



Best Practices & Innovations in Texas Residential Child Care

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Presented to the Select Committee on Child Welfare & Foster Care
August 5, 2004



- Review the licensure requirements for and the performance of all types of foster care facilities, including residential treatment facilities, wilderness camps and emergency treatment centers. Assess the adequacy of communication and interaction between the licensing agency and other state agencies that place children within the foster care and Child Protective Care system.
- Explore other states' efforts that will promote "best practices" and identify program efficiencies with Texas child welfare system.



Needs of Children

- Children need safe homes.
- Even when their parents are unable to provide safety, children still need to be close to their families to facilitate visitation and to maintain connections with their home communities.
- Children need to be with their brothers and sisters.
- Children need stability in their living situations.
- Children need to grow up in a family setting whenever possible.

Approaches



To better address the needs of children, DFPS is implementing innovative approaches for:

- Developing foster care capacity
- Improving placement practices
- Strengthening quality assurance
- Revising minimum standards
- Coordinating monitoring systems



Developing Capacity

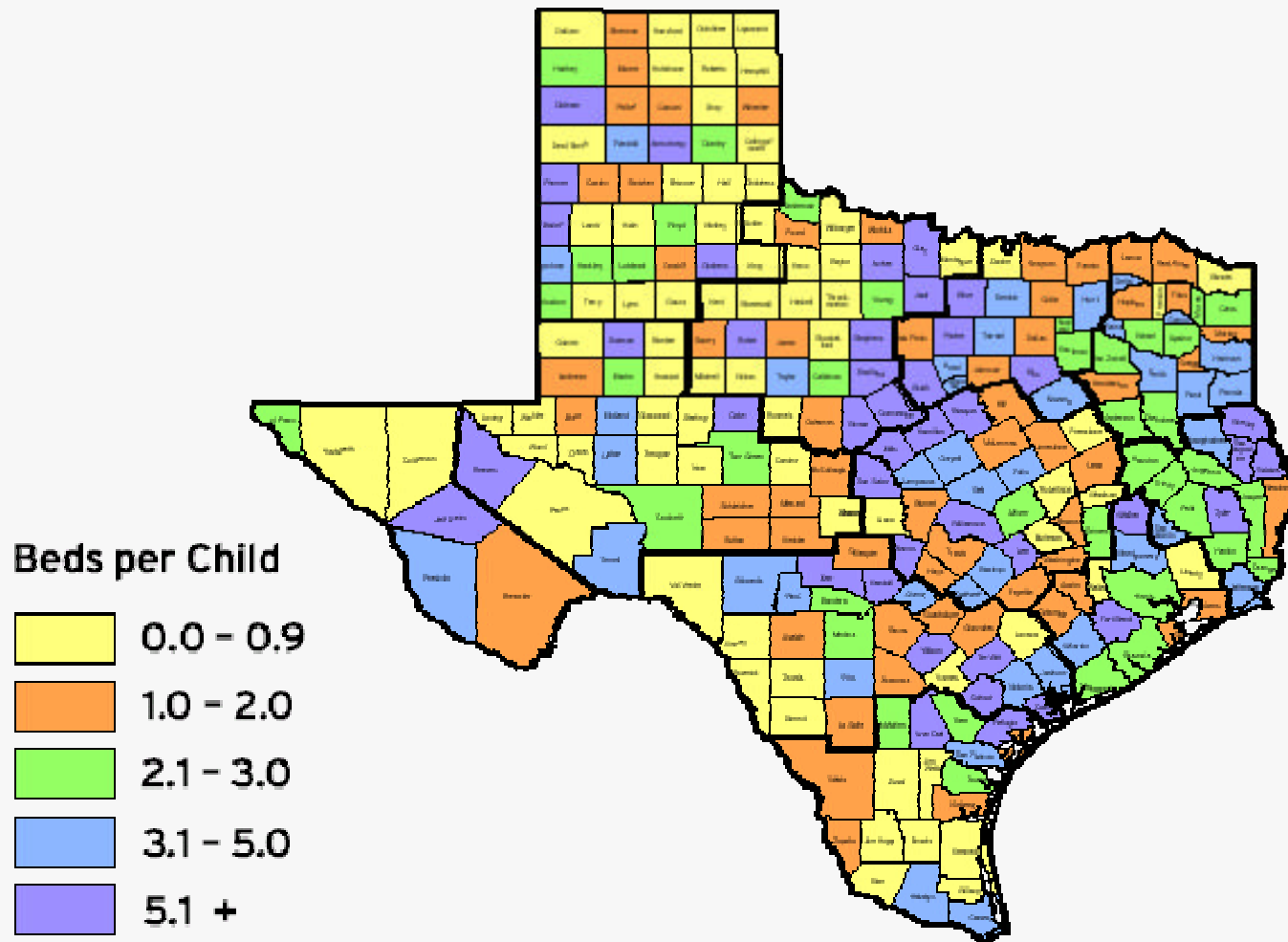
The development of appropriate placement resources is a shared responsibility of DFPS and the provider community.

- Meetings with contract providers to communicate current and projected areas of need
- Focusing on underdeveloped areas to recruit foster families within faith communities.

Developing Capacity



Total Foster Care Beds per Child in DFPS Foster Care



Placement Practices



Children need to live close to home to facilitate family visits and increase contact with siblings and caseworkers.

Region	Children From Other Regions	Children To Other Regions
Lubbock	33	233
Abilene	213	104
Arlington	184	576
Tyler	254	203
Beaumont	188	80
Houston	441	185
Austin	562	481
San Antonio	467	443
Midland	69	128
El Paso	16	38
Harlingen	119	138
Statewide	2546	2609

Placement Practices



DFPS is altering placement practices to better meet the needs of children.

- Placement selection tool
- Home-based services
- Statewide Placement Team
- Improving Connections Unit (ICU)
- Strengthening ties with “no-pay” providers

Focus on Outcomes



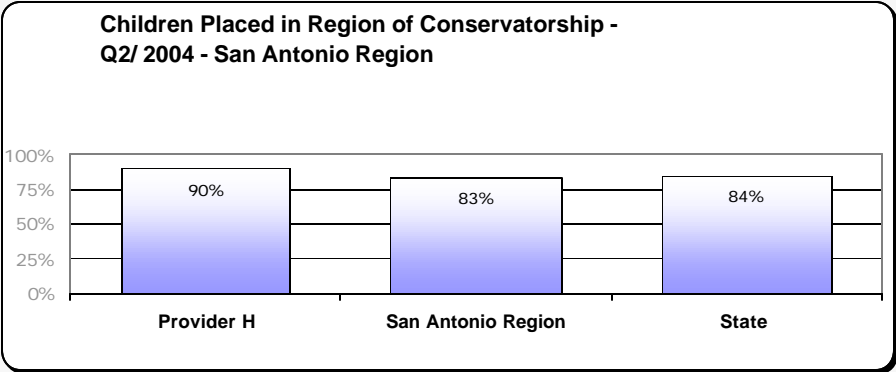
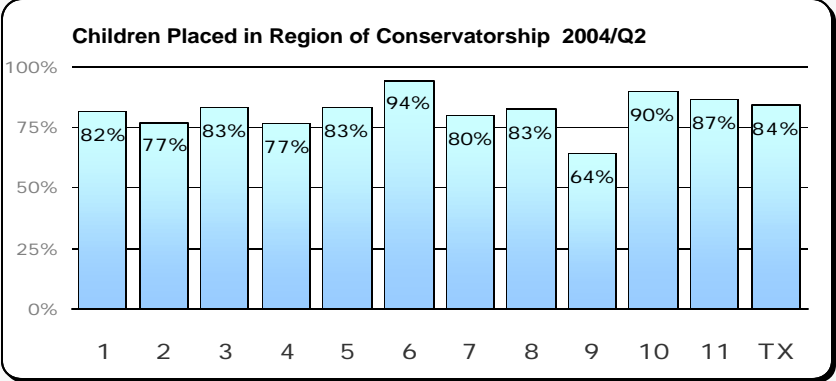
CPS has implemented a quality assurance program.

- Utilizes the Federal Child & Family Services Review Process
 - Interviews with stakeholders
 - Surveys
 - Focus groups
 - Structured case reading
- Monitors outcomes of individual children for:
 - The system as a whole
 - Individual contract providers
 - DFPS regional foster care programs

Child Outcome Report

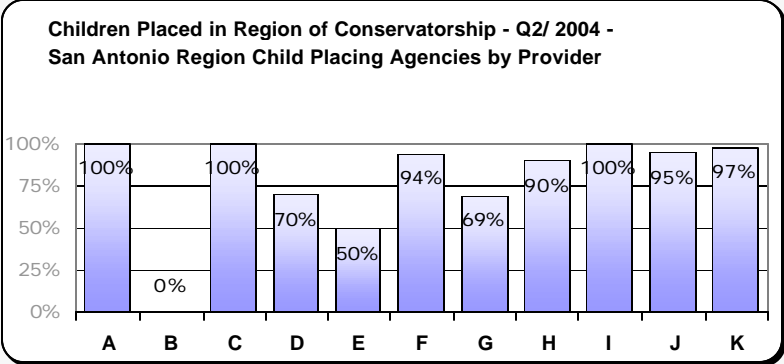


DFPS will be able to measure its own performance by tracking regional data.

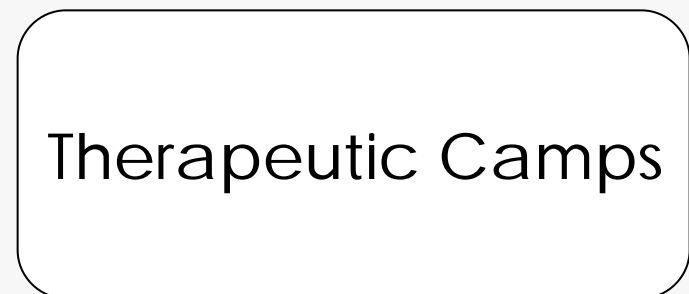
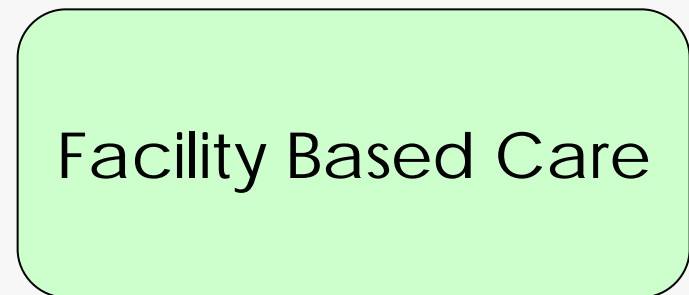
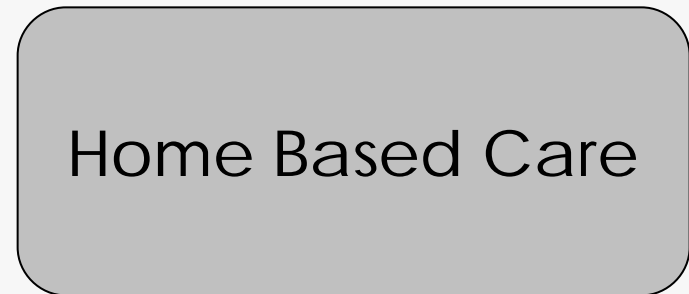
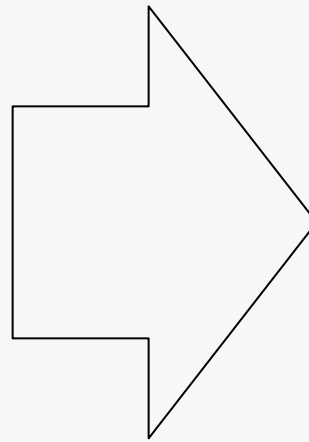
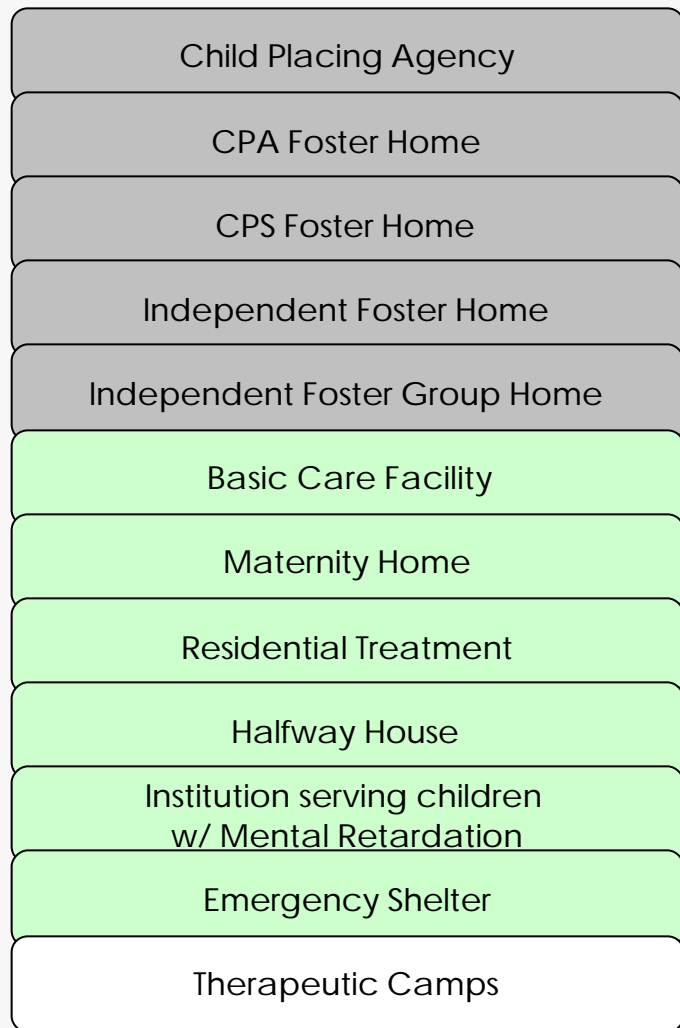


A provider can compare their individual performance with the region and state averages.

In addition, a provider can compare their performance with their peers in their region.



Minimum Standards Consolidation





Minimum Standards Revision

Minimum standards for residential child care will be revised to:

- Encourage a continuum of care to reduce the number of times a child must change placements.
- Reflect a plain language format that enables consistent enforcement and compliance with minimum standards.
- Publish best-practices in print and on the agency's public website.



Coordinated Monitoring System

DFPS will work with residential child care stakeholders to develop an integrated system of monitoring.

- Monitor the services of all providers of out of home care.
- Utilize the strengths of Youth for Tomorrow(YFT), CPS, Licensing and Contract staff.
- Eliminate duplication in monitoring efforts of Youth for Tomorrow (YFT), CPS, Licensing and Contract staff.