

Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries, Inc. (ACAM)
Association for Family and Community Integrity, Inc.
Behavioral Health Alliance of Texas
Bering Omega Community Services
Care for Elders
Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
CHILDREN AT RISK
Children's Defense Fund
Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris Co., Inc.
Coalition of Behavioral Health Services
Collaborative for Children
Communities In Schools
Community Family Centers
Community Health Choice, Inc.
Covenant House of Texas
DePelchin Children's Center
Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance
Greater Houston (DBSA)
Easter Seals of Greater Houston, Inc.
Family Services of Greater Houston
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, Inc.
Good Neighbor Healthcare Center
Greater Houston Healthconnect
Harris County Healthcare Alliance
Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston
Houston Area Association for the Education of Young Children
Houston Area Community Services
Houston Area Women's Center
Houston Food Bank
Houston Methodist Hospital
IntraCare Behavioral Health
Jewish Family Service
League of Women Voters Houston
Legacy Community Health, Services Inc.
Lesbian Health Initiative
March of Dimes
Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM)
Memorial Hermann Healthcare System
Mental Health America of Greater Houston
NAMI Greater Houston
National Association of Social Workers-Houston
Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
New Hope Housing, Inc.
Northwest Assistance Ministries
Phoenix Houses of Texas, Inc.
Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services
Santa Maria Hostel, Inc.
SEARCH Homeless Services
Spaulding for Children
Spring Branch Community Health Center
Springfield College School of Human Services
St. Joseph House
Texas Children's Hospital
Texas Health Institute
Texas Hunger Initiative
The Arc of Greater Houston
The Council on Alcohol & Drugs Houston
The Immunization Partnership
The Living Bank
The Network of Behavioral Health Providers
The Rose
The Walk for Mental Health Awareness-Houston
The Women's Home
United Way of Greater Houston
Vita-Living, Inc.
Wesley Community Center
Worklife Institute
YMCA of Greater Houston

One Voice Texas

A Collaborative for Health & Human Services



Children and Youth

Child Welfare: Ensure More Children Achieve Permanency

Position Statement Approved by One Voice Texas: December 10, 2014

Issue/Concern:

In Fiscal Year 2013, approximately 4,857 children and youth were in the protective custody of Children's Protective Services (CPS) in Harris County with 412 being in long-term substitute care - in care for approximately 5 years. Research has shown that youth who ultimately age out of foster care have more negative outcomes than their peers including higher rates of homelessness and substance abuse and lower rates of employment and high school and college graduation.

Harris County has ten family courts and three juvenile courts that handle a variety of time-consuming, complex issues. Despite the dedication of judges and attorneys, the numerous courts, workloads and non-specific docket times make it very difficult for stakeholders to dedicate the time necessary to address the complexity of CPS cases, and in particular, Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) cases. A specialty court, such as the current PMC court in Harris County, provides the flexibility and time to help achieve permanency for children who have been in foster care far too long.

Specific Policy Recommendations:

Ensure the continuation and possible expansion of the CPS Court in Harris County.

What Can Be Accomplished?

Dedicated CPS courts will be able to support children in achieving permanency at a faster rate with the ability to dedicate more time and attention to specialized and complex cases.

How Will This Impact State Funding?

Continuing and possibly expanding the Harris County CPS Court will help to reduce the cost of foster care to Harris County and the state in addition to decreasing the indirect costs of the negative impact of youth aging out of foster care.

Supporting Facts/Research Resources:

- ✓ National Governor's Association. 2007. State policies to help youth transition out of foster care. Available at: <http://www.nga.org/cms/home/nga-center-for-best-practices/center-publications/page-ehsw-publications/col2-content/main-content-list/state-policies-to-help-youth-tra.html>
- ✓ Texas Network of Youth Services. 2011. *Voices of Experience: Improving Mental Health Supports for Homeless and Transitioning Youth*

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