

# Help Me Grow North Texas News

January 2022 Edition

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## Reminders:

- Next Quarterly Subcommittee meetings will be held in March
- Follow us on social media (Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram) @HelpMeGrowNTX to stay up to date
- Help Me Grow North Texas marketing materials can be ordered [here](#).

## Welcome Princess



Princess Williams-Jarvis is the new Community Alignment Coordinator for Child and Family Services at My Health My Resources of Tarrant County (MHMR Tarrant). She will be instrumental to the team that helps support communications and outreach for child and family serving programs at MHMR Tarrant.

Princess relocated to Texas in 2020 from California and holds a Master's in Public Administration and Health Administration from California State University, Northridge. She is currently earning a Master's in Social Work from University of Houston. Princess is passionate about "service" and is a strong believer in volunteer work. She loves people and collaborating and coordinating with the community. Welcome to the team Princess!

# Biannual Meeting Review

January 19

On January 19, over 80 community members from 46 different agencies across the region joined into the biannual meeting for an in depth discussion over racial equity within Help Me Grow North Texas. These biannual meetings are an opportunity for the larger Help Me Grow North Texas network to come together to celebrate successes, network with other programs, and dive into very targeted discussions that help staff and leadership members continue to improve early childhood systems efforts across the region.

Attendees had the opportunity to hear some updates from the Early Learning Alliance on the cost of child care quality survey and focus group that they are doing. Data will be available in March and will be shared across the Help Me Grow North Texas network at that time. Attendees were also given the opportunity to network with other attendees and share what is happening in their organizations.

After the time of networking, the group was brought back together to hear the tangible ways that Help Me Grow North Texas is working to incorporate racial equity, diversity, and inclusion within all aspects, projects, and subcommittee efforts. The slides that outline the specific action steps that are being taken can be found [here](#).

Attendees were given the opportunity to answer the following questions within their breakout rooms.

- 1) How can Help Me Grow North Texas define equity?
- 2) How can we be sure to fully integrate/embed equity within all aspects of Help Me Grow North Texas?
- 3) How has our work progressed and changed because of the equity lens?
- 4) What are we most proud of?
- 5) What do we need to improve?

The breakout rooms had very in depth discussions regarding those five questions. The notes that captured the conversation can be found [here](#).

The next meeting for the biannual collaborative will be held in July. More information on the date to come closer to the meeting.

## Family Success Story

Linda Pemberton, one of the Family Partners for Help Me Grow North Texas, has been raising her three-year old grandson, Landon, along with her husband Roger, since Landon was born. Landon received ECI services and upon aging out of those services, transitioned to the Family Support Coaching Program at My Health My Resources of Tarrant County through the support of the Help Me Grow North Texas Navigators. Through her personal endeavors raising a grandchild with special needs, Linda wants to use her platform as a family partner and advocate to bring awareness to a tool that many families may not know is available to them to support their child, Augmentative and Alternative Communication or AAC devices. Landon's success thanks to his AAC device is shared below.

"AAC devices help children learn to talk and assist their voices when needed just like glasses help correct vision. These devices help translate different languages and can be used as part of daily life. Landon uses it with ease just like we use our phones" shared Linda.

Here are two videos that show Landon with his AAC device.

- The first video Linda is playing with Landon asking him where he is. Landon's nickname is Cheeky. He answered the question with his AAC device picking "here".
- The second video is of Landon getting on the bus with his voice (AAC device).

Linda and Roger are helping Landon to feel comfortable using his voice in his daily life. They are making his grocery and activities list for the weekend using his AAC device. Landon makes his own choices. This type of technology is child led with adult support and education. Their school therapist told Linda and Roger that the school's policy was "never take a child's voice away, just say quite hands."

Linda has set a personal goal to help demonstrate to others how an AAC device can help children communicate, assist therapists in skillset evaluations, and actually work in the child's everyday life.

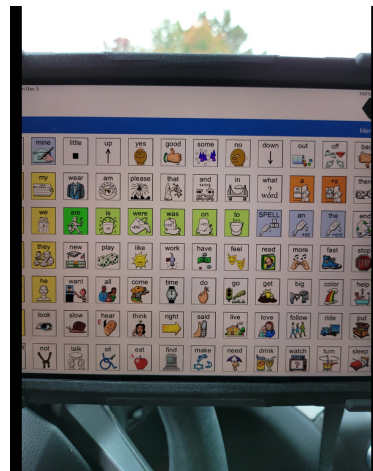


"Landon uses his AAC device like adults use their phones. We want to reduce the stigma of being primarily nonverbal with the new wow factor of electronics" shared Linda.

Linda even shared how she felt that AAC devices could also assist in breaking down language barriers between families and providers through the translation software and opportunities that these devices offer. Linda expressed "young children pick up technology quickly. Everyone deserves a voice. Taking my voice with me, it's easy as 1 2 3".

Linda thanks the AAC device for helping Landon feel comfortable in public and gaining a sense of self confidence which is so important for young children. Landon is 3 years old and is teaching his grandparents communication skills every day. Linda contributes their family's success to ECI and then the Help Me Grow Navigators who got Landon connected with Family Support Coaching.

Below are pictures of Landon's AAC device and a picture of Landon with his grandparents and advocates, Linda and Roger.



# Teachable is Live



The flyer is a vertical rectangle with a yellow background and purple accents. On the left side, there are three overlapping photographs: a woman and two young children looking at a tablet, a doctor in a white coat examining a baby, and a woman sitting on the floor with a child, clapping their hands. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with bold headings and clear icons. The bottom of the flyer features logos for 'Help Me Grow North Texas' and 'FIRST3YEARS'.

## Explore the Help Me Grow North Texas Training Platform

For Families and Providers  
Serving and Caring for  
Children ages 0-5

**FREE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Trainings are free and high quality for both families and providers that come with certificates/CEUS upon completion.

**ACCESS 24/7**

Trainings are available anytime online. Courses can be completed at your own pace.

**TIMELY AND RELEVANT**

Training content is always relevant and timely. New training topics are uploaded quarterly based on the needs of families and providers in the community.

[www.hmgntx.teachable.com](http://www.hmgntx.teachable.com)

Questions? Contact:  
[info@first3yearstx.org](mailto:info@first3yearstx.org)

Powered by:

 Help Me Grow  
North Texas

In partnership with:

 **FIRST3YEARS**  
OUR IMPACT LASTS A LIFETIME

Thanks to the hard work of our Provider Support & Training Subcommittee and partnership with First3Years, our FREE professional development platform for both providers and caregivers, Teachable, is now live with the first three courses. The above flyer explains a little more about the platform and how to access it. Additional courses will be launching in the platform in March and quarterly from there on to keep content new and relevant for both caregivers and professionals of children ages 0-5 across the North Texas region. If you have a training that you would like to submit in a future call for proposals, the next submission opportunity will go out in April. If you have any questions, please email [info@first3yearstx.org](mailto:info@first3yearstx.org).