

Presentation to the House Select Committee on Youth Health and Safety

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Services



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COVID-19 Impact on Children's Mental Health (1 of 3)



- COVID-19 has had a significant impact on children's mental health, including social, emotional and mental well-being
- Challenges include:
 - ▶ Change in routine
 - ▶ Social distancing
 - ▶ School closures and distance learning
 - ▶ Break in physical health care continuity
 - ▶ Missed significant life events
 - ▶ Loss of security and safety
 - ▶ Death of significant individuals



COVID-19 Impact on Children's Mental Health (2 of 3)

Challenge Access to care

- Rapid shift in mental health service delivery
- Reduced community capacity of state hospital and psychiatric beds

From January 2020 to June 2021

- Telephone encounters increased by **731%**
- Video encounters increased by **132%**

Response

- Flexible contract performance measures
- Allowing expanded use of remote service delivery



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COVID-19 Impact on Children's Mental Health (3 of 3)

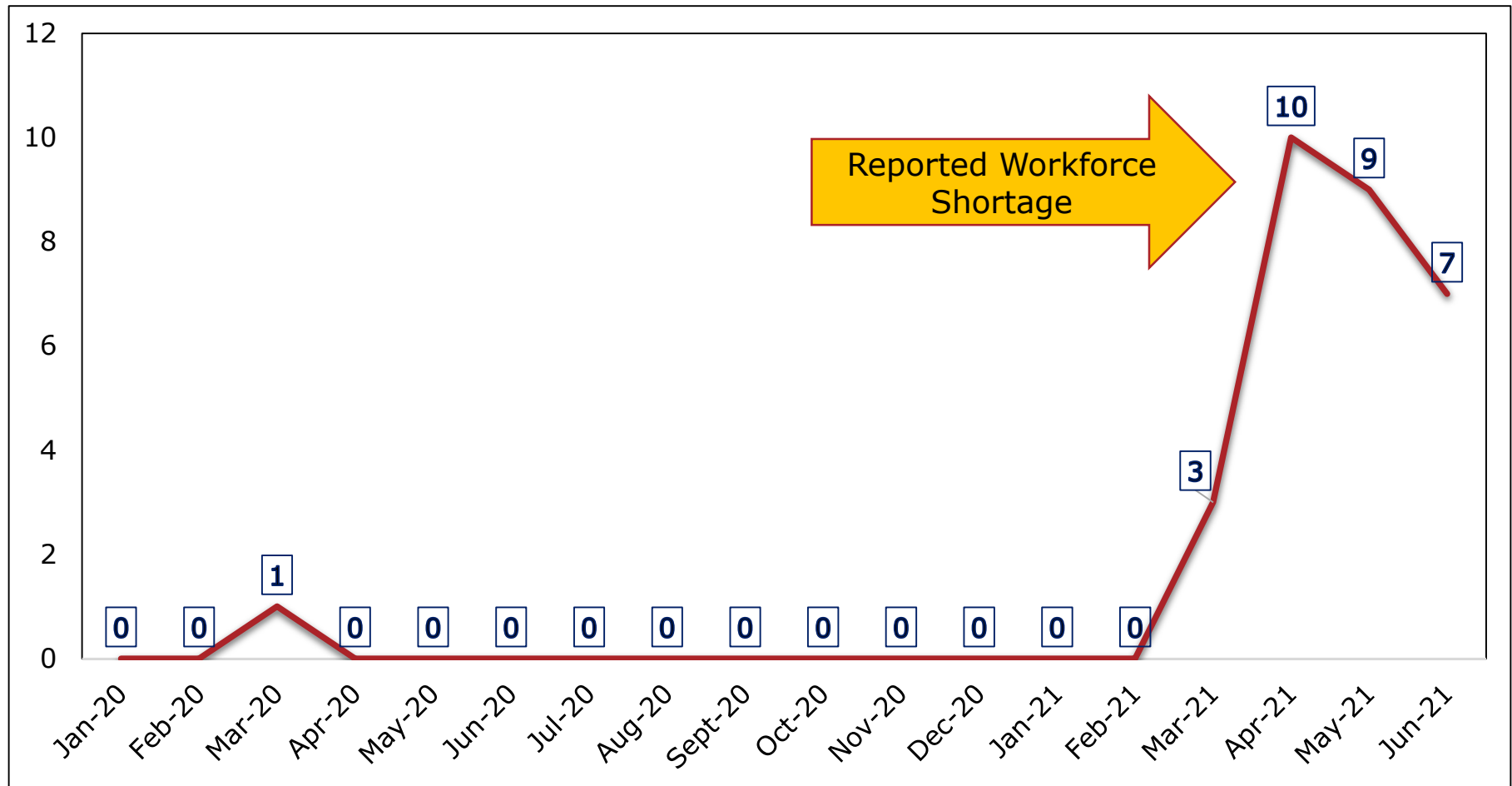
Workforce Challenges

- 97% of Texas counties are designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas
- Local Mental Health and Behavioral Health Authorities (LMHA/LBHAs) report to be significantly impacted by workforce shortages due to the pandemic
- Significant vacancy rates due to inability to offer competitive compensation for staff recruitment and retention necessary to provide essential mental health services
- Staff turnover rates are higher than before pandemic

Impact

- Demand for various mental health crisis services have increased during the pandemic
- Staff shortages impact the frequency and intensity of services offered
- Increase caseload sizes

Number of Children on the Community Mental Health Waiting List: January 2020 through June 2021



Time on Children's Inpatient Care Waiting List by Fiscal Year

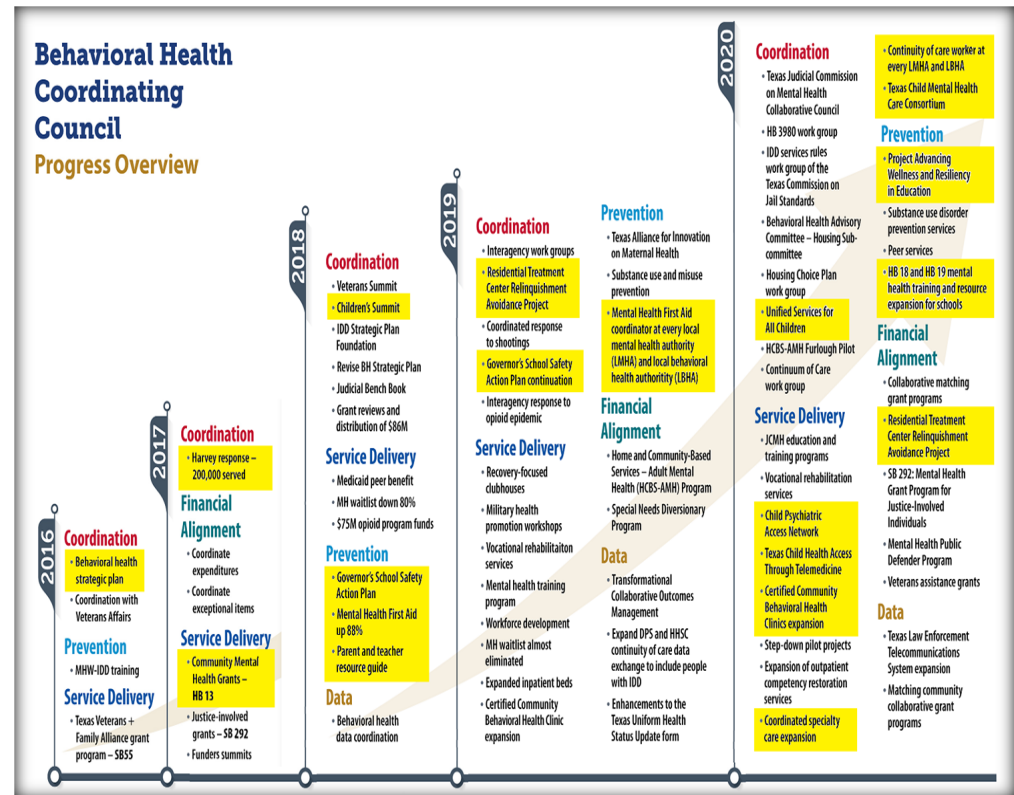
Wait Time Range	FY19	FY20	FY21*
<7 days	208	190	78
7-13 days	28	46	48
14-29 days	34	22	35
>30 days	30	11	24



Mental Health Services for Children Across 25 State Agencies



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Disaster Behavioral Health Response

Crisis Counseling Program and COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

A strengths-based, anonymous outreach program to strengthen existing community supports through:

- Crisis counseling
- Education and outreach materials
- Referrals to other COVID-19 related resources

Texas Health and Human Services
COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed by the COVID-19 pandemic, *help is available.*


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Speak with a mental health professional for help dealing with anxiety, depression, stress, grief or worry 24/7.

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Call the toll-free COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line at **833-986-1919.**

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Mental Health Services for Children

Community Mental Health Services

- 39 LMHA/LBHAs cover all 254 Texas counties and provide children's mental health services
- 24/7 crisis hotline and mobile crisis outreach services provided
- Serves children ages 3 to 17 with serious emotional disturbance
- Utilizes evidence-based practices
- Services based on need and level of care

- *98% of individuals receiving LMHA/LBHA services remain in the community and do not need inpatient care*
- *Serving children in an outpatient setting costs less than \$13 per day*

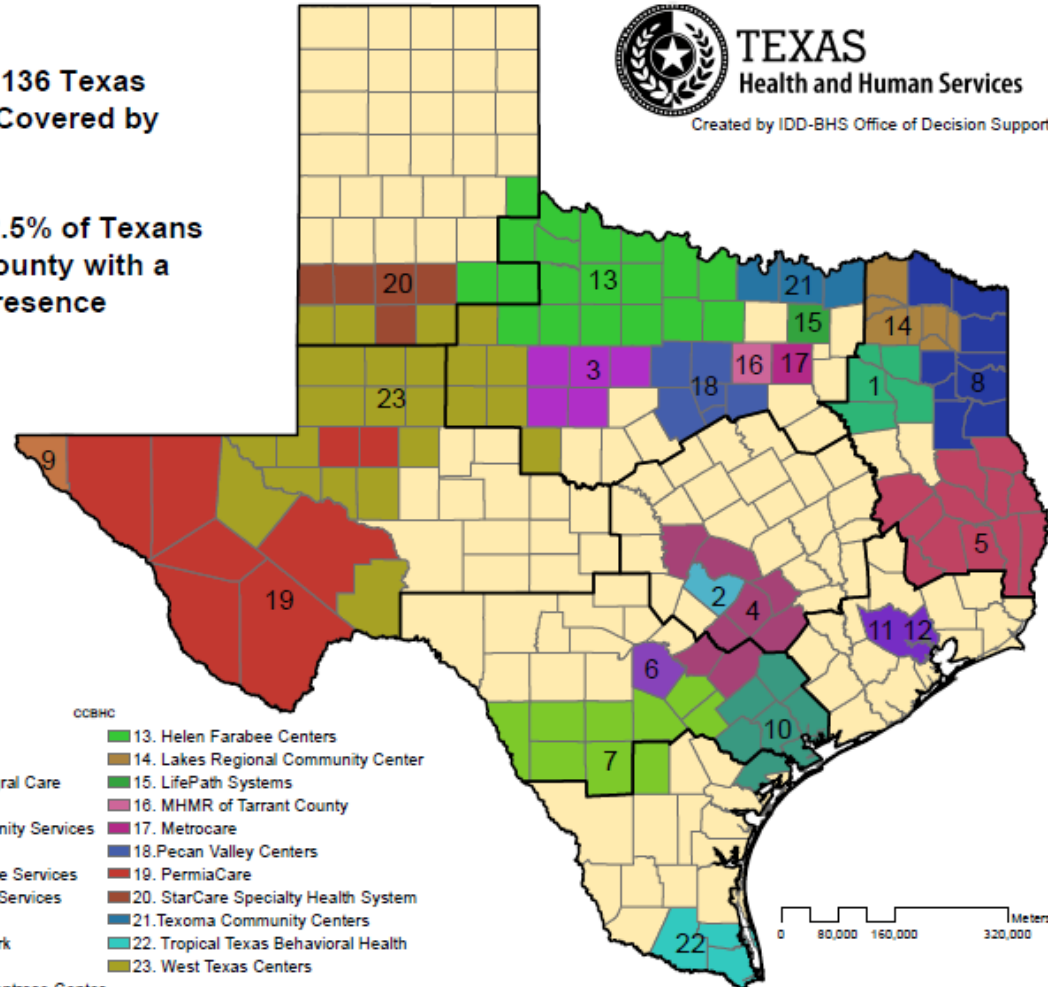
Building a Texas Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Presence (CCBHC)

- There are 136 Texas Counties Covered by CCBHCs
- Almost 72.5% of Texans live in a county with a CCBHC presence



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Effective Strategies for Serving Children (1 of 2)

Coordinated Specialty Care

Evidence-based practice and specialized treatment approach for individuals ages 15-30 with first episode psychosis. Available at 24 LMHA/LBHAs

978 individuals served, exceeding goal of 720

67%
decrease in
hospitalizations



28%
decrease in jail
admissions



69%
decrease in
crisis services



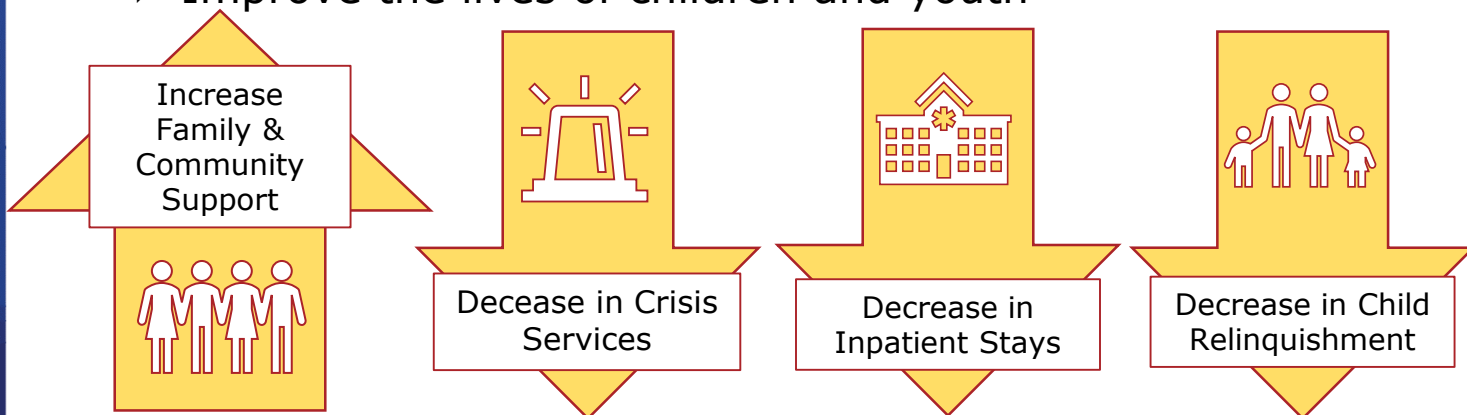


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Effective Strategies for Serving Children (2 of 2)

Youth Empowerment Services (YES) Waiver

- The YES Waiver is focused on providing an array of services to keep children out of institutions and to prevent parental relinquishment
- Annual enrollment has been between **2,600 and 2,880** the last four fiscal years
- Program goals:
 - ▶ Reduce the amount of time children are out of their home and community because of a mental health need
 - ▶ Expand available mental health services and supports
 - ▶ Improve the lives of children and youth



Community Mental Health Grant Program Children-Related Numbers

FY20 By the Numbers



**10,900+
Children
Served**

**\$3.4 million+
Funds Awarded**

**10
Counties**

**9
Projects**

**8+ Direct
Service Types**

88%
of youth in school-based
programs with measurable
improvement in prosocial
academic domains



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Mental Health First Aid Training

COVID-19 impacted training in several ways:

- Training had to be moved to a virtual platform and the National Council experienced difficulties finding an appropriate platform which led to delayed trainings
- Schools and child-serving organizations had competing priorities due to the pandemic, and often could not dedicate a full day to training
- Some schools were resistant to taking training virtually and are waiting for in-person training options to be available again
- Some rural areas have a lack of access to technology and internet

**Total Number of
Youth and Teen
MHFA Trainings
by FY**



* FY21 data is not final



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COVID-19 Federal Rescue Funds

HR133 and American Rescue Plan Act

Outpatient Capacity Expansion for Children

- Expands outpatient mental health services to address growing demand due to population growth
- Addressed funding disparities and local challenges

Housing Support Line

- Available 24/7
- Provides mental health and substance use support to people at-risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness

Coordinated Specialty Care Expansion

- Expands Coordinated Specialty Care services by adding an additional team at seven LMHA/LBHAs
- Additional 17 sites will receive funding to increase capacity through staff training

Additional Resources

- Mental Health Texas

<https://mentalhealthtx.org/>

- TRR Utilization Management Guidelines- 2016 Version: Children and Adolescents

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/behavioral-health-services-providers/behavioral-health-provider-resources/utilization-management-guidelines-manual>

- Family Guide (HHSC website)

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use/childrens-mental-health>

- YES Waiver Services

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use/childrens-mental-health/yes-waiver>

- Coordinated Specialty Care First Episode Psychosis

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/behavioral-health-services-providers/coordinated-specialty-care-first-episode-psychosis>

