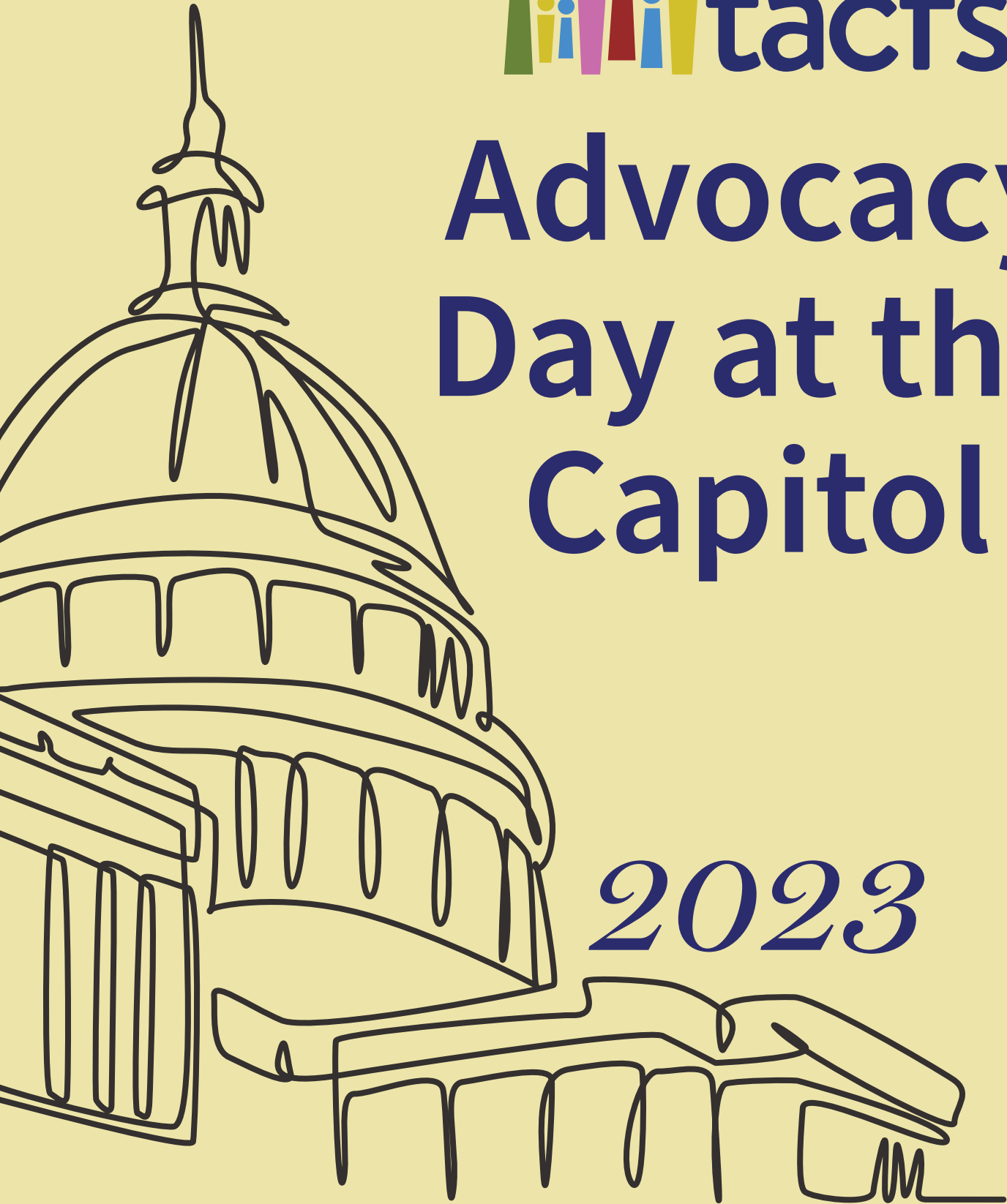




Advocacy Day at the Capitol

2023



To Our Alliance,

The Texas Legislature convenes just 140 days every odd-numbered year. The Texas Alliance for Child and Family Services has staff and partners who are actively engaged in advocacy before, during, and after the session. Most importantly, we have you, the members. In your organizations and in your daily lives, you work to promote the interests of Texas children and families through funding, programs, and policy.

Advocacy with the state legislature is one of the best things we do as an Alliance. I'm so proud of our efforts thus far and I look forward to an effective 88th Texas Legislature... starting now!

This year, we've chosen to distribute pins that say, "For Kids and Families." More specifically, we are working for TEXAS kids and families. In centering the kids, youth, and families we serve, I hope our influence during this time will bring their voices and their stories closer to the legislators who make the biggest decisions in our state.

Your presence at Advocacy Day and your engagement throughout the Session is vital to what we can do "For Kids and Families."

Thank you for being here and happy advocating!



Allicia Frye, TACFS Board President




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Welcome to Advocacy Day 2023

8am - 10am

Legislative Conference Center

- Breakfast and Check-In, Sponsored by  SIGBEE
- Packet Pick-Up
- Welcome
- Remarks
- Instructions

10am - 1:30pm

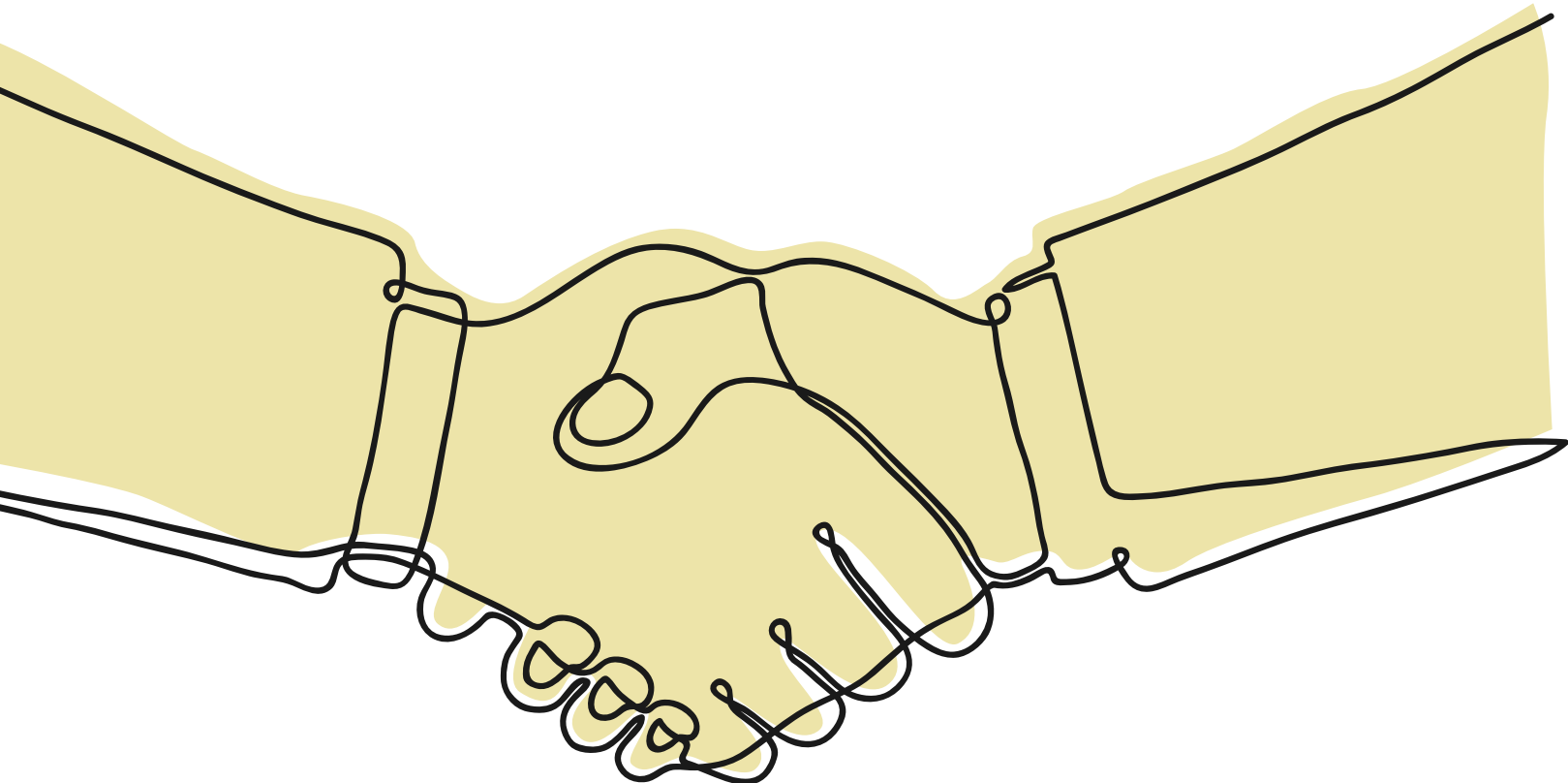
Texas Capitol

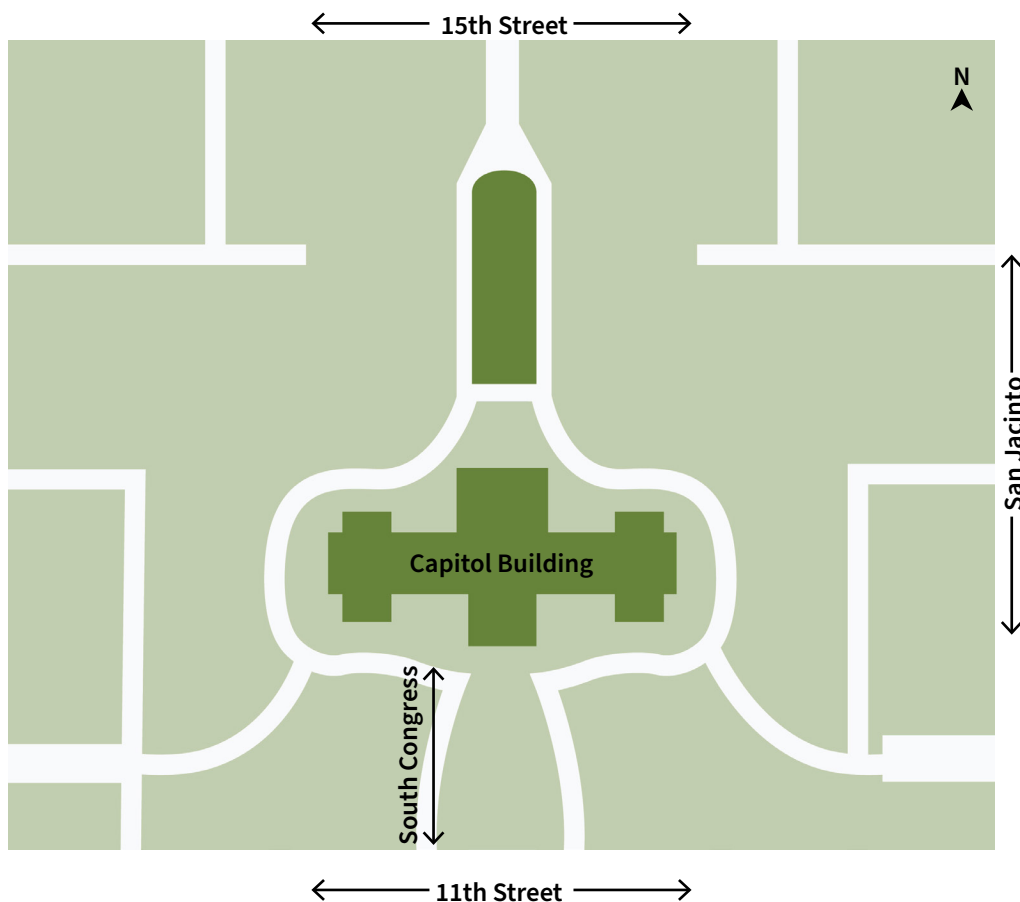
- Visits with Legislators & Staff
- Lunch on Your Own, *check out lunch options on the next page!*

1:30pm - 3:30pm

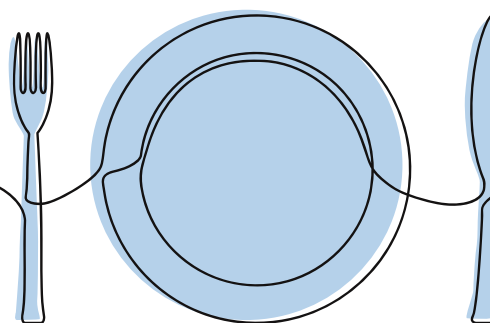
Capitol Auditorium

- Welcome
- Legislative Remarks and Questions
- Call to Action





Scan to view a
detailed map of the
Capitol and a Staff Directory



Where to Eat

Inside the Capitol:

Capitol Grill

Short Walk Outside:

Texas Chili Parlor
Phoebe's Diner
Clay Pit
Quiznos
Quattro
15th Street Café
Chipotle
Roaring Fork

Longer Walk or Uber:

Caroline (inside of the Aloft Austin Downtown)
Perry's, Velvet Taco
Cava
The Yard (inside of the Sheraton Austin)
Chic-Fil-A
Raising Cane's
P Terry's
Jimmy John's



Scan to view other
food options

Tell your story.

Advocate for Texas kids, youth, and families.

Meeting with Your Local Legislator and their Staff

Before The Meeting

Know Our Issues

Take the time to educate yourself and your team on the legislative issues that impact your organization and others in the Alliance. Visit pages six and seven to find our TACFS policy priorities and talking points.

Learn The Process

Our Texas Legislature only meets for 140 days! There are many barriers to creating and passing policy in that short time. Know that the Session goes quickly. Being a reliable resource to your member will make you an effective advocate. And we'll keep you posted on key points to stay engaged as the Session continues!

At The Meeting

Be Honest

Give a true and specific account of your story and knowledge. Use this time to educate and encourage your lawmaker. If you aren't sure of something, just say so! Be sure to provide the needed information later by email or phone.

Be Kind

Make your points persuasive and succinct (You may only get 5-15 minutes!) while finding common ground. We want to work with our representatives, not against.

Be Specific

Always end on a specific ask. What exact legislation, rider, amendment, bill do you want them to support? How exactly can they act to serve Alliance members, kids, youth, and families?

Be Personal

No one knows your story better than you. Legislators remember when they know the direct impact their work has on constituents. Your stories about kids and youth who need our organizations are memorable, impactful, and indisputable.

After the Meeting

Leave something behind... (We've got you covered on the next page.)

Follow Up

There are lots of ways to contact your legislator.

In-Person

At their office in their district or at the Capitol

At Events

They may host town halls, open forums, etc.

Calls and Emails

Legislative Staff can be very helpful

Personal Invitation

Invite them to visit your operation or to attend a meeting in your community

Be sure to leave behind a *one-pager, a thank you note, and a pin after your visit!*



2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

TACFS supports safe and resilient children, youth, and families through our statewide network of service providers and by advocating for meaningful, child-focused reforms and investments. We believe it is critical for Texas to invest in the full range of services that kids and families need and to enact practical changes that will result in better outcomes for all who are served by the child welfare system.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES *Across the Continuum of Care*

Support families at every opportunity to promote stability and keep families safe and together.



Invest in proven, community driven prevention programs, including HOPES, Family Resource Centers, Community Youth Development, and Family and Youth Support.

Support family preservation services, including evidence-based programs for parenting skills, in-home wrap-around services, behavioral health, and substance use treatment.

Continue improvements to kinship licensing to provide more resources and support to families.

Increase utilization of post-adoption and post permanency supports to provide stability and prevent foster care reentry.

HIGH QUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL *Child-Serving Organizations and Workforce*

Invest in a dedicated, passionate, and skilled workforce.

Invest broadly in foster care rate increases to support the child-serving workforce.

Build a culture of excellence and accountability through investment in training, credentialing, and technical assistance at the Texas Center of Child and Family Services

Support the recruitment and retention of clinical, mental health and other licensed professionals

Consider policies needed to address significant challenges in obtaining liability insurance, increasing costs, and risk mitigation.



MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR TEXAS' *Most Vulnerable Youth*

Responding to the national and statewide crisis to support struggling youth and adolescents before a crisis hits.

Improve utilization of existing programs that respond to crises and divert youth from foster care including YES waiver and Residential Foster Care diversion

Invest in evidence-based programming providing in-home wraparound services

Streamline process to become a SB 58 Medicaid credentialed provider



Who We Are

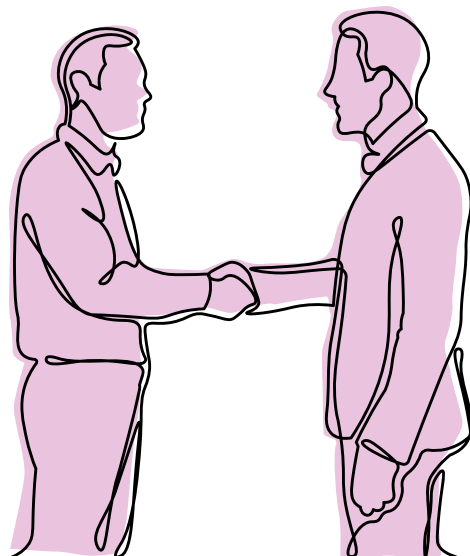
As the state's leading nonprofit association of agencies that provide critical services to children and families, TACFS is strengthened by a diverse, high quality, and collaborative membership. We are a network of **mission-driven organizations** that have embraced the call to serve at-risk children, youth, and families, and are working together to improve care, services, and outcomes in our communities and statewide.

Learn more about Texas' largest child welfare service provider community at [TACFS.org/policy](https://tacfs.org/policy).



*Thank you
for your time!*

policy@tacfs.org • tacfs.org/88th



TACFS Legislative Priorities

Where children, youth, and families need support — TACFS members are partnering with the state to keep kids safe and families together. Our members are the direct care providers of services including prevention, family preservation, foster care, adoption, and more. Our work cannot happen without the Legislature and their long-standing commitment to meaningful child-focused reforms and an investment in strong services that support improved outcomes.

WE SUPPORT STRENGTHENING FAMILIES.

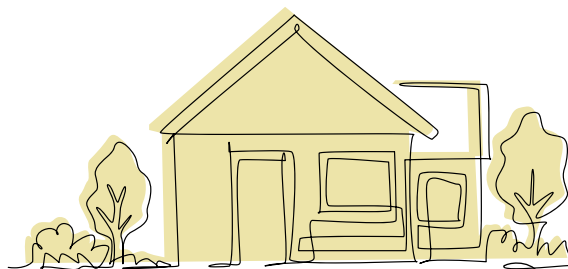
TACFS members support families across the continuum to promote stability and keep families safe and together.

Support DFPS' legislative appropriation request to expand proven, community-driven primary prevention programs, including HOPES, Family Resource Centers, Community Youth Development, and Family and Youth Support. These programs keep families safe and supported before the need for CPS intervention.

Continue the HB 3041 (87R) family preservation pilots, building evidence-based services for children and families at imminent risk of removal.

Invest federal Family First Transition Act funding in developing evidence-based family preservation programs in communities.

Increase post-adoption and post-permanency funding in DFPS budget to provide support to keep families stable and prevent foster care reentry.



WE SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS.

Mental health care is a critical component across all touchpoints of the system. TACFS members are responding to the national and statewide crisis to support struggling youth and adolescents before more significant intervention is needed.

Support increased funding for the RTC (Residential Treatment Center) Project at HHSC, a program targeted to keep youth in crisis or with significant behavioral health needs out of foster care through short-term intensive treatment and support for families.

Direct HHSC to review SB 58 Medicaid credentialing processes and services for child welfare providers. Credentialed providers offer intensive mental health services for youth and adolescents, but this credentialing is difficult to obtain, and the service array should be reviewed for the STAR Health, or foster care, population.

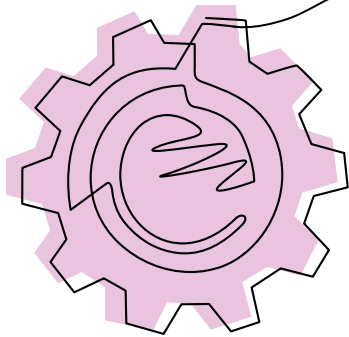
WE SUPPORT CHILD-CENTERED OVERSIGHT AND REGULATION.

The Legislature can support positive and child-centered oversight and reduce the negative impact of a confusing and at times, punitive system.

Direct HHSC to contract with a third-party national expert to review and make recommendations on foster care licensing standards with a core focus on child safety and wellbeing.

Provide legislative direction on oversight of care for children with complex needs and behaviors such as runaway, self-harm, or aggressive behavior to keep kids more stable and to offer therapeutic care, review processes for documenting behaviors, and improved technical assistance.

Support efforts to address child welfare providers risk and lack of access to liability insurance coverage. It is increasingly difficult and expensive to obtain required insurance coverage due to a shortage of insurance carriers and skyrocketing premiums, threatening the sustainability of high-quality providers and making it difficult for organizations to build capacity for children with complex needs.



WE SUPPORT BUILDING AND SUSTAINING HIGH-QUALITY PLACEMENTS AND SERVICES.

The Legislature funds and supports capacity through rates and contracts with TACFS members. Appropriations investments in these areas will support ongoing development and sustainability of high-quality care and placements.

Maintain temporary rate increases established by HB 5 (87S2) and include settings not currently covered, such as emergency shelters.

Invest broadly in foster care rate increases to support the child-serving workforce.

Implement and fund foster care rate modernization, an ongoing priority of the Legislature (86R, 87R) to update calculations to accurately reflect the cost of care and prioritize quality and outcomes.

Support DFPS' request to continue implementation of Community-Based Care in new regions. Continue investment in flexible capacity building funding to support developing high quality foster care and keeping children out of unlicensed settings. Consider investments to support technology and IMPACT interoperability.

Build a culture of excellence and accountability through investment in training, credentialing, and technical assistance at the Texas Center of Child and Family Services

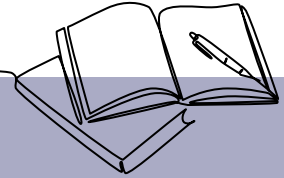
Stay plugged in to the *88th Texas Legislature*



Bill Tracker



Policy Priorities



**Stories, Research,
Recommendations**

bookmark.tacfs.org/88th

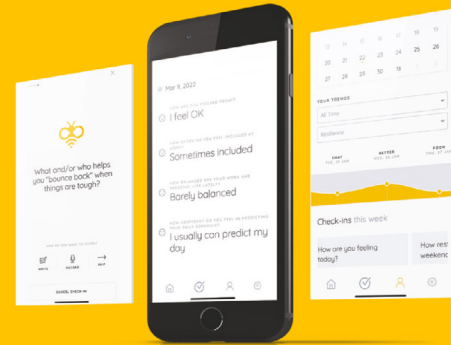
Did You Know?

1. **While** in the central rotunda, be careful what you say! Even your whispers can be heard throughout the gallery, because the sound waves travel the circumference of the rotunda and cling to the walls as it circulates around the inside of the dome. That's correct! This phenomenon is known as a "whispering gallery"
2. **In** the central rotunda, you'll find portraits of all the past presidents of the Republic of Texas and governors of the state of Texas.
3. **If** you stand directly in the center of the rotunda and look straight up into the dome, you will see a star with the letters T-E-X-A-S - each individual positioned between the points of the five-pointed star. The star seems small from your vantage point, but it is actually bigger than you! 8 feet to be exact.
4. **"Everything** is bigger in Texas" so the saying goes, and that is exactly what you might think when you visit the Texas State Capitol. Standing proudly in the capital city of Austin, at just over 302 feet, it is the sixth-tallest state capitol in the nation's Capitol.
5. **This** is actually the third Capitol building in the history of the Lone Star State. It stands on the same site of the second Capitol that was destroyed in a fire in 1881. (The first Capitol was in Columbia, Texas). The current Capitol was built by 900 workers consisting largely of convicts and migrants, including 86 granite cutters brought over from Scotland. Their job was to cut the red granite that came from nearby Marble Falls.
6. **You** can view the monumental statues of Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston in the South Foyer.
7. **Discover** the six sovereign nations that have governed Texas on the floor of the Rotunda and at the E2 entrance to the extension.
8. **The** Texas Capitol's ornate hardware will stop you in your tracks. Designed by architect Elijah E. Myers in 1881, the building is ornate and elegant. Carved door-knobs on the heavy exterior doors welcome those arriving, transporting them in time to a European city. Doorknobs, handrails and kick plates are just a few of the hardware pieces that decorate the Texas Capitol.
9. **The** outdoor rotunda is almost as cool as the one inside. Everyone knows about the Capitol's rotunda. The circular center chamber of the Capitol sits beneath a double-walled dome with inner wall peaking at 218 feet above the floor. The rotunda is a common feature among historic government buildings. But did you know there's another one on the Capitol grounds? The Capitol Extension is an underground building directly north of the Capitol beneath the northern grounds. Windows allow abundant natural light to fill the Extension's central corridor and arterial hallways. The outdoor rotunda sits at the middle of the central corridor.
10. **The** immaculate grounds are filled with monuments. The 22-acre expanse is filled with monuments waiting for your discovery. More than 20 monuments are scattered about the grounds. They honor a wide range of people and events including peace officers, disabled veterans, Texas pioneer women and heroes of the Alamo-just to name a few. The latest addition is a monument to African-American history unveiled in 2016.



**BOOKMARK
TACFS.ORG
& FOLLOW
US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA**

@txalliancecfs



BUILDING STRONGER TEAMS ONE CHECK-IN AT A TIME.

SigBee believes in the power of checking in and enabling stronger, meaningful connections within organizations. We are building the leading employee engagement platform for human service organizations addressing workforce recruitment and retention issues.

Visit the SigBee table to Check In.

[SIGBEE.COM](https://sigbee.com)

DID YOU KNOW?

the center
TEXAS CENTER FOR CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES

The Texas Center for Child and Family Services provides exclusive consultation and technical assistance (CTA) to TACFS members.

The CTA offered by The Center represents a full continuum of support to help agencies operate and thrive in a rapidly evolving environment. Our work is grounded in a solution-focused and tailored approach and produces actionable recommendations to help organizations maximize impact in their communities.

Get help with:

Clinical Coaching

Research & Evaluation

Strategy & Planning

Continuous Quality Improvement

Responding to Policy & Regulatory Changes

Networking & Partnership Building

Visit TACFS.org/CTA to request a free consultation today!

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. At the bottom center, there is a small, colorful illustration of a group of stylized figures (a family) standing together. The figures are colored green, yellow, blue, pink, red, and gold.



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines. The first 18 lines are solid black. The 19th line is a dashed black line. The 20th line is a solid black line.





#88thforKids
#TXLege

