TRANSITION

The Intake and Placement team is now complete with the hiring of an intake and placement supervisor, four intake and placements specialists, and two family support specialists (formerly known as human service technicians at DFPS). These staff are well trained and versed in best placement practices.

The Quality Assurance and Contracts (QA & C) team has continued to expand, with the addition of a data outcome specialist, a system analyst, a training coordinator, a compliance specialist and a data and quality specialist. TFCN also hired a capacity building specialist. The QA & C Department has welcomed over 50 providers to their network in order to ensure adequate placement capacity for Region 5 and continues to add new providers on a daily basis. The QA & C team hosted an onboarding meeting with new providers on October 30, 2023; the team will continue to host monthly onboarding provider meetings as new providers are added into their network. Upon go-live in November, TFCN transitioned over approximately 100 youth from three providers, and the team will continue to transition youth into the network on a monthly basis.

Preparation for Stage II

TFCN is already engaging with DFPS and OCBCT to prepare for Stage II. During this quarter, TFCN continued working with future case managers and case manager supervisors by providing letters of intent to current conservatorship staff in affected positions. All other positions, such as local permanency specialists and kinship specialists, are encouraged to complete the online application for case managers while those positions are being finalized within TFCN. TFCN will also be publishing additional opportunities for family support specialists and staff support specialists.

CBC Model, Process Evaluation, and Continuous Quality Improvement

The OCBCT and DFPS continue to work with the Center for Child Welfare Data, affiliated with Chapin Hall of 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. DFPS, OCBCT, and Chapin Hall, with the input of the SSCCs, are working to finalize Stage III and to implement Stage III for those SSCCs that are eligible. OCBCT, in tandem with DFPS, continues to work to ensure that the criteria for financial incentives and remedies for Stage III are sound and accurate.

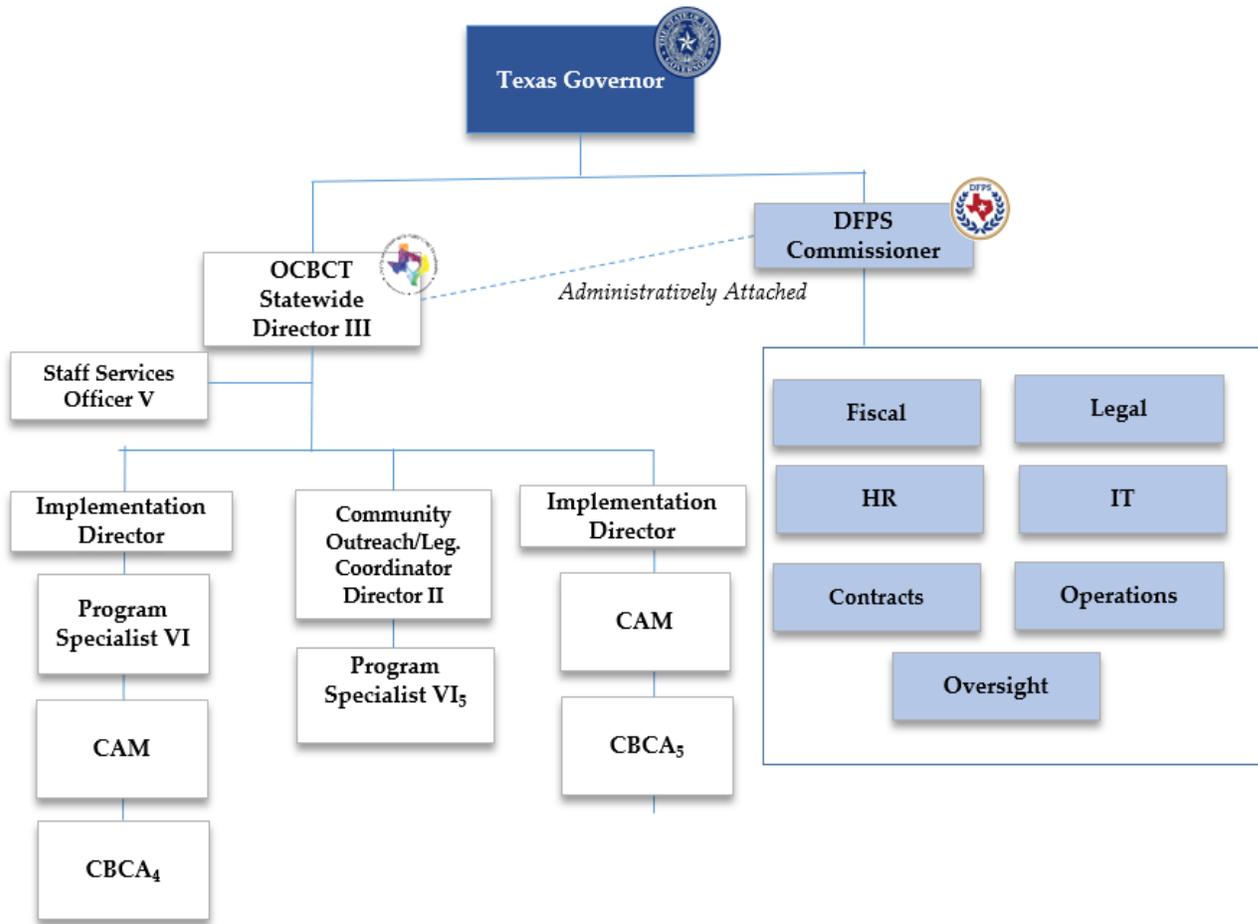


Conclusion

OCBCT, DFPS, and stakeholder partners are committed to successfully implementing and sustaining CBC in the seven current communities: Panhandle, Big Country & Texoma, Metroplex West, South Central & Hill Country, Metroplex East, Piney Woods, and Deep East. The potential award of unsolicited proposals lays the foundation for an expedited rollout statewide. Of the children in paid foster care, 46.7% are in SSCC catchments (as of December 3, 2023). View the latest [CBC Implementation Plan](#) for additional details; which is updated annually and will include new requirements passed during the 88th Texas Legislature.



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



Appendix B: Current Community-Based Care Communities

