

[Type here]



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

DFPS Rider 21 Report for Community Based Care

February 2019

[Type here]

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Background..... 1

Evaluation of Community Based Care..... 2

Using the Rider 21 Report to Evaluate Performance 3

SSCC Performance 5

 Our Community Our Kids..... 5

Introduction

As required by the General Appropriations Act, 85th Texas Legislature, DFPS Rider 21, the agency shall, on February 1 and August 1 of each year of the biennium, "Report selected performance measures identified by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) that will allow for comparative analysis between the legacy foster care and redesigned foster care systems". The report, "shall contain the most recent data for the selected comparative performance measures, an analysis of the data that identifies trends and related impact occurring in the redesigned foster care system, identification and analysis of factors negatively impacting any outcomes, recommendations to address problems identified from the data, and any other information necessary to determine the status of the redesigned foster care system".

Background

Community Based Care (CBC), formerly Foster Care Redesign, changes the way DFPS procures, contracts, and pays for foster care services. Under CBC, a single contractor provides a full continuum of services to children and families within a designated geographic area. In Stage I, this Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing them with services to meet identified needs. In Stage II, the SSCC expands services to include relative or "kinship" placements, and the SSCC has sole responsibility for case management. The model requires competitive procurement of performance-based SSCC contracts with financial incentives and disincentives for permanency outcomes and additional performance measures for child safety and well-being.

DFPS executed an SSCC contract with ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) on January 1, 2014 for DFPS Region 3b. This SSCC catchment area includes Tarrant, Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, and Somervell counties in DFPS Region 3. Our Community Our Kids (OCOK), the Region 3b SSCC operating under ACH, accepted its first referral for new and subsequent placements on September 1, 2014. As of January 18, 2019, OCOK had 1,218 children in the SSCC continuum, which represents 98 percent of the children/youth in paid foster care from Region 3b and approximately 7 percent of the children/youth in paid foster care in Texas.ⁱ DFPS renewed its contract with OCOK through the end of fiscal year 2020 to continue services under Stage I (foster care and services for children) and add requirements for community-based care and transition of kinship and case management services. DFPS and OCOK will share plans publically with stakeholders once finalized and approved; however, Stage II implementation is not anticipated until fiscal year 2020.

DFPS is implementing CBC in four additional catchment areas:ⁱⁱ

- In May 2018, DFPS awarded a contract to Texas Family Initiative LLC to serve as the SSCC for Region 2. They formed a partnership with New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc., and created 2INGage. 2INGage began placing children on December 1, 2018. As of January 18, 2019, 477 children have been transitioned to or placed under the contract, which amounts to approximately 65% of the children in paid foster care in the region.
- In August 2018, DFPS awarded a contract to The Children's Shelter in San Antonio to serve as the SSCC for Region 8a, made up solely of Bexar County. They created Family Tapestry, which is anticipated to go live February 1, 2019.
- In August 2018, DFPS announced Region 1 and Catchment 8b (the counties in Region 8 surrounding Bexar County) as the next two catchment areas. DFPS released a Request for Application for CBC in Region 1 on December 7, 2018 with implementation anticipated in October 2019. DFPS will release a Request for Application for Region 8B in spring 2019.

Evaluation of Community Based Care

Evaluation of Community Based Care is on-going to support Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) and includes both process and outcome components. DFPS and the Public Provider Partnership (PPP), which continues as the guiding body for Community Based Care, define the key elements to be evaluated (guiding principles and logic model). Process and outcome evaluation findings help determine whether these elements are being implemented with fidelity to the model and are yielding the desired outcomes. DFPS uses findings to assist in assessing performance, trends, design changes, and any problems or issues in the CBC catchment areas.

As required by the General Appropriations Act, 85th Texas Legislature, DFPS Rider 21 requires the use of an independent evaluator to complete a process evaluation of the rollout and implementation of Community Based Care in each established catchment area. The process evaluation will help DFPS address initial operations, implementation, and service delivery issues, and make adjustments prior to successive roll out of Community Based Care in new geographic areas. DFPS contracted with Texas Tech University to conduct the process evaluation. The evaluation will include assessment of organizational climate and levels of collaboration in each area, along with qualitative surveys and interviews. The first evaluation report is due to DFPS in summer 2019.

Outcome evaluation includes measuring both contract performance and system change. In addition to the contract performance measures in this Rider report, DFPS continues to work with Chapin Hall of the University of Chicago to provide independent data analysis of each SSCC's performance on paid care days, which will become the basis for incentive payments in Stage III. Chapin Hall will help DFPS test the logic model for Community Based Care which continues to link placing children in their home communities, in the least restrictive settings

possible, and now transferring all case management services under a performance-based contract, with improved permanency outcomes.

The results of these independent evaluation efforts will be reported separately from the Rider 21 report but are an important part of meeting the requirement to assess the redesigned system, including identification of and recommendations for addressing problems, and may be referenced in future Rider 21 reports.

Using the Rider 21 Report to Evaluate Performance

The CBC model is evaluated by comparing performance outcomes for the state as a whole, for non-CBC catchments, and for individual SSCCs, over time. To this end, Section B includes data for populations defined as follows:ⁱⁱⁱ

- **Statewide Population** - The statewide population is the performance of the entire state with regard to SSCC and “SSCC-eligible” legacy placements. “SSCC eligible” placements are foster care placements that would be within the scope of an SSCC contract.
- **Statewide Non-CBC Population** - The statewide “non-CBC” population aggregates data for children in “SSCC-eligible” placements in catchment areas where DFPS has not implemented CBC.
- **Region 3b Legacy Population** - The Region 3b legacy population shows the historical performance for the 3b catchment counties: Tarrant, Erath, Somervell, Hood, Palo Pinto, Johnson, and Parker. In fiscal year 2015, the number of children in the 3b legacy population decreases as all but a few children transition to the 3b SSCC population. This number decreases over time as children exit care. As of January 18, 2019, there were 21 children from 3b who remained in the legacy system. The small number of children in the numerator and denominator impacts the resulting percentages, as seen in the Section B Appendix, and cannot be compared to the historical baseline percentages, which were calculated for all children served in these counties.
- **SSCC Only Population** - The performance of each SSCC is reported individually. Currently the only contracted SSCC serving clients in quarter 1, 2019, was in Region 3b. The Region 3b SSCC population includes both children who transferred to the SSCC in fiscal year 2015 and children newly entering care each fiscal year.

As Community Based Care progresses through a staged, statewide implementation, the data can be used to answer the following questions:

1. **Are there statewide trends affecting SSCC performance?** Compare state performance trends to SSCC catchment trends and to trends for non-CBC catchments. Similarities may point to statewide factors influencing performance in CBC catchments.
2. **Is the redesigned system doing better than the legacy system?** Compare SSCC performance (currently there is only one SSCC in Region 3b) to the performance of the non-CBC population. If the SSCC catchment areas are improving over their historic baseline more than the legacy catchment areas are improving over theirs, the changes made to the foster care system under CBC are effective.
3. **Is a particular SSCC improving performance over time?** Compare individual SSCC performance across fiscal years. Improvement may take time as DFPS transitions services to each SSCC and the SSCC works to build the network of services in the area.
4. **Are some SSCCs performing better than others?** Compare SSCC performance one to another. If improvements to outcomes compared to historical performance are greater for a specific SSCC, the specific strategies implemented by the SSCC may be more effective.

Section B of the Attachment reports the following contract performance measures:

- **Children/youth are safe from abuse and neglect** – the percentage of children/youth served by the SSCC who were not identified as a Designated Victim in a DFPS investigation that closed during the quarter with a disposition of Reason to Believe.
- **Children/youth have stability in their placements** – the rate of placements per child during the fiscal year. This is not the average number of placements for a child over the course of their time in foster care, but rather reflects the placement activity of the contractor during a single fiscal year. It is calculated by dividing the total number of placements in the fiscal year by the total number of unique children served. The measure is cumulative and increases each quarter as more children enter care and as placement changes occur.
- **Children/youth are placed in the least restrictive environment** – the percentage of foster care days that are in a Least Restrictive placement. In Stage I, a least restrictive placement setting is a kinship/relative or non-relative foster home. This measure can be influenced both by an increase in the number of children placed in a setting and the length of time spent in that setting.
- **Children/youth are placed in their home communities** - the percentage of placements within 50 miles of a child's address at removal on the last day of the performance period. Data for this measure is produced every six months by Chapin Hall.
- **Children/youth are placed with siblings** – the percentage of sibling groups placed together in foster care. A sibling group is defined as all children with the same case number. Only siblings age 0-17 in foster care are counted.
- **Children/youth are prepared for successful adulthood** – the percentage of youth who turned 18 and have completed required PAL Life Skills Training.

Outcome measurement requires time. Chapin Hall data and performance experts define “sufficient” time as a minimum of two years of full implementation with additional time required to collect data on those children and families’ experience and outcomes from entry to exit. Full implementation means implementation of CBC where the SSCC serves the families of children in their care and provides case management services and kinship services. No SSCC has reached full implementation. Further, major systemic changes may not be observable until more catchment areas become a part of the redesigned system and fully implement CBC.

SSCC Performance

DFPS uses a CQI approach that includes formal processes for assessing performance and addressing performance issues. DFPS requires performance improvement plans when trends show performance below the contract baseline or decreased performance over time. DFPS and the SSCC review additional data and information to better understand factors driving performance and the SSCC develops action steps to address issues and concerns.

A primary goal of Community-Based Care in Stage I is to build residential child care capacity to meet local needs. The current performance outcomes are specific to the population of children served in Stage I, which is children in contracted foster care placements.

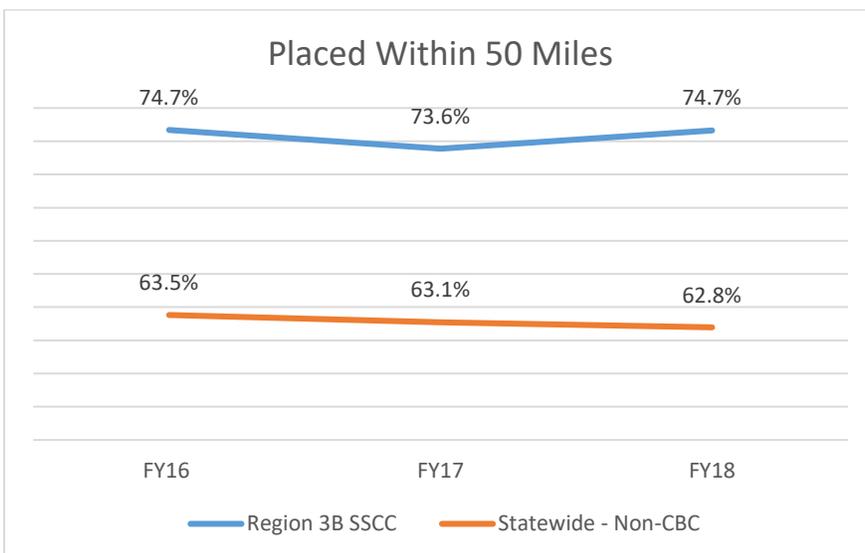
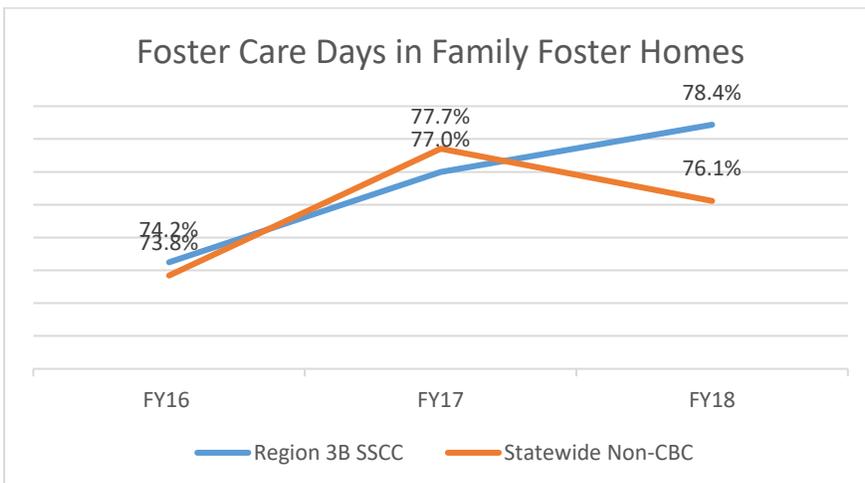
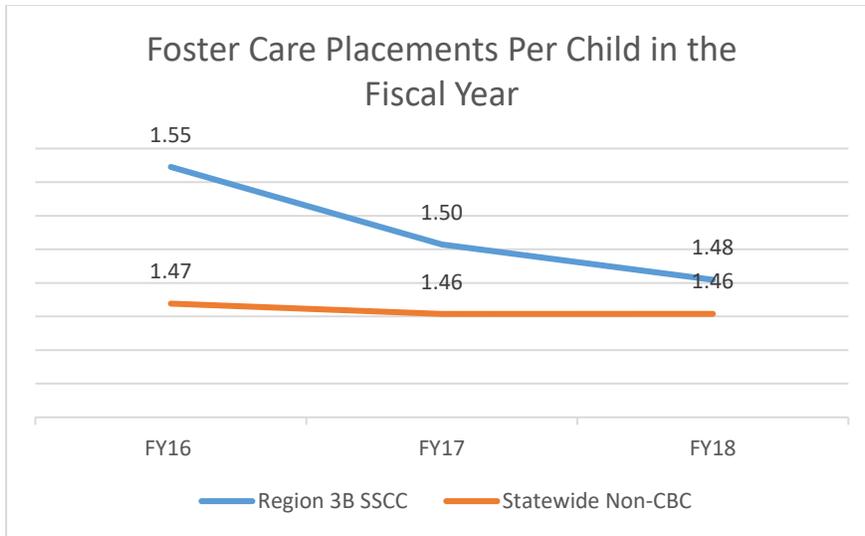
OCOK is the single contracted SSCC serving children with contract performance measure data available for fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2019, quarter one. DFPS will report Region 2 and Region 8a preliminary Stage I performance beginning in quarter two of fiscal year 2019. The first fiscal year will be considered a transition year, as the SSCCs begin accepting new referrals and children currently in foster care are gradually transferred.

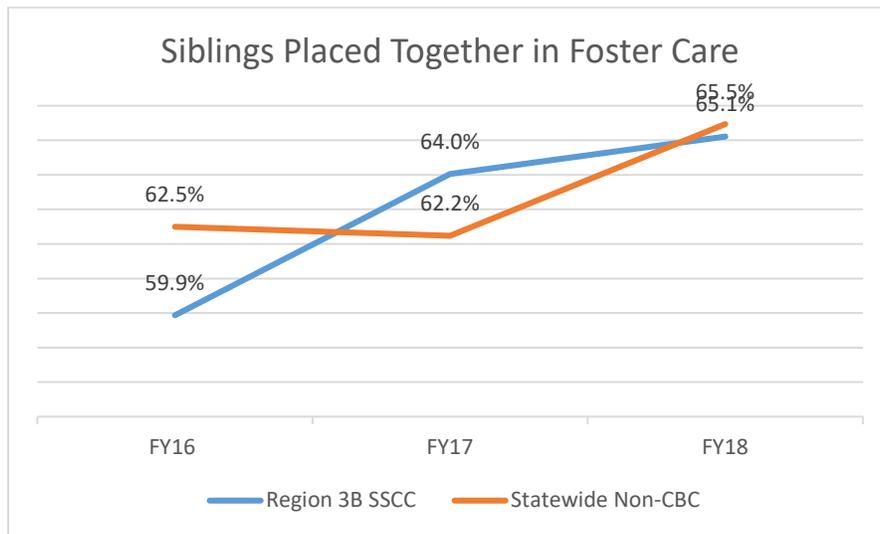
Our Community Our Kids

OCOK saw continued performance gains on key contract outcomes in fiscal year 2018 compared to fiscal years 2016 and 2017:^{iv}

- 99.7% of children from Region 3b were safe in their foster care placements
- Rate of 1.48 foster care placements per child
- 78% of foster care days spent in foster family or kinship foster homes
- 75% of children in foster care placed within 50 miles
- 65% of sibling groups placed together on the last day of fiscal year 2018

The following charts depict recent 3b performance trends and compare to trends in “non-CBC” areas of the state:





First quarter performance for fiscal year 2019, when compared to first quarter 2018, suggests sustained if not increasing positive trends in 3b:

- 100% of children from Region 3b were safe in their foster care placements
- Rate of 1.13 placements per child compared to 1.18 in the first quarter of 2018 (this number increases over the course of the fiscal year)^v
- 80% of foster care days spent in a foster family or kinship foster homes compared to 78% percent in the first quarter of 2018^{vi}
- 67% of sibling groups placed together in foster care compared to 64% in the first quarter of 2018.^{vii}
- 94% of youth turning 18 completing PAL life skills training. Early low performance in fiscal year 2018 resulted in 88% completion in fiscal year 2018. Performance returned to 94% in quarter three of fiscal year 2018, which has continued through the first quarter.^{viii}

The following factors are thought to contribute to trends:

- Decreased use of emergency shelter placements - OCOK made fewer first placements in emergency shelters in fiscal year 2018 and fewer children experienced multiple shelter stays in the fiscal year. ^{ix} This positively impacted stability, requiring fewer subsequent placement changes. It also contributed to more children placed in foster homes and more foster care days in family home settings.
- Increased local foster home capacity– 87% of children in foster homes were placed within 50 miles in fiscal year 2018, which OCOK attributes largely to capacity building in rural areas.^x
- More small sibling groups placed together – Over the course of the contract, OCOK has worked to develop capacity to both keep sibling groups together and place children in

their home communities. DFPS and OCOK recognized the challenge was not only keeping large sibling groups together but recruiting and managing foster home capacity for sibling groups of two. Fiscal year 2019 first quarter data shows that more small sibling groups were placed together, even while the total number of sibling groups of two increased.

- Foster home stability – DFPS notes slight improvement in foster home stability. OCOK reports more significant gains when placement changes to reunite sibling groups are omitted in their agency performance measures. OCOK attributes the stability to ongoing disruption mitigation practices, implementation of provider reviews, and attention to low performing Child Placing Agencies.
- Instability around Residential Treatment Center (RTC) placements – For children with an RTC placement, the average number of RTC placements per child increased in fiscal year 2018, meaning more children had multiple RTC stays during the fiscal year. OCOK is creating more residential treatment capacity within 3b to better monitor and control for instability among RTCs.
- Children in other placement settings placed farther from home – While many children in foster homes are placed within 50 miles, children in other placement settings, including RTCs, are often placed farther from home, a trend which has increased statewide. In fiscal year 2018, only about 27% of 3b children in other settings were placed within 50 miles. OCOK is actively working to build more residential treatment capacity in 3b to place more children closer to home, with one RTC coming online this past year, and two more facilities contracted to open this year, bringing total residential bed capacity to 44. Together with the launch of Professional Home-Based Care, an alternative to or step-down from residential treatment with 12 new foster family homes to date, Region 3b will soon have the full continuum of care available locally to meet the placement needs of the region.

DFPS has required formal quality improvement plans for performance on placement stability, sibling groups placed together in foster care, and placement within 50 miles. DFPS and OCOK worked together to discuss the trends impacting low performance and OCOK outlined strategies for improvement. As the outcomes and trends above show, the CQI process is yielding positive results. DFPS will likely be closing the formal CQI plans as performance is now at or above the contract baseline. Quality improvement remains ongoing, and DFPS will continue to monitor efforts, especially for children in settings other than foster homes.

ⁱ DFPS CBC Data Warehouse Report wk_sa_82s2lxas, Children in All Living Arrangements, January 18, 2019; Agency Data Warehouse - Substitute Care Data Mart, Report Number: fps_sa_19s, as of December 31, 2018.

ⁱⁱ There are currently 17 catchment areas in the state. Catchment areas are subject to change based on implementation criteria and stakeholder input. See map: http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Foster_Care/Community-Based_Care/documents/CBC_Catchment_Areas.png

- ⁱⁱⁱ The populations described are not relevant to Section A, which reports the agency's current LBB performance measures. In Section A, the statewide and non-CBC populations are not limited to children in contracted foster care ("SSCC-eligible"), but include all children in substitute care (including relatives and other non-contracted/unpaid placements). The SSCC 3b and Legacy 3b populations (3b children not in paid foster care) are combined for an "apples to apples" comparison to the statewide performance populations.
- ^{iv} All FY18 performance data is from Rider 21 FEB 2019 Submission Final - log 92272 as reported in the attachment to this report.
- ^v FY18 Q1 data taken from SSCC 2 - # SSCC Placements per Child FY18 Q4 YTD - log 90340
- ^{vi} FY18 Q1 data taken from SSCC 3 - Care Days in FFH - FY18 Q4, YTD Q1, Q2, Q3 refreshes log 90084
- ^{vii} FY18 Q1 data taken from SSCC 5 - Siblings All Placed Together FY18 Q5 - log 92382
- ^{viii} FY18 Q1 SSCC 8 - SSCC 8 - PAL Completed Before 18Yr FY18 Q4 - log 90111
- ^{ix} All DFPS SSCC Performance Measure CQI calculations produced from log 92547 "CBC Open Foster Care Placements Fiscal Year to Date, new quarterly report FY18" and log 92289 "CBC Open Foster Care Placements Fiscal Year to Date, new quarterly report FY19 Q1"
- ^x Children in Paid Care at the End of the Fiscal Year - % Placed within 50 miles of removal location, Chapin Hall, University of Chicago, January 21, 2019