



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Commissioner
H. L. Whitman, Jr.

September 28, 2018

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Office of the Governor
P. O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

The Honorable Dan Patrick
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

The Honorable Joe Straus
Speaker of the House
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

The Honorable Charles Schwertner
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

The Honorable Richard Raymond
Chair, House Committee on Human Services
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Dear Governor Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Straus, Chair Schwertner, and Chair Raymond:

I am pleased to submit for your review the Fiscal Year 2019 Business Plan for Child Protective Services (CPS).

Pursuant to Human Resource Code (HRC) §40.05275, CPS is required to develop and implement an annual business plan for the CPS program to prioritize the department's activities and resources to improve the program. CPS is required to coordinate with the department's regional staff in developing the annual business plan. The annual business plan developed under this section must include, among other requirements, long-term and short-term performance goals and identification of priority projects and ongoing initiatives that are clearly linked to established goals.

HRC § 40.0528 further directs CPS to consider the following goals in developing the annual business plan required under HRC §40.05275 for the CPS program:

- Reducing caseloads;
- Enhancing accountability;
- Improving the quality of investigations;
- Eliminating delays; and

- Ensuring the most efficient and effective use of Child Protective Services staff and resources.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Rand Harris, External Relations Director, serves as the lead on this matter. He can be reached by email at Rand.Harris@dfps.state.tx.us or by phone at (512) 438-3083.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "H. L. Whitman, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

H. L. WHITMAN, JR.



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Child Protective Services

Business Plan

Fiscal Year 2019

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CPS Mission, Vision, and Values

CPS Mission

We partner with families and communities to address child abuse and neglect by practicing in a way that ensures safety, permanency, and well-being for the children and youth we serve.

CPS Vision

Children First: Protected and Connected

CPS Values

Our values represent the ideals we share and serve as broad guidelines for every situation.

Respect

We show respect to the children, youth, and families we serve by demonstrating our understanding that they are more than the reason that brought them to us, and by seeking ways for them to guide the help they receive.

Commitment

We display our commitment through pursuit of the best outcome for each of the children, youth, and families we serve, knowing our interventions have important implications for them.

Integrity

We demonstrate integrity by communicating to the children, youth, and families we serve about our purpose and how we make decisions in a way that is easily understood, and when we follow through on our words and obligations to them.

Equity

We achieve equity in outcomes by applying our methods fairly and consistently, and customizing our interventions to the unique cultural and community context of the children, youth, and families we serve.

Urgency

We work with a sense of urgency to reach safety, permanency, and well-being concurrently for every child and youth we serve, and this is reflected in each of our interventions.

Texas CPS Core Practice Competencies

Child Protective Services (CPS) established and designed training regarding core practice competencies that cross every stage of service. These are the actions CPS carries out to achieve desired outcomes.

Engaging

Engaging means we develop trust-based relationships with children, youth, families, and safety networks for the purpose of driving positive change. Successful engagement is the basic building block of child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Assessing

Assessment of safety, permanency, and well-being is based on balanced, unbiased, and factually supported information. Our assessment tools are objective, reliable, and support consistency and accuracy in decision-making. Decisions are consistent across all stages of service. Although part of our work is helping families solve their problems, we must make impartial decisions about whether caregivers and families can change quickly enough to meet the child's safety and permanency needs.

Teaming

Assembling a safety network to team with the child or youth and the family is the best way to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being. Constructive relationships between people are critical to effective child protection work.

Planning

Planning involves setting goals, developing strategies, and prioritizing tasks and schedules to meet goals. Developing plans requires us to first define the problem in a way that is solvable. This means we describe our worries to families and safety networks in behavioral terms that define the danger to the child or youth. We also help families and safety networks create a vision of what safety will look like in the family so that everyone knows what needs to happen to close the case.

Intervening

Our intervention is the least intrusive required for child safety. When we take a more intrusive course of action to address danger to the child, interventions are designed to be brief. Our goal is to mobilize caregivers and safety networks to take action quickly, knowing that each intervention has an impact on the long-term outcome for the child. The best permanency happens in the earliest stage of the case.

Evaluating

Plans are routinely evaluated with children, youth, families, and the safety network. Good evaluation requires us to continually consider why we are involved with a family and be able to describe what safety will look like in the family. Continued involvement with a family means that the child is unsafe.

For more information, visit [The CPS Practice Model](#).

Introduction from Kristene Blackstone, the CPS Associate Commissioner

During Fiscal Year 2018, Child Protective Services (CPS) was highly engaged in implementing the significant changes resulting from the 85th legislative session and the clear direction from state leadership on moving the Texas child welfare system forward towards the future. With Governor Greg Abbott's vision of CPS becoming the best child welfare program in the country, the inspirational leadership of Commissioner Hank Whitman, and the generous support of the Texas Legislature in providing much needed resources, CPS is continuing the path forward in making real, measurable changes.

Notably, this year, DFPS became a stand-alone agency and CPS Investigations, along with child care and residential child care investigations, moved to a new Investigations Division. Our leadership across the state worked together to ensure that the move of investigations to a new division was seamless, that the clients we serve had no disruption of services, and that staff were supported through the change. This new organizational structure allows CPS to focus specifically on safety, permanency, and well-being for children in our conservatorship and those we serve in Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) cases.

This business plan highlights our accomplishments from the past year. Some of this work is still in progress but notable examples include implementation of a three-day medical exam for children coming into care, establishing payments for qualified kinship caregivers, establishing treatment foster care services, working with the provider community to establish performance measures for residential contracts, conducting a capacity needs assessment and implementing a FBSS pilot purchasing evidenced based services. Perhaps the biggest change in how we do business, CPS began expanding what was formally known as Foster Care Redesign to Community Based Care. Community Based Care is a new way of providing foster care and case management services. It's a community-based approach to meeting the individual and unique needs of children, youth, and families.

In FY 19, we intend to expand and build upon the accomplishments from the past year. This plan outlines our strategies moving forward. In addition to the numerous initiatives already underway, recent federal legislation, known as the Family First Prevention Services Act, has the potential to have a tremendous impact on our state. We are proud of our accomplishments from the past year and eager to build upon them. We look forward to our continued work with many partners and invested communities across the state. We know that continuous self-improvement and collaboration are critical to the future of the children and families we serve.

Accomplishments for FY 2018

Safety

- CPS developed and planned for implementation of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools: Risk Re-Assessments for FBSS and Family Reunification Assessment for Conservatorship (CVS). CPS will complete these updates to IMPACT to support these tools in fiscal year 2019.
- CPS contracted with Pathways Youth and Family Services in Region 10, which covers El Paso, Brewster, Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio counties. Pathways Youth and Family Services is responsible for providing a full array of needed services for children and families in the FBSS stage. The model uses a performance-based contract and includes a comprehensive assessment of service provision.
- CPS worked to improve FBSS through training and staff development, live case reads, and strengthening the case transfer process between Investigations and FBSS. CPS partnered with Casey Family Programs to target performance improvement.
- CPS began implementing the Nurturing Parent Program (NPP) in four FBSS units across the state (Lubbock, Potter, Val Verde, and Smith Counties). CPS plans to expand NPP into at least one more unit in FY19 (Burnet County). NPP is a trauma-informed, evidence-based program to prevent, intervene and treat child abuse and neglect. Nurturing Parenting Programs aim to:
 - Increase parental knowledge about what constitutes abuse and neglect.
 - Improve ability to identify, express, process and manage feelings (such as anger, stress, loss, grief and guilt).
 - Increase understanding of the stages of child development and age appropriate behavior associated with the stages (including safety, emotional and relational aspects).
 - Increase understanding of varied approaches to positive parenting (including discipline, creating age appropriate child rearing structures, conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies).
 - Increase parental capacity to use responsive parenting interactions (including empathy, caring and respect for self and others).
 - Increase community supports for on-going parental capacity development.
- CPS enhanced how staff work with and engage families when domestic violence is a safety and risk factor by increasing the use of the Battering Intervention and Prevention Program.
- CPS completed the Domestic Violence Practice Guide.
- CPS made domestic violence resources available to CPS staff and our partners by posting to internal and external facing websites.
- CPS strengthened relationships with domestic violence partners to bolster prevention and intervention.

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- DFPS analyzed data relating to children who run away as well as children who are victims of human trafficking and created a model to identify populations that are at high risk of becoming victims. DFPS released a report in May 2018.
- DFPS developed and planned for changes to IMPACT to meet Title IV-E requirements for identifying, reporting, and providing services to victims of sex trafficking. DFPS is scheduled to complete updates to IMPACT in FY 2019.
- CPS continued implementing the Prevent Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (HR 4980) to protect children and youth at risk of sex trafficking. The DFPS Division of Investigations and CPS collaborated with the Department of Public Safety, the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and local law enforcement agencies to find missing children.
- CPS continued working with state and community resources to provide human trafficking and internet safety training to youth participating in services to support a successful transition to adulthood (Preparation for Adult Living).
- CPS participated in over 25 community task forces across the state working together to address local issues associated with child sexual exploitation.
- CPS worked with the DFPS Division of Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation to train staff regarding Commercially Sexually Exploited (CSE) youth and to increase institutional knowledge in identifying and responding to CSE youth. DFPS rolled out the training regarding CSE youth, 'Be the One,' in May 2018 and is scheduled to be completed by December 2018.

Permanency

- DFPS continued to partner with Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to support Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE). The goal of CFE is to create better outcomes for children in the Texas child protection system by identifying, locating, and engaging family members and other committed adults so they can be involved in the child's care and permanency planning. CFE is now implemented in 20 CASA programs. During fall 2017 and spring 2018, DFPS and CASA launched additional CFE programs in regions 3b, 6b, 7, 8, 9, and 10.
- CPS analyzed information from the Post Permanency Program for Kinship Families that began in 2017 in regions 6A, 6B, and 11. The Post-Permanency Program supports families who obtained Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) of children and youth in CPS conservatorship. This service provides support to relatives who assume PMC of children in foster care through information and referrals, casework service and planning, parent groups, parenting programs, counseling services, respite care reimbursement, and crisis intervention.
- CPS began quarterly meetings with the Kinship Collaboration Group, which includes adults serving as kinship caregivers. This group helps CPS improve the kinship program by identifying ways to better support kinship placement.

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- In October 2016, the Texas QIC-AG project began Pathways to Permanence 2: Parenting Children Who Have Experienced Trauma and Loss[©]. This program is for temporary or permanent caregivers for the child in the home, or an adult who is engaged with the child through visitation, phone calls, or therapy and who is willing to have the child return to the home. To date, 16 Pathways to Permanence 2 series have been completed, three series are in progress, and three more series are planned. This initiative is a pilot in Region 7.
- CPS began a monthly payment process for eligible kinship caregivers. The Legislature in 2017 passed House Bill 4, allowing DFPS to provide monthly reimbursements to eligible kinship caregivers caring for children in DFPS conservatorship.
- CPS implemented an appeal process for potential kinship caregivers who are denied a placement due to low-risk criminal history.
- CPS updated photo listings of available children on the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE). TARE Specialists worked with various community partners such as Adopt Us Kids, Adoption.com, A Family for Every Child, and Children Awaiting Parents to increase permanency efforts for youth awaiting adoption.
- CPS continued to target permanency work for children who have been in care two or more years.
- CPS expanded Texas faith-based initiatives by supporting congregations that wanted to participate in the CarePortal, which allows churches to provide goods and services to children and families in need in their own communities. CPS currently has 1,199 faith communities partnering with the agency. To date, 517 of our faith partners are enrolled in the CarePortal and are helping to meet the needs of children in families. Since the CarePortal started in Texas, it has assisted 4,758 children and is estimated to have an economic impact of \$1,400,020,¹
- CPS expanded the “adopt a family” initiative to faith communities that wish to support youth and families in need in their own communities. This initiative is targeted for areas with no CarePortal participants. Currently, the “adopt a family” program is in regions 5, 6a, 6b, 9, and 11.
- CPS expanded “clergy in court for kids”, which allows clergy members to attend court hearings and support youth and families. In FY 2018, CPS expanded this initiative into Jefferson County (Region 5), Denton County (Region 3W), Anderson County in (Region 4), and Burnet County (Region 7).
- CPS continued to engage statewide and regional Parent Collaboration Groups on improvements to practice, policy, and service provision. Additional accomplishments include assisting in the development of the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) In-Home Model, membership in the Birth Parent National Network/Birth and Foster Parent Partnership, and participation in the 2018 Texas CASA Child Welfare Primer.

¹ Information provided at www.careportal.org

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- CPS expanded involvement of direct-delivery service volunteers in various capacities, including hospital sitting, and parent transportation. Recruitment efforts for these volunteer roles began in March 2018 through various methods, including newsletters, social media, and Volunteer Match.
- CPS continued to implement a single Child Plan of Service with contracted providers to reduce duplication and improve service provision. DFPS will complete IMPACT functionality to support the single Child Plan of Service in FY 2019.
- CPS expanded Community-Based Care (CBC), as mandated by the Texas Legislature in 2017, to promote a community-based approach to service coordination and delivery, increase capacity, ensure quality, deliver case management, and improve outcomes for children and families. Major milestones include:
 - DFPS released a Request for Application for CBC in Region 2 on October 18, 2017. DFPS awarded a contract on May 29, 2018 to 2INGage, a new partnership between Texas Family Initiative LLC and New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc., to serve as the Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) for the Region 2 area.
 - DFPS released a Request for Application for CBC in Bexar County on December 5, 2017. DFPS awarded a contract on August 3, 2018 to Family Tapestry, a division of the Children’s Shelter to serve as the Single Source Continuum Contractor for Bexar County.
 - On August 10, 2018, DFPS announced that Region 1 and Region 8b (all counties in Region 8 except for Bexar county) would be the next two new catchment areas for CBC. DFPS anticipates releasing the procurement of Region 1 in fall 2018.
- DFPS and ACH renewed the Region 3b CBC contract effective September 1, 2018. This contract includes terms that allow for the continuation of services provided under Stage I (placement, PAL, and Adoption services) as well as requirements around Stage II (case management) and Stage III (incentives and remedies). The Department and ACH understand that both parties must complete the coordination and transition into Stage II in a manner that is seamless to the children, youth, and families in the 3b area, ensuring first and foremost their safety, and with no disruption in services. As a part of our collective commitment to these children and families, the timing, resources and process for transition into Stage II remains a center point of discussion. Once all plans are finalized and approved, DFPS and ACH will share plans with children, families, staff, members of the judiciary, and other stakeholders.

Well-being

- CPS implemented a three-day medical exam for all children entering foster care, which was a part of the 3 in 30 campaign. The new medical exam is conducted within three business days of a child entering foster care and is critical to determining if the child has any immediate medical needs. Used in conjunction with the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength (CANS) assessment and the Texas Health Steps checkups, the

medical exam provides a thorough assessment of each child's physical, emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs when entering DFPS conservatorship. CPS uses the three tools to tailor services for each child.

- CPS worked with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and Superior Health Plan Inc., to strengthen the use of the CANS assessment to ensure: 1) that every child ages 3-17 entering CPS conservatorship receives this assessment or an annual update if they remain in conservatorship; 2) CANS assessments are completed timely; 3) recommendations from CANS are in the service planning process for the child; and 4) the Texas-specific CANS tool and algorithm continue to be valid and reliable assessment tools. Efforts included:
 - Updates to Health Passport to allow automated uploads of the CANS Scoring Sheet.
 - Updates to the CANS algorithm, eCANS manuals and scoring sheet.
 - Superior hosted Learning Collaborative with providers and they are scheduled to implement Quality Management initiatives in September 2018.
 - DFPS published a CANS webpage on the DFPS Intranet as a resource for staff.
 - DFPS included CANS in the 3 in 30 campaign.
 - Telehealth was identified as a viable delivery method for the CANS, which may impact capacity and quality.
 - Completed updates for the CANS training in CPS Professional Development (CPD) for DFPS staff.
 - As part of a Systems of Care grant, two Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHA) are entering CANS for youth in the conservatorship of CPS into the eCANS system.
- CPS collaborated with HHSC and Superior to improve compliance of the initial Texas Health Steps checkups for youth in foster care. The Texas Health Steps checkup is due within 30 days of a child entering care to assess his or her overall physical health. Efforts included:
 - CPS coordination with Maximus and HHSC resulting in Maximus updating:
 - The call script used by Maximus when contacting a caregiver for children and youth in foster care to include the requirement for the initial Texas Health Steps medical checkup to be within 30 days of coming into conservatorship.
 - The new enrollee letter specific to children in foster care.
 - Maximus trainings for providers about Texas Health Steps.
 - Texas Health Steps was included and reinforced in the 3 in 30 campaign.
- CPS expanded Trauma Informed Care knowledge and practices so CPS leadership, caseworkers, and stakeholders act with an understanding of the impact of trauma on children and youth. The CPS Trauma Informed Care Specialist worked with multiple stakeholder groups, such as the Statewide Collaborative on Trauma Informed Care

established by the Children's Commission, the Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH), and the HHSC Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, which includes the Child and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee.

- CPS Education Specialists conducted regional education consortiums with their local education service center to address the multiple education-related issues, including behavior and mental health, associated with the challenges faced by children and youth in foster care. CPS and stakeholders developed an education consortium tool kit, which is pending publication.
- DFPS participated in a multi-disciplinary Foster Care and Education Summit in July 2018.
- Regional Education Specialists tracked credit progress for 11th and 12th grade students in foster care completing requirements for a high school diploma.
- In spring 2018, CPS created an internal workgroup with staff from multiple stages of service to develop and implement strategies to improve educational outcomes of children and youth in care.
- CPS hired seven Psychiatric Hospital Workers to enhance and streamline case planning and respond to the unique medical needs of children in psychiatric facilities.
- CPS implemented program improvements related to Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Life Skills Training, including providing a paper version of the Independent Study Guide so youth have another way to complete training. Through PAL staff efforts, Life Skills Training completion rates for FY17 and FY18 have exceeded the target goals.
- CPS worked with stakeholders and youth to develop a plan to standardize the curriculum for the PAL program to ensure that youth 14 years of age or older receive relevant and age-appropriate information and training. Two subgroups were identified: 1) Life Skills and Learning; and 2) Caregiver Participation. Both workgroups have explored the current process, curriculum, and research about this population as well as identified needs and gaps. DFPS will submit a report about this initiative to the Texas Legislature by December 1, 2018.
- CPS partnered with DPS and CASA to further develop procedures to ensure each youth gets a driver's license or personal identification card before exiting DFPS conservatorship.
- CPS trained its staff and external stakeholders about racial and ethnic identity to promote competencies around healthy racial and ethnic identity formation for children and youth. Efforts included:
 - Conducting Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) facilitator summits.
 - DFPS participation in the Equity: Together We Can Achieve More course.
 - Hosting disproportionality webinars throughout FY 2018.
 - Conducting Undoing Racism workshops.
 - Cultural humanity training for regional staff at the supervisor level and above in certain areas of the state.

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- CPS expanded training of racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ identity at the State Teen Conference.
- CPS continued expanding Knowing Who You Are: Racial and Ethnic Identity training to child-placing agencies. CPS worked with S.A.F.E Alliance and delivered KWYA to S.A.F.E. Alliance leadership, shelter staff, and program staff. CPS collaborated with the HHSC Office of Minority Health to deliver KWYA to Pathways staff involved in the El Paso Family Based Safety Services pilot in El Paso.
- In June 2018, CPS partnered with Marshalls Department Stores and Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas to begin a summer internship within a Marshalls Department store in Plano, which started June 2018.

Workforce

- DFPS continued to provide advanced leadership skills training to CPS supervisors and managers.
- CPS developed training designed specifically for new program directors. This quarterly training focuses on leadership, data management, and human resources. The training is for new and tenured program directors.
- DFPS hosted the Your Leadership, Your Legacy conference in July 2018. This two-day conference for program director level staff and above continued developing leadership and management practices.
- The Division of Systems Improvement and the Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence (CLOE) developed a Program Director and Program Administrator training for CPS on how to effectively use data for systems management. In FY 2018, the training has been incorporated into and provided to all new program directors. CPS program administrators and regional directors received the training at a leadership meeting.
- CPS continues to work with CLOE to produce critical-thinking training for program directors, program administrators, and regional directors. This training will focus on policy and practice around Parent Child Safety Plans (PCSP), safety decision making, risk assessment, and family dynamics, including domestic violence and substance abuse.
- CPS worked to institutionalize exemplary leadership behaviors that provide a framework for positive culture and workforce retention as a part of the ongoing Leadership Challenge training for state office leadership and regional executive leadership. Casey Family Programs also worked with the leadership teams in the majority of the regions (exceptions are regions 4, 5 and 11) to develop leadership skills of the entire leadership team at the program director level and above. Casey Family Programs held sessions with these regions, integrating the practices of the Leadership Challenge. Casey committed to continuing this work through FY 2019.
- CPS expanded cultural responsiveness training for staff at all levels. This included developing a course related to working with Latino families, creating computer-based

training regarding disproportionality, statewide poverty simulations, and statewide implementation of the Working with Families Who Are Impoverished course.

- Building Resiliency in the Face of Trauma (BRIFT) is a TBRI-based training developed with the late Dr. Karyn Purvis, Dr. David Cross, and the TCU Institute of Child Development team. CPS rolled out this secondary trauma training to supervisors and mentors in FY 2017 and caseworkers in FY 2018. It is now incorporated into the certification requirements for caseworkers and supervisors.
- CPS sustained the mentoring program for caseworkers and has established advisors for new supervisors.
- In FY 2018, CPS added hiring boards to the screening assessment for supervisor promotion to support fair and objective hiring practices. CPS provided refresher trainings to program directors in May and June 2018 to review the process and requirements.
- CPS completed the rollout of INSIGHT, an upgrade to the reporting and data management technology for IMPACT, designed to improve efficiency, accountability, and decision-making. Data reports help alert program staff in each stage of service about critical tasks (e.g., plans of service and face-to-face contacts), including tasks that are coming due or overdue. Reports with workload information assist supervisors manage assignments.
- CPS state office and field staff continued to participate in planning and design for IMPACT improvements. These included changes as part of IMPACT modernization, a multi-year technology update to the system. The enhancements will support key initiatives and increase caseworkers' efficiency.
- CPS regional leadership continue to contact workers with six to 24 months tenure at regular intervals to gather feedback on what is working well for staff and what support is needed to ensure staff success. Regional leadership reports that the responses have been positive, and they have expressed the value of maintaining this process.
- CPS continued to send master conservatorship workers to understaffed areas of the state to support workload and build capacity.
- CPS continued to promote employee recognition and retention efforts, including leadership recognition awards, such as the Commissioner's Award of Excellence, CPS Award of Distinction, and Regional Director Award of Distinction. Established in December 2017, the Ramiro Hernandez Excellence in Mentoring Award recognizes the value of a quality mentoring relationship and the impact it has on professional development and career advancement at DFPS.

Continuous Quality Improvement

- CPS developed the Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan, as negotiated with the Children's Bureau, Office of the Administration for Children and Families, to improve outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being.

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- CPS maintained continuous quality improvement efforts through quarterly Child and Family Service Reviews of FBSS and Conservatorship cases and the Investigations and Alternative Response cases attached to those cases across all regions.
- CPS strengthened ongoing continuous quality improvement efforts through regular case reviews in FBSS and Conservatorship and through its Division of Federal and Program Improvement Review. Efforts include
 - Reviewed a weekly sample of high-risk FBSS cases open from 91-96 days. Reviewers send the results, including any concerns for safety, to the staff working the cases.
 - Reviewed a weekly sample of recently implemented PCSPs and a monthly sample of recently closed cases in which a child or children remained in a PCSP, and conducted follow-up calls at six months and 12 months post-closure with caregivers who continued to provide a home for children at case closure.
 - Assisted in building a case review guide for program directors in CVS to use on cases around the four-to-six-month mark in order to assess for progress on achieving permanency goals for children.
 - Assisted in building a case reading tool for quality assurance on the Common Application. The Common Application is a form that contains critical history on a child so the placement understands and meets the child's needs. Case reads for the Common Application began in summer 2018.
- CPS continued reviews to measure outcomes of practice changes or to address areas of potential concern. Reviews over the past year included the areas of Emergency Assistance applications, Texas Health Steps, Child and Adolescent Needs Assessment, Child Sexual Aggression, current photo of children in foster care, visitation plans, Common Applications, and screened intakes. Reviewers sent results to staff involved in the cases and also provided summaries to management.
- CPS maintained its continuous quality improvement efforts to sustain improvements and proactively identify and make needed changes. CPS is using predictive analytics to target resources, aggregate information into usable formats, evaluate new initiatives, and conduct quarterly system improvement meetings with regional leadership.
 - In FY 2018, CPS revamped its case-review process in FBSS and implemented a case-review process for program directors in Conservatorship using predictive analytics to identify high-risk cases for review. Both reviews use a structured case-review tool that is aligned with the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) questions.
 - The Division of Systems Improvement (DSI) compiled and reported quarterly on data from the reviews, identifying patterns and trends. The information is incorporated into the division's work with regional leadership.
 - Regional leadership held quarterly Regional Improvement Team (RIT) meetings across the state. To help leadership prepare for the RITs, the DSI compiles and

integrates information and reports on resource management, critical tasks, quality casework, and outcomes. At the meetings, regional leadership reviewed the reports, discussed progress on implementation of strategies identified in the annual business plan, and identified any emerging issues that need to be addressed.

- DSI began evaluating the implementation and impact of the new kinship caregiver payment program and the Region 10 FBSS pilot.
- The CPS associate commissioner and director of field held quarterly business performance reviews with each regional director to review key data performance indicators and address issues and concerns.

Capacity Building

- In FY 2018, CPS implemented the rate increases funded by the Legislature in 2017.
- CPS continued efforts for building residential child care quality and capacity in areas of need across the state, including seeking evidence-based treatment programs that serve children in the least-restrictive settings.
- CPS implemented the Treatment Foster Family Care program and awarded three contracts across the state to Arrow Child and Family Services, CK Child Placing Agency and the Bair Foundation in July and August 2018. The Treatment Foster Family Care Program will serve children and youth age 10 and younger, who have mental health and/or socio-behavioral needs that cannot be met in traditional foster care settings and who might otherwise be served in residential treatment settings. The program includes innovative, multi-disciplinary treatment services that are evidenced-based and research-supported. It is a time-limited program intended to stabilize and prepare children for successful transition into less restrictive or permanent placements. Under the program, foster parents and contractors receive a higher reimbursement but will have additional expectations such as more training, more frequent treatment plan reviews, and ongoing support following discharge.
- CPS partnered with the DFPS Division of Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation to increase care for placement and services to commercially sexually exploited youth.
 - DFPS Division of Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation provided technical assistance and training to non-profit organizations working to expand their placement capacity to include specialized foster care for sexually exploited youth.
 - In addition, the DFPS Division of Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation will be working with stakeholders to help build resources in areas identified as lacking services for trafficked youth. .
- In FY 2018, CPS completed the Foster Care Needs Assessment, which will be the basis for each region where CBC has not been implemented to create a plan to assess

substitute care capacity and develop local strategic plans for building capacity. CPS will complete the regional capacity strategic plans in FY 2019 and post them on the DFPS public website.

- CPS uses the Temporary Emergency Placement (TEP) program when a child is without a placement. CPS contracted with four providers to offer emergency placements for children with high needs while a more permanent placement is sought. The TEP program is a no eject-no reject program, thus providers must deliver services to any youth referred under the program. The first contract was signed on June 21, 2017. In the first annual year of the program, 398 children and youth were served. Without this program, these youth would have otherwise been under DFPS supervision.
- CPS implemented the Intense Plus service level for residential care providers to receive an increased rate for providing an additional level of services for youth with complex needs.
- CPS increased participation in Supervised Independent Living (SIL) foster care placements. DFPS posted an open enrollment for SIL procurement in FY 2018. SIL expansion included two schools in the Texas A&M University System – Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and Texas A&M-Kingsville.
- CPS contracted for training relating to Motivational Interviewing. Specific CPS staff were trained in motivational interviewing using the curriculum from The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work. The Motivational Interviewing method helps people resolve feelings to find the internal motivation needed to change their behavior. For DFPS, the motivational interviewers encourage the youth to talk about their feelings about refusing and running away from placements.

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The goals of CPS are to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for the children we serve. Metrics for measuring safety, permanency and well-being help CPS evaluate program goals.

To achieve these goals for children, CPS needs to maintain a professional and stable workforce. To evaluate the strength of its workforce, CPS will continue to track turnover by tenure and stage of service along with assessing workforce challenges through the Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE).

The most recent SEE, administered statewide to all government agencies every other year, was in April 2018. CPS analyzed the results by region and will develop meaningful plans to address areas of concern and build on our strengths. For the purposes of the SEE survey, scores above 350 are desirable, and when a scores fall below 300, there is cause for concern. The overall score for all of CPS increased from 359 in 2016 to 378 in 2018.

In the 2018 SEE, CPS received a strength rating for supervision (score: 410), workgroup (score: 406), and Information Systems (score 405) constructs. Comparatively, in 2016 CPS also received strength ratings for those constructs with scores of: supervision (score: 397), information systems (score: 392), and workgroup (score: 388).

For the purposes of the SEE, the workgroup construct captures the employees' perceptions of the people they work with daily and their effectiveness. The 2018 results suggest that: 1) employees view their supervisors as fair, helpful, and critical to the flow of work; 2) employees view the availability and utility of information very positively; and 3) employees view their workgroup as effective, cohesive and open to the opinions of all members.

In the 2018 SEE, CPS received low scores in constructs relating to pay (score: 272), job satisfaction (353) and benefits (score: 373). Comparatively, in 2016 CPS received low scores for the same constructs: pay (score: 210), job satisfaction (score: 323), and benefits (score: 347). While DFPS continues to work to improve overall job satisfaction, the results suggest that recent efforts made by DFPS and CPS may be resulting in higher workforce satisfaction.

The 2018 results reflect that pay remains a central concern or reason for discontent and is not comparable to similar organizations. These results were particularly low for those employees that did not receive pay increases through the emergency funding request provided in FY 2017. However, the upturn in the score may reflect increased satisfaction that the organization's compensation package is more comparable to similar organizations now than it was in 2016. To continue efforts to address pay, CPS awarded one-time and ongoing merit increases to select staff who have a history of exceptional performance and met predetermined criteria during FY 2018.

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Lower scores relating to job satisfaction suggest that employees feel overworked, unable to perform at their best, and are unhappy with their work. Lower scores relating to benefits suggest that employees perceive benefits as less than needed or unfair in comparison to similar jobs in the community. Although the scores fall within the areas of concern, the constructs for job satisfaction and benefits improved from the 2016 SEE. The results suggest that the accomplishments relating to workforce may have resulted in increased job satisfaction. CPS will continue to address job satisfaction and promote wellness benefits as outlined in this plan.

CPS must also further develop a culture of learning by using our continuous quality improvement structure to promote and assess ongoing change. The business planning process allows CPS to evaluate its continuous quality improvement efforts by tracking and reporting on key milestones.

In fiscal year 2018, CPS added a goal of increasing foster care capacity to ensure children in all levels of care have a safe, home-like setting and/or a setting that can meet their therapeutic needs. Providing an appropriate environment where a child can heal and grow is critical to the CPS mission and purpose.

For the fiscal year 2019 business plan, CPS examined historical trends for safety, permanency, well-being, and workforce metrics to identify those that have been improving and those in decline. Historical trends over time allow CPS to understand where it has been, where it currently stands, and where it is headed if trends continue. This helps CPS to proactively and more effectively identify and target strategies to build on areas of strength and improve areas of weakness.

In FY 2019, CPS will continue the goals established in the FY 2018 business plan. Specific strategies are addressed in detail in the sections regarding Safety (Goal 1), Permanency (Goal 2), Well-Being (Goal 3), Developing a Professional and Stable Workforce (Goal 4), Continuous Quality Improvement (Goal 5), and Increase Foster Care Capacity (Goal 6).

Historical Trends and Future Targets²

Safety – Recidivism

Recidivism	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18 Target	FY18	FY19 Target	FY 20 Target	FY 22 Target
Family Based Safety Services	7.5%	7.2%	7.8%	7.6%	7.6%	10.3%	N/A	9.7%	9.4%	9.0%	8.1%
Conservatorship	11.1%	11.6%	11.9%	11.5%	11.7%	11.7%	N/A	13.9%	11.7%	10.1%	9.1%

Safety – Timely Face-to-Face Contacts

Timely Face-to-Face Contacts	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18 Target	FY18	FY19 Target	FY 20 Target	FY 22 Target
Ongoing monthly contact FBSS ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	96.8% ⁴	95%	95%	95%
Ongoing monthly contact CVS	94.5%	94.7%	95.0%	96.6%	97.3%	98.5%	98%	98.8	98%	98%	98%

² FY18 data that is obtained from the DFPS Data Warehouse is preliminary and subject to end of fiscal year refresh. Final FY data is not available at the time of this report. Data for FY18 will be updated in the FY19 CPS Business Plan.

³ The methodology for this metric changed in FY18. Prior to FY18, DFPS reported on the percent of face-to-face contacts made for the month of August for each fiscal year. Reporting has been refined to include the fiscal year to date totals for this measure.

⁴ FYTD as of the end of July 2018.

Permanency

Permanency	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18 Target	FY18	FY19 Target	FY 20 Target	FY 22 Target
Time to permanency in months	18.5	18.9	18.8	18.4	18.3	17.8	17.1	17.4	17.0	16.2	15.4
Time to reunification	13.3	13.2	13.2	13.3	12.8	13.1	12.2	12.7	12.2	11.6	11.0
Time to Relative PMC (no PCA)	12.8	13.3	13.1	13.3	13.3	12.9	12.9	13.0	12.6	12.3	11.7
Time to Relative PCA	25.7	25.7	24.2	24.9	25.1	24.2	21.7	24	21.7	20.6	19.5
Time to Relative Adoption	25.7	25.7	26.6	24.9	25.1	25.6	23.1	24.6	23.1	21.9	20.8
Time to Non-Relative Adoption	32.3	32.1	30.8	29.0	29.0	28.1	26.0	27.6	26.0	24.7	23.5
Exits to permanency for children in care 2 or more years	28%	31%	32%	33%	34%	34.7%	38%	34%	39%	44%	50%
Visits with parents/siblings in foster care ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	81%	58%	N/A	57%	80%	N/A	N/A
Placed with relatives (sub care)	39%	40%	41%	42%	43%	44.8%	N/A	45.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average number of placements for children in foster care	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.6	N/A
Percent of time in sub care spent in least restrictive setting	82.5%	83.2%	83.4%	83.6%	85.0%	86.8%	87.6%	88.5%	88.5%	88.5%	90%

⁵ Data metrics are percent of cases that met the strength rating for the Child and Family Services Review quarterly case reads. The metrics reports are federal fiscal year Q1, Q2, and Q3. Final fiscal year data was not available at the time of publication. Final FY data will be updated in the FY19 Business Plan. During the Federal Review in FY16, the standard by which this measure was scored changed. Prior to the change, visitation was confirmed if it occurred with the parents and siblings at a frequency of at least once per month, with more frequent expectations depending on the family's situation (i.e. more frequent visits for an infant). During the Review in FY16, DFPS learned the expectation was for visits to occur at least weekly with parents and siblings; as such, compliance rates for FY17 and 18 are lower than anticipated. We have set a goal for FY 19 and will continue to monitor progress on this data metric each quarter throughout FY19 and will set future targets as appropriate.

Well-Being

Well-Being	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18 Target	FY18	FY19 Target	FY 20 Target	FY 22 Target
Children’s educational needs are met ⁶	97%	97%	96%	93%	99%	96%	100%	93%	100%	100%	100%
Children’s physical health needs are met ⁷	93%	89%	91%	87%	91%	82%	100%	80%	100%	100%	100%
Children’s mental/behavioral health needs are met ⁸	94%	92%	91%	88%	97%	81%	100%	81%	100%	100%	100%
Youth completing PAL	75%	76%	76%	73%	76%	83.1%	85%	91.%	92.%	93.%	95%
Siblings in substitute care placed together	64%	66%	66%	65%	65%	64.4%	68%	64.9%	70%	70%	70%

⁶ Data metrics are percent of cases that met the strength rating for the Child and Family Services Review quarterly case reads. The metrics reports are federal fiscal year Q1, Q2, and Q3. Final fiscal year data was not available at the time of publication. Final FY data will be updated in the FY19 Business Plan.

⁷ Data metrics are percent of cases that met the strength rating for the Child and Family Services Review quarterly case reads. The metrics reports are federal fiscal year Q1, Q2, and Q3. Final fiscal year data was not available at the time of publication. Final FY data will be updated in the FY19 Business Plan.

⁸ Data metrics are percent of cases that met the strength rating for the Child and Family Services Review quarterly case reads. The metrics reports are federal fiscal year Q1, Q2, and Q3. Final fiscal year data was not available at the time of publication. Final FY data will be updated in the FY19 Business Plan.

Workforce

Workforce	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18 Target	FY18	FY19 Target	FY 20 Target	FY 22 Target
Turnover for Family Based Safety Services	26%	25%	23%	28%	25%	16%	16.5%	19.5% ⁹	16.5%	N/A	N/A
Turnover for Conservatorship	24%	22%	23%	23%	23%	16.5%	16.5%	17.4%	16.5%	N/A	N/A

⁹ In FY18, CPS contracted with a vendor to provide case management services for FBSS cases in Region 10. As such, the metric for statewide turnover was affected. The FYTD metric being reported is FYTD 18 FBSS turnover sans Region 10.

Definitions for Key Measures of Safety, Permanency, Well-Being, and Workforce

Safety

- **Recidivism for Family Based Safety Services** – percentage of children in Family Based Safety Services case that is closed with no further ongoing services that have a subsequent confirmed allegation for abuse or neglect or a case opened for Family Based Safety Services or Conservatorship Services within 12 months of case closure. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Recidivism for Conservatorship** – percentage of children who exit conservatorship to reunification that have a subsequent confirmed allegation for abuse or neglect or a case opened for Family Based Safety Services or Conservatorship Services within 12 months of case closure. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Timely face-to-face with children in FBSS** – percentage of children on a family plan of service or a child principal if there is no family plan of service in FPR stages open at least a month that had monthly face-to-face contact with the caseworker in any given month throughout the fiscal year. (Source: DRIT 90514)
- **Timely face-to-face in Conservatorship** – percentage of children in conservatorship with monthly face-to-face contact with a caseworker. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse report SA_42).

Permanency

- **Time to permanency** – average number of months from removal to exit to one of the following: reunification, relative as a permanent managing conservator, relative adoption, or non-relative adoption. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Time to reunification, relative Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC), relative Permanency Care Assistance (PCA), relative adoption and non-relative adoption** – average number of months a child spends in care from the time of removal until they exit the CPS system. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - Report PP_20)
- **Permanency for children in care two or more years** – percentage of children in care two or more years at the beginning of the fiscal year who exit to one of the following during the year: reunification, relative as a permanent managing conservator, relative adoption, or non-relative adoption. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care** – percentage of children in Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) case read that visited with their parents and siblings. The CFSR defines this as, “whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother,

father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members". (Source: Summary of CFSR case review prepared by CPS Accountability Division)

- **Children in substitute care placed with relatives** – percentage of children in DFPS conservatorship on August 31 (of each year) that were placed with a relative including relatives verified as foster parents. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Average number of placements for children in foster care** – average number of placements for youth in foster care. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Percentage of time spent in least restrictive settings** – for all children who spent at least one day in conservatorship, the percentage of their total days in conservatorship that were spent living at home, with a relative or in a foster family home. (Source: DRIT 90967)

Well-Being

- **Educational needs of the child are met** – percentage of children in Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) case read that had educational needs met. The CFSR defines this as, "whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children's educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities". (Source: Summary of CFSR case review prepared by CPS Accountability Division)
- **Physical health needs of the child are met** – percentage of children in CFSR case read that had their physical health needs met. The CFSR defines this as, "whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs". (Source: Summary of CFSR case review prepared by CPS Accountability Division)
- **Mental/behavioral health of the child** – percentage of children in Child and Family Services Review case read that had mental and behavioral needs met. The CFSR defines this as, "whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children". (Source: Summary of CFSR case review prepared by CPS Accountability Division)
- **Youth completing Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) life-skills training** – percentage of youth who leave substitute care at age 18 or older and completed PAL Life Skills classes required to receive the PAL Transitional Living Allowance (up to \$1,000) funding after a youth left substitute care. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)
- **Siblings in substitute care placed together** – percentage of siblings groups in substitute care on August 31 (of each year) with all siblings in the same placement. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)

Workforce

- Turnover for Family Based Safety Services – FY turnover for FBSS staff, excluding Region 10. Region 10 FBSS case management services were transferred to a contractor in FY18. (Source: DRIT 90988)
- **Turnover for Conservatorship** – calculated according to the State Auditor Office methodology. (Source: DFPS Data Warehouse - DFPS Executive Dashboard)

Goal 1: Maximize the Safety of Children and Youth Served by the CPS System

Outcome Measures

- Reduced recidivism after Family Based Safety Services are offered and the case is closed
- Reduced recidivism after a child or youth exits state custody to reunification
- Maintain quality face to face contact with families being served in Family Based Safety Services
- Maintain quality face to face contact with children in substitute care

At its core, CPS works to create safety for children and families

The ultimate measure of safety for children is when CPS decides that a child will be safe without ongoing CPS intervention and supervision and the child remains safe. CPS measures whether a child remains safe by whether a child in a case closed by CPS has a subsequent confirmed investigation or a family preservation or substitute care case, which is also referred to as recurrence or recidivism. CPS looks at recidivism for 12 months after CPS supervision ends. As a result, this is a "lagging" measure, meaning it reflects past rather than current services and decisions.

CPS also maintains child safety through regularly occurring face-to-face contacts with a child or family. Caseworkers should make contact with children in Family Based Safety Services and Conservatorship stages at least monthly, but more frequently depending on the family or child's unique needs. CPS looks at timely face-to-face contact in the Family Based Safety Services and Conservatorship stages of service as one indicator of safety.

Objective 1.1: Improve Safety Decision Making While Engaging Families and Safety Networks to Keep Children Safe

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Permanency Division, DFPS Operations, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Division of Program Strategy, Domestic Violence Program Specialist, Office of the Governor, CPS Field Division, CPS Division of Program Strategy, and DFPS Purchased Client Services Division.

Action Plan:

- CPS will work to develop and plan for implementation of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency's (NCCD) Structured Decision Making® (SDM) tools: Risk Re-Assessments for Conservatorship and Family Based Safety Services stages and the Family Reunification Assessment for Conservatorship stages. DFPS will complete updates to IMPACT to support these tools in FY 2019. These tools are designed to

support decision-making regarding reunification and determining when services can be discontinued and case closure.

- CPS will enhance policy and communication relating to engaging non-custodial parents.
- In FY 2017 and FY 2018, CPS and Child Protective Investigations (CPI) state office and field staff participated in a series of policy practice roundtables to explore child safety. The roundtables addressed child safety concerns with alternative caregivers in a child's biological home, individuals who do not live in the home but have regular contact with the child, and individuals who are included in safety plans. In FY 2019, CPS and CPI will develop and publish policy and resource guides to strengthen Investigation and FBSS policy to address the roundtable's recommendations.
- CPS will explore evidence-based practices to enhance FBSS direct-delivery skills and knowledge.
- CPS will enhance how staff work with and engage families where domestic violence is a safety and risk factor by increasing the use of the Battering Intervention and Prevention Program, producing a domestic violence resource guide, and strengthening relationships with partners to bolster prevention and intervention. Additionally, through grant funding from the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Texas Governor, CPS is producing nine domestic violence training videos. The videos will focus on effective practice and address common challenges in CPS cases when persons harming children are also harming an adult partner/caretaker to the children.
- DFPS will develop a toolkit for all FBSS staff to better understand and address key aspects of their casework (to include initial contacts, contact frequency, timely service plans, and evaluation of progress).
 - The workgroup will clarify policy around the key aspects of FBSS work, including possible revision to the case-transfer protocol.
 - DFPS will consider asking a parent and external experts to participate in the workgroup. DFPS will work with Casey Family Programs for technical assistance to support the work.
 - DFPS will establish standards and measures for assessing progress of the FBSS program.
- CPS will continue the pilot program that contracts for Family Based Safety Services in Region 10. DFPS will submit an evaluation of the FBSS pilot to the Legislature no later than December 31, 2018, as mandated by the 85th Texas Legislature, Senate Bill 11, in 2017. The review will assess the effectiveness of the pilot and include a recommendation to continue, expand, or terminate the pilot program.
 - CPS will expand the FBSS pilot to one additional area of the state in FY19. CPS anticipates announcing the procurement in fall 2018.
- CPS will expand Parent Support Groups (PSG) across the state. The local PSGs are informational support groups for parents receiving FBSS or CVS services. These groups

are led by a parent who has successfully navigated the CPS system and a CPS staff person.

- Conservatorship caseworkers must conduct at least one face-to-face visit per month with the children on their caseloads, with the majority of those visits occurring in the child's home. The caseworker's monthly visits with a child must be well-planned and focused on issues relevant to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children. In FY 2019, CPS will focus on ensuring requirements of the monthly visits remain focused on safety and well-being through development and publication of updated policy.

Objective 1.2: Work to address risks to foster youth relating to Human Trafficking

Resources:

- Lead: DFPS Human Trafficking Division
- Resources: DFPS Special Investigations Program, the Texas Attorney General's Office, Department of Public Safety, local Law Enforcement agencies, CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, Data Analytics and Evaluation Division, DFPS Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence and CPS Field Division.

Action Plan:

- Training for DFPS staff will include the Office of the Texas Attorney General's "Be the One" video. This video covers how traffickers recruit and retain victims. It also provides the red flags of human trafficking and a reporting protocol, making the training a well-rounded introduction into human trafficking.
- DFPS Human Trafficking Response Protocol will include using West Coast Children's Clinic Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT) to screen youth with the goal of increased detection of sex trafficking. Using the identification tool will help direct delivery staff better assess vulnerable youth. CLOE will train staff on the tool. Training is scheduled to begin in October 2018 and statewide completion expected in June 2019.
- DFPS will analyze data relating to human trafficking victims reported to DFPS and create a model to identify populations at high risk of becoming victims. DFPS will release a report in January 2019.
- DFPS will continue to make changes to IMPACT to meet federal Title IV-E requirements for identifying, reporting, and providing services to victims of sex trafficking.
- DFPS will continue implementing the Prevent Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (HR 4980) to protect children and youth at risk of sex trafficking. The Division of Investigations and CPS will continue collaborating with the Department of Public Safety, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and local law enforcement agencies to find missing children.

- CPS will continue working with state and community resources to provide human trafficking and internet safety training to youth participating in services to support a successful transition to adulthood as part of PAL.

Goal 2: Maximize Permanency for Children and Youth Served by CPS

Outcome Measures

- Reduced time to permanency (reunification, placement with relatives, and adoption)
- Increased placement stability
- Increased visitation with parents and siblings for children in foster care
- Increased placement of children in substitute care with relatives
- Reduced average number of placements in foster care
- Increased time spent in least-restrictive placements settings

When CPS removes a child from his or her home and takes legal custody, the agency is responsible for keeping the child in a safe and stable placement close to home and with his or her family, whenever possible. But a safe, stable placement, even if it is close to home and with family, might only be a temporary solution. CPS must ensure the child finds a safe, permanent home as soon as possible.

CPS remains committed to examining race and ethnicity data to determine outcome disparities for children of color. In 2018, African American children were 1.9 times more likely to be removed, an increase from the relatively steady rates of between 1.6 and 1.7 times more likely seen between FY2013 and FY2017. African Americans and Latinos were more likely to exit to a relative. Even with the higher rate of relative placement, children of color are less likely to be adopted within 12 months of termination of parental rights; the disparity is especially apparent for African Americans. African American families are less likely to regain custody of their children. CPS acknowledges that further study of data related to these outcomes is essential to develop and implement strategies as CPS seeks to identify barriers to permanency for children of color.

Objective 2.1: Maximize Placements with Kinship Families

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Permanency Division, Texas CASA, Kinship Collaboration Group, Single Source Continuum Contractor (as a part of Community Based Care)

Action Plan:

- DFPS will continue to partner with Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to support Collaborative Family Engagement. The goal of Collaborative Family Engagement is to create better outcomes for children in the Texas child protection

system by identifying, locating, and engaging family members and other committed adults so they can be involved in the child's care and permanency planning.

- CPS will hold quarterly meetings with the Kinship Collaboration Group, which includes adults serving in the role of kinship caregiver. This group helps CPS improve the kinship program by identifying ways to better support kinship placements.
- CPS is working to create and sustain monthly kinship support groups in each region. These groups are led by former kinship caregivers and provide information and support to kinship caregivers currently working with CPS.

Objective 2.2: Ensure Permanency through Reunification, Permanent Placement with Relatives, or Adoption

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Permanency Division, CPS Division of Program Strategy, and CPS Field Division, Residential Child Care providers, Single Source Continuum Contractors

Action Plan:

- CPS will continue to work to reduce the number of children who have been in care two or more years. This is an effort to improve practices that support ongoing staffing to explore permanency options and ensure that any children who are in their intended-to-be permanent home are progressing toward their intended exit. In FY 2019, CPS will revisit permanency strategic plans developed by the regions to determine practices that were effective.
- CPS will work to expand the frequency of visits between parents and their children and siblings in foster care. Frequent visitation has a direct link to successful family reunification. CPS will explore the current policy, practice, and resources in an effort to increase the amount of contact that children have with their parents and family.
- DFPS will improve timeliness of out-of-state relative/kinship homes studies and placements to keep children with families and support permanency through the ICPC Division.
 - The ICPC plan will focus on the regional ICPC coordinators having a greater role in managing ICPC requests generated by their region, requests from other states, along with monitoring and tracking their region's compliance.
 - Regional leadership will develop monthly reports on delinquent home studies as well as their rate in making face-to-face contact with children placed from another state.
 - DFPS is analyzing whether it can implement an electronic interstate compact technology in an effort to become more efficient.

Objective 2.3: Partner with Advocates and Communities to Help Achieve Permanency for Children and Families

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Placement Division, DFPS Purchased Client Services Division, Parent Program Specialist, Single Source Continuum Contractors, Residential Care Providers, Texas Systems of Care, Texas Council on Adoptable Children, Texas Foster Family Association, Family Group Decision Making Staff, CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, CPS Foster Adopt Development Division, CPS Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children Division, community churches, clergy members, and the Citizens Review Team.

Action Plan:

- CPS is partnering with Texas Systems of Care and Residential Child Care Providers to implement the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) in Texas. BBI is a framework of best practices for Residential Treatment Center providers. It focuses on permanency, connection to family and community, discharge planning, increasing youth and family voice and choice in services, growing cultural linguistics, reducing restraints and seclusions, and enhancing RTC leadership practices.
- CPS will continue to collaborate with contractor Texas Council on Adoptable Children (COAC). COAC works to establish local chapters throughout Texas so adoptive families can unite and support one another as peers. COAC provides support, educational opportunities, and family events throughout the state. They will continue to work in collaboration with the regional contracted post-adopt service providers to bring more services to families.
- DFPS contracts with the Texas Foster Family Association to provide support, training, resources to foster families. The purpose of the Texas Foster Family Association is to educate, motivate and support foster, adoptive, and kinship parents, as well as, to be a united voice in advocating for the needs of those children and families.
- CPS will implement a single Child Plan of Service to reduce duplication and improve service provision to children. The single Child Plan of Service consists of an initial single case plan meeting and the provider and DFPS jointly developing the child's service plan in IMPACT. The Family Group Decision Making staff coordinate the single case plan meeting, which is a multidisciplinary meeting designed to bring the family and child welfare professionals together to discuss information on the child needed to create the plan of service. DFPS is expected to implement this meeting model in fiscal year 2019. When DFPS completes all modifications to IMPACT, which allow for external providers access to IMPACT, the agency will implement the joint development

of the plan through a staged roll out. The expectation is that all providers will be participating in the joint development of the plan by December 2019.

- Increase Clergy in the Court statewide in six more areas to help communities understand critical needs of families involved with CPS.
- Increase Adopt-A-Family in five more areas to bring awareness and provide resources for families to promote stability and permanency.
- Increase communities using the CarePortal to help provide ways the faith community can meet the needs of children and families through goods and services.

Objective 2.4: Contract for Services and Supports to Help Achieve Permanency for Children and Families

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: Post-Adoption Service Providers, DFPS Purchased Client Services Division, CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, CPS Foster Adopt Development Division, CPS Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children Division, and CPS Community Based Care Division, Single Source Continuum Contractors.

Action Plan:

- CPS will contract with service providers for the Post-Adopt Services program, which supports families who adopted children from CPS. This service provides support through information and referrals, casework service and planning, parent groups, parenting programs, counseling services, respite care reimbursement, residential treatment, and crisis intervention for families who adopt children from CPS.
- CPS will contract with service providers for the Post-Permanency Program, which supports families who obtained Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) from CPS. This service provides support through information and referrals, casework service and planning, parent groups, parenting programs, counseling services, respite care reimbursement, and crisis intervention for relatives who assume PMC of children in foster care.
- CPS will establish contracts with community-based nonprofits or local governmental entities pursuant to Texas Family Code Section 264.151. The contracts will be designed to promote a community-based approach to foster care capacity development, service coordination and delivery, kinship services, case management, and improved outcomes for children and families. By the end of fiscal year 2019, CPS is scheduled to operate under Single Source Continuum contracts in five Community-Based Care catchment areas. Major milestones include:
 - DFPS and ACH renewed the Region 3b CBC contract effective September 1, 2018. This contract includes terms that allow for the continuation of services provided under Stage I (placement, PAL, and Adoption services) as well as requirements

around Stage II (case management) and Stage III (incentives and remedies). The Department and ACH understand that both parties must complete the coordination and transition into Stage II in a manner that is seamless to the children, youth, and families in the 3b area, ensuring first and foremost their safety, and with no disruption in services. As a part of our collective commitment to these children and families, the timing, resources and process for transition into Stage II remains a center point of discussion. Once all plans are finalized and approved, DFPS and ACH will share plans with children, families, staff, members of the judiciary, and other stakeholders.

- In fiscal year 2019, Region 2 and 8A will begin CBC Stage I implementation. Region 2 is anticipated to begin in December 2018 and Region 8a in February 2019. Implementation dates are dependent on successful completion of all readiness requirements.
- In fall 2018, DFPS will release a Request for Application in two more CBC sites to be announced by September 1, 2018. Posting, evaluation, and contract negotiation is anticipated to be a six-month process.

Goal 3: Maximize the Well-being of Children and Youth Served by CPS

Outcome Measures

- Children receive adequate services to meet their behavioral health needs
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical health needs
- Children receive adequate services to meet their educational needs
- More youth complete Preparation for Adult Living services
- More sibling groups are placed together

Ensuring a child is safe and finds a forever home is essential to children's well-being. For children receiving CPS services, CPS must also ensure that their education, health, and other needs are met. As part of the continuous self-improvement process, CPS reads hundreds of cases every year with the federal Child and Family Services Review structured case review tool to examine if we are meeting the needs of the children we serve. CPS reviews cases to see if the child was adequately assessed for needs in education and physical and mental health. If there are needs, the reviewer checks to see if CPS provided the child with appropriately matched services. The process includes a review of the case file in IMPACT and in hard copy and interviews with case-specific stakeholders. The CPS Division of Federal and Program Improvement Review reviews 100 cases per quarter.

While finding a forever family for every child we serve and reducing the number of children who "age out" is our goal, permanency through family reunification, permanent placement with relatives, or adoption is not always possible or appropriate. For youth who emancipate

(age out) from foster care, CPS works to provide them with the skills and support to successfully transition to living on their own.

One way CPS provides support is through its Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) classes. Through PAL, youth not only learn how to successfully live on their own, they can complete certain requirements and receive financial support after they age out.

Another measure of well-being is to ensure youth have bonds and connection to their siblings in care, whenever possible. CPS recognizes that frequent visits with siblings can assist with those bonds, but the ultimate measure is when siblings are placed together. CPS measures when siblings are placed together and strives to increase that measure, when it is safe and appropriate for the youth.

Objective 3.1: Support Children’s Physical and Behavioral Health

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Medical Services Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission, CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, local Juvenile Justice Departments, CPS Division of Program Strategy, and CPS Field Division.

Action Plan:

- CPS will continue to roll out and imbed the practice of “3 in 30,” which are the three exams and assessments that are due within the first 30 days of a child or youth coming into DFPS Conservatorship : 1) the 3-Day Medical Exam; 2) CANS; and 3) Texas Health Steps Medical Check-Up. Through the 3 in 30, children receive a full assessment upon entering foster care. Caseworkers and others use this information to tailor the individual service plan to a child’s unique needs and to increase placement stability.
- CPS will strengthen its efforts relating to healthcare denials. Coverage of some medical, behavioral health, and dental services for children in conservatorship are denied by Star Health for various reasons. Reasons for denials may include lack of medical necessity, failure to get a prior authorization, or not a covered benefit. CPS Medical Services staff will continue to assist caseworkers and medical consenters on denials in an effort to ensure the child’s physical and behavioral health needs are met.
- CPS will have quarterly calls with Texas Juvenile Justice Department Liaisons and targeted local Juvenile Justice Departments to ensure CPS youth in juvenile justice facilities/programs are receiving coordinated case planning and services.
- In FY 2018, CPS convened a workgroup to enhance how CPS works with persons with disabilities. In FY 2019, CPS will publish revised policies that better direct staff on interacting with and supporting persons with disabilities.

- DFPS will strengthen its approach to providing services to children and families in which substance abuse is an issue and treatment is needed.
 - DFPS will create a Substance Abuse Division and consist of a Division Administrator and four Substance Abuse Program Specialists housed in four different parts of the state. The Division will work under the direction of CPS leadership to guide CPS practice in working with children and families with substance abuse issues throughout each stage of service.
 - The Division will consult with regional and state office management, caseworkers and field staff, state office program and policy staff, stakeholders, consumers of child protective services, volunteers, advocates, judges, treatment providers, medical professionals, and other providers for guidance on protocol, policy and practice regarding substance use, abuse and treatment.
 - The Division will provide consultation and guidance regarding the planning, development, implementation, and monitoring of substance abuse treatment projects and programs.
 - The Division will receive specialized training and strengthen practice by sharing knowledge of and incorporating best practice models for working with families.
 - The Division will help strengthen communications with internal and external stakeholders, including DFPS state office staff, field staff, staff from other state and federal agencies, providers of services for agency clients, stakeholders, and legislators.

Objective 3.2: Support Children’s Education Outcomes

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Division of Permanency, CPS Education Specialists, The Supreme Court of Texas Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families (Children’s Commission), and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Action Plan:

- CPS Regional Education Specialists will conduct a minimum of three regional education consortiums in each region to address education-related issues faced by children and youth in foster care.
- CPS will continue to work with the Children’s Commission and various community partners to improve educational outcomes for children. Specifically, a workgroup is looking at behavior interventions and other practices used in school to reduce the higher instances of disciplinary actions for students in foster care.
- Identification of the students is vital to improve educational outcomes for children in foster care. CPS partners with TEA to examine exchanging child specific data to better identify children in foster care and in the school setting.

Objective 3.3: Safeguard Children's Other Well-being Needs

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Disproportionality Manager, DFPS Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence, Preparation for Adult Living staff, and CPS Youth Specialists.

Action Plan:

- CPS will train staff and external stakeholders on racial and ethnic identity to promote competencies around healthy racial and ethnic identity formation for children and youth.
- CPS will expand training for youth related to racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ identity beyond the State Teen Conference by integrating the concepts into already developed curriculum.
- CPS will continue program improvements related to PAL Life Skills training and life skills assessment completion to help youth with successful transition to adult living.
- CPS will continue a four-year pilot summer internship program for current or former foster care youth ages 15 and older.
- CPS will continue partnering with stakeholders and youth to develop a plan to standardize the curriculum for the PAL program to ensure that youth 14 years of age or older receive relevant and age-appropriate information and training. CPS will submit a report to the Texas Legislature in December 2018.
- With stakeholders and youth, CPS will identify areas of improvement as the agencies work together to ensure each foster youth gets a driver's license or personal identification card before leaving DFPS conservatorship.
- CPS will continue to strengthen communication between stakeholders for the new Career Development and Education program. The program was developed at the direction of the Texas Legislature to ensure youth complete high school or receive their GED and have career and post-secondary opportunities.
- CPS will strive to increase the number of faith communities of color and non-traditional faith communities to assist meeting the needs of the children and families we serve.
- It is critical that youth in foster care maintain relationships with their parents and siblings. The primary purpose of visitation is to maintain the parent-child and sibling attachment, reduce a child's sense of abandonment, and preserve their sense of belonging as part of a family and community. In FY 2019, CPS will explore strengthening Conservatorship policy to increase sibling visitation or ongoing interaction to maintain sibling relationships.

Goal 4: Maximize Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Development to Ensure a Professional and Stable Workforce

Outcome Measures

- Decreased combined turnover rate
- Decreased turnover for Family Based Safety Services caseworkers
- Decreased turnover for Conservatorship caseworkers

To achieve the outcomes we want for children and families, CPS must have a professional and stable workforce. Doing so requires that we:

- Identify and hire the right candidates.
- Provide training that inspires confidence.
- Ensure staff have strong supervision and support to grow and professionally develop into the next generation of leaders.
- Project a long-term future with the agency by guiding staff with multiple career path opportunities.
- Mitigate the impact of turnover, which will always be present at some level, with tools and supports for management and staff.

Objective 4.1: Ensure Staff Are Adequately Trained and Prepared to do Their Job

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Disproportionality Division, DPFS Center for Learning and Organizational Excellence, CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, CPS Foster Adopt Development Division, CPS Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children Division, CPS Field Division, and the DFPS Legal Division.

Action Plan:

- CPS will continue to expand cultural responsiveness training for all staff by developing and implementing introductory web-based training related to the basic concepts of disproportionality and casework application. This will replace the existing, outdated, web-based training.
- Texas Interstate Compact Office will hold a two-day face-to-face training for all regional Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) coordinators and FAD supervisors as CPS implements a new ICPC process and ensures each coordinator and FAD supervisor is trained to process ICPC incoming and outgoing requests.

- FBSS University is a compilation of staff trainings to enhance their practice and to promote ongoing staff development. FBSS University will take the place of the current certification course for FBSS caseworkers.
- CPS will review and revise the FBSS certification courses.
- CPS is updating affidavit training for front line staff to include new components.

Objective 4.2: Leverage Technology and Operational Supports

Resources:

- Lead: DFPS Operations
- Resources: DFPS Operations, various CPS Program staff, and the CPS Division for Program Strategy.

Action Plan:

- CPS will continue to provide subject matter expertise to DFPS Operations as work is conducted to enhance IMPACT.
- CPS will work with Data Decision and Support and Management Reporting and Statistics to identify reoccurring data reports that can be delivered through the Data Warehouse, which will enhance the operational supports of CPS Program.

Objective 4.3: Create an Environment That Promotes Retention

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: DPFS Operations, CPS Field Division, Statewide Caseworker and the Supervisory Advisory Committee, Trauma Informed Care Program Specialist and Medical Services Division Administrator

Action Plan:

- The Employee Assistance Program contract expires in FY 2019 and will be re-procured. CPS will participate in the planning process to ensure CPS staff needs are represented.
- CPS will continue to deploy master conservatorship workers to understaffed areas of the state to support workload and build capacity.
- CPS will develop a master FBSS program to assist in a similar manner of master CVS workers, but they will be specific to the FBSS program.
- CPS regional leadership will continue to contact workers with six-24 months tenure at regular intervals to gather feedback on what is working well for staff and what support is needed to ensure staff success.
- CPS will continue the Leadership Challenge Training for regional leadership teams.
- CPS will promote employee recognition and retention efforts, including leadership recognition awards, such as the:

- Commissioner's Award of Excellence – Recognizes staff members and external partners who have gone to extraordinary lengths to protect the unprotected and serve our stakeholders.
- CPS Award of Distinction – Patterned after DFPS Leadership Challenge practices, this is an opportunity to not only showcase, but also provide a leadership template for staff statewide to follow.
- Regional Director Award of Distinction – Focused on leadership skills based on the practices from the Leadership Challenge.
- Ramiro Hernandez Excellence in Mentoring Award – This annual award recognizes the value of a quality mentoring relationship and the impact it has on professional development and career advancement at DFPS.
- CPS created the statewide and regional Caseworker & Supervisory Advisory Committee in FY 2018 to get input and feedback from the field on new initiatives, policies, and practices impacting field staff. The committee will continue to provide input on CPS initiatives in FY 2019.
- DFPS will develop an agency campaign regarding the impact of secondary trauma on staff and available resources.
- DFPS will research and develop Secondary Trauma Support response protocols and policies for staff and caregivers who have been involved in a serious incident.

Goal 5: Integrate Continuous Quality Improvement

Success Measures:

- Continue to use the federal Child and Family Services Review process and other structured case reviews to support the improvement process
- CPS Business Planning process

CPS has worked to solidify a continuous quality improvement (CQI) culture that supports a continual and strategic transformation and improvement process. Additionally, the CPS business-planning process assists CPS in setting and measuring goals and identifying accomplishments and deficits in the regions and program. The CPS business-planning process allows CPS to review progress and set goals in a transparent manner.

Objective 5.1: Continue Development of an Integrated Continuous Quality Improvement System that Effectively Uses Data and Information to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families.

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Division of Federal Program Improvement, DFPS Operations, DFPS Division of Systems Improvement, CPS Disproportionally Division, CPS Community

Based Care Division, DFPS Purchased Client Services Division, DFPS Management Reporting and Statistics, DFPS Data Decision and Support, Chapin Hall, CPS Field Division, and the DFPS Data Analytics and Evaluation Division.

Action Plan:

- Each regional director (RD) has created a business plan. Quarterly, each RD presents performance information and updates to the regional business plan to the Associate Commissioner for CPS and the CPS Director of Field Operations.
- Regular meetings with the Evaluations and Analytics Team, both at the state office level and regionally. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss trends in data and focus continuous quality improvement initiatives at the statewide and regional levels.
- The Division of Federal and Program Improvement Review (FPIR) will implement new ongoing and ad hoc case reviews. The Division develops these reviews at the request of program to focus on key issues.
- FPIR and the Division of Systems Improvement will work together in compiling and presenting data from case reviews to the regions to make practice improvements (Systems Improvement).
- Data collection is broken down by race and ethnicity and published in the annual report. The data analysis allows CPS to target strategic measures to improve services to children in families and reduce racial and ethnic disparities.
- In fiscal year 2019, a third party will evaluate the implementation of Community Based Care to inform continuous quality improvement.
- In fiscal year 2019, CPS will continue to establish quality oversight systems to ensure accountability of contracted case-management providers for processes, quality and outcomes.

Goal 6: Increase Foster Care Capacity

Success Measures:

- Net gain/loss in foster family bed capacity
- Percentage of basic/moderate youth in foster family homes
- Children in substitute care placed in county, in region

When a child enters foster care, it is CPS' responsibility to ensure that the child has a safe, home-like setting that can care for the child until they can safely reunite with their family, or achieve permanency through the transfer of custody to a relative or adoption. CPS contracts with a network of residential care providers across the state that range from basic foster homes to residential treatment centers that provide services to youth with the highest and most complex needs. Over the past few years, CPS has struggled to grow and retain capacity to serve youth with complex needs. To address this issue, CPS has implemented a number of strategies to increase foster care capacity statewide.

Community-Based Care

Community-Based Care (CBC) is a new initiative closely aligned with the Foster Care Redesign model. CBC provides substitute care (foster and kinship) services that relies on a single contractor, within various geographic areas. The Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) is responsible for finding foster homes or other living arrangements for children in state care and providing them and their families a full continuum of services, including case management. The purpose is to improve the overall well-being and permanency of children in substitute care and keep children closer to home and connected with their communities and siblings.

- DFPS released a Request for Application for CBC in Region 2 on October 18, 2017. DFPS awarded a contract on May 29, 2018, to 2INGage, a new partnership between Texas Family Initiative LLC and New Horizons Ranch and Center Inc., to serve as the Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) for the Region 2 area.
- DFPS released a Request for Application for CBC in Bexar County on December 5, 2017. DFPS awarded a contract on August 3, 2018, to Family Tapestry, a division of the Children's Shelter to serve as the Single Source Continuum Contractor for Bexar County.
- On August 10, 2018, DFPS announced that Region 1 and Region 8b (all counties in Region 8 except for Bexar County) would be the next two new catchment areas for CBC. DFPS anticipates releasing the procurement of Region 1 in fall 2018.
- DFPS and ACH renewed the Region 3b CBC contract effective September 1, 2018. This contract includes terms that allow for the continuation of services provided under Stage I (placement, PAL, and Adoption services) as well as requirements around Stage II (case management) and Stage III (incentives and remedies). The Department and ACH understand that both parties must complete the coordination and transition into Stage II in a manner that is seamless to the children, youth, and families in the 3b area, ensuring first and foremost their safety, and with no disruption in services. As a part of our collective commitment to these children and families, the timing, resources and process for transition into Stage II remains a center point of discussion. Once all plans are finalized and approved, DFPS and ACH will share plans with children, families, staff, members of the judiciary, and other stakeholders.

Treatment Foster Family Care

Treatment Foster Family Care Program serves children and youth age 10 and younger, who have mental health and/or socio-behavioral needs that cannot be met in traditional foster care settings and who might otherwise be served in residential treatment settings. Treatment Foster Family Care Program will include innovative, multi-disciplinary treatment services that are evidenced-based and research-supported. This is a time-limited program intended to stabilize and prepare children for successful transition into less restrictive or permanent placements.

Treatment Foster Family Care foster parents and contractors will receive a higher reimbursement but will have additional expectations such as more training, more frequent treatment plan reviews, and ongoing support following discharge.

- CPS implemented the Treatment Foster Family Care program and awarded three contracts across the state to Arrow Child and Family Services, CK Child Placing Agency and the Bair Foundation in July and August 2018.

Temporary Emergency Placement

The Temporary Emergency Placement (TEP) program was designed to provide highly structured quality residential care and services for children without placement on an emergency and short-term basis while placement staff continue searching for a more suitable and longer-term placement. This is a no eject/no reject program. Providers who participate in the TEP program have specialized training and experience providing services to high-needs children in DFPS conservatorship. In fiscal year 2017, DFPS purchased 20 beds from four providers across Texas who provide emergency care, including 24-hour supervision to ensure child safety, frequent one-to-one monitoring, a care staffing within 24 hours of admission to discuss the child's needs, daily observation notes, weekly progress notes, and immediate on-site crisis response. The first contract was signed on June 21, 2017, and 398 children and youth were served in the first year of the program. Without this program, these youth would have otherwise been under DFPS supervision. DFPS will continue to pursue the TEP program in fiscal year 2019.

Objective 6.1: Increase Foster Care Capacity to ensure that children in all levels of care have a safe, home-like setting and/or a setting that can meet their therapeutic needs.

Resources:

- Lead: CPS
- Resources: CPS Youth and Transitional Living Services Division, CPS Foster Adopt Development Division, CPS Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children Division, DFPS Purchased Client Services Division, Residential Care providers, Supervised Independent Living providers, CPS Community Based Care Division, and the CPS Field Division.

Action Plan:

- Statewide implementation of Treatment Foster Family Care Program to increase capacity in the foster care system and reduce the number of young children (under the age of 10) in residential treatment centers.
- CPS will increase participation in Supervised Independent Living foster care placements.

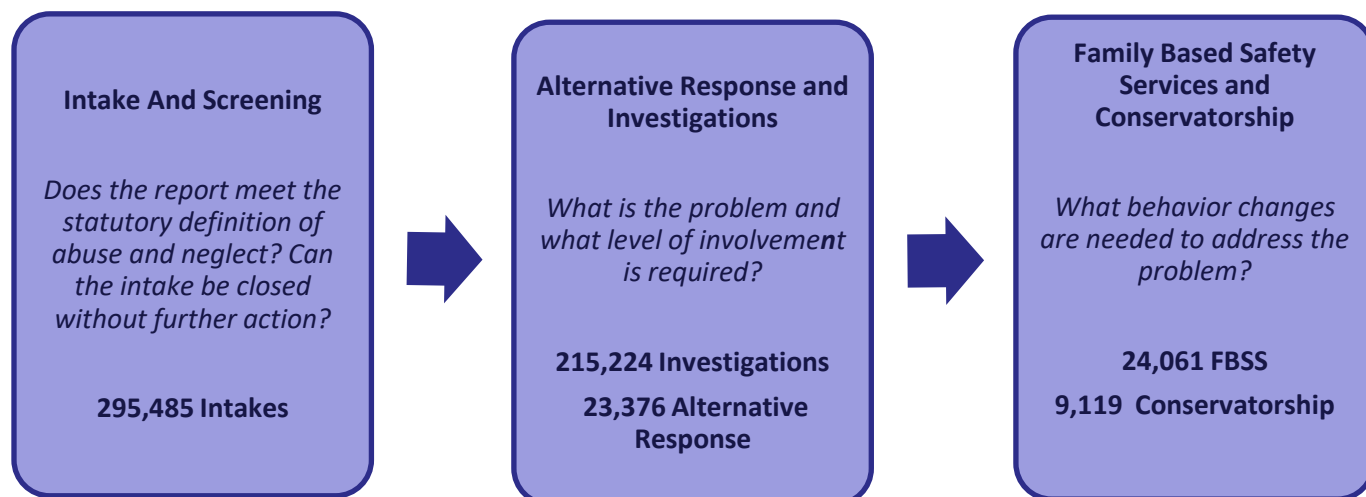
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- CPS will establish contracts with community-based nonprofits or local governmental entities to promote a community-based approach to foster care capacity development, service coordination and delivery, kinship services, case management and improved outcomes for children and families. By the end of fiscal year 2019, CPS will be operating under Single Source Continuum contracts in five Community-Based Care service areas. CBC contracts include performance targets specific to child safety, placement in home community, placement with siblings, and placement in home-like settings.
- Regional directors are partnering with their local providers to create a strategic plan to increase targeted-placement capacity.

Appendix A: CPS Stages of Service

The figure below illustrates the roles of the DFPS/CPS divisions in responding to reports of abuse and neglect. Fiscal year 2017 statistics¹⁰ provide context on children and families affected and staff workload.

Figure 1: Stages of Service



Intake / Referral

DFPS Statewide Intake receives reports of alleged abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults. Intakes are assigned to staff at CPS based on their priority level. Due to their severity, some intakes are assigned immediately for investigation.

Screener Review

Screeners conduct further review of the facts and determine whether to close the intake if it fails to meet criteria for CPS involvement, assign it to an Alternative Response caseworker, or assign it to an Investigations caseworker.

Investigations

Investigations caseworkers investigate allegations of abuse and neglect within statutorily determined timeframes. Investigators interview the child(ren) involved, the alleged perpetrators, and other key collateral contacts, and assess all pertinent information. They use tools that follow a series of structured steps to help reach consistent decisions about safety and risk (Structured Decision Making ®). Best practice is to submit the completed investigation to

¹⁰ Data for FY2018 is not available at the time of publishing.

their supervisor within 45 days, and to close the case within 60 days from the point of intake. When allegations of abuse or neglect are substantiated, the case may be closed, transferred to Family Based Safety Services, or CPS may assume legal custody and transfer the case to the Conservatorship (CVS) stage of service.

Alternative Response

Alternative Response allows caseworkers to approach families in a different way to use solution-focused practice to address a subset of reports of alleged child abuse and neglect that are accepted for investigation. Alternative Response is a strength-based, family centered process that allows for a more flexible, family engaging approach while still focusing on the safety of children. While CPS continues to respond to severe higher-risk reports using a forensic approach (traditional investigation), lower-to-moderate-risk reports are handled through the Alternative Response program. Alternative Response builds connections between state and local social services departments, community agencies, and the families. All work together to identify issues and meet families' needs using the supports and services in each community.

Family Based Safety Services

When investigators do not remove children, but identify the need for ongoing services, CPS opens cases in Family Based Safety Services. FBSS caseworkers work with families to address the behavior changes needed to create safety for the child and may arrange to provide services. Family based safety services are child-safety centered, family focused, and home-based, and most often involve children who are not in the legal conservatorship of DFPS. At all times, the safety and welfare of children are of paramount concern.

FBSS cases are closed when parents address the safety issues involved in the case. If at any point staff determine the safety of a child can no longer be ensured, CPS implements an immediate plan for the child's safety, which can include court-ordered services or, if necessary, removal.

Conservatorship

When removals occur, DFPS assumes legal custody of the child(ren) and places them in paid foster care or with relatives. Conservatorship caseworkers work to achieve permanency for the child, whether it be reunification with parents when safe and possible, or permanent placement with relatives or in an adoptive home when returning home or permanent placement with relatives is not an option. Staff specializing in kinship care and adoption provide additional support to the conservatorship caseworker and relatives or adoptive caregivers to support a stable placement and achieve permanency.

As shown above, exits from the CPS system are possible throughout the life of a case. Once DFPS assumes legal custody of a child, the child exits DFPS custody through one of four primary paths: reunification, placement with relatives, adoption, and emancipation (known as

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“aging out”). When the permanency goal is emancipation, CPS provides Preparation for Adult Living Services.

Appendix B: Organizational Charts

DFPS employs over 12,000 full-time equivalent staff at the state office and in the 11 regions. CPS State Office divisions provide policy direction to and operational oversight of the frontline regional staff managing services for children and families, and working to achieve permanency outcomes for children in DFPS legal custody.

Other DFPS divisions provide support services for CPS, including but not limited to: budget, general counsel, contract management, hiring/recruitment, training, records management, management reporting and statistics, and information technology. [The organizational chart for DFPS](#) shows many of the resources that support CPS and are referred to in this plan.