



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# **Prevention and Early Intervention**

**Progress Report on Implementation of  
Five-Year Strategic Plan  
Fiscal Year 2018**

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September 2018



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This report is required by Senate Bill 206, 84th Legislative Session,  
Texas Family Code §265.005.



## Executive Summary

During Fiscal Year 2017, Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) focused resources externally, supporting contractors through re-procuring programs, identifying the highest risk communities and increasing the number of evidence-based programs funded through PEI. For Fiscal Year 2018, PEI continues supporting contracted programs through technical assistance, training, peer to peer learning opportunities, a spring listening tour, as well as scaling programs through continued and new initiatives while simultaneously looking internally to improve the quality of supports and services PEI was providing.

PEI has been using its new data system, Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS), for a full year and has seen an improvement in the quality of data PEI can access from providers in real-time. This system also provides PEI an increased ability to engage in a continuous quality improvement processes with providers and communities. The design for the expansion of PEIRS was also completed in Fiscal Year 2018, keeping PEI on track for fully incorporating all programs into a central database and launching improved features and reporting capabilities by Fiscal Year 2020.

As part of its growth plan, PEI began taking steps to scale and expand its portfolio of programs. Due to program transitions based on funding cycles, contract expiration dates and programmatic data, PEI procured contracts for approximately 1/3 of its programs. While some programs were at the natural end of their contract dates, others were at the end of their funding cycle. Among the contracts PEI procured in Fiscal Year 2017 with contracts starting this past fiscal year, three of PEI's largest programs (Services to At-Risk Youth and Families (STAR), Community Youth Development (CYD), and Texas Home Visiting (THV)) were procured for another five year period. To assist PEI in developing a growth strategy focused on how to allocate resources within communities of need, PEI contracted with Population Health at University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler (UTHSCT) to develop a series of tools that utilize risk mapping and geographically based risk and resiliency models.

With the re-procurement of the STAR program, PEI took the opportunity to focus on growth opportunities. SUMA Social Marketing, Inc. (SUMA) conducted a review of the STAR program in Fiscal Year 2017. At the beginning of Fiscal Year 2018 SUMA produced a report on the STAR program based in large part on focus groups in six communities with over 90 parents, counselors, and community professionals. This report provides a list of recommendations for improvement to the program, which laid the foundation for the STAR Enhancement project. This project is aimed at creating a clear vision of the STAR program and approach, incorporating several recommendations from the SUMA report, and will ultimately allow PEI and local providers to more clearly share a common language and set of outcomes.

PEI realized that with a focus on programmatic expansion and program implementation this fiscal year, PEI also needed to shore up its internal quality assurance. PEI's utilization of a new contracting and procurement system, and automated billing through PEIRS, made huge strides in streamlining PEI's contracting and payment process. Additionally, the continuation of the DFPS and internal budget reviews further allow PEI to capitalize on allocating funding efficiently and timely.

All of these efforts would be futile if PEI's programs were not helping children, youth and families live safe, healthy and productive lives. In Fiscal Year 2017 (most recent year for which data is available), PEI's network of providers served almost 64,000 unique families, an almost 3 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2016. Data states that 99.4 percent of children and youth remained safe from maltreatment while receiving services. Almost 99 percent (98.5) of youth who engaged in services did not become subsequently involved with the juvenile justice system. In addition, families involved with evidence-based home visiting services continue to have better overall health outcomes than the general Texas population and individuals served by comparable programs. This includes higher breastfeeding rates than similar populations and preterm birth rates on par with the state rate as a whole and more than half of all clients served increased self-sufficiency through education, employment or both.

In the year ahead, PEI will continue implementing its five-year plan with emphasis placed on the following six priority areas:

1. **Prevention Task Force.** PEI will review the recommendations made by the Prevention Task Force to Commissioner H. L. Whitman in the report submitted August 2018 and explore how to incorporate those suggestions in to PEI's work to empower communities.
2. **Implementation Science.** PEI will continue to explore best practices in program implementation and expansion, including how to implement adaptations without jeopardizing effectiveness, and how to enhance peer learning across the state.
3. **Serving the Most Vulnerable.** PEI will map out a growth strategy for program expansion based on a data analysis of risk and vulnerability, community needs, contract expiration dates and funding cycles.
4. **Scaling within Health Care.** To further improve and sustain effective outreach to vulnerable families, PEI will create additional opportunities and mechanisms for dialogue with the health sector.
5. **Outcome Based Performance.** PEI will continue to integrate its new data tracking and research evaluations into a robust continuous quality improvement system.

6. **Business Improvements to PEI's Contracting Oversight, Training and Technical Support Functions.** PEI will focus internally on strengthening the quality of supports and oversight the division provides.

## Introduction

In September 2016, the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) released its five-year strategic plan on child abuse prevention and early intervention. The plan was developed by DFPS's Prevention and Early Intervention division in collaboration with hundreds of stakeholders. This document is the second annual progress report on that plan. This report is required by Senate Bill 206, 84th Legislative Session, Texas Family Code §265.005.

## Progress toward Goals in Fiscal Year 2018

In its five-year strategic plan for prevention and early intervention, DFPS established seven overarching goals. Progress toward those goals is summarized below.

### Goal 1

PEI will adopt a public health framework to prevent child maltreatment and fatalities and support positive child, family, and community outcomes.

#### Preventing Child Fatalities

The Office of Child Safety (OCS) produced the Child Maltreatment Fatalities and Near Fatalities Annual report in accordance with Texas Family Code §261.204. This report supports internal and external work to address risk factors associated with child maltreatment, as well as to support ongoing work to increase resiliency within the community and reach positive outcomes for Texas children. Further, OCS staff updated the case reading survey they utilize during case reads to collect data to allow them to capture newly legislatively required data points in preparation of the next Child Maltreatment Fatalities and Near Fatalities Annual report due March 1, 2019. During the 85th Legislative Session, PEI was appropriated funds for a new position through Rider 36, allowing PEI to expand the breadth of near fatality reporting.

#### Training

Training opportunities are developed for a variety of stakeholders with the intent of increasing knowledge, understanding, and competency of professionals in their respective roles. PEI developed a training plan to guide PEI's efforts in providing extensive training opportunities, utilizing various instructional formats, for providers, staff and the community at large.

The launching of the web-based, interactive learning management system for home visitor staff, community providers and other partner agencies serving families through PEI contracts is one example of an on-going training opportunity. This training hub serves as an engaging, web-based professional development portal providing centralized access, training and training records for a variety of topics.



PEI has hosted the Community Impact webinar series featuring Dr. Camara Jones. This three part webinar series focused on equipping participants with tools for achieving health equity and culminated in a half day symposium lead by Dr. Jones. PEI also hosted online live training for DFPS Investigations Division to support quality and consistent disposition decisions regarding fatality and near fatality investigations. In addition, PEI hosted monthly webinars open to the general public on specialized topics relating to child safety. Topics ranged from child's health to teen safety.

PEI hosted its annual Partners in Prevention conference in October 2017, attended by more than 700 providers, stakeholders and other professionals. The Early Childhood team contracted out through PEI's vendor pool to hold five regional mini-conferences across the state affording Home Visitors the opportunity to come together and learn from each other. They also hosted a summer provider meeting bringing together all of our early childhood program providers; the Youth and Family Team hosted STAR provider meetings in Conroe, Corpus Christi and Abilene; and the Research and Safety team hosted their annual Safety Summit for CPS staff in July. The Community and System Support team embarked on a train the trainer campaign training PEI providers on the Working for Kids: Building Skills™ community educational program. Using layman's terms, this program is a community based approach to teach the importance of positive brain development in children and youth.

During Fiscal Year 2018, PEI initiated procurement activities to expand the vendor pool of experts. These contractors are used to provide subject matter expertise, technical assistance, training sessions, event workshops, and/or opportunities for peer to peer learning for PEI grantees statewide.

## **Goal 2**

PEI will maximize the impact of current investments, and seek additional resources to serve more children, youth and families, and strengthen communities.

### **Program Transitions**

With the end of the five-year contracting cycle for the Community-Based Family Services (CBFS) program, Texas Families: Together and Safe (TFTS) program, and Home-Visiting Education and Leadership (HEAL) program contracts in Fiscal Year 2018, PEI had the opportunity to assess their successes and challenges. These contracts were procured and originally designed prior to the creation of the Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Support (HOPES) program, broadening of STAR eligibility, and the merger of PEI with the HHSC Early Childhood and Home Visiting Programs. The addition of these programs brought a more streamlined, community-driven approach to PEI's early childhood programs. After evaluating CBFS, TFTS, and HEAL, PEI elected to reinvest funding from these contracts into other PEI programs to ensure the distribution of these dollars are aligned with the PEI Five-Year

Strategic Plan and are supporting the improvement of critical outcomes for children and families.

To honor the original intent of the CBFS funding, PEI allocated these funds to the HIP program, which serves parents of newborns referred by CPS, and to the HOPES program to expand and enhance services to families with young children throughout the state.

The TFTS funds were transitioned to the STAR program which serves youth and their families by providing skill-building classes and crisis intervention services, as well as universal child abuse prevention services in their communities, aligning with the original intent of these funds. These funds allowed PEI to solicit proposals from current STAR contractors for additional funding that would allow them to focus on increasing capacity and quality of services available through the STAR Program. Through this transition process, PEI was afforded the opportunity to introduce more flexibility in the STAR program allowing it to meet some of the needs of this expiring program. Concurrently, PEI embarked on a project with SUMA/Orchard Social Marketing, Inc. to obtain information regarding the needs of youth and families in Texas that can be addressed through STAR services. This report provided a list of key findings and recommendations for PEI to consider.

HEAL was originally created to support both parent education and parent leadership. While the intent of the funding still very much aligns with PEI's strategic plan and strategic priorities, PEI believes that using the funds to support parent leadership and parent support through existing contracts is a more efficient and streamlined approach, allowing for stronger connection to existing community resources. PEI is using this funding to focus on evidence based and innovative work strengthening parent leadership and improving parent engagement, specifically with fathers.

During Fiscal Year 2017, PEI also re-procured STAR, and Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), and Community Youth Development (CYD) program contracts, with the contracts effective at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2018. Through this re-procurement PEI increased the level of evidence based programming, allowed for a more flexible service timeframe and opened STAR program eligibility to reduce barriers for families interested in seeking STAR services; expanded the MIECHV program by 1 new site; and expanded the number of zip codes where the CYD program is deployed, increasing PEI's contracts from 15 to 18.

## **Program Expansion**

In response to HB 1549, passed during the 85th legislative session, PEI began taking steps to scale and expand our portfolio of programs. Through the reallocation of CBFS funds in to the HIP program funding, and funds received during the 85<sup>th</sup> legislative session, PEI executed a Request for Proposal (RFP) process expanding HIP services and changing the funding structure for select programs from a fee for service to a cost reimbursement funding structure.

PEI was able to solicit proposals for a new funding opportunity for STAR providers that begins in Fiscal Year 2019. This opportunity allows sites to either engage in a quality improvement pilot using the National Family Support Network (NFSN) Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support or sites may elect to engage in the quality improvement pilot and either increase their current capacity or expand the array of ancillary services they provide. 13 providers were selected to begin this process of creating a common framework for STAR providers across the state to increase the quality of family strengthening services, practice and policy.

PEI began working with the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) to pilot a project offering a support group to male primary caregivers who live within six zip codes and reside at a HACA property. The support group provides fathers mentee opportunities as well as tools for good parenting by focusing on topics such as healthy relationships, learning how to manage anger, identifying and making positive choices, developing self-esteem and confidence, and being a good role model for children. PEI also began initial readiness conversations with other local housing authorities interested in piloting innovative projects.

The Texas Home Visiting program expanded through a new funding strategy, the Build Initiative, to support additional sites that were identified by a community needs assessment. The new funding strategy through the Build Initiative will entail making smaller initial state investments, with immediate match requirements, to garner buy-in at the local level from inception. As the local match increases, the state investment will increase, thus incentivizing stakeholder engagement. Parents as Teachers (PAT) services were implemented in Victoria, Bastrop & Tom Green Counties as part of this initiative. Family Connects, a universal home visiting program for families with newborns, is also being considered for implementation.

### **Goal 3**

PEI will make and share decisions about investments in families and communities based on an analysis of community risk and protective factors as well as community-developed needs assessments.

### **Community Work**

The most important work of PEI is happening with families in communities. A snapshot of some of 2018's successes are:

#### **Services to At-Risk Youth and Families (STAR)**

Lubbock: A teen client and her parents recently attended a teen depression presentation at St. John Neuman Catholic Church in Lubbock, Texas. Client's parents wanted her to receive services for support because her friend would share feelings and thoughts about suicide with her. Her friend's issues became overwhelming and her parents noticed something was off. Client's mom wanted her daughter to have support in dealing with her friend, wanted her to become strengthened in her self-confidence and wanted her to become a stronger leader and be

able to assert herself in difficult situations. The STAR case manager worked with client by helping her learn how to identify feelings and thoughts and helped to instill the use of various coping skills including faith, skateboarding, tennis, friends, parents, youth group and alone time. The case manager also gave resources and support when dealing with her friend such as emergency numbers and things she could do if friend was actively suicidal. Other skills shared with client included relaxation skills (deep breathing, meditation, imagery, etc.), improved communication skills (assertiveness communication and active listening) and positive affirmations to increase self-confidence. Client gained awareness of the role she played in her friend's life (which was support but could not control friend's choices, feelings, or thoughts), was able to use assertive communication to establish needs, wants, thoughts, and feelings, gain confidence in her abilities, learned a variety of ways to help manage feelings and thoughts in an effective and healthy manner. Client's parents understood that the process to become a strong leader is a process that happens over time and is fostered by the interaction with others but also by the example of her parents and surrounding community.

### **Community Youth Development (CYD)**

El Paso: Two years ago a family of three brothers joined the Project Vida after school program in El Paso, Texas. Behavior described as selfish, rude to adults, unable to follow instruction, unwilling to engage with peers, stealing. Staff did not give up, and through mentoring, supported building healthy communication with peers and adults, empowering them to share ideas and express selves in positive productive way. Today, all three are participating in team sports, have strong healthy peer groups and strong relationships with friends, and are reported to have improved behavior and classroom interaction with teachers/adults.

### **Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)**

Ft. Worth: MHMR of Tarrant County is implementing the Healthy Steps family navigation program with three pediatric clinics, allowing for the integration of physical and social emotional health and wellness promotion. Healthy Steps Specialists will assist physicians with screenings when families come for sick and well-child visits, identify needs, and recommend appropriate services. In addition, when a family demonstrates need and meets HOPES eligibility, the child will be enrolled in HOPES services. The early childhood and medical community anticipate this will be an effective practice for identifying additional families who may need assistance with a "gentle touch", serving as an effective and innovative prevention strategy.

### **Texas Home Visiting (THV)**

McAllen: Easter Seals Rio Grande Valley celebrated its success in supporting one mother enrolled in their PAT program through her husband's cancer diagnosis and eventual passing. The mother recounted the tremendous support and impact of the program on helping her family through this difficult time during a group family event hosted by Easter Seals.

### **Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)**

Wichita Falls: The NFP program at the Community Healthcare Center of Wichita Falls helped a first time pregnant mom move from homelessness to self-sufficiency. When this mother came to the program, she was homeless and 20 weeks pregnant with twins. With two years of support from the NFP program, she rode the bus daily with her twins for a year until she was able to save enough money for a vehicle, successfully breastfed her twins to two years of age, has held a job, and now has stable housing.

### **Military Families and Veterans Prevention Program**

San Antonio: The Military Families and Veterans Prevention Program at the United Way of San Antonio assisted a military family suffering financially after one parent was wounded during combat and the other a disabled veteran. Through counseling, financial support, and networking opportunities with families in similar situations, this program was able to reduce the stress this family endured during this time of difficult transition from service.

### **Partners in Prevention Conference (PIP)**

PIP's attendance continues to increase each year. Last year, at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Partners in Prevention conference, PEI had almost 800 professionals in attendance, more than ever before. The three-day event, held in San Antonio, provided an opportunity for contractor networking, breakout sessions and a documentary screening. Three keynote sessions slated throughout the conference and the more than 50 breakout sessions informed and inspired participants while the awards reception educated and engaged. The 2017 theme — Mission Possible: Stronger Families and Communities — embodies both the goal and the spirit of the many individuals and organizations working together to reduce child abuse, enhance school readiness, improve social-emotional and physical health and strengthen communities.

### **Growth Strategy**

PEI contracted with Population Health at University of Texas Health Science Center Tyler (UTHSCT) to develop a series of tools that utilize risk mapping and geographically based risk and resiliency models that will assist PEI in developing growth strategies focused on how to allocate resources within communities of need. UTHSCT will also provide information and analysis that will help PEI understand where programs and investments will need to grow to meet the needs of communities at high risk for maltreatment.

The first of four phases was completed during Fiscal Year 2018, with phase two underway. During this initial phase Population Health developed maps that show the geographic distribution of maltreatment rates in the state by residential zip code and county. During phase two, Population Health will utilize statistical techniques to understand community level risk for infant maltreatment. The factor-based techniques allow one to see how risk indicators cluster together allowing for community data to emerge that describe communities at risk and ones that are resilient. The third phase will move towards more in-depth analyses and will focus on risk modeling. The fourth phase will be focused on growth modeling and prediction.

## **Goal 4:**

Utilize research findings to improve program implementation, to direct program funding toward the most effective programs and ultimately to achieve better results for children and families.

Over this past fiscal year, PEI has increasingly utilized data to determine where there's a need and the programmatic capacity in a community to strategically deploy funding to expand services.

### **Dashboards**

PEI has continued to improve the internal data and financial dashboards.

The data dashboard tracks target output and outcome measures for each of our contracted programs. Currently, all providers are provided data on their specific outputs and outcomes from PEI both on a quarterly basis and annually. This allows both contracted providers and PEI to validate that programs are meeting their performance measures that are reported both to the Legislature and PEI's federal funders.

The financial dashboard allows PEI to stay informed of the financial pulse of PEI and project any potential lapse in funds. This dashboard also provides PEI the ability to identify cost for participants by programs. Currently both of these dashboards are manually updated; however, in Fiscal Year 2019, the financial dashboard will be automatically generated using PEIRS & Impact Data.

### **Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS)**

The PEIRS system, launched at the end of Fiscal Year 2017, also produces outcomes reports (providing regular check-in on how programs are doing on contractual outcomes) and monitoring reports (tool for PEI staff and providers, especially those with sub-contractors, to ascertain if services are being provided in accordance with the contract) that can be run on an ad hoc, quarterly, or monthly basis.

### **Safe Babies**

The purpose of the project is to evaluate hospital and clinic-based interventions designed to prevent maltreatment, especially abusive head trauma in infants, and to develop a strong evidence base that leads to wide-scale implementation of education that supports positive parenting and provides tools to help parents cope with the difficult aspects of caring for an infant. A report outlining the implementation and program fidelity of the Period of PURPLE Crying® in Texas hospitals was made available on September 1, 2017. A mobile application for fathers was developed to provide them with education and information about pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum issues, such as parenting issues. This application should go live in Fiscal Year 2019.

## Fatherhood Summit

The Fatherhood Summit brings together cross sector professionals seeking to support fathers, mothers and their children through research-based best practices and innovative programs. The 2018 Texas Fatherhood Summit, held June 29<sup>th</sup>, focused on why and how the inclusion of policies and programs that support fathers at the community level strengthens the entire family, as well as the communities in which they live.

## Research on Effectiveness and Expansion of STAR

In Fiscal Year 2018, SUMA Social Marketing, Inc. (SUMA) produced their report on the STAR program. This report is based on the qualitative research conducted at six STAR program sites and provided a list of recommendations for improvement to the program. Among those, rebranding the program to reduce the stigma associated with identifying children or families as “at risk” and changing the name to decrease the confusion with other statewide STAR programs, gained the most traction during the Spring Listening Tour.

## Research and Evaluation Projects

The table on the following pages summarizes PEI-commissioned research started or completed since 2014. Reports are available either on [PEI’s website](#), hyperlinked below in the chart, or can be made available upon request.

**Table 1: Research and Evaluation Projects Completed or Underway**

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Texas Home Visiting	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Center for Child and Family Research Partnership	<a href="#">Father Participation Evaluation, May 2014</a>  Process Implementation Evaluation, Final Report, Fall 2016  <a href="#">Father Participation and Retention Evaluation Report May 2017</a>  Systems-Level Change Evaluation, Final Report, December 2017  DHVVE-II Evaluation Plan, Winter 2018	DHVVE Preliminary Findings, Summer 2018  DHVVE Final Report, Fall 2019

PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support (HOPES)	The University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work, Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing	<a href="#">HOPES Evaluation Plan, January 2015</a>  Literature Review: Evaluation of Child Maltreatment Prevention Developing Strategies for Child Maltreatment Prevention: A Guide for Community Needs Assessments, June 2015  Analysis of Ten Years of Prevention Outcomes, Fall 2016  <a href="#">Preliminary Effectiveness Report on HOPES I, Fall 2016</a>	HOPES FY17 Final Report, Fall 2018  HOPES FY18 Final Report, Fall 2018  HOPES Final Evaluation Report, Fall 2019
Military and Veterans Family Program	SUMA	Literature Review  <a href="#">Focus Group Report</a>	
Military and Veterans Family Program	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Center for Child and Family Research Partnership	<a href="#">Preliminary Report, Fall 2016</a>  <a href="#">Final Report, Fall 2017</a>	
Fatherhood Programs	SUMA	Literature Review  <a href="#">Focus Group Report</a>	
Fatherhood Programs	The University of Texas at Austin, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Center for Child and Family Research Partnership	<a href="#">Literature Review, Winter 2016</a>  <a href="#">Fatherhood Evaluation Report, Summer 2017</a>  Fatherhood Evaluation, 2018	
Safe Sleep Public Awareness	SUMA	Literature Review  <a href="#">Focus Group Report</a>	



PEI Program/Initiative	Research & Evaluation Partner	Currently Available Reports	Upcoming Reports
Youth Programs - Recruitment and Branding	SUMA	Focus Group Report, Fall 2017	
Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)	Texas A&M University, Department of Recreation and Tourism	Review of programs for STAR population, Fall 2016  Review of assessments related to measuring outcomes, Fall 2016  STAR Report, December 2017	
Community Youth Development (CYD) Program	Texas A&M University, Department of Recreation and Tourism	Literature Review for CYD, Fall 2016  CYD Evaluation Plan, Summer 2017	CYD Evaluation Preliminary Report, Summer 2018  CYD Evaluation Final Report, Summer 2019
Safe Babies Project	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler	Legislative report, Fall 2017  PURPLE Plus Study, Spring 2018	Paternal PURPLE Study, Fall 2018  Final Report, Summer 2020
Growth Strategy Project		Outcome Mapping, Spring 2018	Risk Modeling and Mapping, Summer 2018  Growth Modeling and Projections, Winter 2019

## Goal 5:

PEI will measure and report on the effectiveness of its programs on an annual basis and will make timely course corrections based on available data.

## Internal Quality Assurance

Through all the expansion PEI embarked on this fiscal year, PEI has taken steps to improve the quality assurances in place to ensure good stewardship of funds and relationships with providers.

PEI began utilizing a new contracting and procurement system, CAPPs, and a new contracting database, SCOR. These two systems further streamlined the initiation, execution, housing and payment of PEI's contracts. PEI simultaneously launched PEIRS Automated Billing, a function of the Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System (PEIRS), that allows providers to enter their billing directly in to PEIRS, streamlining the approval and payment process.

PEI participated in DFPS's second mid-year budget review, allowing for a better established baseline for fiscal year 2019 funding for PEI and conducted its second internal budget review with contractors, a process that continues to improve each year. This review allows PEI to maximize funding across contractors and programs by projecting potential lased funding for each provider.

This past winter, PEI conducted a Billing Process Review to improve our internal processes and expedite paying contractors. While the Contracting team continues to work at streamlining the contracting / procurement process in an effort to promote efficiency, the Youth and Families team began providing non-monitoring, technical assistance site visits and the Early Childhood team deployed the Grantee Assistance Tool to provided targeted technical assistance.

## **86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**

During the past fiscal year, PEI leadership has been preparing for the upcoming 86th Legislative Session. The information obtained through the listening tour and other communication with providers will equip PEI with necessary information heading in to this session.

## **Goal 6**

PEI will maximize its impact by collaborating with other state entities and external organizations working with similar populations.

PEI continues to work to foster relationships with local, state, federal, and philanthropic partners to align trainings, share information, expand services and coordinate systemic work.

PEI staff leads several cross-agency initiatives and participates in various other committees, coalitions, advisory boards, and teams across the state to continue to ensure PEI's work is rooted in and supported by communities. Among these are the Texas Perinatal and Infant Oral Health Quality Improvement Expansion Project, Texas Project LAUNCH and the Texas Behavioral Health Institute's annual conference planning committee, all of which are coordinated by the Department of State Health Services and staff participate on local child fatality review teams and prevention coalitions.

PEI also collaborates extensively with the Office of the Texas Attorney General on trainings and educational initiatives related to child support and fathers' rights and responsibilities. In addition, PEI participates in meetings of the Cross-Agency Mental Health Liaison Group organized by the Health and Human Services Commission and the Adolescent and Young Adult Health Collaborative Innovation and Improvement Network (CoIIN) sponsored by the

Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs and the Health and Human Services System Veterans Initiative.

PEI began working on relationships with philanthropic partners this past fiscal year around expanding The Family Connects program in Texas. This program is designed to provide universal nurse home visiting for parents of newborns, standardized assessment of family need and risk, and facilitated connections between parents and appropriate community resources, thereby increasing child and family wellbeing.

PEI continues to work with DSHS to facilitate data collaboration that will match child welfare data for all confirmed maltreatment with state health records. This level of matching will replicate the original DSHS-DFPS Strategic Plan but also provide a wider assessment of the risk factors and protective factors that can be leveraged to address all maltreatment, not just child fatalities.

## **Research Roundtable**

Prevention and Early Intervention brings together a group of multidisciplinary researchers and stakeholders through research roundtables to help shape more effective use of prevention services for children and families across Texas. While PEI has historically relied on third party evaluators from social work, public health, public affairs, and sociology departments to examine program effectiveness, never before had each group working on evaluations convened to share feedback, suggestions, and thoughts on each other's work and how to further reach families in need. Through working collaboratively across disciplines, the research roundtable has helped improve both external and internal research and evaluation projects by enriching individual projects and engendering a holistic examination of the prevention and early intervention programs.

## **Juvenile Justice Prevention Group**

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Military Department work together to coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services aimed at preventing academic failure, failure on state assessments, dropout, juvenile delinquency, truancy, runaways and children living in family conflict. The group meets to learn about one another's programming; to identify key considerations in the coordination, planning and delivery of services; and to identify opportunities to enhance the coordination, planning and delivery of prevention and intervention services

## **Fatherhood Interagency Workgroup**

PEI collaborates with the Child and Family Research Partnership to convene quarterly meetings of stakeholders across state agencies. The aim of the workgroup is to identify the ways in which programs and services across the state are successfully addressing the needs of fathers; apprise peers of any changes or progress on program objectives; share connections and resources; and

increase efficiencies to reduce duplication. In addition, the group informs the direction of the annual Texas Fatherhood Summit, also convened by CFRP.

## **Early Childhood Systems Integration Group**

The Early Childhood Systems Integration Group is a collaboration of Texas state agencies working together to identify, coordinate and implement cross-sector initiatives for young children and their families. The work group addresses issues and opportunities related to service delivery, systems design and data coordination. Members include representatives from the Department of Family and Protective Services, Health and Human Services Commission, Department of State Health Services, Texas Education Agency, Texas Workforce Commission and Office of the Attorney General. PEI provides leadership and staff support for the group.

This Interagency Group has elected to utilize Results Based Accountability™ (RBA) to identify specific, intersecting, population measures of success across four domains: children are healthy, children are safe, children are school ready and children reach their full potential. In Fiscal Year 2018, leadership from these six agencies developed a visual dashboard to track goals and measures for the state level group, PEI developed a dashboard to track its internal goals and measures, and four interested communities have elected to utilize RBA and are in various stages of the analysis and planning process.

## **PBS Help and Hope Awareness Campaign and Stakeholder Events**

PEI continued the PBS Help and Hope Awareness Campaign and Stakeholder events. This Campaign included a series of television spots on Texas PBS stations, linking Texas families and stakeholders to important resources and promoting Help and Hope resources.

PEI sponsored the community stakeholder conversation “Early Childhood Matters” located at KEDT Television, Corpus Christi’s Public Broadcasting Station. This invite-only event provided an overview of the trends and data to Corpus Christi’s early childhood community.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, PEI, PBS, and San Marcos providers hosted Youthfest 2018, a celebration of childhood, promotion of local child and family services, and commemoration of April’s Week of the Young Child and Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month.

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, the Early Childhood Coalition of Hays County hosted a “Summit on Early Childhood” to increase community awareness about the importance of early development, lay the foundation for lifelong health and well-being, and improve school readiness of all children.

## **Texas Youth and Runaway Hotline**

PEI continues to work in partnership with the agency’s hotline to support outreach efforts in reaching youth and their families at vulnerable times. The Texas Youth Hotline provides prevention services to youth, parents, siblings, and other family members who are in need of crisis intervention, advocacy, referral information, or simply someone to listen. Services are

provided over the phone, via text, and chat. To date, staff and volunteers have answered more than one million calls.

## **Pediatric Brain Health**

The topic of pediatric brain health gained momentum this past fiscal year. The Prevention Task Force identified this as an emerging critical area of focus for PEI. Understanding that early brain development is a crucial pillar of child health, the Department of State Health Services, The University of Texas System and DFPS are partnering to host a Pediatric Brain Health Summit in Fiscal Year 2019, bringing together state agencies, direct service providers, advocacy groups, academia and philanthropy to decipher common language and identify what can be done at the local, regional and state level to promote pediatric brain health.

## **Goal 7**

PEI will be transparent and inclusive in its planning and operations and will proactively publish its strategic plan and progress towards its goals.

PEI does a number of things to keep its stakeholders informed and involved in planning and operations. In addition to the major efforts described below, PEI regularly conducts surveys and hosts conference calls, webinars and in-person meetings with providers, advocates, researchers and other stakeholders. These points of contact are used to guide policy decisions, identify training needs and address implementation issues.

### **Spring Listening Tour**

In 2018 PEI held a spring listening tour where PEI leadership participated in seven regional meetings across Texas in order to gain input from community providers about local needs and resources, the work being done in the community, and what PEI can do to continue to support local community-based prevention efforts. Listening tours were hosted in Austin, Beaumont, Fort Worth, Lubbock, McAllen, Tyler and Wichita Falls. The events included a stakeholder meeting, networking opportunity for providers, and afforded state office staff the ability to participate in ride-alongs with home visiting staff, receive program tours and engage in individual meetings with provider agencies.

### **Prevention Task Force**

In its first meetings, the Prevention Task Force identified the following strategies as necessary for Commissioner Whitman to give particular focus to, aided by the expertise of the Prevention Task Force, in Fiscal Year 2019:

- Developing a community tool kit to empower communities;
- Exploring the financial potential of the children’s trust fund and other financing opportunities for communities;

- Developing a prevention framework; and
- Elevating early brain development.

Business of the task force was conducted broadly in full task force meetings and through various subcommittees, including a Community Tool Kit subcommittee, Regional Children’s Trust Fund and Finance Subcommittee, Developing a Prevention Framework Subcommittee, and an Elevating Early Brain Development Subcommittee. The subcommittees were established to explore a specific issue and make recommendations for the Task Force to approve for inclusion in the statutorily required report to the Commissioner. The task force members collectively framed the purpose and scope of each subcommittee described in the following paragraphs:

The *Community Tool Kit Subcommittee* will focus on developing a strategy for PEI to support communities in their collaborative efforts to align around child maltreatment prevention and the promotion of positive outcomes for children. Current strategies include offering technical assistance resources to contractors around Results Based Accountability. The subcommittee can discuss ways to strengthen these efforts in PEI and reach community members not receiving funding directly but positioned for leadership.

The *Regional Children’s Trust Fund and Finance Subcommittee* will examine ways to create and finance broad community coalitions. This may include research into similar governmental or public/private structures within Texas or in other states and could include suggested statutory changes. Furthermore, this group will examine ways to expand the intent of the Children’s Trust Fund to blend public and private funding and other ways to scale or finance the work of PEI both locally and statewide.

The *Developing a Prevention Framework Subcommittee* will outline the strategic concept of a prevention framework PEI can utilize to guide its upstream prevention efforts. This may include building a strategic map that defines success, identifies the role of the state in community based prevention efforts, and defines a continuum of prevention approaches communities can utilize to promote safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments. This group will examine how to utilize this framework to promote PEI’s mission, vision and values at the community and state levels.

The *Elevating Early Brain Development Subcommittee* will explore ways to infuse the importance of focusing on early brain development into the current landscape of prevention services. This may include operating as a think tank for the development of the early brain development summit, determining the next steps to encourage conversation after the Early Brain Development summit, and crafting intentional language / talking points that can be used cross disciplines to focus efforts on elevating early brain development.

In accordance with Human Resources Code §40.078, the task force submitted a report containing its recommendations to Commissioner Whitman and will continue to meet as needed throughout Fiscal Year 2019.

## Strategic Priorities for Fiscal Year 2019

PEI has prioritized the following six strategic initiatives for Fiscal Year 2019. These are operational improvements or legislative directives that fall within the scope of PEI's current five-year strategic plan.

1. **Prevention Task Force.** PEI will review the recommendations made by the Prevention Task Force to Commissioner H. L. Whitman in the report submitted August 2018 and explore how to incorporate those suggestions in to PEI's work to empower communities.
2. **Implementation Science.** PEI will continue to explore best practices in program implementation and expansion, including how to implement adaptations without jeopardizing effectiveness, and how to enhance peer learning across the state.
3. **Serving the Most Vulnerable.** PEI will map out a growth strategy for program expansion based on a data analysis of risk and vulnerability, community needs, contract expiration dates and funding cycles.
4. **Scaling within Health Care.** To further improve and sustain effective outreach to vulnerable families, PEI will create additional opportunities and mechanisms for dialogue with the health sector.
5. **Outcome Based Performance.** PEI will continue to integrate its new data tracking and research evaluations into a robust continuous quality improvement system.
6. **Business Improvements to PEI's Contracting Oversight, Training and Technical Support Functions.** PEI will focus internally on strengthening the quality of supports and oversight the division provides.