

2016-2017 Court Improvement Program Sub-Grantees

Organization: **Texas Legal Services Center**

Project: **Parent Resource Helpline**

Award: **\$82,141**

Texas Legal Services Center (TLSC) is a non-profit legal aid office that provides assistance and training to poverty law advocates and their clients in the areas of litigation support, education and communication.

The Parent Resource Helpline Project will provide parent callers with telephonic and online support at all stages during the CPS process where the parent is not already represented by an attorney. The Parent Resource Helpline attorneys can address common misunderstandings that parents experience as they move through the process. The project may also help decrease time the caseworker spends on activities that can be handled by the Helpline attorneys. The project expects to improve positive outcomes for children and families by explaining the terms and procedures associated with all aspects of a CPS case, by promoting compliance with all aspects of any court orders issued in the matter, and providing knowledgeable guidance to callers while they navigate through the CPS case.

The Children's Commission, Children's Justice Act, and Texas Access to Justice Foundation will fund the project collectively. Children's Commission funding will be used for phone lines, computers, supplies (business cards, marketing brochures), IT setup for accounting services, attorney salaries, benefits, and travel.

Organization: **Texas CASA**

Project: **Trauma-Informed Training**

Award: **\$36,400**

Texas CASA partners with the CASA community of 72 local CASA programs serving children and families in 213 of Texas 254 counties. Their mission is to support local CASA volunteer advocacy programs and to advocate for effective public policy for children in the child protection system.

Texas CASA will continue expanding and improving training for attorneys, judges, ad litem, and CASA advocates on trauma-informed care. The will provide CLE approved trauma training at the 2017 Texas CASA Annual Conference and award up to 15 attorney scholarships to attend 2017 Texas CASA Annual Conference. Although not part of CIP funding, CASA will also develop an online Learning Management System (LMS) to host trauma-informed training on the Texas CASA website.

Children's Commission funding will be used for partial salary and benefits for the Public Policy Coordinator whose primary focus is trauma informed advocacy and practice, CASA annual conference presenters and travel for scholarship recipients to attend the annual conference.

Organization: Texas Center for the Judiciary

Project: Judicial Education & Training

Award: \$295,466

The Texas Center for the Judiciary is a nonprofit organization that provides specialized judicial education and training opportunities for active, retired, and former Texas appellate, district, and county court at law judges as well as associate judges and court personnel. The Texas Center is designated by the Court of Criminal Appeals as the official registrar of continuing judicial education. The mission of the Texas Center, Judicial Excellence Through Education, is exemplified by providing strong leadership in education and training so that a qualified and knowledgeable judiciary and staff may administer justice with fairness, efficiency and integrity. The Texas Center holds between 10-12 training events each year. More than 1,700 judges (non-unique) and court personnel attended our trainings last year.

Children's Commission funding will be used to cover judicial conference expenditures, a percentage of expenses incurred for salaries, benefits, travel, supplies, speaker contracts, and operations.

Organization: Office of Court Administration

Project: Case Management/Youth Participation

Award: \$270,444

The Office of Court Administration (OCA) is a state agency whose mission is to provide information and resources for the efficient administration of the Judicial



Branch of Texas. OCA operates 24 Child Protection Courts that hear child abuse and neglect cases in more than 121 mostly rural Texas counties. OCA has implemented a web-based case management system for use by the Child Protection Courts. This system allows the court to travel to different counties, connect securely to the Internet and have a system that is specialized in child abuse and neglect cases. OCA has also implemented a video conferencing system to assist all child protection courts in the state. This system allows for courts to connect with children and other participants when coming to the court is not feasible or in the best interest of the child.

Children's Commission funding will be used for salaries (Project Manager and Web Developer/Programmer), benefits, travel, staff training, equipment, software, web subscription services, web cameras, air cards, and conference call services.