Region 3

The Heart Galleries of Texas received funding in the 88th Legislative Session to improve permanency outcomes for youth who have experienced foster care. Over the past year, efforts have focused on expanding the Heart Galleries model across the state, increasing community collaboration, developing online trainings and resources, identifying the post-permanency needs of families, and conducting a Request for Applications (RFA) process to select qualified providers in each region to help meet the post-permanency needs of families.

About the Heart Gallery of North Texas

Heart Gallery Organization: Gladney Center for Adoption
Website: https://heartgallerynorthtexas.org/
Launch Event: February 2025

In 2023, the Heart Gallery of North Texas was established in Region 3 through Gladney Center for Adoption. This region is unique in that there are two Single Source Continuum Contractor organizations covering the two halves of the region, meaning collaborating with both is key to Heart Gallery success. This gallery had 56 youth featured on their website at the beginning of the year. Since then, they have featured 87 more youth. A total of 15 of the youth featured this year have been adopted. The Heart Gallery is taking leadership in coordinating match efforts across both Single Source Continuum Contractors and providers in the community. Overall, Heart Gallery of North Texas has been actively working to build community support across the region. Since January, they organized 15 outreach events with a total of 278 attendees, held 5 collaborative stakeholder meetings totaling 64 attendees, and hosted six information sessions with a total of 55 attendees. They have also held in-person match meetings with local child-placing agencies to help facilitate adoption matches. On average, they hosted six Heart Gallery exhibits a month with 149 portraits displayed and have seen a significant increase in their web traffic, growing from 31,510 visits in January to 48,221 visits in August.

Needs Assessment of Post-Permanency Services in Region 3

In March of 2024, researchers from the Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing and staff at the Texas Center for Child and Family Studies conducted a statewide post-permanency needs assessment, surveying caregivers and providers about services, needs and barriers for families after adoption or permanency legal conservatorship. In Region 3, **77 caregivers** and **17 providers** participated in the survey. A summary of findings is reported below.

Familiarity with Post-Permanency Services

- 38% of caregivers (*n* = 29) and 46% (*n* = 6) of providers were very or extremely familiar with post-permanency services.
- 45 caregivers reached out to their region's Post-Permanency Services Provider (58%).
- 16 caregivers reported being very or extremely satisfied with the assistance they received (36%).

Service Satisfaction by Service Sector

% of caregivers who were somewhat or very satisfied with:

- School-based services (64%, *n* = 38)
- Medical services (56%, *n* = 40)
- Developmental services (51%, *n* = 34)
- Post-permanency services (33%, *n* = 23)
- Childcare (24%, *n* = 14)
- Respite (22%, *n* = 12)
- Mental health services (16%, *n* = 10)

Note: Percentages are based on the number of people who answer each question. Please exercise caution when interpreting findings with small sample sizes. Small sample sizes can limit the generalizability of the results, as they may not accurately represent the broader population.

Most Needed Services and Supports

- **Mental health services** that are trauma-informed and adoption-sensitive (therapy, psychiatric services, timely assessments, residential treatment). Financial assistance may be needed if not covered by Medicaid.
- **Medical and developmental services** that are trauma-informed and covered by Medicaid.
- **Respite, childcare services and camps** with professionals who are trained to work with youth with complex mental health and special healthcare needs. Financial assistance or subsidies may be needed to help cover costs.
- **Post-permanency support** including support groups, mentoring programs, and opportunities for social activities.
- **Policy changes to Medicaid coverage and subsidies** to extend beyond the child's 18th birthday and be available to all families who adopt through DFPS.
- 73% of caregivers also indicated they were interested in **Parents Night Out**, 62% were interested in having **family meet-ups or events**, and 54% were interested in having **family resource centers**.

Caregiver Barriers to Accessing Services

- Lack of providers (especially mental health and adoption-informed providers).
- Timing and location of services.
- Long waitlists to access services.
- Financial barriers such as not enough funding and a lack of Medicaid or other insurance coverage for services.
- Lack of respite and childcare for youth with more complex or specialized needs.

Provider Barriers to Supporting Families

- Lack of funding and resources to support and provide families the services they needed.
- Lack of providers available to meet families' needs, particularly mental health providers.
- Challenges with family engagement.
- Limited options for out-of-home placements including inpatient services.

Top services that caregivers needed but had difficulty accessing or were unable to get:

Individual therapy (specialized) • Respite (overnight) • Respite or babysitting (not overnight) • Therapeutic or specialized camps • Behavior support services • Psychological or trauma assessments

To learn more about this needs assessment, go to: Needs Assessment of Post-permanency Services in Texas Dashboard. You can locate all the data specific to your region.

Looking Ahead

Overall, the support network in Region 3 is strong, but requires expanding coordination across both Single Source Continuum Contractors and agencies serving the region. This region is working on building a permanency collaboration that includes post-adoption providers. Based on needs assessment results and the RFA selection process, the following organizations and services will be provided in Region 3:

- Gladney Center for Adoption: Provide in-home post-adoption services and contract out parent training/coaching, therapy supplements, and respite services.
- Texas Baptist Home for Children: Host annual adoption celebration.
- CK Family Services: Offer therapeutic services, parent support groups, educational support, and medication management.

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