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## **CRCG Events Calendar**

**April 15** – CRCG Family Representative Training, 1-2 p.m. CDT

**April 20** – CRCG Bridge Call, 2-3 p.m. CDT

**May 18** – CRCG Bridge Call, 2-3 p.m. CDT

**June 15** – CRCG Bridge Call, 2-3 p.m. CDT

**July 27 – 29** – 2021 CRCG and TxSOC Conference

## **State CRCG Office Updates**

### **Save the Date: 2021 Texas System of Care (TxSOC) and CRCG Conference**

Please save the date for the 2021 TxSOC and CRCG Conference, which will be virtual, July 27-29, 2021. This year's conference theme is Finding the Spark: Inspiring Authentic Collaborations in Our Communities. This interagency conference will bring together youth, family members, state leaders, child-serving providers, and community leaders to learn how to implement innovative strategies, to shift from coordination to collaboration, participate in networking opportunities, and share best practices. CEUs will be available at the conference. The State CRCG Office and TxSOC would like to thank the CRCG leaders and other planning group members who have volunteered to help plan the conference. For more information, visit the [TxSOC website](#) or email Kisha Ledlow at [kisha.ledlow@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:kisha.ledlow@hhs.texas.gov).

## **CRCG Site Visits**

### **State CRCG Office Site Visits**

The State CRCG Office met with community leaders of Williamson County in March to discuss CRCG sustainability and identify new leaders. The discussion was robust, and the participants agreed that a shared leadership structure would be the best approach to support sustainability. The county has a long history of strong cross-system collaboration and

## 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. Recently updated resources include:

[Information for Your CRCG Meeting](#)

[Non-Educational Funds One Pager](#)

### Webinar Recordings

The State CRCG Office webinars bring valuable resources and information to CRCG partners and members. Click the links below to view previous recordings.

[Working with and Engaging with Youth Series Part Five: Engaging Youth of Color](#)

[State Level Crisis Counseling Program \(CCP\) Overview and Self-Care Training](#)

### Sharing Is Caring

Please share our newsletter with your colleagues or anyone that might benefit from this information!

### Contact Us

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

[CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us)

**512-206-5255**

the new leaders exemplify this approach. Toniya Parker, Program Expansion Coordinator for NAMI Central Texas, is the new CRCG Chair. Julie Calhoun-Bijou, Case Manager for Williamson County Juvenile Services will be sharing Co-Chair responsibilities with Dawn Jennings, Georgetown Independent School District Special Education Parent Liaison.

The State CRCG Office will be working with the new leaders to create a sustainability plan that includes increased state partner participation. We would like to thank these leaders for their support and volunteering to take on these roles.

If you're interested in training or technical assistance support, contact the State CRCG Office at [CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us).

## Spotlight on CRCGs

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### 2020 CRCG Recognition Awards

The State CRCG Office would like to congratulate and thank all the phenomenal nominees and awardees of the 2020 CRCG Recognition Awards. A virtual awards ceremony was held in March to recognize the awardees for their exceptional dedication to improving the lives of individuals and families in their communities. The ceremony was well attended by CRCG leaders, agency partners, and community members. The ceremony featured remarks by Dr. Courtney Harvey, Mental Health Statewide Coordinator and HHSC Office of Mental Health Coordination Associate Commissioner, awards announcements, and a special dedication to Cathy Brock, former CRCG leader and valued community member.

The following recipients were recognized at the ceremony:

## 2020 Outstanding CRCG of the Year Award Recipient

### Grayson County CRCG

## 2020 Shining Star Award Recipients

### Monica Rodriguez

Youth and Family Program Manager at Tropical Texas Behavioral Health and  
Co-Chair of the Hidalgo County CRCG

### Patricia Arnold

Juvenile Probation Officer in Cass County and Chair of the Bowie, Cass, and  
Marion Counties CRCG

### Susie Kirk

Community Partners for Children and the Travis County CRCG Liaison

### Takoya Jackson

LMSW and Coordinator of the Harris County CRCG

### William Barber

LMSW and Chair of the Grayson County CRCG and Fannin County CRCG

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

The State CRCG Office acknowledges efforts and successes of various CRCGs.  
To share success stories for upcoming newsletters, email  
[CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us).

## Upcoming CRCG Events

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### CRCG Bridge Call Series

The State CRCG Office offers a monthly bridge call for local CRCG leaders and members to share ideas, discuss challenges, and network. Bridge calls are held every third Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. (CT). Mark your calendars for the upcoming bridge calls and join other CRCGs for collaborative discussions!

CRCG members can contact their CRCG leaders for registration information. For questions or additional information, please email the [State CRCG Office](#).

- April 20, 2021, 2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. CDT / 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. MDT
- May 18, 2021, 2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. CDT / 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. MDT
- June 15, 2021, 2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. CDT / 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. MDT

## **CRCG Webinar**

### **Strengthening Your CRCG with Family Representation**

April 15, 2021 from 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. CDT

On this month's webinar, join CRCG Family Representatives from around Texas for an overview of the CRCG family representative role. This discussion will review typical duties and expectations of a family representative or member with lived experience and provide strategies for identifying partners to fill the role.

A certificate of attendance will be sent after the session.

Register online for the webinar at [Strengthening Your CRCG with Family Representation](#).

Recordings for past webinars in the series are available online on the [CRCG resources webpage](#).

## **CRCG Partner Agency Updates**

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### **Health and Human Services Commission**

#### **Early Childhood Intervention Program**

During such unprecedented times, it is important to recognize that children's social, emotional, and mental health may be affected directly and indirectly. There are many resources and supports available to parents as they help navigate the challenges children may experience through the pandemic. Check out these resources:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a [COVID-19 Parental Resource Kit: Ensuring Children and Young People's Social, Emotional, and Mental Well-being](#) to help support parents, caregivers, and other adults in recognizing children and young people's social, emotional, and mental health challenges and helping to ensure their well-being.
- Families, parents, and caregivers who take care of children with special health care needs are strong and resilient. Still, it's hard not to feel stressed or anxious in these unprecedented times. [Healthychildren.org](#) provides a message of "Coping & Staying Strong", located in the middle of the webpage, which provides tips and ideas for managing anxiety for parents and caregivers and ways they can monitor their child's mental health.

- Parents of children with developmental delays or disabilities may need extra assistance and resources for their child during the challenges many are facing with the pandemic and its possible isolation. [Read Dr. Jennifer Poon's](#) response to a parent's question on how the parent can help their child cope during COVID-19. She provides several practical recommendations and simple things parents can do to help their child understand and adjust.

## **Department of State Health Services**

### **Children with Special Health Care Needs**

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 Texas 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.

The program leads two statewide learning collaboratives that meet quarterly by webinar to share knowledge, implementation strategies, and best practices. The meetings are open to everyone interested including youth and young adults, parents, providers as well as representatives from local community organizations, hospital and university systems, and health care plans. Information on upcoming meetings:

#### **Medical Home Learning Collaborative**

April 13, 2021 from 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. CDT

Sue Bornstein MD, FACP and Ankit Sanghavi, BDS, MPH, will be presenting findings from their newly released report "Making Primary Care Primary: Prescription for the Health of all Texas." Register online for the event at [Medical Home Learning Collaborative](#).

#### **Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative**

May 12, 2021 from Noon-1:30 p.m. CDT

Jennifer Hines, State Neurodevelopmental Program Specialist with the Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Texas Workforce Commission, will be presenting "Vocational Rehabilitation: What it is and how it serves people

with disabilities.” Jennifer will provide an overview of vocational rehabilitation services in Texas, including specialized services for people with neurodiversity (e.g., Autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and Learning/Intellectual Disorders). Register online for the event at [Transition to Adulthood Learning Collaborative](#).

For more information about the Learning Collaboratives and the CSHCN program, email Ivy Goldstein, State CSHCN Health Coordinator at [ivy.goldstein@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:ivy.goldstein@dshs.texas.gov).

## **Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs**

TDHCA has received approximately \$1.3 billion in Emergency Rental Assistance funds from the newly passed Coronavirus Relief Bill Rental Assistance Program. TDHCA is using the funds to help Texas renters pay rent and utility bills (including past due rent and utilities).

The Texas Rent Relief program can help with the following costs starting as far back as March 13, 2020:

- Past due, current, and up to three months of expected rent, utility, and home energy expenses.
- After the initial three months of forward assistance, households can apply for three additional months of assistance, if funds are still available.

Households must have incomes at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income and meet other qualifications.

TDHCA's Texas Rent Relief program website and phone systems are up and running and ready to answer questions. TDHCA is now accepting applications from landlords and tenants. Learn more and apply online at [TexasRentRelief.com](https://TexasRentRelief.com) or by phone at 833-9TX-RENT (833-989-7368).

## **Other News and Events**

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### **2021 Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest Calendar**

The Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest is an annual event hosted in collaboration between Texas System of Care, The Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health at the University of Texas at Austin, and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. The contest provides a platform for students and adults across the state to answer the prompt, "Why Does Mental Health Matter to You?" by submitting original creative content. To recognize the numerous high-quality entries submitted to the art

contest and to promote mental health awareness throughout the entire year, HHSC created a digital calendar to raise mental health awareness. You can download the calendar from the [TEXAS Mental Health Creative Arts Contest webpage](#). This calendar features last year's winning and honorable mention artwork submitted by children and adults around Texas. Please use the artwork to start conversations about mental health. Through this art, we hope you will be encouraged to stand up to stigma and help others recognize that all people have value and are not defined by mental health challenges. For more information, visit the [TEXAS Mental Health Creative Art Contest Shatter Mental Health Stigma through Art webpage](#) or follow Texas System of Care on Twitter @txsystemofcare for updates.

### **2021 Children's Mental Health Awareness Day**

The annual Children's Mental Health Awareness Day event, which typically features a day of activities and a rally in downtown Austin, Texas, will launch virtually on May 3, 2021 and will run through the end of the month. HHS and the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health at the University of Texas at Austin will host a free, family-friendly experience. This year's interactive, virtual event, aimed at children and youth of all ages and families, will feature activities, games, and resources promoting the importance of talking about mental health. There will be video testimonials from youth, families, state leaders, and nonprofit organizations along with a virtual exhibitor fair to connect families with resources. To stay up to date on Children's Mental Health Awareness Day activities, please visit [txsystemofcare.org](http://txsystemofcare.org).

### **38th Annual TNOYS Conference on Services to Youth and Families**

The 38th Annual Texas Network of Youth Services' (TNOYS) Conference on Services to Youth and Families will be virtual on June 8-11, 2021. Guided by the theme Rooted In Power, the conference will inspire attendees to dig into the unique skills and experiences that can help them grow their impact on youth and family services. Conference registration is now open. To learn more and to register, visit the [TNOYS 2021 annual conference](#) webpage.

### **Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research Seeking New Members for Youth Advisory Board**

The University of Massachusetts Medical School's Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research is looking for new members for the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to have their voice heard and to help shape the future of young adult mental health research and services. YAB is part of the [Stakeholder](#)

[Engagement Program](#). The Stakeholder Engagement Program's mission is to lead the mental health research community and beyond in working in partnership with individuals with lived mental health experience, their families, and the agencies that serve them. Participants must be 18 to 30 years of age with a self-identified mental health condition. Participants are compensated \$30 an hour. People interested in participating can email a resume and cover letter on why they would be a good fit for the YAB to [Emily.McCaffrey@umassmed.edu](mailto:Emily.McCaffrey@umassmed.edu).