



Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five Year Three Accomplishments

Texas Workforce Commission

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CONNECT FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND ENGAGE FAMILIES AS LEADERS

The launch of two websites, a revamped [Early Childhood Texas](#) and the new [Texas Child Care Connection](#), proved to be a valuable resource for Texas families seeking child care options. Google Analytics data reveals significant user engagement for both platforms.

Since the relaunch of Early Childhood Texas on August 22, 2025, the platform has attracted 22,882 active users and generated a total of 105,438 views as of December 30, 2025. The Resources for Raising Kids section was the most popular destination, attracting 51% of users, while 20% of users utilized the Early Childhood Eligibility Screener.

The Texas Child Care Connection site has seen substantial activity since its launch on November 7, 2025, recording a total of 24,221 active users and 99,293 views as of December 30, 2025. The main Texas Child Care Connection page was the primary point of interest for 69% of users, while 7% of users explored information regarding Child Care Scholarships and 6% utilized the Office Locator tool.

SUPPORT LOCAL SYSTEMS BUILDING

The Early Childhood Systems-Building (ECSB) initiatives have successfully evolved from isolated activities into a cohesive, interconnected network designed to support families across Texas. At the heart of this transformation are Family Resource Centers (FRCs), which now serve as vital community hubs. These centers do more than provide services; they act as centralized access points where parent navigation services and shared referral platforms allow families to quickly connect with essential programs like Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), and various healthcare providers.

The FRCs have also become the primary stage for deep parent engagement. Through Parent Café series and Parent Advisory Committees, the initiatives have moved beyond simple outreach to active empowerment. Parents are now taking on leadership roles as facilitators and coalition members, providing critical feedback that shapes how services are delivered. This collaborative spirit extends to strategic partnerships with managed care organizations and early learning providers, ensuring that developmental screenings and school readiness remain top priorities.

To sustain this momentum, Family Support Services has prioritized peer-sharing and professional development. A significant milestone occurred between October and December 2025, when the program coordinated statewide Parent Café trainings. Attended by over 200 partners and awardees, this effort significantly expanded the capacity for parent engagement across the state. By focusing on

sustainability planning and robust consultation, the ECSB awardees are ensuring that these strengthened systems continue to provide a seamless safety net for young children and their caregivers.

EXPAND ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS

To address critical shortages in child care, the Child Care Regulation Navigator program is strategically focusing its efforts on rural communities and "child care deserts." The program's primary mission is to streamline the path to operation by reducing the time between permit application and opening day, while ensuring that new providers have the tools they need for long-term business viability.

These navigators serve as essential guides for prospective and existing providers, offering a comprehensive suite of services. This includes one-on-one mentoring, business development training, and guidance on managing start-up costs. Perhaps most importantly, navigators help providers move through the complex web of local and state regulatory requirements that often act as a barrier to entry.

Recent performance data from April to June 2025 highlights the significant impact of this support. During this period, 63% of applicants working with a navigator successfully obtained their permits. The influence of the program was most striking among Registered Child Care Home programs: without navigator assistance, the permit issuance rate was 17%; however, with the program's support, that success rate more than tripled to 53%.

By bridging the gap between application and operation, the navigators ensure that high-need areas gain more permitted child care providers and that those providers remain supported long after their doors open.

STRENGTHEN AND BUILD THE ECCE WORKFORCE

The following highlights the recent collaborative efforts across Texas state agencies to strengthen and expand the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) workforce, focusing on specialized training, resource distribution, and systemic support.

A primary focus was equipping the workforce to support children with autism and developmental delays. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) ECI program partnered with STAR Autism Support to deliver a three-tiered virtual workshop series. Reaching 738 unique attendees, including child care providers, teachers, and therapists, the initiative was highly successful, with 97% of participants reporting increased confidence in engaging children with autism.

Also, during this period, ECI subrecipients conducted 125 training sessions across 919 child care facilities, reaching over 2,400 professionals. These sessions, focused on inclusive classroom strategies and developmental screening, led to a 14.55% statewide increase in ECI referrals from child care centers, demonstrating a more proactive approach to early intervention.

In the realm of behavioral health, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) transitioned its Restorative Practices Training to a regional delivery model through Education Service Center (ESC) Region 4. While the program faced attendance challenges, it successfully provided free specialized training to dozens of administrators and teachers to improve classroom environments.

The University of Texas-Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health (UT-TIEMH) reached a major milestone by finalizing the Texas Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) Program Manual. This comprehensive resource, supported by instructional videos and appendix tools, provides a roadmap for mental health consultation across the state.

UT-TIEMH also prioritized professional wellness and evidence-based practices by:

- Training 342 participants in the Pyramid Model, including Spanish-language tracks.
- Distributing 228 classroom starter kits to help educators implement these models immediately.
- Providing Reflective Supervision training to practitioners to ensure long-term workforce retention and support.

To ensure ECI providers have the tools necessary for accurate eligibility determinations, HHSC distributed assessment materials to subrecipients. DAYC-2 and BDI-3 evaluation forms were delivered to 39 subrecipients, ensuring they are fully equipped to handle the projected evaluation needs for SFY 2026.

Through a combination of targeted professional development, robust resource allocation, and direct administrative support, Texas is successfully building a more capable and resilient early childhood workforce. These efforts are not only increasing the number of available providers but also ensuring those providers are better equipped to serve children with varying and complex needs.

DEVELOP A STATEWIDE INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEM

In 2025, the Early Childhood Interagency Workgroup transformed the vision for the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) into a high-momentum reality, marking a year of foundational growth, interagency collaboration, and technical achievement.

The journey began in earnest on April 1st with the selection of an ECIDS Product Manager, who officially launched the project alongside the Texas Education Agency (TEA) IT team. Throughout the spring and summer, the agency rapidly scaled its expertise, onboarding a Business Analyst in June and subsequently recruiting a full technical suite, including a Software Development Manager, Power BI Developer, Project Manager, and Quality Assurance Engineer. This team immediately translated goals into action by developing a comprehensive Product Requirements Document (PRD) to guide the system's technical architecture and minimum viable product.

A formal charter was drafted to unite the TEA, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and HHSC under a multi-level committee framework. This structure ensured strategic oversight via an executive board while empowering technical and legal workgroups to handle the nuances of data exchange and compliance.

To bridge the gap between policy and technology, the team facilitated 18 Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions with subject matter experts. These sessions were instrumental in identifying and prioritizing "must-have" use cases, ensuring the system would address the most critical needs of Texas families and educators.

The latter half of the year focused on rigorous technical execution and external learning. The project team maintained a consistent two-week sprint cadence, allowing for iterative development and steady progress. By December, the three participating agencies had successfully identified all initial data elements and exchanged detailed specifications for integration. The IT team completed the system architecture for data ETL (Extract, Transform, Load) processes and finalized models for the first two priority use cases, with wireframes approved for the next phase.

Beyond state lines, the team actively participated in the ECDataLab Analytic Readiness Cohort and attended a multi-state convening in Kansas City. These engagements allowed Texas to exchange best practices with approximately 10 other states, ensuring the Texas ECIDS was built on a foundation of national expertise.

As 2025 drew to a close, the ECIDS project moved from development toward implementation. The legal workgroup completed a final draft of the Data Sharing Agreement (DSA), which is currently under review and slated for execution summer of 2026. Most importantly, TEA and TWC have secured the resources necessary to sustain the ECIDS beyond the initial grant term, ensuring that this integrated data infrastructure will continue to support the state's early childhood goals for years to come.

REPORTS AND STUDIES

In a focused effort to bolster data gathering and stakeholder engagement, the University of Texas Health Science Center team spearheaded a comprehensive needs assessment of the state's early childhood landscape by distributing two key instruments: a Family Survey, and the Early Childhood Workforce Survey. The Family Survey was distributed to ECI subrecipients, Local Workforce Development Boards (who administer the Child Care Services program), ECSB grantees, and Head Start. A total of 1,598 eligible participants submitted responses and were offered gift cards in compensation for their time. Simultaneously, the Workforce Survey was distributed to ECI subrecipients, child care providers, home visiting programs, and pre-k sites, which resulted in 437 responses and achieved 87% of the targeted sample size.

The needs assessment findings highlighted several challenges, including high levels of job stress among providers, a pressing need for child behavior management training, and the necessity for better communication regarding sensitive family conversations.

In conclusion, the successful completion of this statewide assessment marks a significant milestone in the effort to strengthen Texas's early childhood system. The robust participation from both families and the workforce provides a data-driven foundation for addressing critical gaps in training, communication, and resource allocation. Through continued inter-agency alignment and a steadfast commitment to family-centered priorities, the state is now better positioned to build a more sustainable and effective framework for early learning and intervention.

WEBSITES AND PUBLICATIONS

[Early Childhood Texas](#)

[Early Childhood Mental Health](#)

[Early Educators Credit Pathways](#)

[Help Me Grow Texas](#)

[Statewide Strategic Plan](#)

[Texas Child Care Connection](#)

[2023 Texas Early Childhood System Needs Assessment](#)

[2025 Texas Early Childhood System Needs Assessment](#)