

Help Me Grow North Texas News

January 2021 Edition

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Reminders:

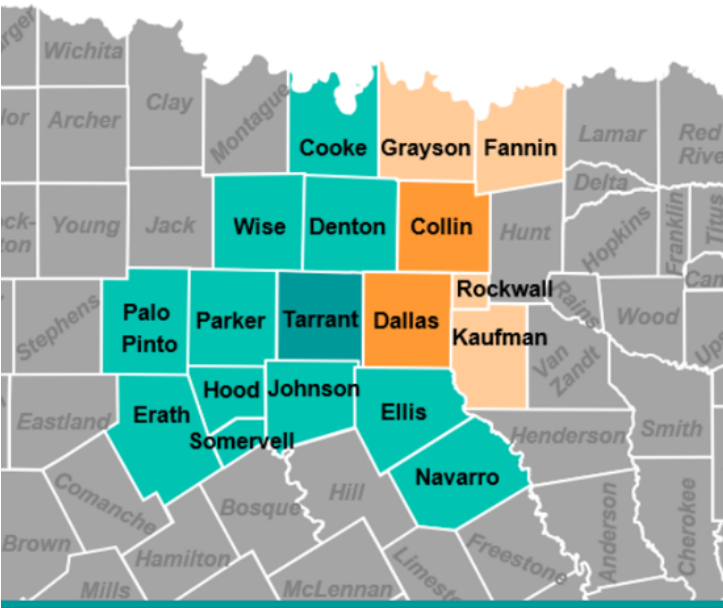
- January 22nd is the Dallas/Collin Launch and Learn
- Next Quarterly Subcommittee meetings will be held in March
- Next Collaborative Meeting will be held January 20th

Your Early Childhood Link to Community Resources

Help Me Grow promotes child development by working to successfully link families to community resources that meet their needs. This happens through cross system collaboration of existing community resources that support the entire family unit. Help Me Grow North Texas provides an information line (844-689-5437) that connects a family or provider to child development services and other community-based resources within your area. By calling this one number, you are connected to an experienced child development specialist, a Family Navigator, who can provide education, resources, and information on developmental screenings to meet a family's specific needs.

"Most caregivers are surprised and appreciative about our follow-up practices; I think it's that feeling that we will really help ensure families get what they need." -Jaquita, Help Me Grow North Texas Navigator

"The best feed-back I get is 'Thank you so much for the follow-up. I think it is so thoughtful for you to make sure that we are getting the services we needed.'" - Jillian, Help Me Grow North Texas Navigator



- Phase 1 - Continued Implementation
- Phase 2 - August 2020
- Phase 3 - Fall 2020 & Spring 2021
- Phase 4 - Summer & Fall 2021



Help Me Grow[®]
North Texas

PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES IN SUPPORT
OF THEIR CHILD'S HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

Free
developmental
screening for every
child age 0 to 6

Help in answering
pregnancy, parenting
& child development
questions

Connecting to
community
resources and
supports

Scan here to download
the free CDC
Milestone Tracker App



Call or visit us online!
844-NTX-KIDS
(844-689-5437)
HelpMeGrowNorthTexas.org

Help Me Grow North Texas Expansion Efforts

Help Me Grow North Texas launched in May of 2019 as the first Help Me Grow affiliate in the state of Texas. Throughout the next year, My Health My Resources of Tarrant County, Tarrant County Public Health, and The Early Learning Alliance set in place the infrastructure for Help Me Grow North Texas within Tarrant County and prepared for further expansion. The call center launched on April 1st, 2020 during COVID-19 to ensure families had a place to call to get connected to community resources, ask questions, and receive developmental screenings.

Starting in August of 2020, Help Me Grow North Texas began expanding into Cooke, Wise, Denton, Palo Pinto, Parker, Erath, Hood, Somervell, Johnson, Ellis, and Navarro counties through their local community coalitions. Partnerships with the coalitions and their members are continuing to expand.

Eastern expansion into Dallas and Collin Counties begins in January. United Way Metropolitan Dallas is spearheading eastern expansion. Two additional Navigators and one supervisor will be coming on board to support eastern expansion through Child Care Group. Next summer and fall, additional Navigators will come onboard as eastern rural counties of Grayson, Fannin, Kaufman, and Rockwall become a part of Help Me Grow North Texas.

Subcommittee Updates

Centralized Access/ Provider Connections

The Help Me Grow North Texas call center enrolled 398 families in 2020. Those families have been successfully connected with 702 community programs or resources. Families primary needs have been child development information and supports, utilities, and food when calling in. Our Navigators are ready to continue to support families across North Texas in 2021.

In the near future, Help Me Grow North Texas will have a finalized contract for an API with 2-1-1 for the majority of our service area across North Texas. This step helps ensure that our FINDconnect system has a variety of resources across our area through data sharing between FINDconnect and the 2-1-1 system. The Navigators and Help Me Grow North Texas staff have also been researching and inputting resources across the metroplex while waiting for the API to happen.

Marketing & Community Outreach

Two new forms have been added to the Help Me Grow North Texas website, www.HelpMeGrowNorthTexas.org. On the front page, families can now utilize the "self-connection" form to fill out some basic information and request connection from a Navigator. This form allows families to connect with a Navigator without receiving a referral from a community agency and allows the first phone call from Navigators to focus on assisting families needs instead of having to focus on taking in demographic information.

The second form is a partnership project form on the providers page that allows agencies to request assistance from Help Me Grow North Texas on special projects, initiatives, or grant proposals. The form asks a few questions related to the project/proposal outline, timeline, cost, outcomes, and expectations for the Help Me Grow subcommittees and leadership team to support. The Help Me Grow North Texas leadership team will review these project forms monthly to determine next steps.

Help Me Grow North Texas is live on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @HelpMeGrowNTX. Please like/follow our pages and share them with your families. The pages share events, resources, and developmental milestones information.

Data Collection & Analysis

The Data Collection & Analysis Subcommittee is going to be focusing on several projects for the community to improve data collection and see Help Me Grow North Texas system impact. The project workgroup will begin meeting soon to push the work forward. The three projects are finding a population level healthy children and families measure, creating and utilizing a family impact survey to see how Help Me Grow North Texas is impacting families, and a provider training survey to measure training effectiveness that is provided by Help Me Grow North Texas partners. If you would like to be involved with any of the projects, please reach out to Faith.Rivera@mhmrtc.org.

Family Engagement

Help Me Grow North Texas is ready to engage family leaders in our subcommittees and leadership to ensure that as this system is being built, family members are key decision makers at the table. Help Me Grow North Texas is looking for five family partners. The description of expectations and what is offered to family partners can be found [here](#). Family partners will receive financial compensation, technology supports, and learning kits for their children while they participate in meetings. Applications are being accepted for family partners until January 19th. Please send the completed application to Faith.Rivera@mhmrtc.org.

Provider Support & Training

Help Me Grow North Texas is launching a partner pledge form in the upcoming weeks. This form allows agencies and individuals to share how they want to partner with Help Me Grow North Texas and make changes across the North Texas area through collaborative efforts. Each piece of the pledge has follow up steps that the Help Me Grow North Texas team will utilize to support partnership. Partnership pledges will be revisited once a year. If you would like more information or to receive the partner pledge to fill out for yourself or your agency, please reach out to Faith Rivera at Faith.Rivera@mhmrtc.org.

Program & Partner Highlights

Vicki Mize, LBSW, CRS



Vicki L. Mize was the 2-1-1 Outreach & Disaster Coordinator/North Central Texas Fort Worth Region through United Way of Greater Houston until her recent retirement on December 18th.

Vicki is a licensed social worker with over 37 years in the Information and Referral profession. After 34 years of service, she retired as 2-1-1 Director with the United Way of Tarrant County and on September 1, 2017, began working with United Way of Greater Houston continuing her work fostering local community partnerships that improve access to services in the 2-1-1 Texas North Central Fort Worth Region and across the country.

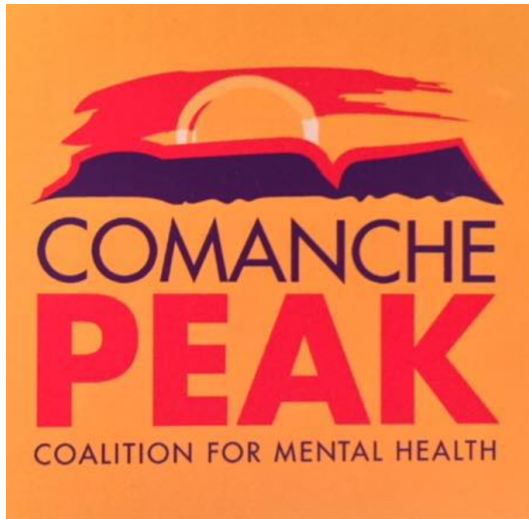
Vicki served as the national President of the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), Board of Directors and held past positions on the Texas Alliance of Information & Referral Services (TAIRS) Board of Directors. Some local contributions include serving as one of the founding co-chair of Help Me Grow North Texas Centralized Access & Providers Committee, service on Fort Worth Safe Communities Advisory Board, ADRC Steering Committee, HEAL (Health Equity Alliance aka Infant Health Network) Board of Directors, past president of Tarrant County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and Chair of the Long-Term Recovery Committee, and service on Mental Health Connections ACCESS Committee and Tarrant Cares Governance Committee, facilitating the sharing of 211 resource data with the Tarrant Cares website and texting platforms.

Some of Vicki's most memorable highlights of her career include her role in the development and implementation of 2-1-1 Texas, being a recipient of the Clare B. Rothmeyer Distinguished Service Award, and the opportunity to serve as President on the national AIRS Board of Directors as well as her service on the AIRS Accreditation Commission and site review team.

**Thank you for your
leadership Vicki!
Enjoy your retirement!**

Program & Partner Highlights

Comanche Peak Coalition for Mental Health



The Comanche Peak Coalition for Mental Health supports Hood and Somervell Counties in improving access to and reducing stigma related to mental health. They are also focused on decreasing the rates of child abuse and percentage of uninsured children in their counties. Their goal is to develop an excellent system of community mental health services that promote healthy lifestyles, wellbeing, and access to all residents. They also work to strengthen mental health services by working together to educate the community and advocate for policies that help all Hood and Somervell citizens.

This coalition is where Help Me Grow North Texas "sits" within Hood and Somervell counties. Every meeting Help Me Grow North Texas updates are shared and feedback is rendered from the coalition members regarding expansion efforts for Help Me Grow North Texas within the counties. As time goes on, the coalition will also be looking at Hood and Somervell County specific call data from the Help Me Grow North Texas Centralized Access Point call center. This partnership and collaboration is thanks to the coalition's chair Dr. Jan Finch.

On December 11, the coalition hosted a Healthy Holiday Drive-Thru event that served close to 70 families within the community by giving families access to mental health support, resources, and free food. Carter Blood Care was there to collect blood. Agencies that participated in the drive-thru were Help Me Grow North Texas, My Health My Resources of Tarrant County's Early Childhood Services, STARRY Counseling, STAR Council, The Hood County Substance Abuse Council, United Way Hood County, Rancho Brazos Community Centers, Paluxy River Children Advocacy Centers, Brazos Pregnancy Center, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pecan Valley Centers, and The YMCA.

Find out more about the Comanche Peak Coalition for Mental Health by visiting their website <http://www.comanchepeakmh.org/>.

Developmental Monitoring

"Learn the Signs. Act Early."

Help Me Grow North Texas utilizes the CDC's *"Learn the Signs. Act Early."* materials which offers providers and families tools to:






- celebrate developmental milestones
- give power to the families to be educated about their child's development
- create a universal language toward developmental promotion and monitoring within the community



There are a variety of free materials that are offered to families and providers in the community as a partner of Help Me Grow North Texas. Materials can be ordered [here](#).

A family and provider favorite is the free Milestone tracker app. This is an interactive way to track your child's development, share checklists directly from the app to another caregiver in the child's life, receive reminders to do checklists, find tips and activities to support child development, and take notes of information to share with a doctor or other provider. The checklists even have videos and pictures embedded into the questions as examples of milestones to help with answering checklist questions. The app is available in English and Spanish from both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Download and start tracking your child's development or share with your families today!



Try CDC's FREE *Milestone Tracker* app today...
Because milestones matter!

-  Milestone checklists for 2 months to 5 years
-  Summary of your child's milestones
-  Activities to help your child's development
-  Tips for what to do if you have concerns
-  Appointment reminders

 Download on the App Store  GET IT ON Google Play
cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker

Now available in Spanish!