



Year in Review

Report to the Supreme Court of Texas

December 31, 2018

Children's Commission

Supreme Court *of* Texas

Hon. Justice Nathan L. Hecht,
Chief Justice
Hon. Justice Paul W. Green
Hon. Justice Phil Johnson

Hon. Justice Don Willett
Hon. Justice Eva Guzman
Hon. Justice Debra Lehrmann
Hon. Justice Jeffrey S. Boyd

Hon. Justice John Phillip Devine
Hon. Justice Jeff Brown
Hon. Justice Jimmy Blacklock

Commissioners

Hon. Eva Guzman, Chair
Hon. Harriet O'Neill,
Chair Emeritus
Hon. Rob Hofmann, Vice Chair
Lt. Col. Sonya J. Batchelor
Paula Bibbs-Samuels
Allison Billodeau
Kristene Blackstone
Hon. Susan Brown
Hon. Darlene Byrne

Hon. Gary Coley
Sheila Sturgis Craig
Heather Fleming
Hon. Helen Giddings
Dr. Andy Keller
Hon. Lawrence Lujan
Hon. Michael Massengale
Hon. Piper McCraw
Hon. Selina Mireles
Hon. Mary Murphy, ret.
Cindy Patrick

Hon. Ronald Pope
Hon. Frank Rynd
Hon. Peter Sakai
Hon. Michael Schneider
Luanne Southern
Vicki Spriggs
Terry O. Tottenham
Hon. Carlos Villalon, Jr.
Lt. Col. Travis Walters
Hon. Royce West

Collaborative Council

Tymothy Belseth
M. Lynn Chamberlin
Irene Clements
Bill Connolly
Sarah Crockett
De Shaun Ealoms
Barbara Elias-Perciful
Debra Emerson
Laura Figueroa
Mike Foster
Will Francis
Mara Friesen
Sadie Funk
Helen Gaebler
Teal de la Garza
Christine Gendron

Christina Green
Sandra Hachem
David Halpern
Ashley Harris
Lisa Harst
Alex Hunt
Bruce Kendrick
Knox Kimberly
Kelly Kravitz
Richard LaVallo
Dr. Tracy A. Levins
Madeline McClure
Hon. F. Scott McCown, ret.
Gabriella McDonald
Susan McDowell
Pamela McPeters
Kate Murphy

Katie Olse
Jon Olson
Dr. Anu Partap
Judy Powell
Mary Christine Reed
Carolyne Rodriguez
Tanya Rollins
Johana Scot
Janet Sharkis
Andrea Sparks
Hon. Ian Spechler
Jeanne Stamp
Gloria Terry
Kenneth Thompson
Arabia Vargas
Kelly White

From the *Chair*



Texas is unparalleled in its geographic, cultural, and economic diversity. Whether you view Texas as 254 counties, 11 judicial regions, or over 1200 school districts, our state is fortified by individuals and organizations dedicated to keeping vulnerable children safe and to strengthening at-risk families. The mosaic featured in this report represents the Children's Commission collaborative approach to child welfare reform—a holistic alliance committed to improving the outcomes for children and youth experiencing neglect, abuse, trauma, grief, and loss.

As Aristotle once wrote, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” That adage nicely describes Texas's child-welfare collective. Different governmental agencies and representatives are responsible for distinct aspects of the lives of Texas citizens. Among others, the child welfare agency serves children and families, judges ensure the rights of children and their families are protected in the legal process, and medical and mental health professionals treat children and families for health issues. Though the means may differ, systemic collaboration is essential to realizing our goal of improving outcomes for the Texas children and families who experience our child welfare system.

Each part of a mosaic is necessary for the whole. At the Children's Commission, we embrace each part of the child welfare system while maintaining steadfast focus on the big picture: the safety, permanency, and well-being of Texas children. A few highlights from 2018 are particularly noteworthy. The Commission supported a first-of-its-kind Judicial Summit on Mental Health, in partnership with the newly formed Judicial Commission on Mental Health. Also, the Legal Representation Committee created and launched a comprehensive survey which gathered input from multiple perspectives to assess the current functioning of legal advocacy in Child Protective Services cases and culminated in a report to the Texas Legislature on the status of legal representation. Additionally, the Children's Commission also supported the creation of a Young Adult Leadership Council to ensure that the voices of children and young adults are considered in the development of systemic reforms.

True child welfare system reform is the product of bringing the many together as one, and there is more to come in 2019!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. M. Szymanski".

“Our mission is to strengthen courts for children and families in the Texas child protection system and thereby improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.”

Activities by the Numbers

Every year, the Children’s Commission provides funding to support judicial and legal training events, technology enhancements, and data collection and analysis for courts. The commission also funds project management support for systemic reform efforts. In 2018, the Commission spent over one million dollars to further the goal of improving child and family outcomes through leadership and collaboration.



\$1,056,554

total amount of grants and scholarships awarded



9

Court Improvement Program grant recipients



20

conferences, programs, training tools & resources funded



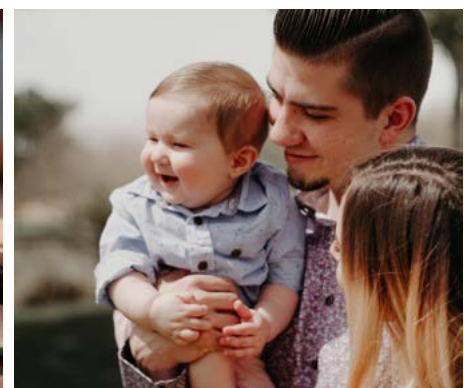
786

judges, attorneys & partners trained



99.25

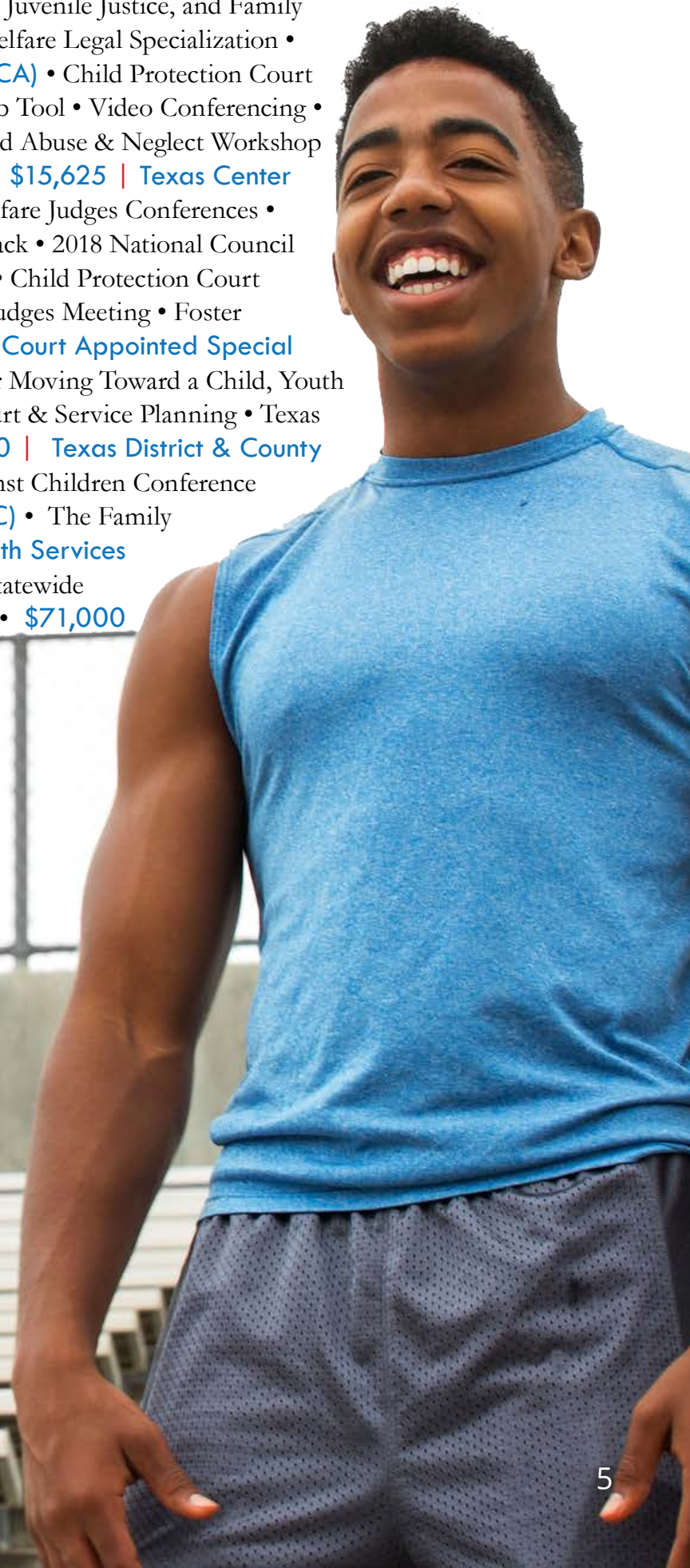
number of MCLE hours provided



206

sites enabled for video conferencing

Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) • DFPS Legal Assistant Training & Regional Attorney Conference • **\$10,000** | **National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC)** • 2018 National Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, and Family Law Conference & Red Book Training • Child Welfare Legal Specialization • **\$89,455** | **Office of Court Administration (OCA)** • Child Protection Court Management System • Notice & Engagement Web Tool • Video Conferencing • **\$269,470** | **State Bar of Texas (SBOT)** • Child Abuse & Neglect Workshop • Child Protection Law Section Advanced CLE • **\$15,625** | **Texas Center for the Judiciary (TCJ)** • 2017 & 2018 Child Welfare Judges Conferences • 2018 Family Justice Conference Child Welfare Track • 2018 National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Conference • Child Protection Court Coordinators Meeting • Child Protection Court Judges Meeting • Foster Care & Education Summit • **\$342,459** | **Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** • 2018 Child Welfare Primer Moving Toward a Child, Youth & Family-Centered System: Opportunities in Court & Service Planning • Texas CASA Educational Advocacy Tool Kit • **\$49,530** | **Texas District & County Attorneys Association (TDCAA)** • Crimes Against Children Conference • **\$18,319** | **Texas Legal Services Center (TLC)** • The Family Helpline • **\$190,696** | **Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS)** • 2018 TNOYS Annual Conference • Statewide Youth Council, Young Adult Leadership Council • **\$71,000**

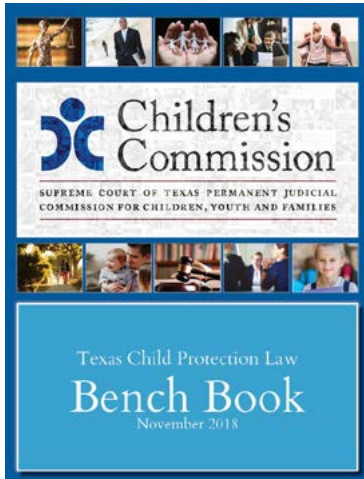


Enhancing *Professionalism*



Inaugural Child Welfare Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) Certification Exam

The TBLS received over 65 applications from attorneys and judges for board certification in child welfare law. Fourteen applicants met the criteria to become certified without taking the exam and 49 applicants were scheduled to sit for the exam. The inaugural Child Welfare Law Specialization exam was held on October 15, 2018 in Austin. Grading of the exams began in November 2018 and applicants will receive their results in January 2019.



2017 & 2018 Bench Book Updates

The Children's Commission publishes a Texas Child Protection Law Bench Book (Bench Book) which outlines the state and federal statutory requirements for judges handling child protection cases, and includes topical sections and checklists. The Bench Book also includes special issues which judges may encounter in overseeing child protection cases, as well as statutory and case law citations which are maintained by and connected to an online service called LawBox.

The Bench Book is updated annually and was recently revised to include updates to all topical chapters. New sections on best interest of the child, burden of proof required throughout the stages of a Child Protective Services (CPS) case, contempt, and the importance of youth voice in court have been added. Additionally, there is a new bench card on addressing disproportionality. While the Bench Book was originally designed for and is primarily used by judges, many attorneys and other child welfare stakeholders also find it to be informative and helpful.

8th Ed.
of the
Bench Book

18
Bench
Cards

30 +
JIR letters
distributed

Children's Commission Jurist in Residence Receives Service Award

On February 23, 2018, the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) awarded its Tom Garner Service award to Children's Commission Jurist in Residence, Judge Dean Rucker. Named after a former chair of the TBLS Board, the award recognizes a TBLS volunteer who epitomizes the best ideals of voluntary service by their knowledge, dedication, hard work and integrity. Judge Rucker was recognized for his diligent and tireless work in establishing Child Welfare Law as a TBLS certified area of legal specialization. Judge Rucker has served as the JIR for the Children's Commission for five years, providing invaluable support and leadership to the commission and its staff.



Improving *Practice*

TDCAA Crimes Against Children Conference Child Welfare Track

In partnership with DFPS, the Commission provided 12 hours of curriculum on April 11-12, 2018 for the 2-day CPS CLE track within the TDCAA's 4-day Crimes Against Children Conference in San Marcos, Texas. This was a first-ever partnership with TDCAA and the curriculum was very well received, with standing room only for many of the presentations. Thirty-four DFPS and HHSC attorneys and staff received \$350 registration scholarships to attend the 12 hours of curriculum for the 2-day CPS CLE track.

Alabama Coushatta Judicial Symposium Presentation on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

In September, 2018, the Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas hosted a Judicial Symposium to focus on the Violence Against Women's Act and how it affects tribal nations. The Children's Commission was invited to present on ICWA. The Symposium brought together tribal court staff, tribal members, state court staff, lawyers, domestic violence advocates, and law enforcement. The event provided an excellent collaborative learning opportunity for participants and advanced the tribal-state partnerships working to help families heal from violence and abuse.

2017 & 2018 Child Welfare Judges Conferences

The annual Child Welfare Judges Conference, hosted by the Commission in partnership with TCJ, is designed for judges who have a significant amount of their dockets dedicated to CPS cases. The content focuses on relevant and timely judicial education, along with practical tools for best judicial practices.

- 2017 Presentation Highlights: Family Finding, Interventions, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), 85th Legislative Session Update, Community Based Care and Foster Care Redesign, Case Law Update, DFPS Statewide Data and Regional Trends on Children in Foster Care, Regional meetings with judges and the corresponding DFPS Regional Director, Foster Care Parent Panel, and Recognizing Judicial Leadership and Innovative Practices.
- 2018 Presentation Highlights: Judicial Secondary Trauma and Self Care, Statewide Collaborative on Trauma Informed Care Update, Cultural Competency, Legal Representation Study Results, DFPS Statewide Data and Regional Trends on Children in Foster Care, Regional meetings with judges and the corresponding DFPS Regional Director, and Substance Abuse Issues, Testing, and Resources.



DFPS Attorney Tool Kit

A project of the Legal Representation Committee, the Tool Kit for Attorneys Representing the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services was designed to benefit prosecutors of all levels of experience by providing concise compilations of hearing checklists, relevant state and federal statutes, and practice tips. The goal of the Tool Kit is to promote best practices for prosecutors representing DFPS across the state. It received endorsement from DFPS as well as TDCAA. It is among the many resources which the Commission has developed and provided to attorneys for parents, attorneys for children, and judges. The Tool Kit was first published and distributed at the TDCAA's Crimes Against Children Conference in April 2018.

A State of *Skill*

Trial Skills Training (TST)

Unique, realistic, and effective, this three-day training is based on a fictional Texas CPS case and breaks down the teaching of litigation skills by lecturing, demonstrating, strategizing, and practicing in all areas of trial. It is conducted by a volunteer faculty comprised of highly respected judges and attorneys from across the state and incorporates live witnesses for a hands-on experience. In the ninth Trial Skills Training in July 2018, 21 participants representing parent and/or child clients or the DFPS on CPS dockets from 24 Texas counties received 17.5 hours of MCLE with 2 hours of ethics, covering 14 lectures, 10 demos, 7 strategy sessions, and 7 practice sessions.

Children's Commission Collaborative Council

The Collaborative Council assists the Children's Commission by informing commission members and staff of local and statewide activities, events, and issues that affect attorney and judicial practices in CPS cases. The Collaborative Council is composed of child welfare stakeholders and advocates from across Texas, including child/youth and parent advocates. There are approximately 50 Collaborative Council members. The Collaborative Council met in November 2017 and November 2018 in conjunction with the annual Child Welfare Judges Conferences. On November 13, 2017, the Council met to discuss new strategies to engage members in 2018. Following the November 2017 meeting, the Commission invited Council members to join its bi-weekly stakeholder conference call and offered Council members an opportunity to present at Commission meetings. The Commission also produced a document defining the roles and expectations of the Collaborative Council.



3
webcasts

614
viewers

6
hours of
MCLE

State Bar of Texas One-Day Webcast

In partnership with the State Bar, the Commission hosted six hours of live MCLE on September 11th, 2018 on basic and advanced topics for attorneys providing legal representation in CPS cases. The webcasts included presentations on Navigating Concurrent Civil and Criminal CPS Cases; Understanding Common Evidentiary Issues in CPS Cases (including Authentication of Social Media, Drug Testing Issues, and Medical Diagnoses and Exhibits); and Expanding Opportunities for Older Youth in CPS Cases (covering Sealing Juvenile Records, Youth Voice in Court, and Postsecondary Readiness and Success).

The State Bar provided discounts to court-appointed attorneys and CASAs and scholarship opportunities to other viewers, while the Commission offered scholarships to attorneys representing DFPS. In general, the webcast audience included attorneys on the child protection docket across the state, along with judges, CASAs, and other stakeholders. All three webcasts have been archived and are available online with the same available discounts at TexasBar CLE's Online Classroom.



Addressing *Mental Health*

Judicial Commission on Mental Health

In January, the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals, for the first time, formally joined together to focus the attention of the highest judicial officials in the state on one topic: mental health. Individuals from across the state appeared before Texas' high courts to testify on how the judicial branch has a key role in transforming the way people with mental health needs are treated. On February 13, 2018, the two courts signed an order establishing the groundbreaking permanent Judicial Commission on Mental Health (JCMH) which will spearhead improvements in the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of decisions affecting those with mental illness in the justice system.

Judicial Summit on Mental Health

Texas's two highest courts held a first-ever conference in October 2018 in Houston on how courts grapple with mental illness and intellectual disabilities in criminal and civil cases and strategies for assisting children and adults with such challenges who crowd the justice system. This groundbreaking event was hosted by the Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals' new creation: the Judicial Commission on Mental Health. At the Summit, leaders in civil and criminal justice, mental health treatment, and child welfare met to develop strategies to strengthen the judiciary's response to adults and children with mental health and intellectual disability challenges.

The Children Commission's Children and Youth Track offered presentations on Preventing Youth Suicide, Including Youth Voice, Ensuring Equity in Child Welfare, and updates from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. The Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care convened on the second day of the Summit to hear updates from the workgroup chairs and to craft guiding principles for Texas.

JUDICIAL SUMMIT ON MENTAL HEALTH

WESTIN MEMORIAL CITY, HOUSTON, TX
OCTOBER 22-23, 2018



Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care (SCTIC)

In July 2017, the Children's Commission launched the SCTIC to work on developing and implementing trauma-informed policy in Texas's child welfare system. The collaborative consists of approximately 170 members from a wide variety of professions and systems who are committed to transforming Texas into a trauma-informed state. Four workgroups were created from the collaborative membership with these distinct goals: System Reform; Organizational Leadership; Cross Systems Collaboration; and Funding, Data, and Evaluation.

Each workgroup met several times over the course of 2018 to share, discuss, and vet ideas for strategies designed to achieve a statewide trauma-informed child welfare system. This collaboration will result in a Blueprint which will be released in early 2019 and will serve as a roadmap to guide all Texas stakeholders towards a more trauma-informed system.

A State of *Legal Representation*

Legal Representation Study (LRS) Implementation Begins

In an effort to understand how Texas can continue to improve and optimize the quality of legal services, the Children's Commission conducted a comprehensive follow up to the 2011 Legal Representation Study to assess how Texas can go further in improving quality, training, and accountability. A fourteen-member LRS subcommittee consisting of parent and child attorneys, judges, prosecutors, CASA advocates, parent advocates, and former foster youth was established to oversee the creation and implementation of the study.

Implementation of the new LRS began on March 13, 2018. Surveys were sent to court-appointed attorneys, DFPS attorneys, judges, CPS caseworkers, parents, relatives, CASAs, foster parents, and youth-in-care. When the surveys concluded on June 1, 2018, over 3,400 stakeholders had participated, including 962 CPS caseworkers, 790 CASAs, 737 youth-in-care, and 555 foster parents.

LRS Presentation to Statewide Youth Collaborative; DFPS Statewide Parent Collaborative Focus Group for LRS

Children’s Commission staff attended the DFPS Statewide Youth Collaborative in Houston on January 20, 2018. Youth were given the opportunity to provide direct feedback on the proposed youth-in-care survey questions for the Children’s Commission 2018 Study of Legal Representation in Child Protective Services Cases. The discussion focused on making the survey questions relevant and relatable to youth-in-care so that they would accurately capture youth’s experiences with their attorneys.

Children’s Commission staff attended the DFPS Statewide Parent Collaborative Meeting in South Padre Island on June 8, 2018. Commission staff conducted a focus group with the collaborative about their experiences with their court-appointed attorneys. Parents were asked open-ended questions about their relationships with their attorneys, their experiences with the legal representation system, and their opinions about how the system could be improved. This discussion provided the opportunity to add parents’ voice to the LRS.

3,400+
stakeholders
surveyed

737
youth-in-care
surveyed

962
CPS
caseworkers
surveyed

LRS Report Submitted to the Texas Legislature

In September 2018, the Children’s Commission sent the finished report on the 2018 Study of Legal Representation in Child Protective Services Cases to the Texas Legislature. The report reveals divergent perspectives on issues such as attorney performance and accountability, but also reveals common ground on issues such as what resources are most needed, and which reforms are likely to have the greatest impact.



The report recommends that the Supreme Court or the Texas Legislature convene a Task Force on Court-Appointed Legal Representation to determine how Texas can thoughtfully design systemic improvements. The report suggests that the Task Force on Court-Appointed Legal Representation be charged with making specific recommendations regarding the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a high-functioning, high-quality legal representation system with the necessary and appropriate oversight and accountability.

Foster Care & *Education*

Texas' 2nd Foster Care and Education Summit

In July 2018, the Children's Commission hosted its second Foster Care and Education Summit. The summit included cross-disciplinary training and offered facilitated discussion among regional teams to tackle local problems and formulate customized solutions. Teams consisted of judges, attorneys, educators, child welfare staff, youth, advocates, and other professionals from every region in the state. Discussion topics included preparing students in foster care for postsecondary opportunities, using foster care and education data to drive related decision-making, addressing behavioral health in schools, supporting students with special education needs, and accessing and engaging young children with early learning.

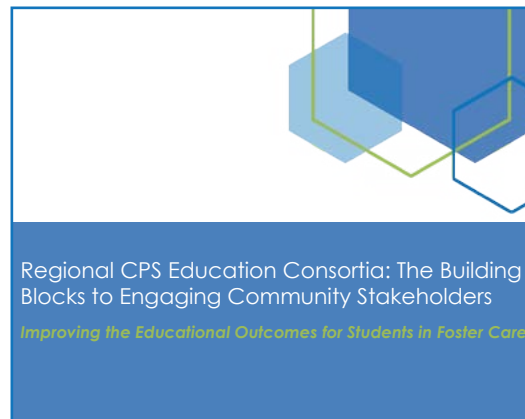


Release of Education-Related Resources

The tuition and fee waiver in the Texas Education Code offers eligible young adults the opportunity to attend any Texas public institution of higher education without the payment of tuition and fees. In response to a concern that the process to activate the waiver is difficult, the Foster Care and Education Postsecondary Education Workgroup created the “Foster Care College Tuition & Fee Waiver Process” map.

A short video entitled “THECB Tuition and Fee Waiver” was also created by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in partnership with Sam Houston State University, DFPS, and the Postsecondary workgroup. The video clarifies the eligibility criteria for the state tuition and fee waiver and explains how the waiver can be utilized in Texas.

To help make connections at the local level, there are now CPS education consortia in every region of Texas aimed at strengthening ongoing efforts to partner across systems. Although the consortia are organized differently, DFPS, with input from the Foster Care & Education Local Collaboration Workgroup, developed a short guide entitled “Regional CPS Education Consortia: The Building Blocks to Engaging Community Stakeholders, Improving the Educational Outcomes for Students in Foster Care” which provides the foundation for building a local collaboration.



Education of Children & Youth Placed in Residential Treatment
Round Table Report
Issued September 2018

Education in Residential Treatment Centers Round Table

On April 18, 2018, the Children’s Commission convened a round table meeting to focus on the education of children and youth placed in Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs). Stakeholders representing RTCs, Child Placing Agencies, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Child Protective Services, Texas Education Agency, school districts, charter schools, as well as the legal and judicial community, each

provided a unique perspective on the current state of education for students placed in RTCs, with a particular focus on special education.

The primary goal of the round table discussion centered on how the child welfare and education systems can improve coordination and communication regardless of where or how the student attends school. This includes developing a plan to address education, providing special education in the least restrictive environment, designating education decision-makers, and planning for school transitions. A Round Table Report was released in September 2018, identifying opportunities for continued dialogue and collaboration.

Connection through *Innovation*



“We are currently using the video conferencing to accommodate sibling visits for one of our cases. These children are placed in three different places across Texas. We are helping to facilitate these visits to ensure that the siblings are getting to see each other weekly. Mom also attends the visits at our office so that she can see the screen and talk to them. It is very important for children to be able to maintain a connection to family when appropriate. We are very grateful that we have been able to achieve visitation with the video conferencing system.” - CASA Volunteer

Family Helpline

The Children's Commission partnered with Access to Justice and the Children's Justice Act to fund the Texas Legal Services Corporation to establish the Family Helpline in 2017. The Family Helpline provides easy, statewide access for parents and family members to basic information, education, and resources. The Family Helpline has provided assistance to over 2400 individual callers facing child welfare legal issues across the state of Texas so far in FY 2018. Helpline staff attorneys have spoken with callers from 164 different counties in Texas, which is 65% of the 254 counties in our state. The calls affected 2,089 adults, 3,354 children, and covered questions regarding 119 different issues related to CPS.

2,500 +
callers to
the Family
Helpline

Hearing Notification Expansion

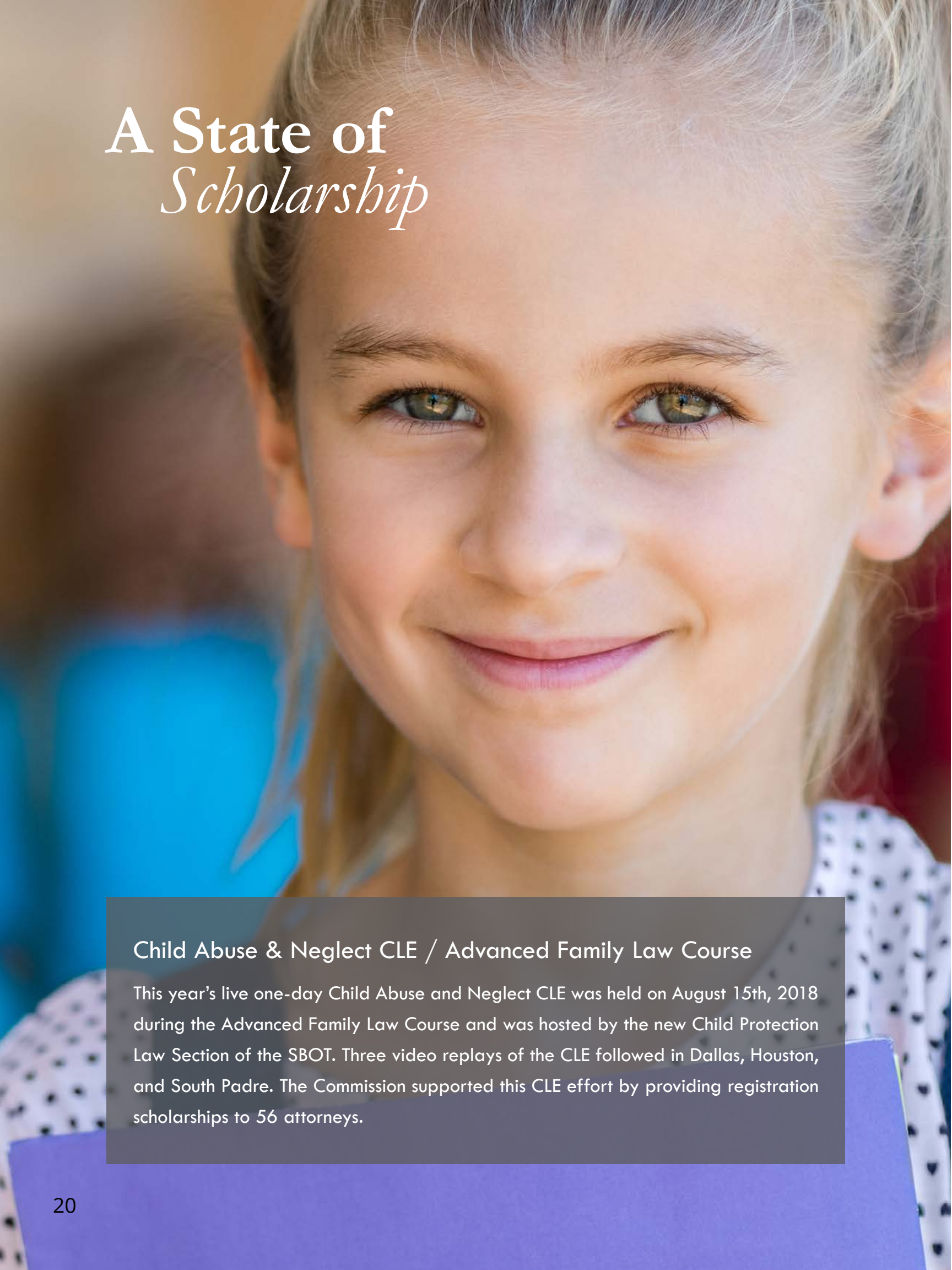
The Supreme Court Children's Commission and the Office of Court Administration (OCA) host a CPS Hearing Notification service that uses non-confidential case data to provide hearing notice by email to and/or text message court participants (attorneys, CPS personnel, CASA, parents, relative caregivers, and adoptive/foster parents) involved in cases heard by our Child Protection Specialty Courts. In FY 2018, OCA created an application programming interface that will allow Courts other than those using Child Protection Court Management System to upload their hearing data into the system to expand the hearing notification tool to all courts hearing child protection cases in order to provide parties with up-to-date hearing information and to provide courts with an alternate means of notification free of charge.

1,111
registered
users for
hearing
notification

Video Conferencing

OCA manages a video conferencing project between the courts presiding over child abuse and neglect cases, DFPS, CPS, and the residential placement facilities contracted to DFPS, to facilitate communication between the children placed in these facilities and the judges overseeing their cases. In FY 2018, 159 hearings were conducted using the system and the number of video-enabled courts, placement facilities, and CASA offices increased by 45 bringing the total to 206 video endpoints in Texas.

206
video
conference
end points



A State of *Scholarship*

Child Abuse & Neglect CLE / Advanced Family Law Course

This year's live one-day Child Abuse and Neglect CLE was held on August 15th, 2018 during the Advanced Family Law Course and was hosted by the new Child Protection Law Section of the SBOT. Three video replays of the CLE followed in Dallas, Houston, and South Padre. The Commission supported this CLE effort by providing registration scholarships to 56 attorneys.

National Association of Counsel for Children

The Children's Commission awarded 77 total registration and travel reimbursement scholarships, which included 58 Texas attorneys and judges as well as 9 scholarships to members of the Collaborative Council and 10 to CASAs. Of those awardees, 36 also attended NACC's pre-conference Red Book Training. The conference presented a total of 25.5 hours of MCLE.

77
scholarships

National Conference of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

NCJFCJ's Annual Conference was held in Denver, Colorado from July 22-25, 2018. The NCJFCJ scholarship process was conducted in partnership with TCJ through which the Commission funded scholarships to 19 judges. Topics included trauma, domestic violence, ICWA, human trafficking, combating racial and ethnic disparities in the courtroom, special immigrant juvenile status, child safety, and child and family wellbeing.

19
scholarships

Scholarships for first-ever State Bar of Texas Child Protection Law Section Advanced CLE

The newly-formed State Bar of Texas Child Protection Law Section's first annual Advanced Child Protection Law Course was held April 19-20, 2018 in Austin, Texas. Funding for scholarships to attend the course was approved at the Commission's February 2, 2018 meeting and the scholarship opportunity was announced through the Commission's Attorney Resource Letter. The Commission provided scholarships to 45 attorneys to attend the course in a first-ever partnership with the new Section. One hundred percent of the 40 respondents to the post-event survey replied that they would attend the conference again in the future if given the opportunity for another registration scholarship.

45
scholarships

Texas Judicial Institute on Domestic Child Sex Trafficking

Children's Commission staff partnered with the Office of the Texas Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team and the National Center for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to host a Texas-specific judicial training on preventing and addressing domestic child sex trafficking on September 18-19, 2018. The Texas Judicial Institute on Domestic Child Sex Trafficking was designed for and led by judges and included interactive sessions and opportunities to apply information to hypothetical case scenarios.

7
scholarships



Engaging Youth & Young Adults

TNOYS Grant

The mission of TNOYS is to strengthen, support, and protect critical services for Texas youth and their families to ensure their success. TNOYS helps ensure a vision of Texas where all young people are valued, their strengths are recognized, and they have access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. In FY2018, the Children's Commission funded a \$50,000 grant to TNOYS to support its 2018 Annual Conference and help establish a Statewide Young Adult Leadership Council (YALC) designed to elevate and incorporate youth voice in statewide policy and administrative procedure discussions, particularly in the area of the foster care system. YALC members are young adults between the ages of 18 to 25 who have experience with foster care, homelessness, juvenile justice system involvement, or other at-risk situations, and who have a demonstrated interest in or potential for leadership or advocacy.

Children's Commission

Leadership

Executive

Hon. Eva Guzman, Chair
Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair Emeritus
Hon. Rob Hofmann, Vice Chair
Hon. Michael Massengale
Hon. Piper McCraw
Hon. Michael Schneider
Vicki Spriggs

Senior Judicial Advisors

Hon. Darlene Byrne
Hon. Michael Massengale

Jurists in Residence

Hon. Dean Rucker
Hon. Rob Hofmann

Committees

Basic

Hon. Michael Schneider, Chair
Sarah Crockett
Mary Christine Reed
Carolyn Rodriguez
Tanya Rollins
Hon. Peter Sakai
Hon. Cynthia Wheless

Training

Hon. Michael Massengale,
Former Chair
Hon. Piper McCraw, Chair
Hon. Mark Atkinson
Tymothy Belseth
Cathy Cockerham
Barbara Elias-Perciful
Debra Emerson
Hon. Richard Garcia
Tracy Harting
Pam Kemp
Tanya Rollins
Fairy Davenport Rutland
Hon. Ellen Smith
Elizabeth Watkins

Foster Care & Education

Hon. Rob Hofmann, Chair
Shalynn Andrews
Joy Baskin
Hon. Alyce Bondurant
Briana Dovi
Lori Duke
Dr. Monica Faulkner
Maya Guerra Gamble
Dr. David Gardner
Dr. Deena Hill
Andy Homer
Kelly Kravitz
Hon. Aurora Martinez Jones
Kristine Mohajer
Hon. Cathy Morris
Jon Olson
Wanda Peña
Michael Redden
Carol Self
Hon. Ian Spechler
Julie Wayman

Technology

Vicki Spriggs, Chair
Jason Hassay
Hon. Gilford Jones
Elizabeth Kromrei
Robert Nolen
Hon. Virginia Schnarr
Hon. Carlos Villalon, Jr.

Staff

Tina Amberboy
Executive Director

Jamie Bernstein
Assistant Director

Jessica Arguijo
Communications Manager

Tiffany Edwards
Executive Assistant

Jocelyn Fowler
Staff Attorney

Monica Mahoney
Program Specialist

Dylan Moench
Staff Attorney

Patrick Passmore
Grant Administrator

Milbrey Raney
Training Director

Kristi Taylor
Former Assistant Director
2016 - 2018

Andrea Vicencio
Executive Assistant

