

New Federal Law Prompts State Plan

A new federal law provides Texas with an opportunity to improve early learning from pre-K to 3rd grade according to Texans Care for Children. The law, called the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA), replaces the [No Child Left Behind Act](#) and reauthorizes the nation's national [education law](#) and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students. The ESSA allows Texas to use funding to build a stronger and more coordinated early childhood education system. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is gearing up to develop an ESSA state plan. Input from early childhood educators, community leaders, and parents are welcome and can be entered through the TEA [web page on ESSA](#). Texans Care for Children recently published an article with seven different ways ESSA can assist with early learning. Some of these include requiring states to publish annual reports, prioritizing professional development of teachers, and stressing better coordination between young child serving programs. You can learn more or read the article in its entirety [here](#).

ESSA and Opportunities for Texas to Improve Early Learning - Texans Care for Children January 13, 2017



Optional Training: *First3Years has released their Monthly Webinar Training Series for 2017! The series can be found at <http://first3yearstx.org/online-training>. The upcoming February training is entitled: Reflective Supervision for Professional Development. There are multiples times available to meet your scheduling and/or endorsement needs.*

“This is potentially all great news for Texas communities if we take the opportunity seriously and focus on what’s best for kids.”

-Texans Care for Children, 2017



Project LAUNCH Cohort 3 E-Book

Learn from other communities across the country who have implemented Project LAUNCH strategies through a new, modular e-book. Strategies range from developmental and behavioral screening to mental health consultation. Each strategy includes examples from two communities that brought the strategy to life and illustrated both the commonalities across the sites and the uniqueness of each. The publication is rich with creative approaches, lessons learned, and illustrative data from communities as diverse as the Bronx, the Texas border, and the upper Northwest. The tool is a valuable resource for implementation planning and provides an opportunity to learn from pioneers in this work. You can access the entire e-book by visiting our website at <http://sites.utexas.edu/mental-health-institute/texas-launch/>.

(This text has been modified from its original version: Copyright Project LAUNCH: Implementation of Young Child Wellness Strategies in a Unique Cohort of Local Communities; 10/2016)

Infant Mental Health Endorsement: Success Story from Fort Worth

Recently several Early Childhood Services employees received the Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH- E®), reports Debra Lindsey from MHMR of Tarrant County. The Endorsement credential supports and recognizes development and proficiency of professionals who work with or on behalf of infants, toddlers and their families.

Earning the Endorsement® is a process based upon an internationally recognized set of competencies that helps define best practices and guides an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based professional growth. Applicants must meet the requirements matching one of four levels to earn the IMH-E®. The national organization of Zero to Three and the world association of Infant Mental Health have approved The Endorsement® system, which is now being honored across the United States and internationally.

The Texas LAUNCH team would like to congratulate the following individuals on this accomplishment:

Amber Wright (II)	Amy Anderson (II)
Amy Hester (II)	Anisha Philips (II)
Candice Allums (II)	Danielle Battle (II)
Debra Lindsey (IV)	Isaura Patton (I)
Jeanne Stevens (II)	Kathrine Maxfield (II)
Kris Barnes (II)	Kristen Wilhite (II)
Kristi Furnival (II)	Laura Kender (IV)
Lisa Aguilar (II)	Meghan Glover (II)
Michelle Price (II)	Michelle Ramirez (II)
Miranda Holmes (II)	Patricia Almaraz (II)
Sarah Donley (II)	Stephanie Marks (II)

Point of Order from CPPP

The Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) is an independent public policy organization that uses data and analysis to advocate for solutions that enable Texans of all backgrounds to reach their full potential. CPPP became an independent, tax-exempt organization in 1999 to advance public policy solutions for expanding access to health care and over time their focus expanded to include economic opportunity and fiscal policy. CPPP is based in Austin and works statewide. The Center for Public Policy Priorities is offering a resource to keep you up to date on the 85th legislative session. A weekly e-newsletter called Point of Order will keep you informed about the big stories and developments at the Texas Legislature. Each week, Point of Order will ‘interject’ to highlight key actions by lawmakers, share policy recommendations guided by data and fact-check debates at the Capitol. Check out CPPP’s Legislative Priorities for the 85th Session [here](#).



You can sign up for the Point of Order e-newsletter by visiting the CPPP website here: <http://www.forabettertexas.org/home.html> and navigating to the bottom of the page where you can sign up using your email in the “Connect” section.



Announcement Area

A training topic poll will be disseminated soon for Texas LAUNCH expansion communities and their state council members. Potential trainings include programmatic concepts, research-based early childhood topics, and trauma-focused trainings. Fill out the survey to let us know what your training needs are!

The 2017 Parenting Tips Free Calendars highlighted in our last newsletter are still available for order in English and Spanish. You can find the link [here](#) to make an order.