



2024-2029 Strategic Plan

<<Summary>>

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Introduction

At the onset of crafting our next Success by Six Strategic Plan, we made a deliberate choice to infuse every stage of the process with a commitment to racial equity, ensuring that the voices of families in our community were centered. This approach, termed "co-construction," involved the active participation and iterative feedback of the SX6 leadership team, workgroups, coalition members, organizations, and community members over an eighteen-month period. As we journeyed through this process, a shared aspiration emerged: to establish a universal vision for the children in our community. However, confronting the persistent racial disparities within our community, we recognized the imperative to address them directly. Thus, alongside overarching goals tailored to all families in Austin/Travis County, each pillar of our plan incorporates targeted objectives aimed at specific groups disproportionately affected by historical and current inequities. This dual approach not only fosters inclusivity but also accelerates progress towards our overarching vision by strategically targeting areas of greatest need.

Strategic Plan Format

Each pillar is written in the following format

- Universal Vision Statement: States the
- Community Data
- Targeted Goal Statement
- Strategies

Pillar	Healthy Beginnings	
Universal Vision Statement	<p>Families feel empowered and have guidance to navigate the medical and mental health systems successfully, and have the resources they need to thrive before, during, and after birth and through the child's first year of life.</p>	
Community Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, about 1 in 15 infants (6.6% of live births) was born to a woman receiving late or no prenatal care in Travis County. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The rate of late or no prenatal care among births to Black women (8.6%) was about 2 times higher than the rate among White women (2.7%) ◦ Black infants (14.2%) were about 2 times as likely as White infants (7.9%) to be born preterm during 2020-2022 (average) ◦ Black infants (7.1) were about 2 times as likely as White infants (3.1) to die during the first year of life during 2019-2021 (average). <p>Source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March of Dimes, 2024 	
Targeted Goal Statement	<p>Families, especially Black families, families impacted by poverty, and families who possess complex documentation statuses, feel empowered and have guidance to navigate a just medical and mental health system successfully. Additionally birthing parents have the resources needed for their well-being, and resources to ensure that their infants achieve developmental milestones from prenatal through age one.</p>	
<u>PN3 State Levers</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to perinatal health insurance • Group prenatal care • Community-based doulas • Comprehensive Screening & Connection Programs 	
	Strategy Description	Workgroup
Strategy 1.1	Conduct targeted outreach to child health care providers through office-based education, training, and/or workshops on effective developmental screenings and observations to increase the number of screened and successful referral to necessary early childhood services for infants, toddlers, and families who are impacted by poverty.	HMG Workgroup
Strategy 1.2	Build new and strengthen existing	Physician Consultant / HMG Workgroup

	relationships between healthcare systems and early childhood providers.	
Strategy 1.3	Ensure families have access to culturally affirming and evidence-based prenatal and postnatal care by trusted providers, inclusive of doulas and midwives, in any setting the birthing parent chooses.	Perinatal Coalition
Strategy 1.4	Eliminate disparities in birth outcomes and increase cultural humility by strengthening and supporting organizations involved in perinatal health.	Perinatal Coalition
Strategy 1.5	Identify and engage with the support system of fathers, partners, family members, healthcare providers, and community committed to the health and well-being of our children.	Perinatal Coalition
Areas to maintain	TBD	
Areas to lend support	TBD	

Pillar	Supported Families	
Universal Vision Statement	Families have access to age-appropriate resources to maintain and build on nurturing responsive parent-child relationships while navigating the journey of raising children from birth through age 5.	
Community Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only around 1,200 of eligible children 0-3 receive research- and evidence-based home visiting or parent-education services. The Travis County child welfare system is highly inequitable, with Black children 4.3 times more likely to be reported, 5.7 times more likely to be investigated, and 11.3 times more likely to be removed than White children. 1,018 children under the age of 6 are confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect. <p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Way for Greater Austin, 2023 data from partner agencies Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 2023 data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 Disproportionality and Disparity Analysis CPI Completed Investigations Austin Monitor, 2023 	
Targeted Goal Statement	Families impacted by poverty, especially those who identify as BIPOC and families with home languages other than English, have access to the culturally-affirming resources that maintain and build on nurturing responsive parent-child relationships while navigating the journey of raising children from birth through age five.	
PN3 State Levers	Evidence-based home visiting Programs	
	Strategy Description	Workgroup
Strategy 2.1	Strengthen referral pathways for parents and caregivers to meet their most basic needs, including stable housing, sufficient income, nutritionally rich and healthy food, reliable transportation, safe neighborhoods, and mental health.	Family Support Network
Strategy 2.2	Increase parent and caregiver access to positive, culturally affirming, and trauma-informed parenting education supports, available both locally and in their home language, which enables developmentally appropriate parenting practices.	Family Support Network



Strategy 2.3	Grow and support existing family care programs, including existing home visiting programs, in languages other than English.	Family Support Network
Areas to maintain	Ensure that parents/caregivers and young children have at least twenty early childhood books in their homes	Cross referenced with GARC
Area to lend support	Connect parents/caregivers of young children with adult education and workforce development opportunities leading toward greater economic stability	Cross referenced with 2Gen
Areas to lend support	Connecting with organizations outside of Travis to support families moving out of the area.	Cross reference with SX6 Wilco

Pillar	Quality Care and Education	
Universal Vision Statement	Families have access to affordable, high-quality, equitable early care and education from birth to age 6.	
Community Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average cost of infant care is \$12,740 annually - almost \$2,000 more than the annual cost of tuition at the University of Texas 60% of programs serving children from households with low income are high quality. Only 22% of eligible three year olds are served by Pre-K3, and children from families with low income who attend Pre-K are more than twice as likely to be school ready. <p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 Texas Child Care Market Rate Survey; UT website Workforce Solutions and United Way for Greater Austin E3 Alliance 	
Targeted Goal Statement	Families impacted by poverty, especially those who identify as BIPOC and families with home languages other than English, and children who have exceptional needs have the opportunity to experience high-quality equitable early care and education from birth to age 6.	
<u>PN3 State Levers</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Care Subsidies Early Head Start (Public PreK Participation) 	
	Strategy Description	Workgroup
Strategy 3.1	Increase the availability of high-quality, affordable center and home-based infant and toddler care especially in communities that lack access to child care and during the hours needed by parents.	ECE workgroup / FBCC workgroup / Shared Services Alliance
Strategy 3.2	Recruit, develop and retain a highly-qualified early childhood workforce.	ECE workgroup / FBCC Workgroup
Strategy 3.3	Increase the capability of childcare programs to support children with exceptional needs.	ECE workgroup / FBCC Workgroup
Strategy 3.4	Secure additional sustainable funding	ALL

	sources for high-quality, affordable early care and education.	
Strategy 3.5	Increase the number of licensed/registered and TRS (Texas Rising Star) quality rated Family Based Child Care (FBCC) programs by increasing access to resources and supports	
Strategy 3.6	Increase the number of eligible 3 and 4-year-old children enrolled in Public Pre-K in Travis County school districts and other high-quality early education settings.	PreK Workgroup
Strategy 3.7	Every district has and implements a plan to increase Public Pre-K quality and sociocultural equity, utilizing student data analysis to inform teacher professional development and district decisions regarding Pre-K supports, specifically for children of color.	PreK Workgroup
Areas to maintain	*Maintain quality ratings for child care providers in Travis County	
Areas to support	TBD	

Pillar	Safe and Stimulating Communities	
Universal Goal Statement	Families experience Austin/ Travis County as a child and family-centered community that invests in and designs joyful learning opportunities that honor the developmental needs, nurture healthy brain development and ensure that children and families can thrive.	
Community Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 3 children live in a very low or low opportunity community • Austin/Travis County invested \$328 in early childhood last year per child under 6 from low-income households. • Temporary COVID relief fund related investments raised the investments to \$882 per child under 6 from low-income households. <p>Source: United Way for Greater Austin calculations</p>	
Targeted Goal Statement	The Austin/Travis County community is a safe, child and family-centered community that invests and designs joyful and engaging learning opportunities that honor exceptional needs, nurture healthy brain development, and ensure that children and families, especially those who identify as BIPOC, are impacted by poverty, have exceptional needs, or possess complex documentation statuses, can thrive.	
<u>PN3 State Levers</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid Family Leave • State Minimum Wage 	
	Strategy Description	Workgroup
Strategy 4.1	The coalition has clear and equitable systems that remove barriers to participation and center the voices of families with lived experiences to incorporate community voices in the coalition's decision-making process.	Equity Workgroup
Strategy 4.2	The Community has connected/coordinated early childhood programs and resources that families can navigate.	HMG workgroup
Strategy 4.3	Our community will collaborate to design and amplify shared messages that emphasize the paramount importance of prenatal to age 5	Communications Workgroup

	development that will generate action from caregivers to policymakers.	
Strategy 4.4	Our community will highlight existing, and advocate for the development of, safe and joyful spaces rooted in child-centered learning and intentionally designed for all families.	TBD
Strategy 4.5	Increase alignment in public-private sector funding levels to reflect the importance of the prenatal to age 5 period.	Leadership Team, Early Matters Greater Austin, Early Childhood Council
Strategy 4.6	The SX6 Coalition will implement equity within its structures and processes, ensuring it truly represents the Austin/Travis County community. This involves prioritizing BIPOC families in decision-making and placing a deliberate focus on achieving racial equity in early childhood outcomes.	Equity Workgroup
Areas to maintain	Build the capacity for advocacy and utilize data to inform efforts.	

Glossary of Terms

- **Access to early care and education:** parents, with reasonable effort and affordability, can enroll their child in an arrangement that supports the child's development and meets the parents' needs.
- **Affordable:** the financial burden experienced by families when participating in an early childhood program or service is feasible. Affordability includes factors such as out-of-pocket expenses, income-based co-payments, and the percentage of family income dedicated to the costs of participation.
- **BIPOC:** stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color and is an umbrella term used to refer to people who are not white. BIPOC is used to acknowledge the shared experiences of marginalization and discrimination faced by Black and Indigenous people throughout history, as well as people of color more broadly. It also highlights the disproportionate impact of systemic racism on Black and Indigenous communities.
- **Culturally affirming:** a philosophy or approach that recognizes and respects the cultural backgrounds, experiences, and identities of the students, parents, clients, etc. Key components of culturally affirming practices include honoring diverse identities and perspectives; using an asset based approach that builds on strengths; creates inclusive environments that foster a sense of belonging; and encourages critical consciousness that examines topics such as power and privilege.

- **Cultural humility:** the ability to understand a person's identities related to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, and social needs.
- **Developmentally appropriate parenting supports:** strategies and practices that parents can use to nurture their child's growth and development at each stage of childhood. These approaches consider a child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional capabilities and provide the necessary support for them to learn and thrive.
- **Equitable:** something that is fair or just, especially in terms of distributing resources, opportunities, or benefits. It entails ensuring that everyone has access to what they need to thrive, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances, and often involves recognizing and addressing existing disparities, inequalities and systemic racism and oppression.
- **High-quality:** the definition for high-quality early care and education programs is based upon the data sources available and does not always encompass other quality measures that we do not have data for or may not be quantifiable. As such, for the purposes of this strategic plan, a high-quality early care and education program meets one or more of the following criteria: 1) is nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC), and/or other national accreditation recognized by the Texas Workforce Commission; 2) has a Texas Rising Star four-star quality rating; 3) is an Early Head Start/Head Start (EHS/HS) program
- **Perinatal:** the period of time when you become pregnant and up to a year after giving birth.
- **Postnatal:** "after birth;" refers to the period of time immediately after birth
- **Prenatal:** "before birth;" refers to the period of time from becoming pregnant up to one year after giving birth.
- **Prenatal development:** includes the development of the embryo and fetus during gestation, which begins at fertilization and continues until birth.
- **Racial disparities:** the imbalances and incongruities between the treatment of racial groups, including economic status, income, housing options, societal treatment, safety, and myriad other aspects of life and society.
- **Trauma-informed care:** a framework that helps people who have experienced negative consequences after exposure to dangerous experiences. It focuses on the impact of trauma on an individual's life, including how trauma may affect their response to behavioral health services. TIC can improve patient engagement, treatment adherence, health outcomes, and provider and staff wellness.
- **Trauma-informed parenting supports:** strategies and approaches that parents can use to raise a child who has experienced trauma in a healthy and supportive way. These approaches acknowledge the impact of trauma on a child's development, behavior, and emotional well-being, and aim to create a safe and healing environment. Support may also include addressing trauma experienced by the parent.



- **Workforce development:** programs, policies, and activities used to sustain, create, and retain a workforce. It is a key component of community economic development that focuses on people rather than businesses to enhance a region's economic stability and prosperity.