



TexProtects in the 86th



Overview

This session, TexProtects worked diligently and strategically to advance our priorities and engage on issues across the child protection spectrum. Every child deserves the opportunity to grow up with a healthy family and a strong foundation. Our work this session better ensures that children are safe, families are resilient and communities have access to evidence-based programs that support prevention and healing.

Despite the fact that only 18.7% of the bills filed made it all the way to the finish line, TexProtects is thrilled that many of our legislative initiatives were successful and the session resulted in real improvements for Texas children. Since our inception in 2004, **TexProtects** has led and/or assisted the passage of **51 BILLS**, including **three omnibus bills** and has secured over **\$140 MILLION IN STATE FUNDS** for evidence-based family support home visiting services. In 2018, these funds provided services for **16,000+ children and families**.



Priority Bills

TexProtects works across the child protection spectrum to ensure safe childhood and healthy future for Texas children. This session's priorities focused on prevention, education and healing.

Bills that passed

Bills that did not pass



Author: Sen. Royce West

SB 355

Strategic Planning for Foster Care Prevention Dollars

House sponsor: Sen. Lois Kolkhorst

Goal: Keep every child with their family, when possible, so they can achieve their greatest potential.

How we get there: Improve coordination and effectiveness of services for children and families at risk of entering foster care by leveraging Family First federal funds. Integrate trauma-informed mental health, substance use and in-home parent programs. Improve access to resources for relative caregivers.



Author: Rep. Tan Parker

HB 4183

Toolkit to Address Adverse Childhood Experiences

Senate sponsor: Sen. Charles Perry

Goal: Connect Texas systems that prevent child adversity, facilitate healing from childhood trauma, and promote resilience in children.

How we get there: Develop and implement a statewide strategic plan to address causes and symptoms of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) by cross-systems collaboration; evaluation of prevention needs, strengths and gaps in services; and providing resources for communities to empower decision making and programming.



Author: Rep. Four Price

HB 18 ✓**Integrate Trauma-Informed Practices into Schools**

Senate sponsor: Sen. Kirk Watson

Goal: Empower school staff to support student academic success and mental health.How we get there: Include trauma training as part of required continuing education credits every five years for teachers. Create a trauma-informed policy to address staff and parental awareness of the impact of trauma in each school district.

Author: Rep. Donna Howard

HB 475 ✓**Support for Pregnant and Parenting Foster Youth**

Senate sponsor: Sen. Kirk Watson

Goal: Promote maternal and child safety. Promote health in pregnant and parenting foster youth.How we get there: Ensure that pregnant and parenting foster youth receive basic information about ways to keep their child safe. Promote healthy attachment, child development, and maternal health if parents choose not to participate in Project HIP.

Author: Sen. Judith Zaffirini

SB 708 ✓**Data Collection On Child Care Safety**

House sponsor: Rep. Donna Campbell

Goal: Report data on child safety in licensed child-care centers.How we get there: Collect and report child care safety data on violations that impact the health, safety and well-being of children as well as information on the number of children and caregivers in each classroom. Allow lawmakers, providers and parents to make better decisions to ensure the safety of children in care.

Author: Rep. Lois Kolkhorst

SB 750 ✓**Address Prevalence of Maternal Mortality & Morbidity**

House sponsor: Rep. Angie Button

Goal: To maximize Texas' efforts to address maternal mortality and morbidity.How we get there: Improve maternal and newborn healthcare as detailed by the Health and Human Services Commission's report, State Efforts to Address Maternal Mortality and Morbidity in Texas. Improve access to healthcare during the prenatal and postpartum period for women enrolled in the Healthy Texas Women Program.



Budget Highlights

This session, our budget priorities focused on improving access to evidence-based prevention programming, quality behavioral and physical healthcare and ensuring that DFPS is able to provide high-quality services to children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Priority No. 1

Strengthen investments in community-based, primary child abuse prevention programs for children in their most critical neurodevelopmental years.

TexProtects, in collaboration with Child Trends, created a strategy that would allow DFPS to reach at least 30% of the highest need families in the next 10 years. Aligned with that strategy, we asked for this biennium to include: \$12 million to serve an additional 1,200 families with Nurse-Family Partnership and \$18.5 million to serve an additional 2,400 families or more with HOPES (costs differ based on the evidence-based model chosen in the community).

Through our advocacy efforts, we helped secure an additional \$1.5 million (from \$39.9 million) for HOPES and an additional \$2.9 million (from \$30.2 million) in all funds for Nurse-Family Partnership.

Priority No. 2

Strengthen the Child Protective Services system and workforce.

TexProtects has a long-time record of advocating for investments to better ensure the protection and healing of abused children. This session, child protection advocates worked to secure an additional \$5.3 million (total \$50 million) for salary increases for statewide intake staff and \$8.6 million (total \$84.1 million) for adoption, post-adoption and post-permanency, preparation for adult living, and substance abuse client services.

With our support, stakeholders were successful in obtaining \$57.3 million more (total \$1.9 billion) for foster care, adoption subsidies, relative caregiver monetary assistance, and day care payments.

The budget includes a total of \$1.6 billion to maintain lower caseloads for caseworkers and to expand Community-based Care into two new regions and advance case management model in three existing regions.



TexProtects in Action

Our staff and advocates worked tirelessly this session to support legislation through testimony, face-to-face visits with legislators and a day-long advocacy event at the capitol. Here is just a snapshot of what we accomplished in the 86th.



117

Supported bills



38%

Bills we supported passed



349

Number of bills we tracked



16

Times we provided testimony



461

Visits to legislative offices by staff and advocates



22

Different committees where we registered support for bills

**12**Advocacy email
alerts sent**659**Advocate responses to
our legislation alerts**13,189**Letters sent to legislators
by our advocates**15**

Legislative briefings

538

Briefings participants

**105**Child Protection Day adult
participants**80**Child Protection Day middle
school participants

Thank You For Supporting Our Work



Let's Keep the Conversation Going

This legislative session resulted in significant policy changes; however, there is much more work to do as we move into the interim. We must continue strengthening relationships with lawmakers and begin looking ahead to the 87th legislative session.

Like any great endeavor, we do not do this work alone. We hope you will join TexProtects as we monitor the implementation of these new initiatives closely and collaborate with our partners to continue speaking up for our children, who often cannot speak up for themselves. The efforts of many advocates, partners, stakeholders and providers were critical to the work that was done this session. Thank you to each one of you who used your voice, experience and time to stand up for Texas children and families. Your efforts made a difference and we look forward to the steps we can take next as we move forward together.



Please stay engaged with our research, education and advocacy efforts throughout the year by checking our website at texprotects.org. You can sign up for advocacy alerts there. You can also connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.