Foster Care Redesign is working.

It’s vital for our children that it continues.

Foster Care Redesign has shown encouraging results in its first year of operation. By focusing on capacity building, accountability of outcomes, and program innovations, significant system improvements have been made in Region 3b.
Why Redesign?

Through a regional approach, Redesign is solving problems that Texas’ current foster care system cannot.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Local leadership creates urgency and allows for quicker decisions to expand services for children and families.
- Defined geography and collective information allows the development of new resources.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Clear accountability advances quality care.
- A manageable size of children in care allows for better oversight.

**INNOVATION**

- Increased flexibility allows innovation to improve efficiency and results.
- A collaborative approach leverages community resources.

“Foster Care Redesign attacks the primary problem of the foster care system in Texas: its sheer size.”

Fort Worth Star-Telegram Editorial Board
Foster Care Redesign

An effective solution to improving care in Texas

CAPACITY BUILDING

The number of licensed foster care beds increased in year one by 20% in our seven-county region.

Total Capacity Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOVEMBER 2014</th>
<th>AUGUST 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,950 beds</td>
<td>2,330 beds</td>
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Through targeted recruitment, Our Community Our Kids (OCOK) added more quality foster homes to our seven-county region. Having more beds available allows better placement options for sibling groups and helps keep children with therapeutic needs closer to their homes.

Significant efforts were made to increase capacity in our most rural county, Palo Pinto. Developing capacity in rural areas has been a longstanding problem for DFPS. An increase this quickly indicates how a focused and consistent recruitment initiative will yield results.

Placing Children in Family Settings

The statewide benchmark of children placed in a family setting.

71.5%  

Our first-year numbers indicate that 79% of children placed through OCOK were in a family setting.

Research tells us that placing children in a family setting is a better solution than placing them in a group home setting.

I’ve been doing good in my home, everyone’s proud of me. I have an internship at a nursing home, it’s great! Thank you for everything you’ve done for me!

Thank you note excerpt from a foster youth in therapeutic care to OCOK

Therapeutic foster homes were created through Foster Care Redesign so children with more intense care needs are kept in a family setting rather than Residential Treatment Centers.

Therapeutic Foster Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed foster homes</td>
<td>Licensed foster homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within 1 Year

- 2 youth were adopted
- 2 youth returned to Residential Treatment
- 1 youth moved

As of 1/30/16
ACCOUNTABILITY

Keeping Children Close to Home

The most immediate and apparent change is the dramatic increase in the number of children being kept within their home communities.

This success is a direct result of Foster Care Redesign, which allows a local contractor the flexibility to build targeted, local capacity to keep children within their home communities.

Safety

We are here to ensure the protection and safety of our children. To promote development of best practices for keeping children safe from abuse while in care, OCOK required each child-placing agency in our network to take part in a risk management audit.

Risk Management Audits

Child-placing agencies in the OCOK network took thorough safety reviews to assess how their policies and practices stacked up against nationally recognized standards.

We know how traumatic it is for children to be removed from their homes. We appreciate all the effort OCOK is putting in to placing kids close to their homes, schools and communities. Being able to continue going to the same school is a wonderful thing for our kiddos.

— Barbara Tucker, Executive Director, CASA – Hope for Children in Weatherford, Texas
During its first year alone, Our Community Our Kids has rolled out several important innovations aimed at improving the care and safety of children. These innovations are transforming the business of foster care in ways Texas has not seen before.

**INNOVATION**

Technology has provided us powerful tools we’ve put in place to change the landscape of how care decisions are made.

**Matching Children with the Best Homes**

Decision-support software, Every Child A Priority or ECAP, works to match children in care with the best foster family for that child’s specific needs. A study conducted through Kansas University found that using ECAP significantly improved placement stability.

- 94% of children entering foster care in Region 3b are in stable placements.

Reducing the number of times children move between foster homes is a key goal of Redesign. We know from research the devastating impact such transitions have on a child’s sense of stability and well-being.

**Efficiency**

Before Redesign, providers could not share data securely and efficiently. OCOK has developed the technology infrastructure allowing providers to work as a network.

**CLINICAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Providers can access caseload information and upload documents such as assessments, plans of care, or incident reports.

**INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

The Provider Information Exchange allows agencies to upload data from their own case management software rather than wasting staff time duplicating data in multiple systems.

**Quality Parenting Initiative**

To improve the quality of foster care, OCOK brought in the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), a change framework that has seen success in other states. QPI brings together stakeholders to define quality, strengthen recruitment and retention efforts, and change the system to promote quality.

“Since starting our QPI communication group in December, it’s helped bring more awareness about the great need for foster parents in our community.”

Nathan Buchanan, Foster Parent and Pastor at First Baptist Mineral Wells

**Cutting the Red Tape**

Through QPI, the length of time it took for foster parents to receive reimbursements for daycare costs was identified as a problem with retaining foster parents.

- Redesign has made receipt of daycare reimbursements quicker by 50%.

OCOK reduced the wait time from five weeks down to 10 days by pre-qualifying foster parents to receive daycare reimbursements before they take a child into their home.
ACH Child and Family Services is a century-old, Fort Worth-based nonprofit agency dedicated to protecting children and preserving families.

The child welfare experts on our leadership team in addition to the agency’s excellent history of quality services, experience, deep community relationships, financial stability and reputation give us the confidence to know we’re moving in the right direction by supporting and implementing Foster Care Redesign in Texas.

We believe Foster Care Redesign has the capability to bring great, positive change to the foster care system in Texas. Implementation in Region 3b is demonstrating the power of this thoughtful model. System improvements are already apparent. The work is by no means complete, but for the first time, a clear plan to achieve meaningful change is evident.

“Texas must not lose the help it is getting from ACH, and courts should make sure of it.”

Fort Worth Star-Telegram Editorial Board