



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

Capacity Strategic Plan

Region 11

October 31, 2019

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Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 264.1261, of the Texas Family Code, “appropriate management personnel from a child protective services region in which community-based care has not been implemented, in collaboration with foster care providers, faith-based entities, and child advocates in that region, shall use data collected by the department on foster care capacity needs and availability of each type of foster care and kinship placement in the region to create a plan to address the substitute care capacity needs in the region.” The statewide foster care needs assessment was completed in August of 2019 and helped to inform the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, which specifically addresses the needs of region 11.

Foster Care Placement Forecast and Assessment of Capacity Need

The Foster Care Needs Assessment can be accessed at the below DFPS link

[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About DFPS/Reports and Presentations/CPS/documents/2019/2019-08-06 Foster Care Needs Assessment.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About%20DFPS/Reports%20and%20Presentations/CPS/documents/2019/2019-08-06%20Foster%20Care%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf)

A stakeholder/provider meeting for Region 11A and 11B occurred on October 30th, 2019 where the Foster Care Needs Assessment was reviewed and a Power Point of regional/catchment data was presented focusing on historical analysis and forecasted capacity needs for Fiscal Year 2020.

While DFPS is honored to submit this plan on behalf of the community, the goals and strategies contained herein belong to us all. DFPS would like to thank the following agencies:

A World for Children, The Ark, Arms Wide, Beacon of Hope, Benchmark Family Services, Burke Center for Youth, Buckner, Children Hope, Circles of Care, Connections, Families Especial, GIOCOSA, Hands of Healing, Open Arms, Prairie Harbor, SCAN, Safe Haven for Kids and South Texas Children’s Home

The following strategies were identified by stakeholders and the DFPS regional leadership team:

Regional Plan to Increase Capacity

Goal 1: Increase the number of Basic Foster Homes that accept children who have a basic service level ages 0 to 17

The Region 11 Needs Assessment indicates that the greatest need in both catchment areas; 11A and 11B, is Basic Foster Homes for children ages 0 to 17. Although there are some data points that indicate that we need additional shelter placements in catchment area 11B, this need should be met by two shelters that have opened since this data was collected or are in the process of opening.

➤ **Objective 1.1: Area Child Welfare Boards will work with CPAs/CPS to raise awareness for the need for foster families in Region 11**

Child Welfare Boards will collaborate with CPAs/CPS to raise awareness of the need for foster families and provide information at events they attend within their counties. DFPS will provide data and demographic information to the Child Welfare Boards to provide to prospective foster parents with information to start the fostering process.

- CPS and Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) will work collaboratively to create a user friendly way to receive inquiries from prospective families.
- CPS, with input from all of the regional Child Placing Agencies, will create a handout that can be provided to all prospective foster families. This handout will have a brief description of each agency so that prospective families can choose which agency the family would like to select to take them through the foster home screening and approval process.
- CPS and regional Child Placing Agencies will continue to have collaborative informational meetings to provide information to prospective families in face to face meetings. Collaborative meetings allow perspective families the ability to choose which agency they would like to work with.

➤ **Objective 1.2: Child Placing Agencies will work to increase the number of available beds for Region 11 children**

Regional Child Placing Agency agreed to begin working together to set up various ways to recruit new foster families.

- Child Placing Agency will hold recruitment fairs throughout the region.
- Child Placing Agency will reach out to current respite care providers and inquire if they would consider taking placements of basic service level children.
- Arms Wide Adoption Agency and the CPS Faith Based Specialist worked together to form the One Heart Coalition within Region 11.

Goal 2: Increase the likelihood that a CPA/GRO will accept a child when they have open beds and are able to meet the child's needs

➤ **Objective 2.1: Child Placing Agency employees will review internal policies**

Some CPA policies may be unnecessarily screening children from being accepted.

- Each CPA will review internal processes and consider changing any policies that negatively impact placement matches.

➤ **Objective 2.2: Improve comfort level while interacting with Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL)**

There is an expressed concern from Child Placing Agencies that interacting with RCCL can be intimidating for foster parents and CPA employees.

- RCCL employees who were present at the meeting stated that they would make themselves available to give presentations and provide general information about the inspection process. Attendees will be given an opportunity to ask questions in a more comfortable setting in an attempt to make the inspection process less intimidating.
- CPA employees agreed to invite RCCL staff to trainings, meetings and other events.
- RCCL will be sending out information about forums throughout the fiscal year to CPS/CPAs that will include new/upcoming licensing regulations and changes. These forums will allow for comments and questions to ensure everyone fully understands the changes taking place.

➤ **Objective 2.3: CPS management will allow staff to work outside of normal business hours in order to better accommodate the schedules of foster families**

When foster families have multiple placements with different CPS caseworkers they struggle to be able to meet with the caseworkers at the times caseworkers request.

- Both in writing and during face to face meetings, CPS supervisors will be reminded that CPS employees should be encouraged to set up visits with foster children and families at times that work for everyone. This may include after hours and on the weekends. CPS employees will be encouraged to arrange their schedules to accommodate these visits and meetings.

➤ **Objective 2.4: CPS staff in Region 11 will put special emphasis on placing with safe kinship caregivers starting at the beginning of each case.**

Region 11 staff will focus on finding safe kinship placements for the children in our care.

- Upon learning of potential kinship placements, CPI staff will complete the Preliminary Kinship Assessment in attempts to place children with appropriate relatives at the beginning of a case.
- Throughout the case, CPS staff will continue to utilize the practices learned from Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE) to identify kinship caregivers who can not only be considered for placement, but who may be able to provide support and assistance to caregivers who are able to be the primary caregivers for the children.

➤ **Objective 2.5: CPA Agencies new fiscal year begins January of 2020. At which time they will provide CPS with their new agency goals to increase foster care capacity in Region 11.**

Region 11 CPS staff will obtain CPA agency plans to increase the capacity in Region 11 after the start of the new year (January 2020).

- It was agreed upon that after the CPA fiscal year begins in January 2020, each of the agencies will provide CPS with their agency's plans geared toward increasing foster care capacity within Region 11.