

PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Birth to Five



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education awarded Texas a Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five. The purpose of this grant opportunity is to encourage states to strengthen coordination and collaboration across early childhood programs and services with the goals of increasing access to and quality of programs and services.



Agency Partners

The efforts carried out under this grant will be supported by the following state agencies:

- Texas Department of Agriculture
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office
- Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Texas Workforce Commission

\$1,789,455
Federal Funds

+

\$536,837
State Match

=

\$2,236,292
Project Total

About the Grant

The Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five was authorized by Congress through the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015. Unlike the previous federal grant opportunity under the same name, these grants are not intended to expand states' preschool programs.

Grant Purposes

The new Preschool Development Grant has three purposes:

-  **Develop and implement a strategic plan** that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs for early care and education
-  **Encourage partnerships** among Head Start providers, state and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, private entities, and local education agencies
-  **Maximize parental choice** among a mixed delivery system of early care and education providers

Required Activities

States are required to carry out five activities under the Preschool Development Grant:

1. **Conduct a statewide birth-five needs assessment** of the availability and quality of existing programs in the state and the number of children being served and awaiting services
2. **Develop a statewide birth-five strategic plan** that recommends collaboration, coordination, and quality improvement activities among existing programs
3. **Increase parental choice and knowledge** about the existing programs in the state's mixed delivery system and how to support their child's development
4. **Share best practices** among early care and education providers to increase collaboration and efficiency of services
5. **Improve overall quality** of early care and education programs

THE TEXAS APPROACH

Vision

Thriving children in strong Texas families empowered by state and local systems

Theory of Change

Texas will achieve a return on investment for its citizens ensuring that the state is efficient, intentional, and impactful by:

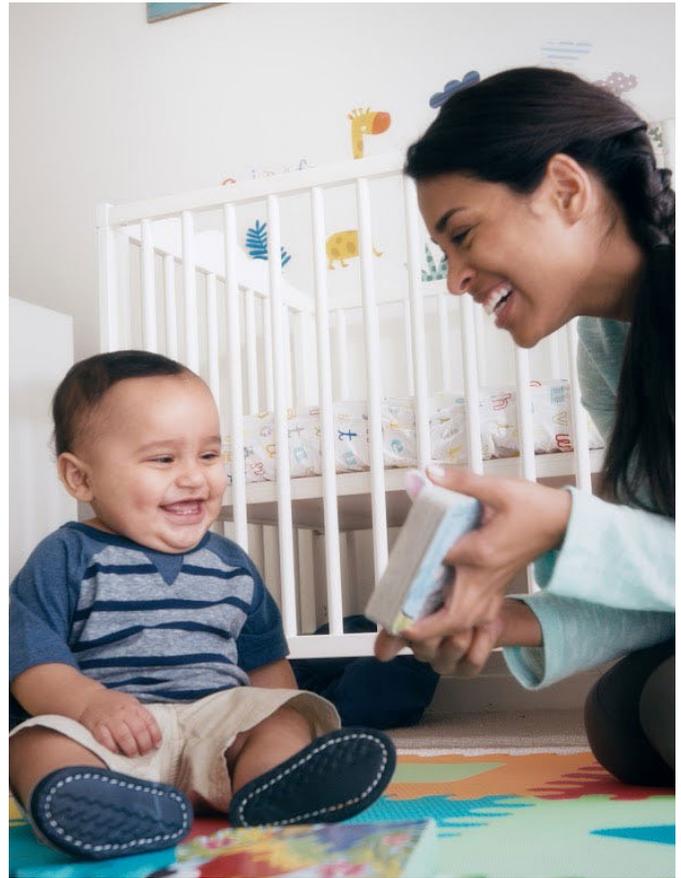
1. Identifying critical services and development milestones that indicate thriving children from prenatal to five years of age
2. Identifying critical services and indicators of thriving families
3. Aligning state and local systems around shared goals and outcomes

Short-Term Outcomes

1. Improved governance of the mixed delivery system
2. Increased coordination and quality of mixed delivery system programs and services
3. Increased access to early childhood programs and services

Long-Term Outcomes

1. State and local systems coordinate and align to empower thriving children and families
2. Children and families achieve critical milestones



ACTIVITY ONE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Goal: Clear picture of the current landscape of Texas' early childhood system

The Texas Early Learning Council (TELC) will lead planning for the needs assessment. This includes outlining the scope of the needs assessment beyond the requirements of the grant and establishing standard terms and accompanying definitions. The needs assessment will be informed by a meta-analysis of existing state and federal needs assessments, state agency data, and stakeholder surveys and focus groups. The needs assessment will describe:

- The current quality and availability of early childhood care and education
- To the extent possible, the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs
- To the extent possible, the unduplicated number of children awaiting services
- Gaps in data or research about the quality and availability of programs and supports
- Identified vulnerable and underserved populations
- Barriers to the funding and availability of early care and education services and supports
- Opportunities for more efficient use of resources
- ECE facilities and facility-related concerns
- Transition supports and gaps (early care and education to elementary school)
- Other needs assessment elements as requested by TELC

ACTIVITY TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN



Goal: Coordinated statewide system of early childhood programs and services

Using the statewide needs assessment, a meta-analysis of existing state-level strategic plans, and stakeholder input from surveys and focus groups, the Texas Early Learning Council will establish a strategic plan that:

- Improves coordination and collaboration
- Promotes partnerships
- Increases quality
- Reduces duplicative efforts
- Efficiently utilizes resources
- Eases children's transitions into kindergarten

ACTIVITY THREE: PARENT CHOICE AND KNOWLEDGE

Goal: Families empowered by state and local systems

State agencies will carry out the following projects to increase parental choice and knowledge of existing programs within Texas' mixed delivery system and how families can best support their children's development:

Coordinated Eligibility Verification and Enrollment System

Texas will work collaboratively with both Austin and Dallas to plan for and implement pilots of coordinated eligibility verification and enrollment systems with the goal of better understanding how these tools and approaches can be scaled statewide as part of the state's mixed delivery system.

Developmental Screener Website for Families

Building upon Texas Project LAUNCH's identified need for increasing the use of developmental screeners, Texas will create a plan for and begin updating a family-facing website that allows families to complete developmental screeners and connect to resources and services to support their children's healthy development.



ACTIVITY FOUR: SHARING BEST PRACTICES

Goal: Efficient state and local early childhood systems

State agencies will carry out the following projects to share best practices for increasing coordination and efficiency of programs and services:

Shared Services

Two types of shared service models will be expanded across the state: (1) Web-based shared service platforms and (2) Community-based shared services alliances. To increase the use of web-based shared services, Texas will provide funds to Local Workforce Development Boards to secure user licenses for child care providers. To increase shared services alliance, Texas will collaborate with Children at Risk to facilitate the building of shared services alliances in three communities.

Community Convenings

To support the work of local early childhood systems, Texas will host two convenings, one for rural communities and one for urban communities. Communities will receive technical assistance on coordinating programs and services at the local level, establishing partnerships across programs, and facilitating smooth transitions to kindergarten.

Local Systems Capacity Building

Texas will identify and provide direct technical assistance to five communities. Each of these five communities will establish a core workgroup that will conduct a community-level needs assessment, identify and prioritize specific opportunities for intervention, and plan corresponding infrastructure with state-level support.

Child Find Activities

Texas will provide additional funds to Early Childhood Intervention contractors with enrollment numbers significantly below their contract target to increase Child Find efforts. These efforts will focus on providing outreach and training to child care providers.

ACTIVITY FIVE: IMPROVING OVERALL QUALITY

Goal: High-quality early childhood programs and services

State agencies will carry out the following projects to improve the overall quality of early childhood programs and services:

ASQ® Training-of-Trainers

Texas will continue efforts to build a network of Ages and Stages Questionnaire® (ASQ®) trainers around the state, started by Texas Project LAUNCH, by hosting a training-of-trainers. These trainers will be able to train early childhood administrators and educators on how to administer the ASQ®, Third Edition and ASQ®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition.

Professional Development for ECI Providers

Texas will provide funding to Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) providers to receive professional development in Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Intervention (NDBI) models.

Planning for Statewide QRIS

Increasing coordination and collaboration requires a common understanding of quality across Texas' mixed delivery system. Texas will begin exploring the potential of expanding participation in the Texas Rising Star (TRS) program to all child care providers, Head Start programs, and public prekindergarten programs on a voluntary basis.



For questions, contact:

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