



*#88thforKids #TXLege*

# **88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session** *at the Capitol*



# 88th Lege Snapshot

- *Sine die* – Adjourn “without a day” at end of 140-day Regular Session
- Record number of bills passed and a robust budget
- Continuity in leadership ≠ Less drama
  - Historic proceedings initiated in the House, will continue over the summer
    - *Sine did not die* – 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session called immediately for property tax relief and border security
    - More sessions anticipated



# 88<sup>th</sup> By the Numbers

- 8,345 bills filed, more than ever recorded in either chamber (5,619 in House, 2,726 in Senate)
  - *10% more than the next highest session in 2009 (7,609)*
- 45% bills received public hearings
- 28% bills passed out of either chamber
- 15% bills were finally passed and sent to the Governor
- 2 bills vetoed (6/18 deadline)

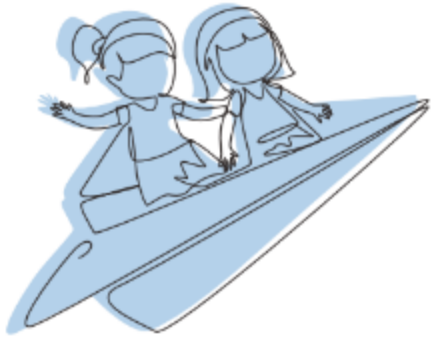


# TACFS 88th Priorities



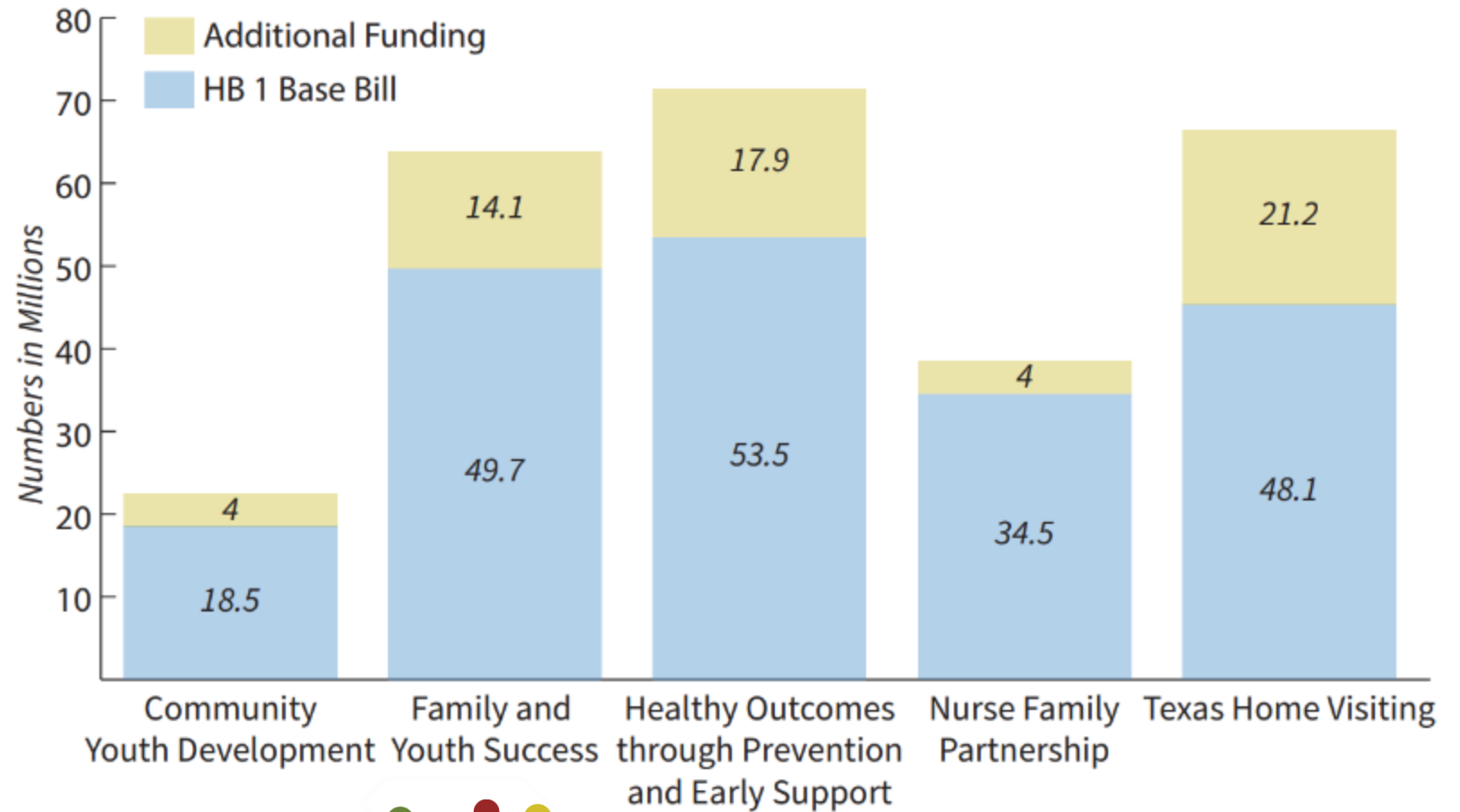
1. Strengthen Families Across the Continuum of Care
2. Mental Health Care for Texas' Most Vulnerable Youth
3. Focus Ongoing Oversight and Regulation on Children's Safety and Needs
4. Build and Sustain High Quality Placements and Services

# Prevention Services



## Prevention Services

A \$61.2 million increase for child maltreatment prevention programs



# Prevention: Looking ahead

- Focus on implementation of programs shifting to HHSC
  - Child maltreatment program funding was contingent on passage of SB 24
  - What will this mean for current programs? *Re-procurement, changing program requirements, new program opportunities, etc., program*
- “Community pathways” – access to services for families to access services outside of DFPS system and oversight
  - HB 1667 (Jetton) did not pass, but will likely inform future legislation

**Key theme:** Families should be able to access services without “system involvement” or outside of hotline referrals; holistic array of services across the continuum



# Family Preservation

- **\$15 million** in federal Family First Transition Act (FFTA) funds to continue HB 3041 Family Preservation Pilots established in 87<sup>th</sup> Session.
- **Rider 43** directs DFPS to develop additional criteria for pilot referrals
  - Children that could enter conservatorship
  - Children of families struggling with significant issues that impact family stability and child safety
- **HB 730** (Frank) PCSP Limitations and Parent's Miranda Rights

**Key themes:** Limit new entries, foster care a system of last resort. But oversight needed to ensure families don't linger indefinitely in the system.

**Looking ahead:** What does true family preservation look like under FFPSA? What does oversight look like for families?

- Look to language in SB 1853 to inform future legislation.





# Mental Health: A Historic Expansion

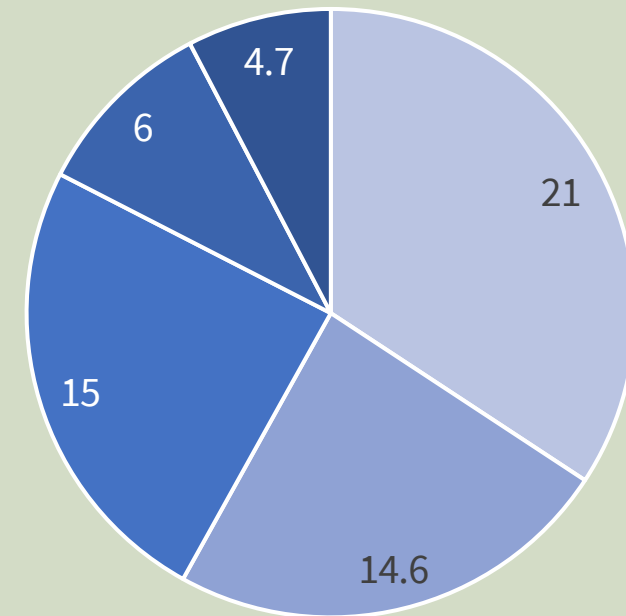
**SB 26 (Kolkhorst)** Creates the Mental Health Innovation Grant Program that will be open to agencies that provide services to children, families, and children in or at risk of placement in foster care to develop evidence-based programs.

**HB 400 (Klick)** establishes grant programs to recruit, train, and retain more mental health professionals.

**Rider 44** requires a report on the activities of the Mental Health Team for DFPS kids

- Coordination of care for children and youth
- Recommendations on how to improve mental health services

Mental Health Funding and Foster Care  
(funding in Millions)



□ Inpatient Crisis Stabilization

■ Innovation Grant Program\*

■ Psychiatric Youth Treatment Facility Voluntary Certification\*

■ Extendend Inpatient Beds

■ Youth Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams

\*Not exclusively for DFPS or foster care providers.



# Big Wins for Foster Care Rates

**Rate modernization** - approved and fully funded – first time in 35 years. Key multi-Session initiative for the TACFS network.

1. **Sustain** \$70 million – Maintain Supplemental Rate Increases
2. **Increase** \$54 million – “Bridge” rate increases targeting basic and moderate
3. **Fully Funded** – Rate Modernization Implementation, Rates, Provider Implementation Grants

\*Provider Capacity Grants were not continued in the 2024-25 biennium

**Key themes:** “One size does NOT fit all”- Texas envisions a child welfare system that can meet a child’s individual needs; desire to ensure capacity is being used (no-eject/no-reject discussion)

**Rider 45** requires Providers to report % of referrals that resulted in admission, % of referrals that did not result in an admission, reasons for the denial, and, for children that were admitted, the average length of time of placement.



# Foster Care Rate Modernization

Rates	22-23	24-25	Percent change
Basic Foster Family	27.07	27.07	0%
Basic CPA	49.54	57.71	16%
Basic Residential	45.19	52.65	17%
Moderate Foster Family	47.37	47.37	0%
Moderate CPA	87.36	101.79	17%
Moderate Residential	108.18	126.05	17%
Specialized Foster Family	57.86	57.86	0%
Specialized CPA	110.1	122.76	11%
Specialized Residential	197.69	220.42	11%
Intense Foster Family	92.43	92.43	0%
Intense CPA	186.42	207.86	12%
Intense Residential	277.37	309.27	12%
Intense Plus	400.72	446.8	11%
Treatment Family Foster Care	277.37	309.27	12%
IPTP	374.33	417.38	12%
Emergency Services	137.3	153.09	12%
Temporary Emergency Placement	400.72	446.8	11%

## Foster Care

**\$62 million**

Maintained supplemental rate increases

**\$54 million**

“Bridge” rate increases targeting basic and moderate

**Fully funded**

**Rate Modernization**

implementation and rates

\*Provider Capacity Grants were not continued in the 2024-25 biennium

\*While DFPS was funded to sustain the supplemental rates at the current FY 2023 levels, these published rates reflect the FY 2022 rates. This was an error and DFPS is working to correct and publish accurate rates.

# Focus on Youth in Care

**SB 1379** (Parker): Foster Youth Financial Pilot between DFPS and a financial institution to establish checking and savings accounts, financial coaching for participating youth

**HB 4233** (Zwiener): enhance runaway prevention training requirements for caregivers of older children and youth, may include current training and not required for families that serve younger children

**SB 1930** (Kolkhorst): Requires review of residential (RTC and QRTP) placements for youth at regularly scheduled hearings, with the intent to move kids to the least restrictive environment and be in compliance with federal Family First Prevention Services Act QRTP requirements

**Key themes:** High-quality, time-limited, residential care that prioritizes stepping children down into less restrictive settings.





# Regulations and Operations

**SB 593** (Sparks): *TACFS priority*, requires a third-party review of minimum standards, contracts, and other oversight functions

- Review for relevance and best practice, take into consideration model licensing standards
- Prioritize child safety and well-being, while also reducing barriers to becoming licensed
- Make recommendations to adjust the weights of minimum standards
- Clearly define roles and oversight at HHSC & DFPS, promote transparency

**SB 1447** (Miles): Improve quality of investigations training at DFPS through a training program and prescribed training requirements

**SB 1469** (Bettencourt): Requires signed affidavits for prospective employees to disclose if they have been charged with, adjudicated for, or convicted of an inappropriate relationship with a minor

**SB 1849** (Kolkhorst): Establishes the development of the Interagency Reportable Conduct Search Engine between TEA, TJJD, HHSC, and DFPS.

**Themes:** Texas wants a professionally-trained workforce that can be trusted to meet the needs of children and keep them safe; desire for a regulatory scheme that prioritizes children's safety over mere compliance.

# Community-Based Care

**Funded CBC expansion to four new regions, with 11 regions and an estimated 78% of children served by 2025.**

- Additional funding for family preservation pilots, litigation costs, kinship, MH capacity

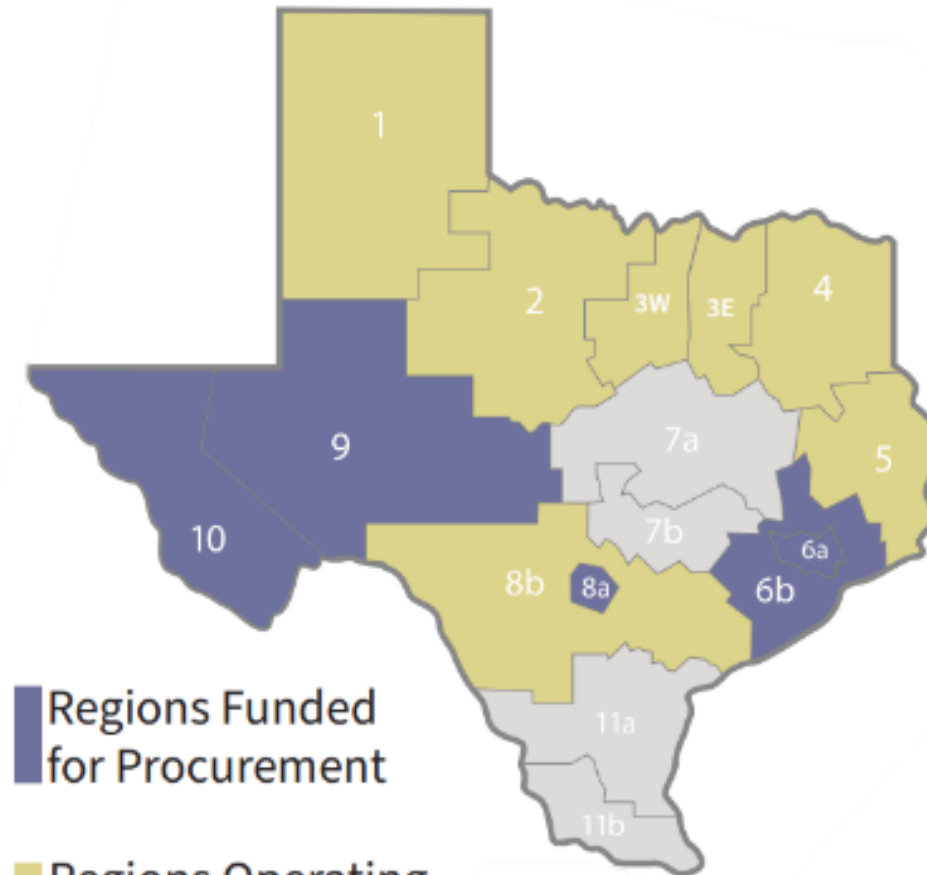
## *IMPACT & Interoperability*


- \$10 million for DFPS to complete upgrades to IMPACT and improve interoperability with external systems, including those used by the SSCCs
- Additional \$4.9 million for SSCCs to improve data and info sharing
- Directed DFPS to report on transitioning IMPACT to an interoperable system – *strategic planning, solicitation development, and readiness assessments* – due December 2024

**Looking ahead:** Signaled legislative intent to include family preservation, family-based safety services, post-adoption, and transitional living as part of the CBC contracts.



# Community-Based Care



 Regions Funded for Procurement

 Regions Operating or in Readiness



# Kinship Care remains a Priority

Kinship families were the subject of many legislative discussions and prioritized in HB 1.

- \$4.3 million to provide up to \$1,000 in needs-based funds to kin families
- \$1.6 million to reimburse licensing costs for kin families.
- \$1.1 million to provide Enhanced Permanency Care Assistance (PCA) payments for children with higher needs.
- \$3 million to fund the Community-Based Care regions to provide additional mental health capacity for kinship families.
- Directed DFPS to update the rate paid to unverified kin to 50% of the new modernized basic foster family rate once implemented.

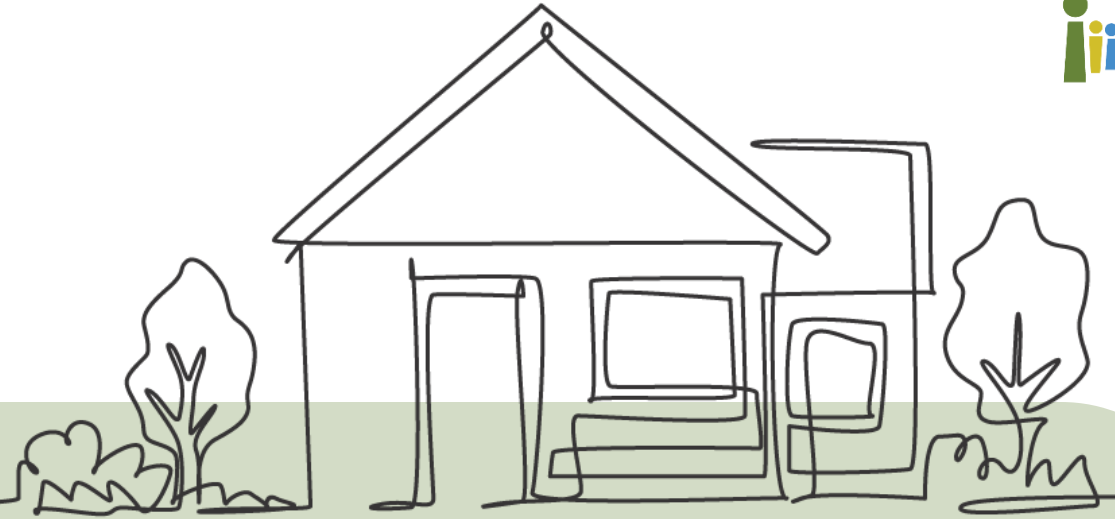
**Key themes:** Kids and youth are better served in kin families, but verification is still preferred.

**Looking ahead:** Pending federal guidance, the Legislature directed agencies to expedite rules to facilitate a streamlined kin-specific license, ultimately resulting in more resources for kin and improved state reimbursement.





# Support for Every Child



## **\$12 million** for permanency through Heart Galleries

- Through the University of Texas, partnering with Texas Center for Child and Family Studies, to support the expansion in each catchment area
- This program is intended to find forever homes for children that struggle finding permanency.

Over **\$5 million** in continued funding to the Office of the Governor for grants to prevent child sex trafficking victimization, and to identify and support survivors.





## What's Next?

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- Implementation partnership with DFPS & HHSC to ensure provider input.
- Evolving our approach and continued development of quality care (QRTPs, TFC)
- Readyng providers for Rate Modernization
- Charting a course for the future with CBC
- Bringing resources and experts/supports to help
- Availing opportunities for funding, grants, and innovation to community organizations



**Thank  
you!**

