
TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Note: The field of trauma and trauma-informed care, and trauma-informed practice is constantly evolving and expanding. The information in this chapter is intended to give judges a basic understanding of the topic to help manage child protection cases in a trauma-informed manner. Through the Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care and other initiatives, the Texas child welfare system is actively working to transform the system to one that is trauma-informed and responsive to the needs of children, youth, and families experiencing the effects of trauma.

A. Trauma

The concept of trauma and the accompanying research have shifted the paradigm about the way in which systems, organizations, professionals, and caregivers approach and serve children, youth, young adults, and families who experience the child welfare system.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) describes individual trauma as resulting from "an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."²⁰⁵

Some examples of traumatic experiences include:²⁰⁶

- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse and neglect (including trafficking);
- Family or community violence, both experiencing and witnessing;
- Loss of loved ones or traumatic grief;
- Witnessing violence;
- Natural and technological disasters or terrorism;
- Serious accidents;
- Historical trauma²⁰⁷
- Medical trauma;
- Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss or injury)

B. Trauma Impacts a Child's Development and Health

The groundbreaking 1998 study on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and replicated studies since demonstrate that childhood stress is linked to poor health outcomes, including obesity, diabetes, depression, heart disease, cancer, and stroke as well as alcohol and drug abuse, low graduation rates, and poor employment outcomes.²⁰⁸ The presence of ACEs does not mean that a

child will experience poor life outcomes. Positive experiences and protective factors can prevent children from experiencing adversity and protect against many negative health and life outcomes.²⁰⁹

Undoubtedly, children and youth who experience abuse or neglect or interact with the child welfare system are vulnerable to trauma and our systems must respond to the needs of children and families through a trauma-informed lens. This requires judges, attorneys, court staff, and other stakeholders to understand how traumatic responses present in the children and families in front of the court and change courtroom practices to help families build resilience. In doing so, serving children and families moves beyond responding to behaviors to promoting healing.

It is important to note that no age is immune to the effects of traumatic experiences, including infants and toddlers. Traumatic stress will manifest differently from child to child and will depend on the child's age and developmental level.²¹⁰

Children who are not experiencing consistent safety, comfort, and protection may develop ways of coping that allow them to survive and function day-to-day. These learned adaptations make sense when a physical and/or emotional threat is pervasive but are not helpful once a person is no longer under such threats.²¹¹ Additionally, unaddressed trauma can lead to long-term effects into adulthood.

Some potential effects of trauma are:²¹²

- Difficulties with emotional regulation, focus, and self-control (when in fight or flight mode, the brain loses executive functions that do not serve fight or flight, like higher learning and problem-solving which contribute substantially to school success);
- Anxious and avoidant behaviors;
- Difficulty developing strong, healthy attachment to caregivers and others;
- Distrust of people in authority, seen as threats;
- Over-responding or under-responding to sensory stimuli;
- Misinterpreting motives, facial expressions, body language in others;
- Difficulties belonging and playing well with others;
- Difficulty with problem solving and decision making;
- Chronic or recurrent physical complaints;
- Potential impacts to self-efficacy;
- More likely to engage in high-risk behaviors

C. Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System²¹³

The document “Building a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System: A Blueprint” lays out nine Guiding Principles for child welfare stakeholders to use as we continue transforming the system to one that is trauma-informed and trauma-responsive. The nine Guiding Principle as well as suggested trauma-informed practices to be implemented in the courtroom are provided below.

1. **CULTURE:** Texas will create a culture of trauma-informed care for all individuals and organizations that touch the lives of children, youth, young adults, and families while they are involved in the child welfare system.

- Acknowledge the children, youth, young adults, and family members in court have likely experienced trauma and may continue to experience trauma throughout the case.
- Review current courtroom practices and environment with a trauma-informed lens and integrate improvements.
- Base communications between court professionals and participants in trauma-informed principles.
- Create an environment of safety, respect, honesty, and humility to nurture healing, rehabilitation, and resiliency. Modify the environment, such as seating, lighting, and signage to be trauma-informed.
- Develop a shared understanding of the role that trauma has played in shaping the survivor's life. Connect trauma concerns with the rest of the child's problems and goals, and understand that experiences of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse can shape fundamental patterns of perceiving the world, other people, and oneself.
- Identify current circumstances that may trigger trauma responses, e.g., unexpected touching, threats, loud arguments, violations of privacy or confidentiality, being in confined spaces with strangers, or sexual situations. Be watchful for other less obvious triggers that become evident as you know the family better and as family members recognize and can express their individual stress responses more accurately.
- Promote and support efforts to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint practices.
- Create service plans and court orders that are individualized to address the trauma-related needs of the child and family to promote healing and minimize re-traumatization.
- Address trauma-related needs during transition periods.

Special Issue: The Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care has developed a working definition of Trauma-Informed:

An individual, program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed fully integrates knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices by:

1. Realizing the widespread impact of trauma, understanding potential paths for recovery, and acknowledging the compounding impact of structural inequities related to culture, history, race, gender, identity, locale, and language;
2. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;
3. Maximizing physical and psychological safety and responding to the impact of structural inequities on individuals and communities;
4. Building healthy, trusting relationships that create mutuality among children, families, caregivers, and professionals at an individual and organizational level; and
5. Striving to avoid re-traumatization.

This definition was developed and approved by the SCTIC utilizing definitions from [SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma Informed Approach](#) and the [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#).

- 2. COLLABORATION:** A trauma-informed child welfare system requires collaboration within and across systems, organizations, and individuals.
 - Create an environment of open collaboration between all stakeholders to enhance services to families.
 - Increase accessible and effective trauma services through education and collaboration among the many stakeholders (mental health providers, caseworkers, foster parents, caregivers at kinship placements and residential treatment centers, judges, attorneys, CASAs, medical community, law enforcement)
- 3. EQUITY:** A trauma-informed child welfare system is culturally competent and equitable.
 - Consider a child and family's identity and cultural background when addressing participants and making decisions.
 - Seek out equity training for court staff. See the Chapter on Disproportionality for additional resources.
 - Review disaggregated data and address disproportionalities and disparities in collaboration with community partners.
- 4. YOUTH & FAMILY VOICE:** A trauma-informed child welfare system includes and respects youth and family voice and cultivates resilience.
 - Gather the child's perspective on their case through the appropriate avenue for each individual child (in-person, video conference, letter, etc.).
 - Engage children, youth, parents, and family members in identifying the best approach for achieving reunification or other permanency options when reunification is not possible.

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- Minimize the trauma from removal and attachment disruption by increasing visitation with parents, siblings, and other close family (especially in children ages zero to three) to provide meaningful and consistent connections with appropriate family members.
 - Help children and youth identify strategies helpful in the past in dealing with overwhelming emotions. Place priority on child's preferences regarding self-protection and self-soothing needs by using de-escalation preference surveys.
 - Facilitate healthy relationship building with a trusted adult (e.g. CASA; community member; family member)
 - Support and encourage normalcy activities as defined by the individual child.
- 5. SECONDARY TRAUMA:** A trauma-informed child welfare system recognizes and addresses secondary trauma.
- Assess courtroom practices to evaluate the work environment and its impact on court staff and professional wellness as it relates to secondary trauma.²¹⁴
 - Encourage court staff and professionals to complete periodic self-assessments for personal reflection.²¹⁵
 - Provide trainings and resources that support self-care and minimize the impact of secondary trauma.
- 6. TRAINING:** A trauma-informed child welfare system recognizes that ongoing, quality training is fundamental.
- Train court staff and professionals on the basic concepts of brain science, trauma, and trauma-related behaviors. Collaborate with stakeholders and community partners to leverage existing training and technical assistance resources.
 - Provide ongoing, regular training to court staff and professionals to sustain trauma-informed changes and provide opportunities to implement what they learn.
- 7. INFORMATION SHARING:** A trauma-informed child welfare system has information sharing capabilities that are accessible, manageable, innovative, and user-friendly.
- Enhance collaboration pathways within and outside the courtroom to enhance information sharing processes.
 - Encourage the creation of a learning collaborative in the community to increase opportunities for sharing resources and knowledge and building relationships.
- 8. DATA:** A trauma-informed child welfare system is informed by data and committed to continuous quality improvement.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure quality data collection practices.
 - Evaluate data and institute necessary changes with a trauma-informed lens.

9. FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY: A trauma-informed child welfare system is adequately funded and sustainable.

- Partner with community stakeholders to develop strategies for sustaining a trauma-informed courtroom.

D. Emergency Behavior Interventions

Many trauma-informed care trainings promote specific strategies including self-care approaches, peer-provided services, arts programs, and comfort rooms to enhance healing and as means to avoid the use of restraint and seclusion. In Texas, the Administrative Code offers the following guidelines on utilizing Emergency Behavior Interventions, such as restraints and seclusion, on children in General Residential Operations and Residential Treatment Centers.

1. Restraint/Seclusion May Only Be Used:

- As last resort

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2455\(a\)\(1\) and \(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2055\(a\)\(1\) and \(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2551\(a\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2151](#)

- After less restrictive and more positive measures have been tried and failed

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2455\(a\)\(1\) and \(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2055\(a\)\(1\) and \(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2551\(a\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2151\(a\)](#)

- Only in an emergency situation or to administer intra-muscular medication or other physician prescribed medication

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2455\(a\)\(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2055\(a\)\(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(21\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(23\)](#) (Definition of emergency situation)

- Where immediately necessary

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(19\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(21\)](#) (Definition of Emergency Behavioral Intervention (EBI)); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(21\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(23\)](#) (Definition of emergency situation)

- To prevent imminent probable death or substantial physical injury

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(19\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(21\)](#) (Definition of EBI); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(21\)](#); [40 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(23\)](#) (Definition of emergency situation); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(64\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(66\)](#) (Definition of substantial physical injury)

- NEVER as punishment, retaliation, means of compliance, convenience, or treatment

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2463](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2063](#)

2. Types of Restraints That May Be Administered with Restrictions:

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- Short personal restraint and personal restraint

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2451(a)(1) and (2); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2051(a)(1) and (2); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43(48) and (61); and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43(48) and (64) (Definition of personal restraint and short personal restraint)

- Emergency medication

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2451(a)(3); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2051(a)(3); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2753 (simultaneous use with another EBI); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2233 (simultaneous use with personal restraint); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43(20); and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43(22) (Definition of emergency medication)

- Seclusion

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2451(a)(4); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2651; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43(59); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43(62) (Definition of seclusion); and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2051(b)

- Mechanical restraint

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2451(a)(5) (only in Residential Treatment Centers); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2701; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2703; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2755 (simultaneous use with emergency medication); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43(37); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43(38) (Definition of mechanical restraint); and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2051(b)

3. Restraint/Seclusion May Only Be Administered by:

- A caregiver qualified in emergency behavior interventions

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2453; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2053; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.947; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.947; (Annual Training) 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.903; 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.903; (Pre-service training) 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.863(a); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.863(a); (Training hours) 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.901; and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.901

- Whose duties include the direct care, supervision, guidance, and protection of child

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43(5) and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43(8)

4. A Child Must Be Released from a Restraint/Seclusion:

- IMMEDIATELY if an emergency health situation arises

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553(1)(A), (2)(A), (4)(A), and (5)(A); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2153(1)(A) and (2)(A); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2603; and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2203

- IMMEDIATELY once the danger is over

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553(2)(C) and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2153(2)(C)

- Once maximum time allowed is reached

26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553(2)(E); 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2153(2)(E); and 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553(2)(E) and (4)(D)

Figure: 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553

Type of Emergency Behavior Intervention	The caregiver must release the child:
(1) Short personal restraint	(A) Immediately when an emergency health situation occurs during the restraint. The caregiver must obtain treatment immediately; or (B) Within one minute, or sooner if the danger is over or the disruptive behavior is de-escalated.
(2) Personal restraint	(A) Immediately when an emergency health situation occurs during the restraint. The caregiver must obtain treatment immediately; (B) Within one minute of the implementation of a prone or supine hold; (C) As soon as the child's behavior is no longer a danger to himself or others; (D) As soon as the medication is administered; or (E) When the maximum time allowed for personal restraint is reached.
(3) Emergency medication	Not applicable.
(4) Seclusion	(A) Immediately when an emergency health situation occurs during the seclusion. The caregiver must obtain treatment immediately; (B) As soon as the child's behavior is no longer a danger to himself or others; (C) No later than five minutes after the child begins exhibiting the required behaviors; (D) When the maximum time allowed for seclusion is reached; (E) If the child falls asleep in seclusion. In this situation, the caregiver must: (i) Unlock the door; (ii) Continuously observe the child until he awakens; and (iii) Evaluate his overall well-being; or (F) If the child is receiving emergency care services: (i) As soon as the child is no longer a danger to himself or others; (ii) Upon the arrival of a medical professional; or (iii) Upon assistance from law enforcement or the fire department.

Figure: 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553

Type of Emergency Behavior Intervention	The caregiver must release the child:
(5) Mechanical restraint	(A) Immediately when an emergency health situation occurs during the restraint. The caregiver must obtain treatment immediately; (B) As soon as the child's behavior is no longer a danger to himself or others; (C) No later than five minutes after the child begins exhibiting the required behaviors; (D) When the maximum time allowed for mechanical restraint is reached; or (E) If the child falls asleep in the mechanical restraint. In this situation, the caregiver must release the child from the restraint and continuously observe the child until he awakens and evaluate him.

Figure: 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2801

Types of Emergency Behavior Intervention	The maximum length of time is:
(1) Short personal restraint	One minute.
(2) Personal restraint	(A) For a child under nine years old, 30 minutes; (B) For a child nine years old or older, one hour; or (C) A prone or supine personal restraint hold may not exceed one minute.
(3) Emergency medication	Not applicable.
(4) Seclusion	(A) For a child under nine years old, one hour. (B) For a child nine years old or older, two hours.
(5) Mechanical restraint	(A) For a child under nine years old, 30 minutes. (B) For a child nine years old or older, one hour.

When restraining/secluding, a written order is required:

- By a licensed physician when administering emergency medications
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2501\(3\)](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2101\(3\)](#)
- By a licensed psychiatrist when administering mechanical restraints
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2501\(5\)](#)
- By a licensed psychiatrist, physician, or psychologist when administering seclusion when using successive restraints
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2501\(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2102\(2\)\(A\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2751\(3\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2231\(a\)](#)
- When using restraints simultaneously
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2501\(2\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2101\(2\)\(A\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2753\(a\)\(3\)](#) and (b); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2233\(a\)](#) (Emergency medications with personal restraint); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2755\(a\)\(3\)](#) and (b) (Mechanical restraints with emergency medications)
- When maximum length of time allowed is exceeded
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2805](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2283](#)
- Also see: [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2505](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2105](#) (content of written orders); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2507](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2107](#) (PRN or

“as needed” orders); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2807](#) (verbal orders to exceed maximum time allowed)

Figure: 26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2501

Type of Emergency Behavior Intervention	Are written orders required to administer the intervention for a specific child?	Who can write orders for the use of the intervention for a specific child?
(1) Short personal restraint	NO.	Not applicable.
(2) Personal restraint	NO. However, successive restraints, a restraint simultaneous with emergency medication, and/or a restraint that exceeds the maximum time limit all require orders as specified in this subchapter. PRN orders are also permitted under §748.2507 of this title (relating to Under what conditions are PRN orders permitted for a specific child?).	Not applicable.
(3) Emergency medication	YES.	A licensed physician.
(4) Seclusion	YES, except written orders are not required when you provide emergency care services to the child placed in seclusion.	A licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, or physician.
(5) Mechanical restraint	YES.	A licensed psychiatrist.

A review is triggered when:

- Restrained four times in a seven-day period or more than 12 times in 30-day period
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2901\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2331\(a\)\(2\)\(A\)](#)
- Emergency medications used three times in a thirty-day period
[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2901\(3\)](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2331\(3\)](#)
- Secluded > twelve hours or three times in a seven-day period

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2901\(a\)\(4\)](#) **NOTE: Not applicable to foster care placements.

- Mechanically restrained > three hours or three times in a seven-day period

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2901\(a\)\(5\)](#) **NOTE: Not applicable to foster care placements.

Restraint/Seclusion that is NOT allowed:

*Foster care placements may never administer chemical restraints, mechanical restraints, or seclusion.

- Mechanical restraint may not be simultaneously used with seclusion or pursuant to PRN order

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2757](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2507\(5\)](#)

- No chemical restraints

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.1119\(1\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.1021\(1\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2451\(b\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2051\(b\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.43\(7\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.43\(11\)](#) (Definition)

- Prone or supine restraints except for a transitional hold for 1 minute or less or as a last resort

[26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2605\(b\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2205\(b\)](#) and (c); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2461\(b\)\(1\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2061\(b\)\(1\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2553\(2\)\(B\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2153\(2\)\(B\)](#); [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2801\(2\)\(B\)](#); and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2281\(2\)\(B\)](#)

Also see other relevant provisions:

- [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.1119](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2021](#) (techniques prohibited)
- [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2303](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.1953](#) (may not use or threaten corporal punishment)
- [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2307](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.1957](#) (methods of punishment prohibited)
- [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2605](#) and [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 749.2205](#) (prohibited physical restraint techniques)
- [26 Tex. Admin. Code § 748.2705](#) (types of mechanical & other restraint devices prohibited)

E. Trauma Work in Texas

1. Reports

[Building a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System: A Blueprint](#)²¹⁶

[Trauma-Informed Care Final Report](#), The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute for Texas²¹⁷

[Texas Children Recovering from Trauma Final Project Report](#): A trauma-informed care transformation pilot under the Texas Department of State Health Services²¹⁸

[Meeting the Needs of High Needs Children in the Texas Child Welfare System](#), November 2015²¹⁹

[Understanding Trauma-Informed Care in the Texas Child Welfare System, Data and Recommendations from the Field](#), October 2015²²⁰

[Respecting the Needs of Children and Youth in Texas Foster Care: Acknowledging Trauma and Promoting Positive Mental Health throughout the System](#), December 2014²²¹

2. Legislation

In 2011, the Texas Family Code was amended to require DFPS to include training in trauma-informed programs and services in any training the department provides to foster parents, adoptive parents, kinship caregivers, department caseworkers, and department supervisors. [Tex. Fam. Code § 264.015](#).

DFPS caseworkers are required to complete:

- An initial, in-person training on trauma-informed care during their basic skills development training; and an annual refresher course online.
- Supervisors and mentors are also required to complete a secondary trauma training.
- DFPS internal learning management system offers several optional trainings on trauma-related topics.

Residential Child Care Contract (RCCC) Requirements:

- As of September 1, 2015, DFPS required all caregivers and employees who are subject to RCCC for direct care to complete:
 - at least eight hours of trauma-informed care training prior to being the only caregiver responsible for children; and
 - at least two hours of trauma-informed care annually, and contractors may select their own curriculum/model for the annual refresher training.

Changes to the Human Resources Code in 2013 required trauma-informed care training for certain staff of county and state juvenile facilities, including probation officers, supervision officers, correctional officers, parole officers and court-supervised community-based program personnel. [Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 221.002\(c-1\)](#) and [Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 221.0061](#).

Since 2015, DFPS is required to institute a comprehensive psychosocial assessment tool to assess all children who enter the foster care system within 45 days. The tool must include a trauma assessment and an interview with at least one individual who knows the child. DFPS utilizes the CANS 2.0 for children and youth placed in substitute care ages 3 to 17 years within 30 days. [Tex. Fam. Code § 266.012](#).

3. Statewide Initiatives

The Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care

In July 2017, the Children’s Commission launched the Statewide Collaborative on Trauma-Informed Care (SCTIC), which aims to elevate trauma-informed policy in the Texas child welfare system by creating a statewide strategy to support system reform, organizational leadership, cross-systems collaboration, and community-led efforts with data-informed initiatives to develop champions, consensus, and funding. The SCTIC began with a planning group with the Children’s Commission, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI), Texas CASA, and the Department of Family and Protective Services and created workgroups to carry out its mission.

In February of 2019, the Children’s Commission released [Building a Trauma-Informed Child Welfare System: A Blueprint](#), a document based on the work and recommendations of the SCTIC workgroups. The SCTIC Implementation Task Force was formed in July 2019 with a focus of implementing the Blueprint through continued collaboration with stakeholders.

Cross-Systems Trauma-Informed Care initiative

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Office of Mental Health Coordination leads a Cross Systems Trauma-informed Care (CSTIC) initiative. The vision of the CSTIC is a coordinated behavioral health system, as envisioned by the Behavioral Health Strategic Plan, which is healing-centered and trauma-informed in its foundation and unified in its implementation of a person-centered and family-focused approach across Texas. The CSTIC initiative involves working with state agencies across Texas to advance trauma-informed organizations, culture and services. The collaboration includes representatives from state agencies who receive state funding for behavioral health training or services. As part of the CSTIC initiative, HHSC leads an internal Trauma Transformation Team with representatives from different divisions and departments within the agency who facilitate trauma-informed change within HHSC.

Children’s Advocacy Centers Practice Model

In 2013, the Texas Legislature raised the standard for mental health services in CACs, requiring that all mental health services be trauma-focused and evidence-based. Additionally, mental health services must be provided by professionals who have a master’s degree and are licensed, or who are students in an accredited graduate program and supervised by a licensed mental health professional.

Trauma-Informed Care Specialty Network

Created by STAR Health, it allows its providers to list the training on trauma that they have pursued and helps identify providers who have been trained in trauma-informed care in the STAR Health network for caseworkers, caregivers, and others in the child welfare community. STAR Health also offers TIC trainings to CPA, kinship families, RTC staff, and Emergency Shelter staff.

4. Examples of Community-Level Initiatives

[The Travis County Collaborative for Children \(TCCC\)](#)

Led by Texas Christian University's (TCU) Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development (KPICD), the TCCC implemented system-wide changes to the way children in Travis County are cared for during and after their time in state custody. TCCC's goal is to accelerate healing and speed to permanency for children in foster care utilizing KPICD's research-based Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI®) principles and practices.

[The Trauma-Informed Care Consortium of Central Texas \(TICC\)](#)

Established in 2013 by St. David's Foundation and Austin Child Guidance Center, the TICC brings together professional organizations quarterly to network, share information, and coordinate trainings for mental health clinicians, school personnel, medical /nursing professionals, law enforcement, and juvenile justice professionals.

[The South Texas Trauma-Informed Care Consortium](#)

The South Texas Trauma Informed Care Consortium is a collaboration between The Children's Shelter, Voices for Children and City of San Antonio Metro Health Department that brings together community participants who are committed to addressing the impact of trauma.

F. National Resources

NCJFCJ, [Ten Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know about Trauma and Delinquency](#)²²²

NCJFCJ, [Assessing Trauma for Juvenile and Family Courts](#)²²³

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), [Bench Cards for the Trauma-Informed Judge](#)²²⁴

NCTSN, [LGBTQ Issues and Child Trauma](#)²²⁵

Mental Health America (MHA) and the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), [Position Statement on Seclusion and Restraint](#)²²⁶

G. Training Resources

DFPS [Trauma-Informed Care Training](#)²²⁷

[NCTSN Learning Center](#)²²⁸

Superior Health, the STAR Health Managed Care Organization (MCO), [offers online webinars](#) through their parent organization, Centene Foster Care²²⁹

The Children's Commission, in partnership with Texas CASA and the Shield Ayers Foundation, created a one-hour training to help introduce trauma-informed care to Attorneys ad Litem, Guardians ad Litem and CASA volunteers. The presentation includes strategies for advocating for children in courtrooms, schools, and placements to meet each child's unique needs. Other topics include how trauma influences a child's ability to communicate about the case and how to appropriately respond to a child's trauma-related behaviors. [Video: Trauma-Informed Advocacy for Children and Youth in Foster Care.](#)²³⁰

