



## OVERVIEW

The National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation (QIC-AG) is a five-year project working with eight sites that will implement evidence-based interventions or develop and test promising practices which, if proven effective, can be replicated or adapted in other child welfare jurisdictions. Effective interventions are expected to achieve long-term, stable permanence in adoptive and guardianship homes for waiting children as well as children and families after adoption or guardianship has been finalized.

## SITE OVERVIEW

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) works with communities to protect children, people aged 65 or older, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In addition, DFPS works to protect the health and safety of children in day-care, foster care, and other types of 24-hour care. DFPS accomplishes its mission through conducting investigations, providing services and referrals, administering regulations, and implementing prevention programs. Texas is increasing its emphasis in finding permanent families for children in foster care, a goal that is supported by the QIC-AG project.

## PROJECT GOAL

The Texas QIC-AG project aims to help children in the Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) of Texas

address issues resulting from trauma, grief, and loss by using an interactive series for caregiver families that focuses on parenting children who have trauma and loss as a part of their history.

## PERMANENCY CONTINUUM INTERVAL: FOCUSED

Texas is implementing an intervention within the Focused Interval of the QIC-AG Permanency Continuum Framework. Although many families are willing to adopt or assume guardianship of children in the child welfare system, finding permanent homes for children with challenging emotional, behavioral, or mental health issues can be difficult. In some cases, the children's issues can hinder movement toward permanence even after prospective adoptive parents or guardians have been identified. Focused services are designed to not only meet the emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of children whose needs are hindering permanence but also to enhance each family's capacity to meet the needs of their child and become permanent resources.

## TARGET POPULATION

The Texas QIC-AG project is targeting children in Texas PMC in Region 7 who meet one of the following criteria:

- » Children whose biological parents (mother and father) have had their parental rights terminated and do not have a finalization hearing scheduled within 60 days, or
- » Children whose biological parents (mother and father) have **not** had their parental rights terminated or only

partial termination of parental rights (either mother or father) has occurred and who have been in care for two years or more.

## INTERVENTION

The Texas QIC-AG project will implement **Pathways to Permanence 2: Parenting Children Who Have Experienced Trauma and Loss ©2012 Kinship Center® A Member of Seneca Family of Agencies**, developed by Kinship Center, a member of Seneca Family of Agencies. Pathways to Permanence 2 is a seven session (21 hour) interactive series for caregivers who are parenting children who have experienced trauma and loss.

Pathways to Permanence 2 will be offered to randomized and consented participants (active caregivers) across DFPS Region 7 that encompasses 30 counties. An *Active Caregiver* is an adult who is intended to be a temporary or a permanent caregiver for the child in the home, or an adult who is engaged with the child through visitation, phone calls, or therapy and who is willing to have the child return to the home.

To support Pathways to Permanence 2, DFPS will implement **ACT: An Adoption and Permanency Curriculum for Child Welfare and Mental Health Professionals ©2005 Kinship Center® Revised 2009**. ACT serves as a foundation for Pathways to Permanence 2. ACT will be implemented with DFPS staff in five counties in Region 7 that serve roughly half of the children in the target population for Pathways to Permanence 2. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) serving these five counties will be invited to participate in ACT with DFPS staff.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Texas DFPS will participate in a rigorous evaluation to examine the effectiveness of Pathways to Permanence 2. The expected long-term outcomes include:

- » Increased permanency outcomes,
- » Decreased time to finalization/permanency or decreased time in care,
- » Increased placement stability,
- » Improved child and family well-being, and
- » Improved behavioral health for children and youth.

## SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Short-term outcomes, unique to this site include the following:

- » Improved family relationships;
- » Increased caregiver resiliency;
- » Decreased caregiver strain;
- » Increased caregiver knowledge in dealing with childhood trauma, grief and loss;
- » Improved ability for caregivers to respond to challenging behaviors; and
- » Increased caregiver commitment.

As evaluators assess the overall impact of Pathways to Permanence 2, they will be looking at how staff trained in ACT will impact the outcomes of families who receive Pathways to Permanence 2.



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## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the QIC-AG visit [www.qic-ag.org](http://www.qic-ag.org) and

- » search our Intervention and Program Catalog
- » download information about the Permanency Continuum Framework
- » explore details about the eight Partner Sites

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