CBC7 Cohort of Community Initiatives

Invitation to Apply

CBC7, in collaboration with the Texas Center for Child and Family Studies and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, seeks applications from community organizations and collaboratives in Region 7 who would like to be part of a cohort of projects seeking to make children's time in foster care rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Background

Community-Based Care (CBC) in Texas is a community-based approach to foster care and case management services, creating an enhanced service delivery model that fully engages the community in serving children, youth, and families in Texas. CBC guiding principles provide a model for protecting children and strengthening families, drawing on the strengths of communities to transform foster care.

To date, CBC is underway in seven areas of the state, and the Office of Community Based Care Transition has recently closed a request for applications for a contract to implement CBC in four more areas. Although there is not a specific timeline for when CBC will be implemented in Central Texas, the State Plan calls for full roll-out by Fiscal Year 2029 and there is an open opportunity for an entity to submit an unsolicited bid for the contract at any timed.

In Central Texas, there is a cross-sector coordinated effort underway to explore how the region and/or its sub-regions might prepare to implement Community Based Care by taking real action to address the needs of children and families involved in, or at risk of being involved in, the child welfare system, and develop an innovative, collaborative structure for the implementation of CBC. This collaborative effort, branded as CBC7, has engaged over seventy-five organizations from across the region, including child and family service organizations, advocacy groups, health and behavioral health providers, state agencies, judges, faith-based organizations, community associations, people with lived experience in the foster care system, and others. Together, these stakeholders have established a shared goal of achieving measurable positive change in communities across the region, where families are supported and placements of outside of permanency are rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Request for Cohort Participants and Project Objectives

CBC7, in partnership with the Texas Center for Child and Family Studies and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, is seeking up to four community child and family serving organizations or collaboratives that are interesting in being part of a cohort that will implement community-based and community-designed projects in Region 7. Individually as projects, and collectively as a

cohort, participants will be striving to make placements outside of permanency rare, brief, and non-recurring. For purposes of this opportunity:

- Permanency is defined as a child who is: safe at home without removal; reunified; adopted; living with a family member who has been granted conservatorship; or, for youth who age out of care, they do so with a circle of caring adults that provide support, opportunity, and unity.
- Rare is defined as (a) removals being infrequent, as families have what they need for children to remain safely at home, and (b) when removals do occur, placements in a non-permanent setting are infrequent.
- Brief is defined as, when a child needs to be in foster care, their time in care is short and based on the needs of the child and the parents. Time in care is measured by the number of days between the date of removal and the date the child/youth moves into a permanent placement and no longer has CPS involvement.
- Non-recurring is defined as, when children leave foster care to a permanent placement, they do not return to foster care. For children who must return to care, the placement is with a relative/kinship family.

The objectives of the full cohort will be to implement innovative ideas, compile lessons learned, and support children and families in Central Texas that are involved in or at risk of involvement in the child welfare system.

Timeline

The cohort will meet through April 2025, with an option to extend based on availability of funding

Expectations of Participants

Organizations and collaboratives that are selected to be part of the cohort will receive the following:
- Strategic guidance and facilitation from members of the Texas Center for Child and Family Services team
- Support in developing an evaluation plan to inform project improvement, iteration, and assessment of impact.
- Opportunities to connect, including at least two meetings of the cohort to allow for shared learning, peer support, and system impact discussions
- Option to present during a fall funder meeting to share information on the project with foundations that invest in Central Texas.

In return, cohort participants will be expected to:
- Attend monthly meetings with a CBC7 representative
- Develop a project plan, including planned activities, timeline, and resource requirements

- With support and guidance from the CBC7 team, develop a project logic model and evaluation plan.
- Implement the project and evaluation plan
- Provide quarterly project updates, including successes and lessons learned with the CBC7 team.
- Participate in at least two cohort convenings

Criteria for Selection

An application may be submitted by a single organization or a group of organizations acting as a collaborative. Applicants may have a specific project they are implementing or have a project concept they would like to develop and begin implementing. Applicants must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements to be selected.

1. Provide direct services to children, youth, or families involved with, or at risk of involvement with Child Protective Services (CPS). This could include prevention services, services that support children and families involved in the child welfare system, or services that support permanency after a child or youth has left foster care.
2. Provide these services in DFPS Region 7.

In addition, applicants will be selected for participating in the cohort based on the following criteria:

1. The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the needs of the local community.
2. The applicant demonstrates how the proposed project or project concept aligns with the identified needs.
3. The applicant describes how the proposed project or project concept contributes to making placements outside of permanency rare, brief, and/or non-recurring.
4. The proposed project or project concept involves community partners that are critical to the success of the project.
5. The proposed project or project concept can be implemented, at least in part, without new financial resources.
6. The proposed project or project concept is sustainable after the cohort, and connected supports, ends.

In selecting applicants to participate in the cohort, priority will be given to ensuring that there are participants that represent the breadth and diversity of the region.

Applications must be submitted online here by July 12, 2024. The application includes the following sections:

- Description of the organization and/or collaborative, including services provided.
- Names, titles, and descriptions of the team members that will be working on the

project.
- Community profile, including geographic area and information that supports the need for the project (for example, removal rates, average length of time to permanency, return to care rates, etc.)
- Summary of the project or project concept
- Description of why the organization and/or collaborative would like to participate in the *cohort*.

Notification of acceptance into the cohort

CBC7 will notify applicants of their acceptance into the cohort no later than August 1, 2024. The Center for Child and Families Studies, acting on behalf of CBC7 will create MOUs for participation in the cohort and jointly determine the project timeline.

Questions?

Contact Valerie Hallam at vhallam@tacfs.org with questions related to this opportunity, the application, or CBC7.

[Link to Application](#)