Bigger Is Not Always Better: Policies and Programs to Address the Big Challenges Facing Texas Kids

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Child and Family Research Partnership

Center for Children and Families
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Texas Strengths

28,701,845 Residents: 2nd Most Populous in the U.S.
- Population is growing 1.3% annually
- Home to 10% of the children in the U.S.
- Half of the growth in the U.S. child population is due to Texas

Economy is Relatively Strong
- 10th largest global economy
- $1.65 trillion GDP
- $217 billion biennial budget
- 3.4% unemployment
- 3.4% annualized growth in July 2019
- Over 14 million workers
Texas Challenges

47th
State Spending Per Resident

41st
Overall Child Wellbeing

Special thanks to:
OK, WV, AL, AK, AZ, NV, MS, LA, NM

Everything is Bigger in Texas

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
Texas Child Poverty

Overall: 21%
Black: 27%
Hispanic: 29%
White: 9%
Asian: 10%

38th Child Poverty (1.5M kids)

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
Child Wellbeing

39th
Economic Wellbeing

30th
Education

39th
Health

47th
Family & Community

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
# Economic Wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Percent of Children</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Poverty</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Parents Employed</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>1.9M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend &gt;30% of Income on Housing</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2.3M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaffected Youth</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>134K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Ranking: **39**

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
## Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Percent of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 4 Year Olds Not in School</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Proficient in 4th Grade Reading</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Proficient in 8th Grade Math</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Ranking:** 30th

*Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey*
## Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Overall Ranking: 39&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Birthweight</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child and Teen Deaths</td>
<td>27 per 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children without Health Insurance</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Substance Abuse</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
Family and Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children Living with Single Parent</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Living with Parent Who Does Not have a High School Degree</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Living in Concentrated Poverty</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Births</td>
<td>28 per 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Ranking: 47th

(special thanks to: NM, MS, LA)

Source: Kids Count Data Book, based on 2019 US Census/American Community Survey
Consequences of Child Poverty

- Poverty causes chronic stress on families
- Exposure to chronic stress harms early brain development
- Children in poverty show up to school less prepared

- Child poverty is associated with:
  - Hunger
  - Poorer school achievement
  - Juvenile justice involvement
  - Teen pregnancy
  - Lower employment
  - Lower earnings
  - Higher illness rates
  - Early death
Disparities Show Up Early

Figure 1: Disparities on the Bayley Cognitive Assessment between Higher- and Lower-income Infants at 9 and 24 Months

Figure 2: Disparities on the Positive Behavior Index Scores between Higher- and Lower-Income Infants at 9 and 24 Months

The Case for Early Intervention

Child Poverty Rates Would Be Higher Without Existing Programs

With all programs: 13%
Without all programs: +8.7%

- Federal EITC, CTC: +5.9%
- SNAP: +5.2%
- SSI: +1.8%
- Social Security: +2.3%
- UC, WC, and other social insurance: +0.7%
- Housing subsidies: +1.8%
- Other benefits: +4.1%

Source: A Roadmap to Reducing Poverty NASEM Report
What is Texas Doing?

- Texas Home Visiting
- Full-day pre-K
- Increasing oversight of child care
- Increasing funding for ECI
- Reach Out and Read
- State agency strategies
- Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center
What are Home Visiting Programs?

• Two-generation approach to supporting families with young children
  – Targets parents’ abilities to promote their children’s development
  – Trained professionals or paraprofessionals deliver services or referrals in the home

• Services vary widely across program models
  – Children’s age
  – Level of family risk
  – Type and number of services provided
  – Program curriculum
  – Frequency and duration of the visits
  – Qualification for home visitors
  – Overall program goals
The Evidence Base

• Positive effects include improvements in:
  — Child and maternal health
  — Parenting attitudes and behaviors
  — Cognitive and social-emotional outcomes
  — Rates of child abuse and neglect

• Average effect sizes are small

• The number of favorable impacts and the range of impacts across outcome domains vary widely across program models
## Improvements in Child Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Home Visiting Program(s) Showing Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decreased rates of preterm or low-birth weight babies</td>
<td>Healthy Start, HFA, PAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased (a) breast-feeding, (b) child-immunizations, and (c) well-visit exams</td>
<td>(a) HFA, (b) Healthy Start, PAT (c) Healthy Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased child mortality from preventable causes</td>
<td>NFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased physical activity</td>
<td>STEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer language or cognitive delays</td>
<td>EHS, NFP, PALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated school readiness</td>
<td>HIPPY, PAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced cognitive or academic performance</td>
<td>AVANCE, EHS, HFA, HIPPY, PAT, STEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved child behavior and/or social-emotional development</td>
<td>EHS, HIPPY, Incredible Years, PALS, PAT, STEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased likelihood of engaging in crime as a 15-year old adolescent</td>
<td>NFP</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## Improvements in Parenting

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<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Home Visiting Program(s) Showing Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved quality of parent-child interaction and/or parent sensitivity</td>
<td>AVANCE, EHS, Healthy Steps, HFA, HIPPY, Incredible Years, NFP, Nurturing Parenting Program, PALS, PAT, SafeCare, STEP, Triple P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of a (a) safer and (b) more stimulating home environment</td>
<td>(a) Healthy Steps, NFP, SafeCare, Triple P and (b) AVANCE, EHS, Healthy Steps, HFA, HIPPY, NFP, PAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated parental knowledge</td>
<td>Exchange Parent Aide, HFA, Incredible Years, Nurturing Parenting Program, PAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced father involvement in complex play with child</td>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer substantiated reports of child abuse</td>
<td>Exchange Parent Aide, NFP - rates lower after child age 4 through age 15, Nurturing Parenting Program, SafeCare (recidivism), Triple P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer out-of-home placements from abuse</td>
<td>Triple P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Home Visiting in Texas (2017)

209,005 home visits provided
15,009 families served
17,911 children served

### 2,306,100 Children

2,306,100 children could benefit from home visiting.

### 1,761,600 Families

1,761,600 families could benefit from home visiting.

### Of the 2,306,100 children who could benefit—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infants</th>
<th>Toddlers</th>
<th>Preschoolers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>370,800</td>
<td>783,200</td>
<td>1,152,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many home visiting services are geared toward particular subpopulations. The NHVRC estimated the percentage of families who could benefit in Texas who met the following targeting criteria:

- **Child < 1**: 19% (12% for single mother, 26% for parent with no high school diploma)
- **Pregnant woman or mother < 21**: 4% (27% for low income)
- **Parent with no high school diploma**: 12%

Of the 1,761,600 families who could benefit—

55% of families met one or more targeting criteria

24% of families met two or more targeting criteria

What is Texas Doing?

- Texas Home Visiting
- Full-day pre-K
- Increasing oversight of child care
- Increasing funding for ECI
- Reach Out and Read
- Statewide collaborations and strategies
- Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center
HB 3: Texas School Finance Bill

• Requires districts to provide full-day pre-K to eligible 4-year-olds

• Requires all pre-K programs be high-quality by incorporating pre-K guidelines established by TEA (does not establish class size limit or maximum student-teacher ratio)

• Requires school districts to develop an early childhood literacy and mathematics plan to help improve skills
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Child Care Oversight

- 12-part investigative series in the Austin American Statesman (December 2018): **90 children died of abuse and neglect suffered in child care facilities since 2007**

- At least 11 bills were introduced in the 2019 legislative session
Passed Legislation

• SB 568: ensures more information on safety records of child care centers is available to parents

• SB 569: increases oversight for small in-home child care operations (“listed family homes”)

• SB 706: reinstates an investigation unit within HHSC to seek out illegally operating child care

• SB 708: directs HHSC to collect data on caregiver-child ratios and group standards, and serious violations and injuries
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Early Childhood Intervention

• Statewide program for families with children (0-3) with disabilities and developmental delays

• 2019: Legislature boosted ECI funding by $31M
  – Less than half of the $72.6M requested by HHSC
  – But, the largest increase in years
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Reach Out and Read – Texas @ Children’s Learning Institute

- Doctors, nurse practitioners, and other medical professionals incorporate Reach Out and Read into regular pediatric visits by:
  - Speaking with parents about the importance of reading aloud, beginning in infancy
  - Giving each child, from 6 months through 5 years of age, a new book to take home
  - Creating literacy-rich environments that include books in waiting rooms and/or volunteers to model reading aloud

- 300,000 children served annually in Texas through 895 pediatric providers
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• Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center
Statewide Early Childhood Collaborations & Strategies

• Pritzker Planning Grant
  – TexProtects, Children at Risk, Texans Care for Children

• Preschool Development Grants Birth through Five (PDG B-5) program

• Title V MCH and MIECHV needs assessments
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To ensure children are on track for healthy development by age three, it is essential that programs and policies start early so that:

- Infants are born healthy and continue to thrive,
- Parents have what they need to support their child’s healthy development, and
- Families have access to affordable, high-quality child care options.
Prenatal-to-Three Policy Impact Center

- Conduct comprehensive reviews of state-level PN-3 policies
- Build strong relationships with state PN-3 leaders and other stakeholders
- Develop a Roadmap to provide direction to states on how to build effective PN-3 systems of care
- Identify and fill gaps in the evidence base
- Facilitate the exchange of information between researchers, policy makers, and practitioners through convenings, website, and personal connections
Big Challenges, but Big Opportunities Too

• Texas is a great place for business, but not always a great place to be a kid

• Texas is making big steps toward supporting the future of Texas
  – Home visiting, full-day pre-K, stronger regulations for child care, assessing needs in communities, planning for the future
  – Always more to do
QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION
Connect with Us

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