

In this issue...

- [State CRCG Office Updates](#)
- [CRCG Site Visits](#)
- [Spotlight on CRCGs](#)
- [Upcoming CRCG Events](#)
- [CRCG Partner Agency Updates](#)
- [Other News and Events](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Sharing Is Caring](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

CRCG Events Calendar

October 9 – Leader Training and Bridge Call 10-11:30 a.m. CDT

November 13 – Leader Training and Bridge Call 10-11:30 a.m. CST

State CRCG Office Updates

CRCG Regional Coordinators

The State CRCG Office welcomed six new CRCG Regional Coordinators to the team this summer. These positions will support CRCGs, operating locally, by providing targeted outreach, engagement, training, and technical assistance to strengthen CRCGs in coordinating community mental health services for children and adults. Read below to learn more about each team member.

Eira Aguilera, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Eira Aguilera is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) Regions 9 and 10. She holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and graduated from Purdue Global with a master's degree in human services.

Eira has several years' experience with child welfare in Texas and Alaska. Most recently, Eira has worked with El Paso County spearheading a new program to make legal services accessible to many of the community's most at-risk citizens regarding family law matters.

Eira's strength-based modality makes her a fierce advocate for her community. In her free time, Eira loves to travel with her husband and their two daughters, seeing the world through their eyes.

Charlene Green, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Charlene Green is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for HHS Regions 3 and 4. She started her career with the State of Texas at the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) in 2018 as a Conservatorship Specialist, Residential Child Care Investigator Supervisor and then as a Program Specialist VI with Child Care Investigations.

Charlene received her Bachelor of Arts in anthropology from the University of North Texas and began her journey in the child abuse field with the Hunt County Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) in 2010. While at the CAC, Charlene had the privilege to serve as the Program Director of Forensic Services while also maintaining her role as the lead Forensic Interviewer.

Charlene has focused most of her work coordinating agencies on all levels to better serve children and families with complex needs. She believes that together we can achieve anything and is proud to join the State CRCG Office, where she can continue supporting and advocating for individuals and families. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history."

Ruby Vidaurre, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Ruby Vidaurre is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for HHS Regions 1 and 2. She has an associate degree as a certified legal assistant from South Plains College – Levelland, bachelor's degree in social work from Lubbock Christian University and a master's degree in social work from the University of Texas at Arlington.

Ruby began her journey as a parent liaison for many years as she worked to obtain her bachelor's degree. She then provided social service assistance to children and their families in primarily low economic areas. Ruby also served on the Crisis Intervention Team providing crisis counseling, on-site social services to children and their families during

difficult times. She was recently employed by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) as a social worker providing case management assistance to children with disabilities. Prior to DSHS, Ruby was employed with the Lubbock Independent School District.

Ruby was born and raised in Lubbock, Texas. She is married to her husband Andrew, has three daughters – Amber, Stephanie, and Abigail – and five grandchildren – Adrienne, Manolo, Marcelo, Avery, and Miguel. She also has six grand dogs, one cat and several fish! Ruby enjoys reading and gardening. Recently, she began a new wellness approach by exercising more and changing her diet to help improve health issues.

Ruby looks forward to being a part of the State CRCG Office and shares one of her favorite quotes: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” - African Proverb

Jennifer Rock, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Jennifer Rock is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for HHS Region 7. She graduated from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor with a Bachelor of Science in social work and later earned a Master of Science in social work from the University of Texas at Austin.

She began her social work journey as a Social Services Coordinator at a low-income housing complex in Temple. This was a wonderful opportunity to work with clients of all ages. The job included after-school clubs, youth group, organizing activities for senior citizens, organizing a job training program and parenting group, and more.

Jennifer’s next learning experience came from a 28-year career with Child Protective Services (CPS). While at CPS, she worked as an Investigator in Coryell County and then a Conservatorship Worker for Bell County for eight years. She was hired for the initiative of the Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) program as the initial Family Group Conference Coordinator in the counties of Burnet, Llano, Blanco, Lampasas and surrounding counties.

Jennifer was then promoted to Program Manager over the FGDM program in Austin covering 15 counties in southern Region 7 and served in that role for over 13 years. As a CPS representative, she participated in several CRCGs covering many counties.

Jennifer is originally from Austin with close connections to extended family members in the area. Her free time is spent hiking, gardening, home projects

with her husband and recently taking up pickle ball. She is a proud mom to her 16-year-old son. In her house, there is a zoo of animals, the quirkiest being an energetic blue heeler and the loudest a talkative parrot.

Lisette Spraggins, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Lisette Spraggins is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for HHS Regions 5 and 6. She is a Special Education Consultant who has served at Region 14 Education Service Center in Abilene, Texas, and Region 4 Education Service Center in Houston, Texas. There she enhanced special education services and fostered community partnerships to support students and families. At Region 14, she developed training programs for Foster Care and Response to Intervention, collaborated with organizations to create an annual Community Resource Roundup, and implemented a website to coordinate CRCG referrals and resources. During her tenure at Region 4, she directed the Victims of Crime Advocacy Grant at Santa Fe Independent School District and oversaw Region 4 Wellness Counselors using a System of Care approach and an Integrated Systems Framework for Mental Health.

Her responsibilities at both Education Service Centers included professional development and coaching on special education, Multi-Tiered System of Support frameworks for academic, behavioral, mental health supports and Restorative Practices. Lisette supported local education agencies with data analysis and compliance, represented both regions in various educational networks, and strengthened the connection between schools and CRCGs. Her role involved strategic planning, training, ensuring compliance with state and federal laws, and promoting inclusive and supportive learning environments. She has presented at both state and international conferences and is a contributing author of "Peers as Change Agents," Chapter 16: Restorative and Conflict Resolution Interventions, Oxford University Press.

Lisette approaches her work with enthusiasm and has a genuine passion for supporting youth, families and caregivers with vital resources. Beyond her professional accomplishments, she is an avid artist who enjoys oil painting and creating pottery. Lisette also loves traveling the world, which enriches her life and work with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Raquel Ballesteros, CRCG Regional Coordinator



Raquel Ballesteros is the CRCG Regional Coordinator for HHS Regions 8 and 11. Her professional background spans higher education initiatives, clinical counseling and public health projects at local, state and federal levels.

Raquel holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology and two master's degrees in mental health counseling and public health, with a focus on health promotion program planning and evaluation. She is dually licensed in the state of Texas, holding credentials as a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor - Intern. Her experience in providing behavioral health services to individuals in public health Region 11 has given her valuable insights into addressing the diverse needs of the community.

Residing in Harlingen, Texas, Raquel enjoys cooking, reading, playing the piano and exploring the nature parks of the Rio Grande Valley in her free time.

Nominations Open for the 2024 CRCG Recognition Awards

The State CRCG Office is excited to announce the 2024 CRCG Recognition Awards! We are currently seeking nominations to acknowledge the dedication and accomplishments of local CRCGs, their leaders and members across Texas.

There are two nomination categories this year:

- CRCG Shining Star Award
- Outstanding CRCG Award

We encourage CRCG Shining Star Award nominations for CRCG leaders and members who exemplify knowledge, service, dedication to their CRCG and make a positive difference in their community. The Outstanding CRCG Award is for CRCGs who exemplify service, dedication and make a positive impact on their community. Nominations are open to anyone who has been impacted by or knows of the great work CRCGs do. CRCG leaders can self-nominate or nominate another CRCG. The deadline to submit nomination forms is

November 8, 2024. To complete a nomination form, visit the [Outstanding CRCG Award Nomination Form](#) and [Shining Star Award Nomination Form](#).

2025 Texas System of Care and CRCG Conference

Planning has started for the 2025 Texas System of Care (TxSOC) and CRCG Conference! The TxSOC and State CRCG Office teams had a kick-off planning meeting on August 29, 2024. A conference planning committee that includes CRCG leaders and other key partners will be formed to help guide and plan the conference, from determining the conference theme to choosing topics and speakers. More information about the conference will be shared as it becomes available.

CRCG Site Visits

Tri-County CRCG

The State CRCG Office met with Audrianna Esser, Tri-County CRCG chair (Bastrop, Fayette and Lee counties), in August. At the meeting, participants discussed the CRCG memorandum of understanding, responsibilities of the referring entity and member roles and participation requirements. Technical assistance was provided on best practices for engaging youth and families in staffings. Further, outreach and marketing materials for community events was discussed.

Bailey and Parmer Counties CRCG

In August, a welcome meeting was held with Bailey and Parmer counties CRCG Chair, Fallon Garcia. At the meeting, the State CRCG Office reviewed new CRCG leader resources, including the task delegation worksheet, and reviewed the CRCG data reporting requirements and resources.

State CRCG Office Available for Virtual Technical Assistance

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

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](#)

Webinar Recordings

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

[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

Spotlight on CRCGs

Welcome New CRCG Leaders

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

- **Fallon Garcia**, Bailey and Parmer Counties CRCG Chair
- **Nicholas Simons**, Collin County CRCG Chair
- **Teri Trull**, Kimble, Mason, Menard and Schleicher Counties CRCG Chair
- **Danna Graham**, Delta, Lamar and Red River Counties CRCG Chair
- **Gabby Bonner**, Denton County CRCG Chair
- **BJ Green**, Yoakum County CRCG Co-Chair
- **Gina Perez**, Castro, Hale, Lamb and Swisher Counties CRCG Secretary and Data Reporter
- **Victoria Crooks**, Brown County CRCG Chair
- **Lacey Doster**, Cochran and Hockley Counties CRCG Co-Chair

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@hsc.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. In addition, it serves 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 10-11:30 a.m. CT. A calendar invite is sent to all CRCG leaders with the meeting information. Upcoming dates and times include:

- October 9, 2024, 10-11:30 a.m. CDT / 9-10:30 a.m. MDT
- November 13, 2024, 10-11:30 a.m. CST / 9-10:30 a.m. MST

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

Texas System of Care

Quarterly Community Calls

The Texas System of Care (TxSOC) team holds Quarterly Community Calls to bring together people who are currently implementing a system of care approach to mental health services and supports in their communities, as well as those wanting to learn more about the system of care philosophy, principles and values. During the August 15 Quarterly Community Call, Sonia Hartman with Travis County Health and Human Services presented on the Children's Partnership of Travis County. She discussed best practices and challenges of sustaining a local system of care framework and highlighted the importance of collaborating with partners and incorporating system of care values. The call was recorded and is available on the [TxSOC YouTube webpage](#). For more information and to receive emails about networking and training events for providers and supporters of the system of care approach in the state of Texas, sign up for the TxSOC distribution list on the [TxSOC Networking Group webpage](#).

Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee

The Children and Youth Behavioral Health Subcommittee (CYBHS) provides recommendations on children and youth behavioral health topics and serves as the advisory body for the Texas System of Care. The next CYBHS meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2024, from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. CDT. To view the

public agenda and join the call virtually, visit the [Behavioral Health Advisory Committee webpage](#). For more information on CYBHS, or to watch recordings or previous meetings, visit the [TxSOC CYBHS webpage](#).

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. To find a training, visit the [Mental Health Texas Resources webpage](#).

Trauma-Informed Care

[Texas Health and Human Services](#) is proud to announce the new [Trauma-Informed Care webpage](#). In addition to providing a basic description of trauma-informed care, a new flyer has been created (attached) to provide people with general information about the six principles of trauma-informed care and how it can be used by service providers and systems of care. Take a moment to visit the HHS website and share these new resources with your network.

Texas Network of Youth Services

Texas Network of Youth Services Named a Recipient of HUD's Youth Homelessness System Improvement Grants

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded \$2 million to Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS), a statewide member network that strengthens services and support for young Texans experiencing or vulnerable to homelessness, foster care, juvenile justice and other systems. Support from HUD will power TNOYS' work to address urgent challenges in youth homelessness response, and there are many opportunities for CRCG members to get involved. Please [subscribe to TNOYS' newsletter](#) to learn about upcoming opportunities, such as listening sessions and regional capacity-building events, or email info@tnoys.org.

Registration Now Open: Strengthen Your Youth Engagement with New TNOYS Training Series

Is your organization looking to engage youth and young adults with lived

experience more meaningfully? TNOYS' Blueprint for Youth Engagement is a first-of-its-kind, virtual training series on strategies to partner with young people and center their voices effectively. Whether you are new to youth engagement or looking to enhance or scale existing programs, this series has something for everyone who works in youth-serving systems. Trainings take place on October 3, 10, 17 and 31, as well as November 7, 2024. Register for individual trainings or the full series at tnoys.org/events.

Texas Department of State Health Services

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Systems Development Group

The [Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs \(CYSHCN\) 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 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 CYSHCN Systems Development Group leads the statewide [Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative](#) (TALC) 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. Please email CSHCNSDG@dshs.texas.gov to join or learn more about TALC.

Other News and Events

Healthier Texas Summit

It's Time Texas, in collaboration with the University of Texas System, will host the Healthier Texas Summit on October 10-11, 2024, in Austin, Texas. The conference brings together thought leaders and health champions to connect, share innovative ideas and cultivate cross-sector relationships essential for building a healthier Texas. To learn more, visit the [Healthier Texas Summit website](#).

2024 National Alliance on Mental Illness Texas Conference and Awards Celebration

Every year, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas hosts an annual conference and awards celebration to bring together individuals and families affected by mental illness, service providers and the broader mental health community. This year's conference will be on November 7-9, 2024, in El Paso, Texas. Conference events highlight innovations in the mental health field and provide opportunities for networking and celebration. With exciting keynotes, informative workshops, a lively exhibit hall, continuing education credit, networking opportunities, and surprises, the conference has something for everyone. To learn more, visit the [NAMI Texas Annual Conference webpage](#).

48th Annual Convention of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Texas Chapter

Registration is open for the 48th Annual Convention of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) Texas Chapter: Aim for the "I" in AAIDD. The AAIDD Texas Chapter will host the convention on November 12-15, 2024, in Galveston, Texas. The convention hopes to draw professionals, direct support staff, self-advocates and family members with an interest in all the issues facing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. To learn more, visit the [AAIDD Texas Chapter Convention webpage](#).

2024 Partners in Prevention Conference

DFPS will host the 2024 Partners in Prevention (PIP) Conference 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](#).

7th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health

The Supreme Court of Texas and the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals will host the 7th Annual Judicial Summit on Mental Health on November 21-22, 2024, either in person in Allen, Texas or virtually. The Summit will include opportunities to connect with colleagues, establish new relationships and engage in learning sessions designed to be inspiring yet practical. Participants will receive tools to help navigate the complex mental health laws. To learn more, visit the [Judicial Summit on Mental Health website](#).