



# Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Community-Based Foster Care Expands in South Texas** *St. Jude Ranch New Foster Care Contractor in 27 Counties*

Today, the State of Texas announced an aggressive expansion of Community-Based Care (CBC) into South Texas, naming St. Jude's Ranch for Children as the first private foster care contractor for 27 counties surrounding Bexar County, which is already part of CBC.

"The expansion of Community-Based Care in South Texas is an important step in ensuring our child welfare system continues to serve Texas children with the care and compassion that they deserve," said Governor Greg Abbott. "We will continue to support CBC and prioritize the needs of young Texans in our child welfare system."

St. Jude's becomes the fifth CBC contractor in Texas, with five more contracts in the planning stages as the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) pursues CBC implementation in all 254 counties.

"This is a big step for South Texas as we expand CBC statewide," said DFPS Commissioner Jaime Masters. "Each child in foster care belongs to a community, a town or a city. It follows, then, that the housing, care and any necessary treatment of these vulnerable children and young people should come from those communities, with state oversight."

Traditionally, when a judge orders a child placed in foster care, Child Protective Services (CPS) is responsible for finding a foster home or other living arrangement for that child and ensuring adequate capacity for other foster children.

In the CBC model, St. Jude's - not CPS - will be responsible in the 27-county area for finding foster homes and other suitable living arrangements for foster children and youth.

St. Jude's Ranch for Children, also known as SJRC Texas, is expected to begin placing children in six months after a start-up/transition period in coordination with CPS.

"We are excited and ready to implement BELONG, a division of SJRC Texas, where we will continue to leverage our organizational history and successes including our relationship within the community, operational expertise, and growth mindset," said Tara Roussett, the CEO of SJRC Texas. "We have a plan for children to stay geographically close to their home communities and where they will be supported by an excellent network of local services overseen by providers that are held accountable for positive outcomes."

SJRC Texas has been a foster care provider in Texas for almost 40 years, currently operating a residential operation, child placing agency and prevention programs with offices in San Antonio, Bulverde and New Braunfels.