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CRCG Events Calendar

April 10 – Leader Training and Bridge Call
10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT

May 8 – Leader Training and Bridge Call
10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT

June 12 – Leader Training and Bridge Call
10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT

State CRCG Office Updates

2023 CRCG Recognition Awards

Congratulations to the 2023 CRCG Recognition Awards recipients! A virtual awards ceremony was held in February to recognize the awardees for their exceptional dedication to improving the lives of people and families in their communities. The ceremony included remarks by the State CRCG Office, awards announcements, and a special congratulatory group video from State CRCG Workgroup members and CRCG representatives.

The following award recipients were recognized at the ceremony:

2023 Outstanding CRCG

Ellis County CRCG

2023 Shining Star Award Recipients

Janis Burdett, M.S.

Chair of the Ellis County CRCG

Joana Padilla Zapata, LMSW

Co-Chair of the Brazoria County CRCG

Eryberto "Eddie" Subealdea

Chair of the Hale, Castro, Lamb, and Swisher Counties
CRCG

Janette Maldonado-Johnson

Chair of the Cherokee and Anderson Counties CRCG

Esmeralda Gutierrez

Coordinator of the Harris County CRCG

To view the recording of the event, visit the [GoToWebinar webpage](#).

Partner Agency Presentations

In January, the State CRCG Office team met with the new Office of Behavioral Health Strategy at the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). The team presented an overview of CRCGs across the state and was able to meet the new DFPS partners and answer questions.

Also, in January, the State CRCG Office team participated in the Education Service Centers' Mental Health and Behavioral Health Monthly Professional Learning Community meeting. The team provided an overview of counties in Texas currently not covered by a CRCG, with a goal to outreach and gain interest and support in reestablishing CRCGs in these areas.

CRCG Site Visits

Hopkins County CRCG

A welcome meeting was hosted by the State CRCG Office with Jessica Harry, new Chair of the Hopkins County CRCG. Jessica is an Investigation Program Director at DFPS. She will be leading the CRCG with the support of Dana Sills, Co-Chair, and Heather White, Recorder. The State CRCG Office enjoyed sharing CRCG resources and learning more about how the CRCG will function as they get reestablished.

Washington County CRCG

The State CRCG Office welcomes Noemi Navarro Torres, the new Data Reporter for the Washington County CRCG. Noemi represents Brenham Independent School District. She will be entering the monthly data for the CRCG and will also be supporting the Chair, Kimberlee Parmer, with other tasks as needed. In February, the State CRCG Office met with Noemi to provide a tutorial of the CRCG data collection system and review data reporting requirements.

Bell, Coryell, and Milam Counties CRCG

The Bell, Coryell, and Milam Counties CRCG has been inactive since the fall of 2023 when the CRCG leaders stepped down from their roles. There continues to be a need for the CRCG to reconvene to support people and families in these communities.

The State CRCG Office met with Dawn Owens, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Bell County Juvenile Services; Melanie Webb, Director and Founder of Righteous Roots Crisis Resource Center; and Felicia Inman, LMSW, LCDCI, Program Director of Righteous Roots Crisis Resource Center, to discuss next steps with reestablishing the CRCG. These people have been instrumental in conducting outreach with community members to gain support with reestablishing the CRCG.

An organizational meeting was held in March with community members and the State CRCG Office to discuss the structure of the CRCG, the CRCG meeting process, and to review leader and member roles. Juliethe Leon, Area Manager Juvenile Probation – Community-Based Programs, Bell County Juvenile Services, volunteered to take on the Chair role. Several other community members expressed interest in being a part of the leadership team to assist with leadership duties. The State CRCG Office looks forward to seeing how the CRCG develops and grows in the upcoming months.

McLennan County Adults CRCG

John Vorderkunz, the new Chair of the McLennan County Adults CRCG, met with the State CRCG Office to learn more about the CRCG data collection system and reporting requirements. The State CRCG Office appreciates John's dedication to leading the CRCG and taking the time to report the meeting and staffing information into the CRCG data collection system each month.

Kimble, Mason, Menard, and Schleicher Counties CRCG

The State CRCG Office welcomes Calley McSherry, the new Chair of the Kimble, Mason, Menard, and Schleicher Counties CRCG. Calley is a Juvenile Probation Officer with the 452nd Judicial District Juvenile Probation Department. In February, the State CRCG Office met with Calley to go over CRCG resources and support offered by the office. The meeting participants discussed the chair role and best practices in leading the CRCG.

Resources

CRCG Website

The [CRCG website](#) has great resources for leaders and members, including guidebooks covering all things CRCGs and resources for families and community members. Popular links include:

[CRCG Training Toolkit](#)

[CRCG Data Resources](#)

Webinar Recordings

The State CRCG Office webinars bring valuable resources and information to CRCG partners and members.

[2023 CRCG Recognition Awards Ceremony](#)

[Restorative Practices for CRCGs Webinar Series](#)

Visit the [CRCG Training and Technical Assistance webpage](#) to view other past webinar recordings.

Sharing Is Caring

Please share our newsletter with your colleagues or anyone who may benefit from this information!

Contact Us

We would love to hear from you! If you have thoughts, concerns, comments, ideas, or anything else you would like to share, please contact the State CRCG Office.

CRCG@hsc.state.tx.us

(512) 206-5255

Refugio County CRCG

The State CRCG Office welcomes the new leadership team of the Refugio County CRCG. The leadership team is made up of community members who represent the Refugio Independent School District. This includes Clarissa Rosas, Chair; Alexa Deal, Coordinator; and Samantha Meza, Secretary. The State CRCG Office was pleased to meet the new leaders in February and learn more about their roles and group structure. In addition, the meeting provided a time to go over resources and best practices for reestablishing the CRCG.

Freestone and Limestone Counties CRCG

A virtual site visit was conducted with Colette Pauley, the new Co-Chair of the Freestone and Limestone Counties CRCG. Colette is a Program Specialist II at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and works in the Health Services Region 7 Specialized Health and Social Services. She will be leading the group with Hilda Contreras, Chair of the CRCG. At the meeting, the State CRCG Office shared CRCG resources and discussed Colette's new role.

State CRCG Office Available for Virtual Technical Assistance

The State CRCG Office is available for virtual training and technical assistance, including helping to navigate virtual platforms and attending practice meetings. Please email the State CRCG Office at CRCG@hsc.state.tx.us or call (512) 206-5255 for assistance.

Spotlight on CRCGs

Welcome New CRCG Leaders

A special welcome to the new CRCG leaders who volunteered to take on key roles:

- Jessica Harry, Chair; Dana Sills, Co-Chair; and Heather White, Recorder, Hopkins County CRCG
- Calley McSherry, Chair, Kimble, Mason, Menard, and Schleicher Counties CRCG
- Clarissa Rosas, Chair; Alexa Deal, Coordinator; and Samantha Meza, Secretary, Refugio County CRCG
- Colette Pauley, Co-Chair, Freestone and Limestone Counties CRCG
- Jacqui Elmore, Co-Chair, Potter and Randall Counties Children and Youth CRCG
- Jana Irons, Chair, and Tanya Jopling, Co-Chair, Bexar County CRCG
- Ashley Peralez, Data Reporter, Lubbock County CRCG
- Noemi Navarro Torres, Data Reporter, Washington County CRCG

The State CRCG Office appreciates the time and commitment these leaders devote to supporting their local CRCGs and communities.

To share success stories for upcoming newsletters, email the State CRCG Office at CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us.

Upcoming CRCG Events

Monthly Leader Training and Bridge Call

The monthly leader training and bridge call, hosted by the State CRCG Office, offers time to provide training and technical assistance to CRCG leaders and answer questions, as well as an opportunity for leaders to share ideas, discuss challenges, and network. A portion of these sessions is dedicated to regional cohort breakout rooms for leaders to connect and build partnerships with other CRCGs in their region.

All CRCG leaders are welcome and encouraged to join each month. The training occurs every second Wednesday of the month from 10:00 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. CT. A calendar invite is sent to all CRCG leaders with the meeting information. Upcoming dates and times include:

- April 10, 2024, 10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT / 9:00-10:30 a.m. MDT
- May 8, 2024, 10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT / 9:00-10:30 a.m. MDT
- June 12, 2024, 10:00-11:30 a.m. CDT / 9:00-10:30 a.m. MDT

For questions or more information, please contact the State CRCG Office at CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us.

CRCG Partner Agency Updates

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Office of Mental Health Coordination

Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training introduces participants to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use concerns, builds understanding of their impact, and gives an overview of common treatments and resources.

Adult, youth, and teen MHFA trainings are available to community members across the state through the local mental health and behavioral health authorities. More information on how to enroll in a course can be found at [Mental Health First Aid | Texas Health and Human Services](#).

Mental Health and Substance Use Programs

Behavioral Health Housing Hotline

The behavioral health housing hotline can be accessed at (855) 802-0014. This number is available statewide 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to help people facing housing instability or homelessness, with a focus on people dealing with mental health or substance use issues.

Texas Department of State Health Services

Children with Special Health Care Needs Systems Development Group

The [Children with Special Health Care Needs \(CSHCN\) Systems Development Group](#) supports population-based services for children with special health care needs relating to the Title V Block Grant and is part of the Maternal and Child Health Section at the DSHS.

The program partners with [community-based contractors](#) around Texas to provide support for families with children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities. Services may include in-home or center-based respite, parent-to-parent connections, educational trainings and workshops, support groups, community recreational activities, and more. Not all services are available in all parts of the state. Case management for families is also available through DSHS regional offices.

Program resources on transitioning to adult health care, community inclusion, medical home, and more are free and can be ordered on the [DSHS Resource Order Form webpage](#).

Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative

The CSHCN Systems Development Group leads the statewide [Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative](#) quarterly webinars to share knowledge, implementation strategies, new resources, and best or promising practices. The meetings are open to everyone interested, including youth and young adults, parents, providers, community organizations, hospital and university systems, educators, and health plans.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, 2024, noon-1:30 p.m. CDT. Angela Standridge, Director of the Texas Technology Access Program (TTAP) will be our guest and present "Assistive Technology (AT) and Transition." Angela will provide a general overview of the TTAP services to support Texans with disabilities, explore supports for appropriate AT devices in K-12 and post-secondary settings, and discuss strategies for end users to advocate for the AT devices and services they need to access community, education, and employment. To receive the link to register, please email ivy.goldstein@dshs.texas.gov. Please bring your questions and share this information with others who may be interested!

For more information about the Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative and CSHCN Systems Development Group initiatives, please email Ivy Goldstein, State CSHCN Health Coordinator at ivy.goldstein@dshs.texas.gov.

Texas Education Agency

2024 Mental and Behavioral Health Webinar Series

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Safe and Supportive Schools Division and Project AWARE Texas partners will be hosting a series of virtual webinars on the second Thursday of the month from April to June 2024, from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CDT. The webinar series will highlight resources and best practice strategies on timely and relevant safe and supportive schools' topics. Topics will include school mental health, substance abuse prevention, school discipline, early mental health interventions, approaches to whole child student support, and building community partnerships to increase capacity. Continuing Professional Education credits will be made available to those who attend the full live session.

Register for each webinar on the [2024 Mental and Behavioral Health Webinar Series Event webpage](#).

Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness and Human Trafficking Webinar Series

Educators are in a unique position to recognize, report, and help prevent child abuse and human trafficking. Educators are vital in recognizing the warning signs of abused or neglected students and guiding potential victims to available resources and support. This webinar series is a collaboration of state and regional agencies to assist and support school leaders with fulfilling their mandated duties and requirements concerning child abuse and neglect and promoting the well-being and safety of all Texas school students.

This webinar series will be hosted by the TEA via Zoom. It is open to all Education Service Centers, Local Education Agencies, and community partners.

The final webinar in the series titled "Internet and Social Media Safety Awareness" will be held on May 3, 2024, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. CDT. To register, visit the [Zoom Webinar Registration webpage](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

For questions, please email preventinghumantrafficking@tea.texas.gov.

Other News and Events

2nd Annual Kids Living Well Education Summit

Join Region 13 Education Service Center for the 2nd Annual Kids Living Well Education Summit on April 18, 2024, in Austin, Texas. This year, the summit is focusing on increasing and building bridges between community health care personnel, educators, and parents. This will be a collaborative and interactive day of learning from highly qualified speakers and educators from both the medical field and the field of education. Let's all come together to "Connect the Dots for Kids Mental Health"!

To learn more, visit the [Kids Living Well 2024 Summit webpage](#).

Thrive Fest – Children’s Mental Health Acceptance Day

The Boys & Girls Club of the Austin Area (BGCAA), Texas System of Care (TxSOC), and Austin Independent School District Afterschool Centers on

Education (ACE Austin) program have announced they will collaborate on an event leading up to Children’s Mental Health Acceptance Week called Thrive Fest: A Showcase Celebrating Youth Wellbeing.

Thrive Fest, which will focus on supporting youth mental health and well-being, will take place on Saturday, April 27, 2024, from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. CDT at BGCAA’s Home Club on the Sheth Family Campus.

In the past, each organization has organized their own recurring events around mental health, youth empowerment and development, or resource sharing. This year, BGCAA, TxSOC, and ACE Austin will join forces to create a fun, informative festival for young people and their families. Attendees can expect to see live student performances, distinguished speakers from the community, engaging activities, and meet various organizations with tangible mental health resources for families.

Thrive Fest is free and open to the public and will provide food, drinks, and a shuttle service. Find out more at thrivefest2024.org, or email Miguel Guerrero at miguel.guerrero@bgcaustin.org.

2024 System of Care Virtual Summit, All Systems Go: Taking Action Together

The 2024 System of Care Virtual Summit (SOC Summit) will be hosted by the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth, and Family Mental Health virtually on May 14-16, 2024. The SOC Summit is an opportunity for all children’s mental health partners to reunite, renew, and re-energize their efforts to support children and young people with behavioral health needs, as well as their families. The event is free to all participants.

To learn more, visit the [SOC Summit webpage](#).

41st Annual Texas Network of Youth Services’ Conference on Services to Youth and Families

Registration is open for the 41st Annual Texas Network of Youth Services’ (TNOYS) Conference on Services to Youth Families, a flagship event bringing together over 400 professionals who serve youth and young adults. Join TNOYS June 4-7, 2024, in Houston, Texas for a week of networking, inspirational speakers, and more than 40 workshops led by experts and young people with lived experience. Over 14 continuing education units will be available, including for licensed social workers, licensed professional counselors, and licensed marriage and family therapists.

To learn more, visit the [41st Annual TNOYS' Conference on Services to Youth and Families webpage](#).

First Episode Psychosis Virtual Conference 2024

The First Episode Psychosis (FEP) Virtual Conference 2024, hosted by the South Southwest Mental Health Technology Transfer Center, will be held virtually on June 5-6, 2024. This year's theme, Pausing with Purpose, emphasizes the importance of human connection in effective FEP care. It encourages building genuine relationships and intentionally pausing to deepen connections.

The conference also highlights the significance of understanding oppression and diversity in perspective. The conference is open to people who are committed to transforming FEP care, including providers, researchers, and those with lived experience. There is no cost to participate.

To learn more, visit the [FEP Virtual Conference 2024 webpage](#).

27th Annual Texas Council Conference

The 27th Annual Texas Council Conference, hosted by the Texas Council of Community Centers, will be held June 17-19, 2024, at the Grand Hyatt San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas. The conference brings together local, state, and national experts to share perspectives on best practices for integrated health, person-directed and recovery-based services, Mental Health First Aid, public policy, peer support, and other promising practices affecting people with serious mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders.

To learn more, visit the [Annual Texas Council Conference webpage](#).

32nd Annual Texas Autism Conference

The 32nd Annual Texas Autism Conference, hosted by TEA, will be held on June 20-22, 2024, in Austin, Texas and virtually. The conference's goal is to promote increased awareness and understanding of evidence-based practices, interventions, standards, and services in the area of autism. It provides professional development and networking opportunities for families, students, educators, and professionals.

To learn more, visit the [Texas Autism Conference webpage](#).

2024 Texas School Safety Conference

Registration is open for the 2024 Texas School Safety Conference, hosted by Texas State University's Texas School Safety Center, on June 23-27, 2024, in San Antonio, Texas. This conference will take a deep dive into current trends, best practices, and innovative, evidence-based approaches in school safety and security. Learn from leading experts in the fields of school behavioral threat assessment, emergency management, school-based law enforcement, and mental health. You can also hear from your peers throughout the state about strategies to effectively engage educators, law enforcement, and community members to promote positive cultures of safety and preparedness.

To learn more, visit the [Texas School Safety Conference webpage](#).

19th Annual Statewide Parent Conference

Save the date for the 19th Annual Statewide Parent Conference, hosted by Texas Parent to Parent, on August 9-10, 2024, in San Marcos, Texas. The conference helps Texas parents learn how to deal with the unique issues and challenges they face daily in caring for their children. The two-day conference offers 50 different sessions within several tracks, each covering a different topic. The tracks include: advocacy (general and legislative), parenting and sibling issues (and a Sibshop), special education law (basic to advanced), medical issues (including Medical Home and Medicaid Waiver Programs), behavior, mental health, parent leadership, resources and services, self-advocacy, transition issues for youth and young adults with disabilities, and creating a good life for people with disabilities.

To learn more, visit the [Texas Parent to Parent Statewide Parent Conference webpage](#).

2024 Partners in Prevention Conference

Save the date for the 2024 Partners in Prevention (PIP) Conference, hosted by DFPS, on November 19-21, 2024, in Denton, Texas. The PIP Conference is the largest yearly gathering of prevention and early intervention professionals in Texas. The conference attracts parent educators, youth service providers, civic leaders, policy advocates, researchers, DFPS staff, Prevention and Early Intervention grantees, and others with a professional interest in child and family well-being, youth development, and juvenile justice.

To learn more, visit the [2024 PIP Conference webpage](#).