



# Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Texas Foster Care Debuts Private Case Management**

### ***DFPS enters next phase in effort to improve foster care***

The State of Texas is taking the next step toward expanding Community-Based Care (CBC) for children in foster care by entering a groundbreaking new phase for the initiative in seven North Texas counties.

Today, Our Community Our Kids (OCOK) – a division of ACH Child and Family Services – begins providing foster care case management, kinship, and family reunification services to youth and families in Tarrant, Palo Pinto, Parker, Johnson, Hood, Somervell, and Erath counties.

“The transition to Community-Based Care case management is a crucial step to ensure our child welfare system serves young Texans with the care and coordination they deserve,” said Governor Greg Abbott. “The next step would not be possible without ACH Child and Family Services, who is helping the State usher in this new form of care and are serving on the front lines of child welfare. I am pleased to see this transition occur in North Texas, and I am committed to the expansion of CBC statewide.”

Traditionally, when a judge orders a child to be placed in foster care, the removal is carried out by a child abuse investigator. At the first court hearing on the child’s custody, the case is transferred to a state foster care worker who is with the child for their entire foster care stay, ensuring they get regular care, support and services.

Here is how case management will now work: after a child’s removal, that child’s case – and the responsibility that goes with it – will instead be shifted

to a private OCOK caseworker who will provide the same case management from a community-based perspective that is tailored to each child's needs.

With OCOK responsible for providing a full array of foster care services, DFPS is shifting its focus to oversight. A team of experienced DFPS staff will work closely with OCOK to assure child safety and provide technical assistance.

"This is an exciting day for foster care in Texas," said Kristene Blackstone, Associate Commissioner of Child Protective Services. "Families and children will now be receiving all services from a local community organization, and as Governor Abbott said, OCOK will now be on the front lines. Our partnership with OCOK is fruitful and they have our full support."

The first stage of CBC in this seven-county area has been successful in building foster care capacity, keeping children closer to home and expanding services. This includes placements for youth with complex needs. In 2019, 81 percent of days in foster care in the CBC area were spent in a foster home, rather than in shelters or treatment centers. And, 74 percent of children were placed close to their home communities, compared to 62 percent in non-CBC areas.

DFPS began Community Based Care – then called Foster Care Redesign – in 2010 as an effort to expand the community's role in meeting the needs of children and youth in foster care. The seven-county North Texas area where OCOK became the lead provider in 2014 was the first to successfully implement CBC. The program expanded to the Abilene region in 2018 and the greater San Antonio area in 2019, and CBC is expected to launch in the Panhandle in 2020.

Learn more about [Community-Based Care](#) on the DFPS website.