

On December 6, 2017, Texans Care for Children hosted a daylong event, ***Building Bright Futures: A Policy Summit on Supporting Healthy Moms, Babies, and Childhood Development*** in Austin, Texas. The summit, sponsored by the St. David's Foundation, brought together nearly 100 health practitioners, early educators, policy leaders, philanthropists, business leaders, and other Texans who advocate for strong early childhood systems. Panelists and attendees explored emerging challenges and innovative, effective ways to support maternal health, postpartum care, infant health, and early childhood development.

The first panel of experts discussed how childhood trauma impacts children and communities. Panelists shared innovative trauma-informed practices that are being implemented in child care programs and schools across Texas. Seanna Crosbie -- Director of Program & Trauma-Informed Services at Austin Child Guidance Center and Chair of Trauma-Informed Care Consortium of Central Texas (TICC) -- offered insights and lessons learned from ACGC's Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Project (IEC). Through this project, ACGC uses the Second Step Program to promote the social and emotional health of children in order to build resiliency and they educate and provide guidance to childcare staff and parents on infant and childhood development.

The second panel explored Texas' maternal mortality crisis. Experts highlighted the need for collaboration and innovative approaches to support pregnancy and postpartum health that are tailored to the needs of moms from different Texas communities. In the afternoon, there was a lively panel discussion about the urgent need to restore full funding for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) and the work being done in doctor's offices and early education settings to ensure developmental screenings and referrals are streamlined. The final panel explored infant health disparities in Texas and how data will continue to guide targeted strategies for improving infant health.

The Summit was rich with information about the latest evidence on what's off track, what works, policies ripe for change, and innovative opportunities for policy or practice changes. Texans Care for Children looks forward to continuing to support healthy moms, babies and childhood development as we work to advance policy solutions that give Texas children the best possible chance for a bright future.

For more information about the summit please visit txchildren.org/summit.

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