



Kinship Quarterly

Strengthening Families

April 2018

IN THIS ISSUE: 3 IN 30 PART 2 AND SUMMER TRAVEL

In last quarter's newsletter, we introduced the "3 in 30" initiative. This edition gives a short description of "3 in 30" but focuses more on your role and resources that may help you.

What is the 3 in 30?

"3 in 30" combines three separate tools. Each of the three are important for determining the medical, behavioral, and developmental strengths and needs of children in your care. Texas law requires all three assessments. Together they will help map the path for services to children from the start of their time in care. STAR Health providers complete all three assessments. Click here for more information about the [3 in 30](#).

What are the components of 3 in 30?

3-Day Medical Exam: In 3 business days, children entering DFPS care must see a medical provider to be checked for injuries or illnesses and get any needed medications or treatments. The requirement to have a 3-Day exam will start in some areas in spring 2018 and be required statewide by fall 2018.

Texas Health Steps (THSteps)

Medical Checkup: Within 30 days of entering DFPS care, children must see

a STAR Health medical provider for a complete check-up with lab work. It is important to know that the THSteps medical checkup is separate from the 3-day medical exam, and different than a routine physical. THSteps ensures that:

- We address medical issues early.
- Kids are growing and developing as expected.
- Caregivers know how to support strong growth and development.

Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment:

Within 30 days of entering DFPS care, children (ages 3-17) must get a CANS assessment. The CANS is a comprehensive trauma-informed behavioral health evaluation. It gathers information about the strengths and needs of the child and helps in planning services that will help the child and family reach their goals.

Kinship Caregiver Role

Nearly half of all children in CPS care are being cared for by family and friends just like you! Your role in making sure that children get the assessments needed to provide them with the best care possible is essential. By taking your child to these visits, you will have the opportunity to ask

questions as well as receive first-hand knowledge of the child's immediate needs and long term needs. That first-hand knowledge will help you get the best possible care for your child as well as help transition the child into your home safely.

Addressing the Barriers

Time off work – The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles *eligible* employees of covered employers to take paid/unpaid, job-protected leave for family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage. One of those specific reasons is the placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement. Ask your employer for more information.

Transportation – If getting your child to their 3 in 30 appointments is difficult due to transportation, here are a few solutions for you:

- **Caseworker** – The caseworker who placed the child in your home is a great resource. They can either give you a ride to your appointments or arrange transportation with a CPS case aide.

- **Volunteers** – Volunteers play an important role in helping DFPS accomplish its goals. Many volunteers work one-on-one with children and families to provide such things as transportation. For more information, contact your caseworker or email the Office of Volunteer and Community Engagement at communityengagement@dfps.state.tx.us
- **Medicaid** – STAR Health provides a full-range of Medicaid covered medical and behavioral health services for children in DFPS care. One of the benefits is transportation. Visit the HHS website to learn how to use this service. <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/questions-about-your-benefits#star>
- **Family Group Decision Meeting (FGDM)** – A term used to describe various ways CPS works with families to make decisions about safety and service plans. You can use this opportunity to gather support from other family members. Although other family members are not caring for the child, they can support the child in other ways. For example, they can provide you with transportation to and from appointments.

Where can I Find a Doctor?

A doctor or other Health Care Provider (HCP) may complete the initial 3-day medical exam. To find a provider for the 3-Day Medical exam, THSteps medical checkup or the CANS, go to: www.fostercaretx.com/for-members/find-a-doctor.html. You also can call STAR Health Member Services, (866) 912-6283.

Kinship Development Worker

You should have a Kinship Development Worker (KDW) if you are caring for a child in state care. Your KDW is there to support you and can

help you get your child to these appointments.

Summer Travel

With summer approaching, many people are planning family getaways. If you plan to travel, make sure you notify the caseworker. Any travel longer than 72 hours requires advance approval from the caseworker or supervisor. If you are going to travel outside of Texas, you must provide the child's caseworker with the following information at least 10 days before leaving:

- Date of departure
- Date of return
- Contact information (including the addresses and telephone numbers where you and the child can be reached. This is because CPS may need to notify the court of your travel plans and request advanced court approval).

If you plan to travel out of the country, CPS must obtain court approval before your departure as well as obtain several other approvals. If you are considering traveling out of the country, discuss your plans with your caseworker as soon as you can so they can get the appropriate approvals.



Summer Ideas

Infants and toddlers learn about the world around them by using all of their senses. Spring and summer are great times for engaging your child in outdoor activities. Here are some fun ideas that will support your child's development:

- Use a clean dry ice tray and place your child's favorite small snack (cheerios, gold fish or gummies) into each compartment. Have your child try to remove the snack using a fine pincer grasp (thumb and index finger).

- Use salad tongs to pick up ping pong balls and place into a reusable container. A great way to make this more fun is to decorate the container as an alligator or hippo and "feed the animals."
- Draw a rainbow and have your child place matching colored Fruit-Loops on the corresponding rainbow line. You also can use colored stickers or washable dot markers.
- On your sidewalk, use colored (washable) chalk to draw squares close to each other and have your toddler jump from square to square.
- Toss inflated balloons to your child while they use a pool noodle to try and hit it.
- Allow your child to copy simple figures in sand, shaving cream or pudding. Practice scooping sand into a large bowl using a spoon.
- Blow bubbles and let your child try to pop them before they hit the ground. Encourage them to use both hands, and for older children, let them blow bubbles themselves.
- On a hot day, try freezing colored water into various shapes, and allow your child to play and enjoy the various sensations of touch and taste.
- Fill a little pool with bubble bath and let him/her revel in playing with bubbles! Throw in a few toys for your child to play detective and hunt around! Use various containers to pour water, use cups and have a tea party! Make sure to always supervise your child when they are in or around water.
- Provide opportunities to climb, swing, and jump using age appropriate playground structures.

As with all activities, make sure your child is always adequately supervised to ensure safety.

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) is a statewide program with Texas Health and Human Services for families with children birth to 36 months, with developmental delays or disabilities. For more information, visit hhs.texas.gov/eci

Spring and Summer Safety Tips

Walking and Biking Safety

- Younger children are learning to become independent. They enjoy walking, riding bikes and playing outside, but they don't have the judgment to cope with traffic by themselves yet. Learn to keep your kids safe when they are on the move.

Sun Safety for Babies

- Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight. Move your baby to the shade under a tree, umbrella or stroller canopy. Dress babies in lightweight clothing that covers the arms and legs, and use brimmed hats.

Water Safety

- Provide touch supervision, meaning that an adult is within arm's reach anytime your young child is in or near water.
- At the beach, stay within the designated swimming area and ideally within the visibility of a lifeguard. Be aware of rip currents. If you get caught in a current, don't try to swim against it. Swim parallel to shore until clear of the current.
- Be aware that pools may have unsafe drain systems. Supervise children closely.

Travel Safety

- Even though most airlines allow a child younger than 2 to ride on a parent's lap, having an FAA-approved car seat will aid in your child's safety on the plane.
- Bring your own play yard or porta-crib. Play yards and cribs offered by hotels may not be up to the latest safety standards.
- Never leave a child alone in a vehicle, even for a minute. A child could not only get lost quickly, but he or she could overheat and die within minutes.
- Always carry safe water and snacks to offer your children. This is not only a safety precaution, but also will ensure you always have something they like to eat.

- Know where your children are at all times. Many vacation destinations are crowded places. You need to hold your child's hand in a crowded place and don't let him or her wander around. Even older kids should not be allowed to roam in an unfamiliar place by themselves. Keep a recent picture of your child with you, and have children carry an identification card with them (not their passport).

Resources

- DFPS Kinship Care Facebook
www.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers
- STAR Health
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Medical_Services/guide-star.asp
- Texas Home Visiting
<http://www.texashomevisiting.org>
- Help for Parents
www.helpandhope.org
- Methodist Children's Home
www.MCH.org
- Help for Teaching Reading
www.sightandsoundreading.com/
- DFPS Kinship Care Information
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Kinship_Care/
- Services for Youth and Young Adults
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/default.asp
- Child Safety Information
www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Child_Safety/default.asp
- Summer Camp Information
<http://www.campsusa.org/resources/>
- YMCA Camps
<http://www.ymca.net/find-a-y-camp/>
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
<https://www.bgca.org/>

Kinship Support Groups

In previous issues, we introduced the Kinship Collaboration Group (KCG). The KCG allows kinship caregivers who have received services from CPS to help CPS design, implement and evaluate CPS programs, policies and services.

In addition, the KCG will help to establish Regional Kinship Support Groups (KSG). These groups will provide regional/local opportunities for kinship caregivers with

open CPS cases to obtain greater insight of the CPS system. The KSG is a venue where kinship caregivers who have successfully exited the CPS system share their experiences, knowledge of the system, procedures, etc. with kinship caregivers currently involved with CPS.

Since September 1, 2017, several KSG have been created in your area. If you are interested in attending a support group, contact your Kinship Development Worker to see if there is a local group near you.

Upcoming Kinship Support Groups/Kinship Community Events

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Health Fair

April 14 from 9 a.m to noon
Sul Ross Middle School
3630 Callaghan Road
San Antonio

Contact: Mary Hewtty, (210) 559-0287

Learn More about Permanency

April 28 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Alice McKean Young Neighborhood Library
5260 Griggs Road
Houston

11th Annual Family Fun Fair

April 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Album Park (Eastwood)
3001 Parkwood Street
El Paso

Contact: Sonya Avila, (915) 521-3704

Go Blue Day

April 6 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
501 Hawkins Blvd.
El Paso

Contact: Sonya Avila, (915) 521-3704

Kinship Support Group

May 15 from 9:30 a.m. to noon
Child Protective Services
3635 SE Military Dr.
San Antonio



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services
Child Protective Services

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities at

(800) 252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org.