

Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families

April 2025

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and we want your help to empower communities with resources to support Texas children, youth, and families where they live, work, and play! For the month of April, we encourage you to promote child abuse prevention awareness with your networks.

childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/

Education Specialist

Education Specialists act as a connection between DFPS and local schools in your area. The Education Specialist is an excellent contact for building partnerships with the community and local child welfare system. They also serve as a point of contact for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

School stability is necessary for improving the educational experience and outcomes of students in foster care. Research highlights a link between school stability and improved graduation rates. According to the Casey Family Programs' National Alumni Study, foster youth who had one fewer placement change per year were almost twice as likely to graduate from high school.

Ask your kinship worker about who your education specialist is.



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services
Child Protective Services





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Early Childhood Intervention

Texas Health and Human Services Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program works with families with children birth to 36 months old, with developmental delays, disabilities or certain medical diagnoses that may impact development. ECI services support families as they learn how to help their children grow and learn.

If you have concerns about a child's development visit the ECI Program Search page to find the ECI program in your area or call the HHS Office of the Ombudsman at 877-787-8999, select a language, then select Option 3.

hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services

Learn The Signs. Act Early.

This CDC program has goals to improve early identification of children with developmental delays so families can get the services and support they need.

The program offers a lot of materials and tools to help educate families about developmental milestones and how to help your child grow and thrive. Materials are free and available in English and Spanish. Some of the materials include:

- Developmental milestones checklists
- Milestone Tracker mobile app for iOS and Android
- Children's books
- Watch me! A free one-hour training for early care and education providers
- How to Help Your Child and How to Talk with the Doctor tip sheets

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/freematerials.html>

Resources

- **Superior/STAR Health**
<https://www.fostercaretexas.com/for-members/find-a-provider.html>
- **Parenting Tips**
<https://www.getparentingtips.com>
- **Housing/Utility Assistance Programs**
www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/get_help_paying_rent.html
- **Your Texas Benefits**
www.yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home
- **2-1-1 Texas**
www.211texas.org/
- **Texas WIC**
<https://texaswic.org/>
- **Kinship Manual**
www.dfps.state.tx.us/ChildProtection/Kinship_Care/documents/KinshipManual.pdf
- **Texas Kinship Caregivers Facebook Page**
m.facebook.com/TexasKinshipCaregivers
- **Kinship Care**
www.dfps.state.tx.us/ChildProtection/Kinship_Care/default.asp

Kinship Support Groups are an important part of The Kinship Program. If you want more information about support groups in your area, please ask your Kinship Development Worker. If you want to be involved in improving the Kinship Program, consider joining the Kinship Collaboration Group. For more information on kinship support groups or becoming an advocate, please contact

Stephen Martinez at 512-960-9254.

"April brings the promise of new beginnings. Wishing you infinite joy and abundance."