

# Help Me Grow North Texas News

March 2021 Edition

## Contents:

- Emergency Supports for Families in Need
- Benefits of Partnering with Help Me Grow North Texas
- Subcommittee Updates
- Program Highlights
- Developmental Screening

## Reminders:

- Next Quarterly Subcommittee meetings will be held in June
- Next Collaborative Meeting will be held in July 21st 8:30-10 AM
- Check out updates to the Help Me Grow North Texas website

## Emergency Supports for Families in Need

The Help Me Grow National Center and The JPB Foundation gifted Help Me Grow North Texas \$49,000 in the summer of 2020 to help families with infants and toddlers get access to diapers, wipes, and formula as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Families with young children have been one of the groups most harshly effected by COVID-19.

Eight agencies came together to support families across seven counties, those include: My Health My Resources of Tarrant County, Tarrant Area Food Bank, Community Frontline, Cornerstone Community Action Agency, First3Years, Fort Worth ISD Parents as Teachers, Presbyterian Children's Services, and Wise Health Systems. Through the collaborative efforts, 3,820 unique interactions were had with families; 100,863 diapers were distributed; 188,688 wipes were distributed; & 1,772.3 ounces of formula were distributed.

The families that were served were extremely grateful for the support that Help Me Grow North Texas and their partners were able to offer in a time of need right around the holiday season.

## Benefits of Partnering with Help Me Grow North Texas

As Help Me Grow North Texas is expanding partnerships and outreach across the entire North Texas area, it is important to highlight stories of how partnership is impacting local organizations and families. Rachel Gillespie LMSW, the Program Director for Growing Together at Presbyterian Children's Home and Services in Navarro County, shared how their program, their community, and the Navarro County Early Childhood Coalition are benefitting from their partnership with Help Me Grow North Texas.

"I've been participating in Help Me Grow North Texas as a rural coalition organizer since Fall of 2020. I've so enjoyed the quarterly gatherings and subcommittees that I've been able to be a part of because of the ways that I've been encouraged in what we are all doing together on the macro level to support children and families. I've learned so much from the other providers that I've been able to meet through working with Help Me Grow North Texas and we've been able to share ideas about how to get through this pandemic together and meet families where they are. Through Help Me Grow North Texas, we were also able to use The JPB Foundation grant funds to share diapers, wipes, and formula with our families in Navarro County and they were incredibly grateful for this gift at a tough time during the pandemic. I would encourage other providers across the Help Me Grow North Texas to get plugged into Help Me Grow North Texas so that you can meet these like-minded providers and grow your agency's impact."

The picture below shows Rachel and some of her coalition members/staff handing out gifts around the holidays.



# Subcommittee Updates

## Centralized Access/ Provider Connections

We want to express a warm welcome to Linda Turner as the newest co-chair to the Centralized Access & Provider Connection subcommittee. Linda Turner is the Vice President of Community Outreach and Administration at ChildCareGroup. She joins Victoria Price of Cook Children's Health Plan and Debra Hanus of Camp Fire First Texas.

Help Me Grow North Texas is launching the first FINDconnect inclusion and exclusion policy. This policy gives specific criteria on which agencies can be listed within the FINDconnect system that the Family Navigators can connect families with. There is also a specific process now for being considered for inclusion and how to appeal if your agency is not accepted for entry into FINDconnect. If you would like more information on FINDconnect or the consideration process, please contact [info@helpmegrownorthtexas.org](mailto:info@helpmegrownorthtexas.org)

## Provider Support & Training

We want to express a warm welcome to Nailah Johnson and Kym Shaw Day to the Provider Support & Training subcommittee. Nailah is the Director of the Texas Home Visiting Program at United Way of Metropolitan Dallas and Kym is the Vice President of Equity and Community at Green Space Learning. They join Ashley Borthick from First3Years and Misty Wilder from UNT Health Science Center Healthy Start.

Help Me Grow North Texas in the coming months will be launching a virtual platform to house evidence-based trainings that families and providers within the community can access. First3Years is partnering with Help Me Grow North Texas to make this goal a reality. Information will be coming soon for programs that are interested in submitting a training for consideration to be included in the platform or accessing the trainings.

If you or your agency have not already, please be sure to fill out the Help Me Grow North Texas Partnership Pledge to let us know how you would like to partner with Help Me Grow North Texas, please [click here](#) to fill out the survey.

## Data Collection & Analysis

This subcommittee has created three workgroups that are carrying out specific data related projects.

- 1) Healthy Children & Families Population Measure is looking for a measure that can be tracked over time to show the health of families and children within the community and change that Help Me Grow North Texas efforts impact.
- 2) Family Impact is creating a survey for families to fill out to share their experience interacting with the call center to see the impact it had on their families.
- 3) Provider Impact is creating a general Help Me Grow North Texas training survey and instructions for facilitators to use for the survey to gauge change that happened due to providers attending Help Me Grow North Texas trainings.

## Marketing & Community Outreach

HelpMeGrowNorthTexas.org has been updated to include more information and resources for providers and families. Flyers and outreach materials are now also linked on the providers tab of the website. Help Me Grow North Texas is in the process of implementing their first strategic communications plan with the support of Burrell Communications. The plan is designed to help expand outreach and awareness of Help Me Grow North Texas across the community. The plan can be found [here](#).

## Family Engagement

We want to express a warm welcome to Olga Hickman and Tameka Caldwell as the newest co-chairs to the Family Engagement subcommittee. Olga is the Executive Director of Bachman Lake Together and Tameka is the Home-Based Program Manager for ChildCareGroup. They join Jennifer Carpenter from Lena Pope.

On March 2nd, Help Me Grow North Texas staff hosted an orientation and overview for the 38 interested applicants for the first Help Me Grow North Texas Family Leaders Program and Family Council. Families seemed excited for the opportunity and grateful that family voice and expertise is becoming such an important part of Help Me Grow North Texas efforts. Staff and partners will be conducting interviews over the next few weeks to get to know the applicants and have time for applicants to ask questions. After interviews are completed, the Family Engagement subcommittee leadership will come together to choose the 5 core leaders for the council and leadership of Help Me Grow North Texas. The others will be welcomed to join the overall family council. Diversity will be taken into consideration when choosing the five core leaders to ensure we have representation across the region, support a variety of family types, and have a racially diverse group that represents the community.

# Program Highlights

## Bachman Lake Together

Bachman Lake Together exists to unite the Bachman Lake community to fully prepare children for kindergarten – academically, socially, and emotionally – so they can thrive in school and in life. Their approach is based on the reality that a child’s experience outside the classroom has a significant impact on their readiness to learn when they arrive at school. This could mean that a child is hungry, or is in a high-stress environment, or has not learned the skills to stay calm and interact with others in socially appropriate ways. .

Bachman Lake Together addresses these challenges holistically by supporting high-quality early education, developing parent leaders, promoting family well-being, and building community. Members of the Bachman Lake Together coalition, including local schools and early and adult education providers, collectively offer high-quality early childhood development opportunities to one of every four children under age 6 in Bachman Lake. Bachman Lake Together connects families to these existing programs while leading the community in identifying and implementing solutions to eventually reach all Bachman Lake children. To amplify the work of the coalition, Bachman Lake Together provides introductory and advanced leadership development training for neighborhood parents that are unfamiliar with public education and other community decision making processes. These parent leaders become advocates who actively work to expand educational opportunities to all area families.

Building on their insights about area families and what partners already offer, Bachman Lake Together also hosts events at their neighborhood family center, such as a monthly mobile food pantry, community mental health services, and operates a direct-message text service to share curated and culturally-relevant information about programs and resources with Bachman Lake families.

To learn more about Bachman Lake Together, visit [www.bachmanlaketogether.org](http://www.bachmanlaketogether.org) or follow them on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or LinkedIn.



# Developmental Screening

## The Ages & Stages Questionnaire

The General and Social-Emotional Development Screening tools are ideal options for caregivers to measure how well their child is progressing throughout key phases of her/his early childhood years. The online screening is fast and easy to access from the Help Me Grow North Texas website at

<https://helpmegrownorthtexas.org/developmental-screening/> and is smart phone friendly. Each developmental screener only takes about 15-minutes to complete and is immediately submitted to a Help Me Grow Family Navigator who contacts the caregiver within 48-hours to discuss the results. Once the caregiver and Family Navigator review the screener, a pdf copy is emailed to the caregiver. The Family Navigator can provide age appropriate supplemental developmental tips and strategies. Additionally, if the caregiver would like to connect with direct service providers in the community, the Family Navigator can provide immediate support in finding resources and offer on-going follow up with the caregiver. The online Developmental Screening tools are a quick and effective gateway to refer families to Help Me Grow North Texas. Additionally, if local programs or providers are interested in being trained to administer and interpret the Developmental Screening tool online, email [info@helpmegrownorthtexas.org](mailto:info@helpmegrownorthtexas.org) for more details.

### Developmental Screening

[Home](#) > [Developmental Screening](#)



[General Development Screening - English](#)

[Social-Emotional \(SE\) Development Screening - English](#)