

# The State of Early Childhood Education in Texas

Lower Rio Grande  
Valley/McAllen

October 2024 Texas Tour

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children  
at Risk



# Our Mission

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**CHILDREN AT RISK** serves as a catalyst for change to improve the quality of life for children through strategic research, public policy analysis, education, collaboration, and advocacy.

# CHILDREN AT RISK - ECE Team



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# Prenatal-to-Three Collaborative



Sign up for the [Texas PN3 Newsletter](#)

# Child Care Property Tax Relief

## Cities Adopted

- City of Austin
- City of Denton
- City of Dallas
- City of Fort Worth
- City of Houston
- City of San Antonio
- City of Arlington
- City of Kyle
- City of Weslaco
- City of Waxahachie
- City of El Paso

## Counties Adopted

- Aransas County
- Dallas County
- Bexar County
- El Paso County
- Hays County
- Travis County
- Harris County
- Andrews County
- Jefferson County
- Knox County
- Milam County
- Potter County
- Tarrant County
- Medina County

# Child Care Property Tax Relief



How is it going?



What is going well?



Where are the roadblocks?



What else would be helpful?

# Child Care Deserts Data

**1 in 10** children in  
America live in Texas

**2.3M** children under the  
age of 6 live in Texas

**1 in 10** children under  
6 with low-income,  
working parents live  
in a child care desert





# The Texas Early Childhood Ecosystem



**ACCESS** | 44% of all zip codes in Texas qualify as child care deserts for low-income children, meaning that 3x more children live in the zip code than the number of available child care slots. Children deserve equitable access to safe care that supports their health, learning, and development.

**FAMILIES** | In Texas, caring for an infant and toddler can cost 10-50% of many working families' annual earnings. According to federal recommendations, child care should cost no more than 7% of a family's income. Families need affordable care in their communities to be able to participate in the workforce.



**EDUCATORS** | According to the US Department of Treasury, more than half qualify for at least one form of public assistance. Early Childhood Educators deserve a living wage.

# Overall Child Care Deserts

## Texas Overall Child Care Deserts

**1,065,952**

Total Number of Seats

**365**

Overall Desert Zip Codes\*

## Lower Rio Grande Overall Child Care Deserts

**35,087**

Total Number of Seats

**7**

Overall Desert Zip Codes\*

# Subsidy Child Care Deserts

## Texas Subsidy Child Care Deserts

**114,372**

Total Number of Subsidy Seats

**859**

Subsidy Desert Zip Codes\*

## Lower Rio Grande Subsidy Child Care Deserts

**10,233**

Total Number of Subsidy Seats

**3**

Subsidy Desert Zip Codes\*

# TRS Child Care Deserts

## Texas TRS Child Care Deserts

**48,491**

Total Number of TRS Seats

**981**

TRS Desert Zip Codes\*

## Lower Rio Grande TRS Child Care Deserts

**2,995**

Total Number of TRS Seats

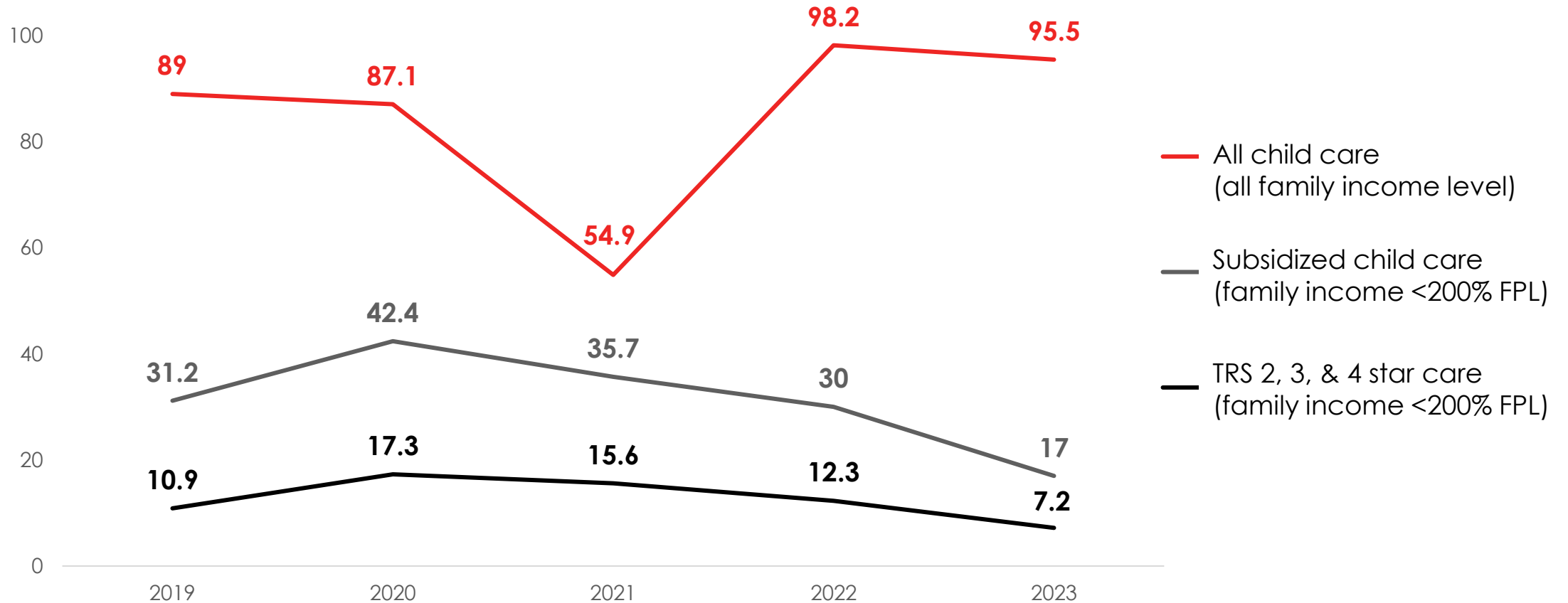
**8**

TRS Desert Zip Codes\*



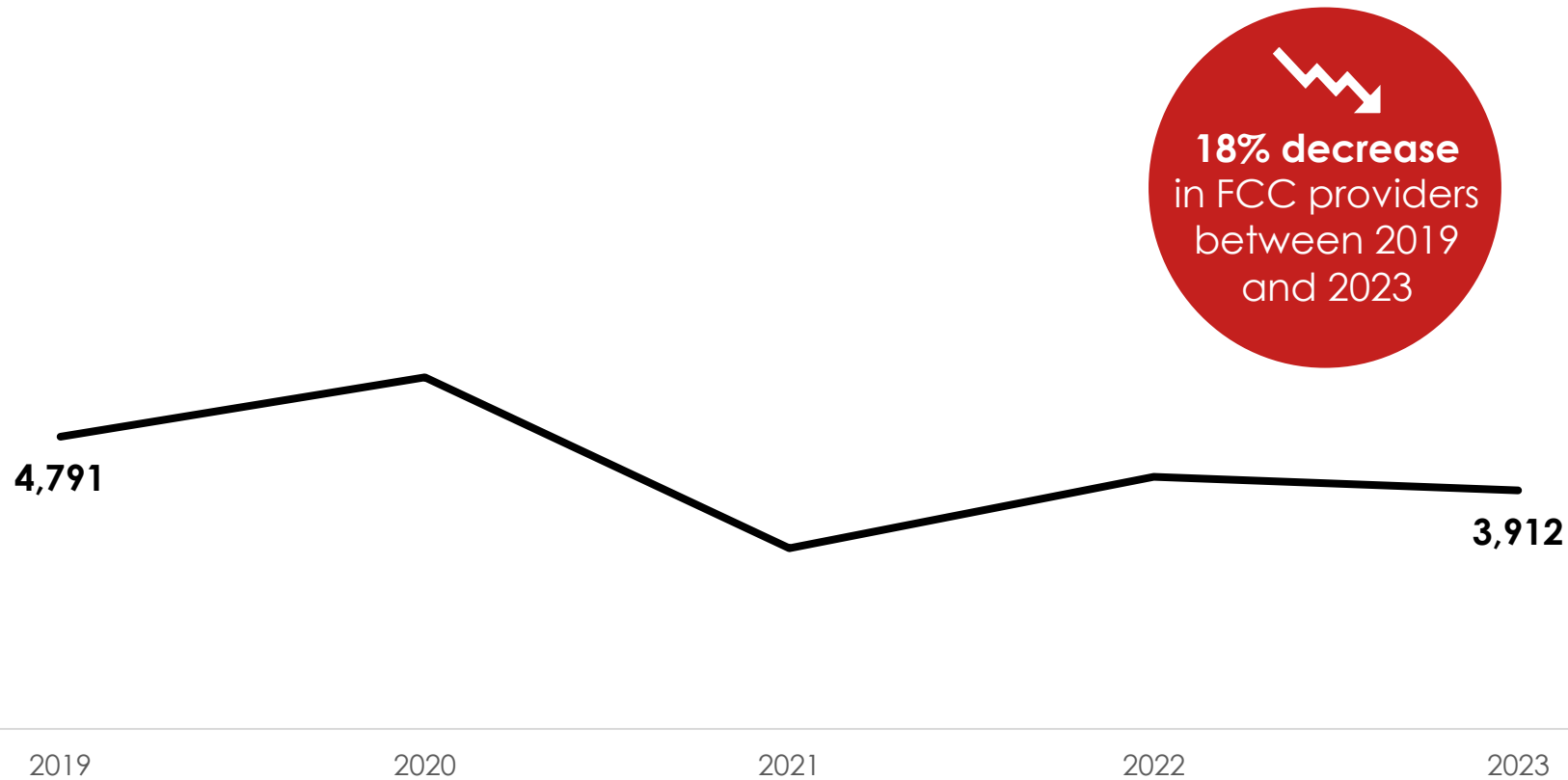
# The Last 5 Years of Child Care Deserts in Texas

Number of Child Care Seats per 100 Working Families

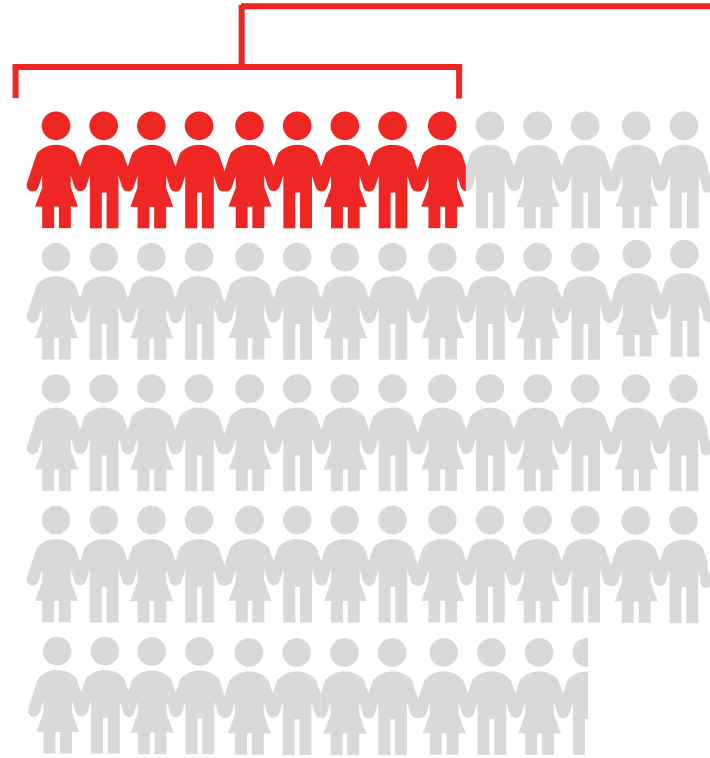


# Family Child Care Homes

Registered and Licensed Family Child Care Homes, 2019-2023

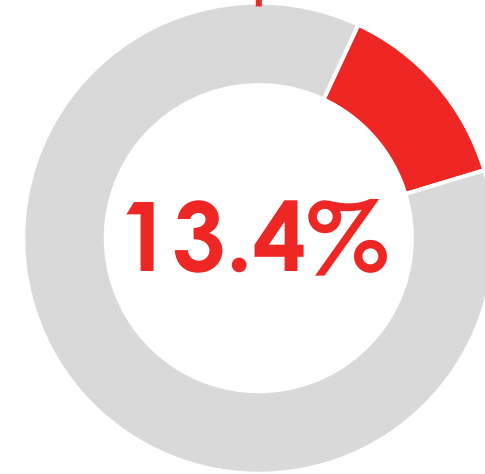


# Number of Children Served with Funding versus Need



 = 10,000 low-income children ages 0-5 with working parents

 = children ages 0-5 served by TWC



Just over **one in ten** low-income children ages 0-5 with working parents **receive subsidies for child care.**

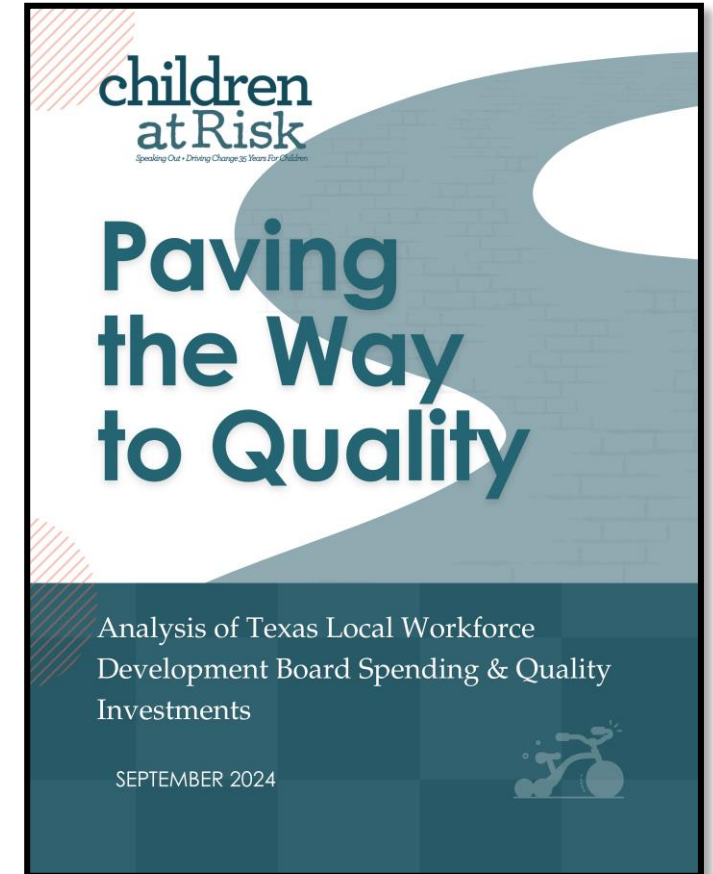
# Child Care Funding Data



# Paving the Way to Quality

*CHILDREN AT RISK IS excited to present findings from the 2024 report, Paving the Way to Quality. This milestone research highlights trends in child care funding across Texas, including updated data on Child Care Deserts and fiscal strategies by Local Workforce Development Boards.*

**Learn more at**  
[childrenatrisk.org/pavingthewaytoquality](https://childrenatrisk.org/pavingthewaytoquality)



# Child Care Funding



Texas' Child Care  
Development Block  
Fund Allocation for  
GY23: **\$1.1B**

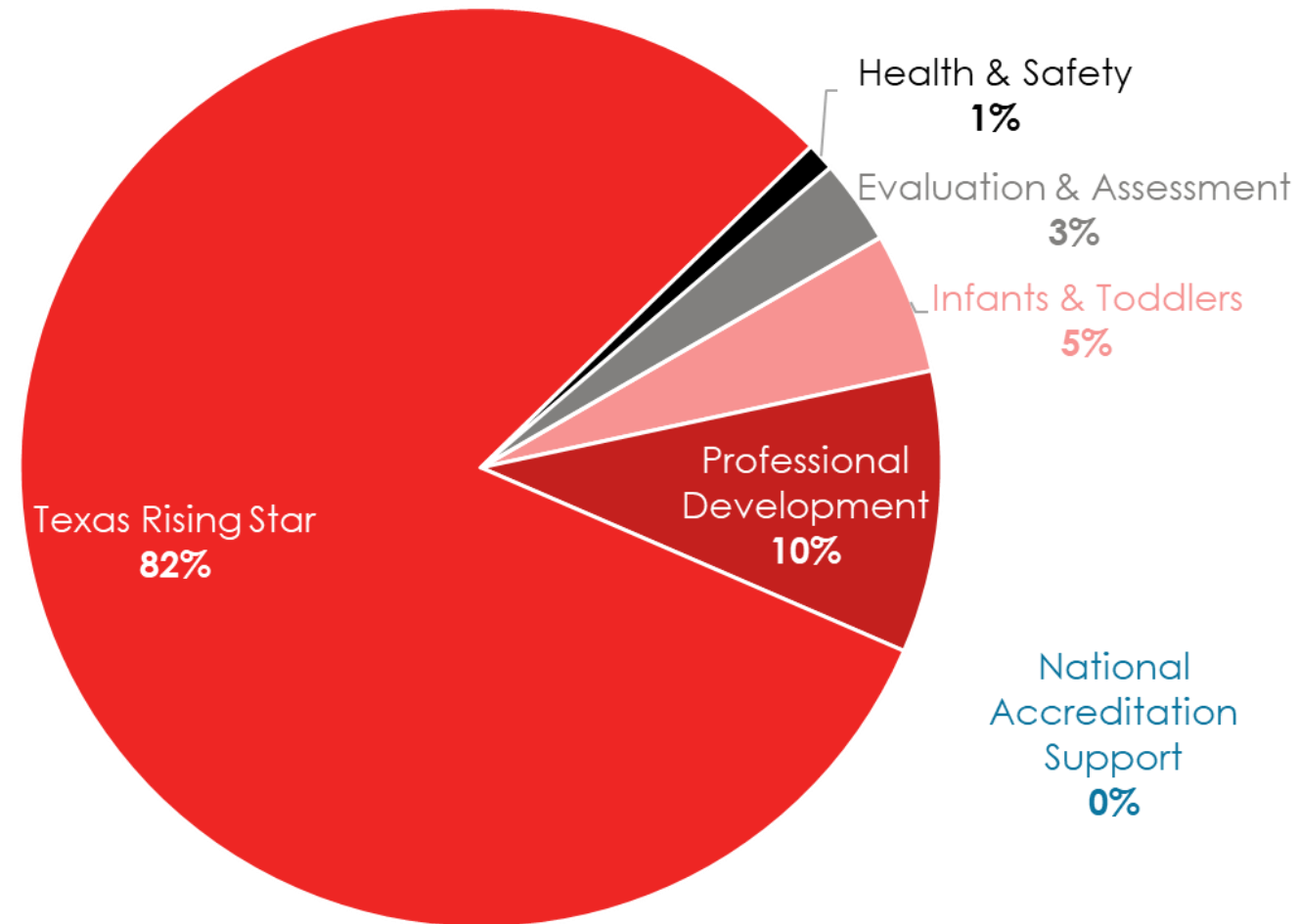
## Federal Rules Require That:

- No less than **70%** of funds can be used for **direct care**;
- No less than **9%** for **quality initiatives**;
- No less than **3%** for **infants & toddlers quality initiatives**; and
- No more than **5%** for **administrative activities**.

## Texas State Match:

- \$34M (3%)

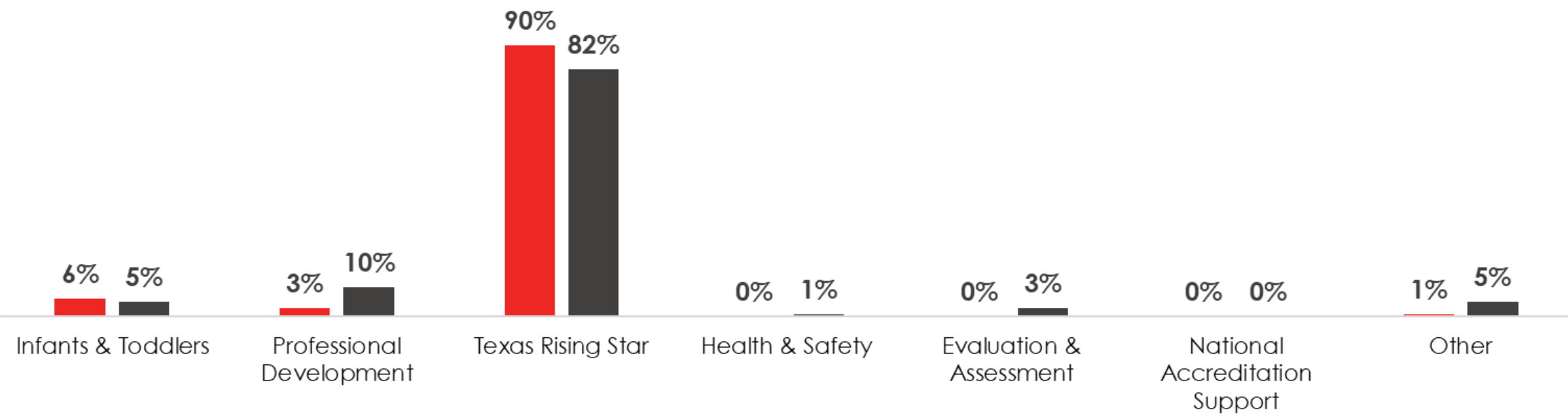
# Statewide Spending of Quality Improvement Dollars



# Lower RGV LWDB Spending of Quality Improvement Dollars

Percent of Total Quality Funds Expended by Category

■ Lower Rio Grande Valley ■ Statewide

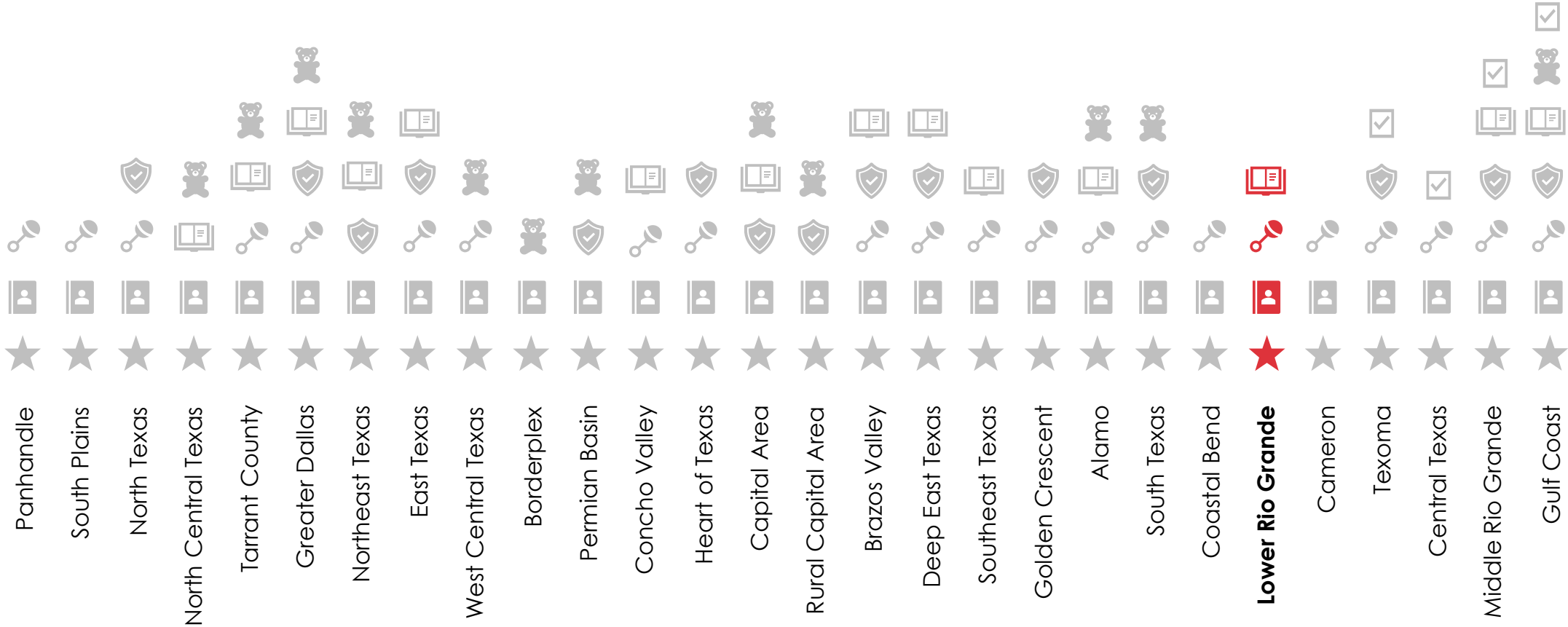


Out of **\$2,196,593.89** Total Quality Dollars Spent

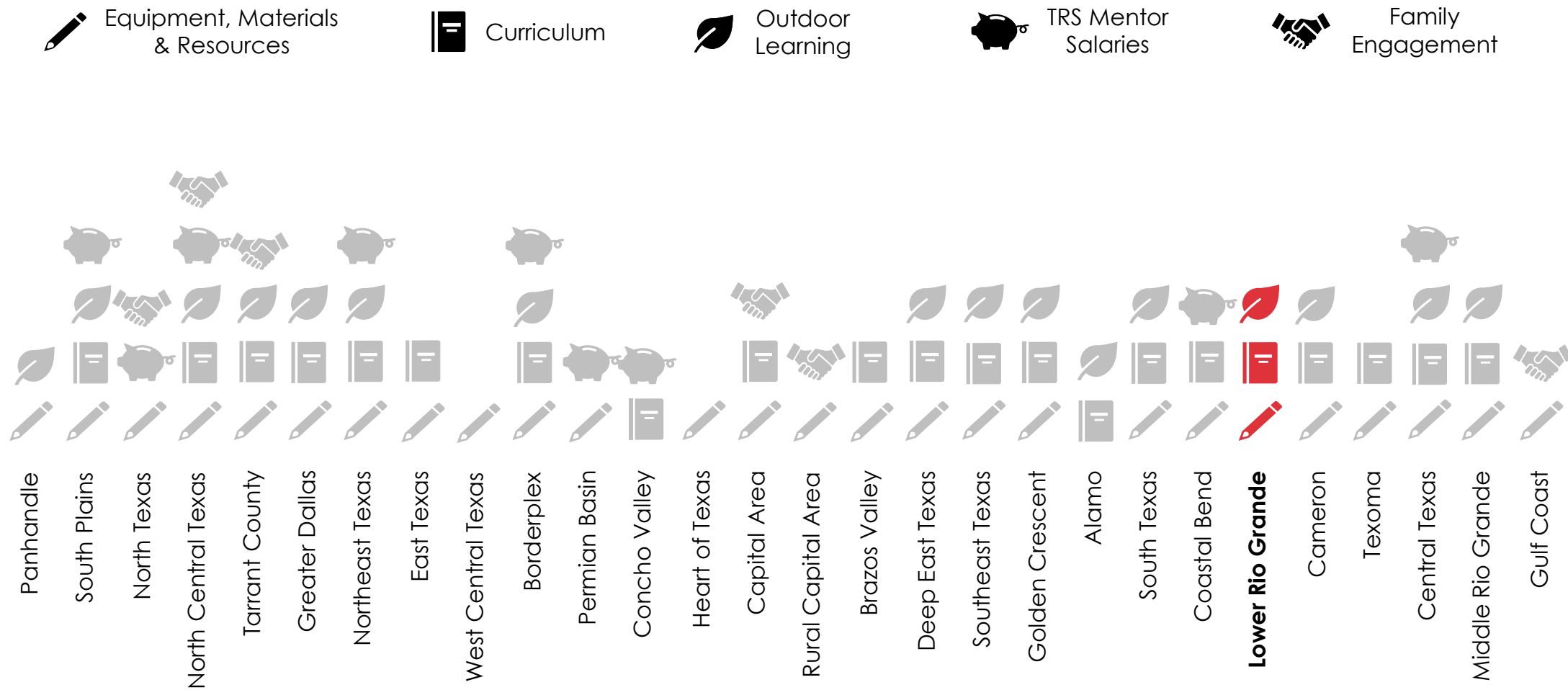


# Statewide Spending of Quality Improvement Dollars

★ TRS Supports    👤 Professional Development    🍼 Infants & Toddlers    🛡️ Health & Safety    📖 Evaluation & Assessment    🧸 Other    ☑️ National Accreditation



# Statewide Spending Allocated to Texas Rising Star Supports



# Statewide Spending Allocated to Infants & Toddlers



Curriculum  
& Materials



Professional  
Development



Outdoor



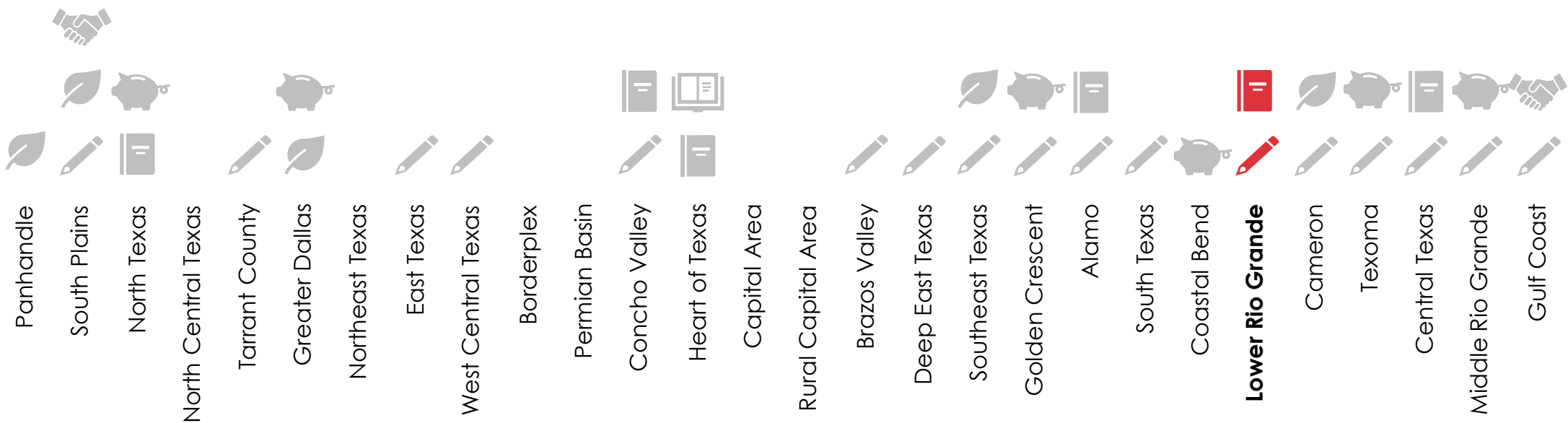
Expansion  
Grants



Infant-Toddler  
Specialist Network



Evaluation  
& Assessment



# Statewide Spending Allocated to Professional Development



# Statewide Spending Allocated to Other Activities



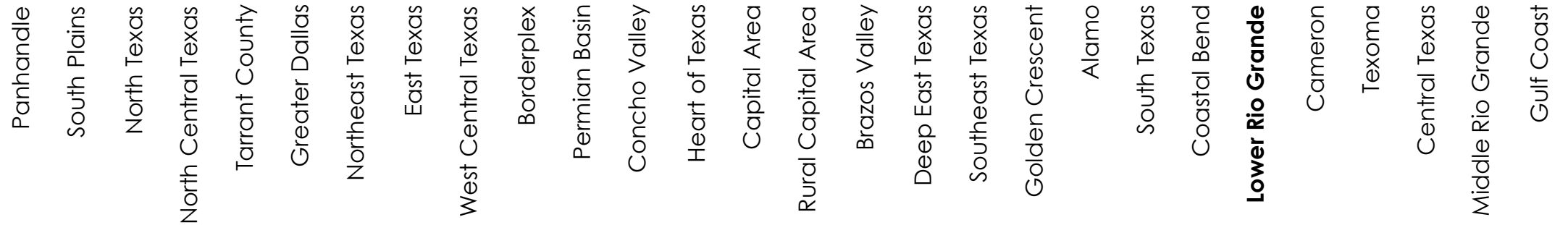
Wage  
Supplements



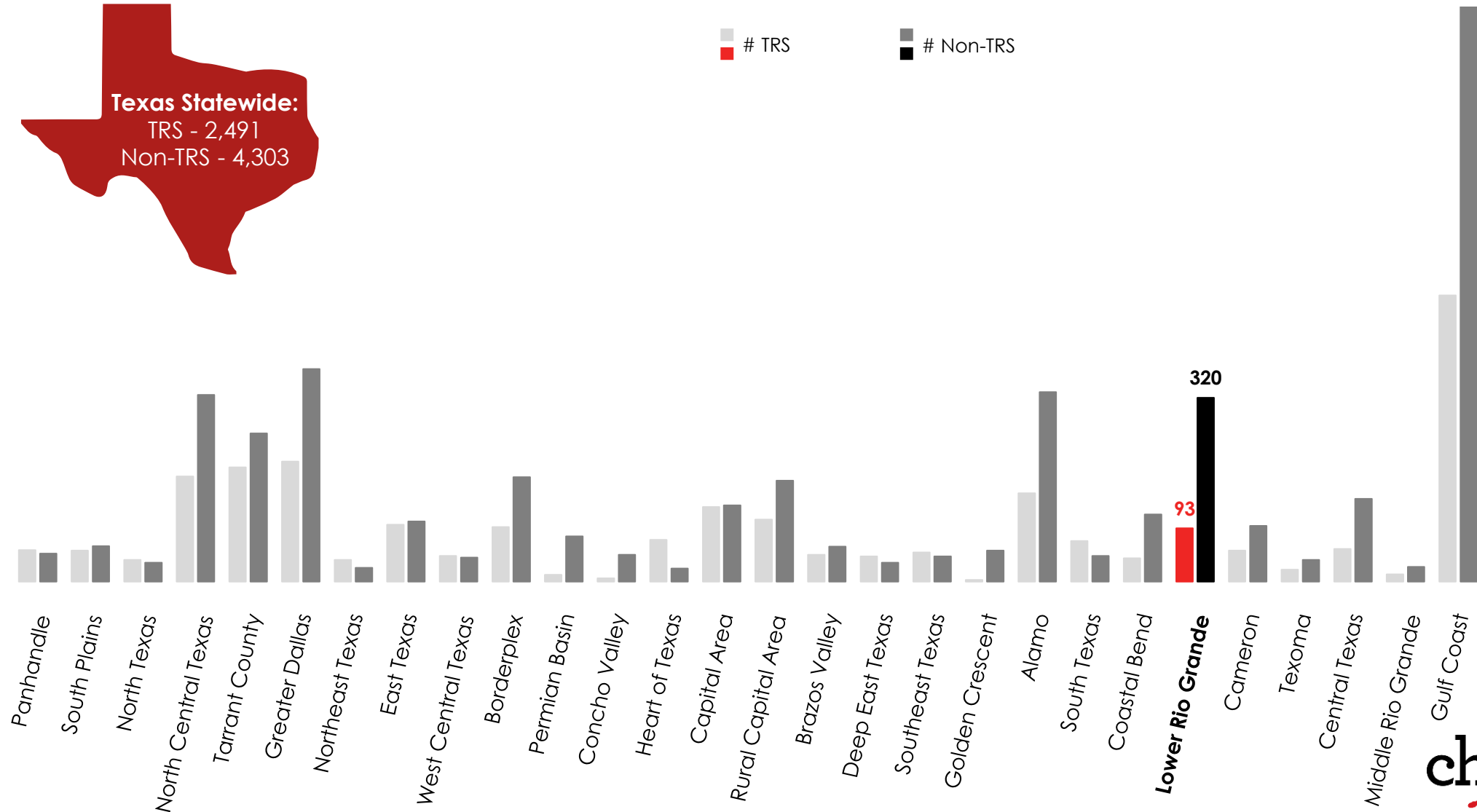
Pre-K  
Partnerships



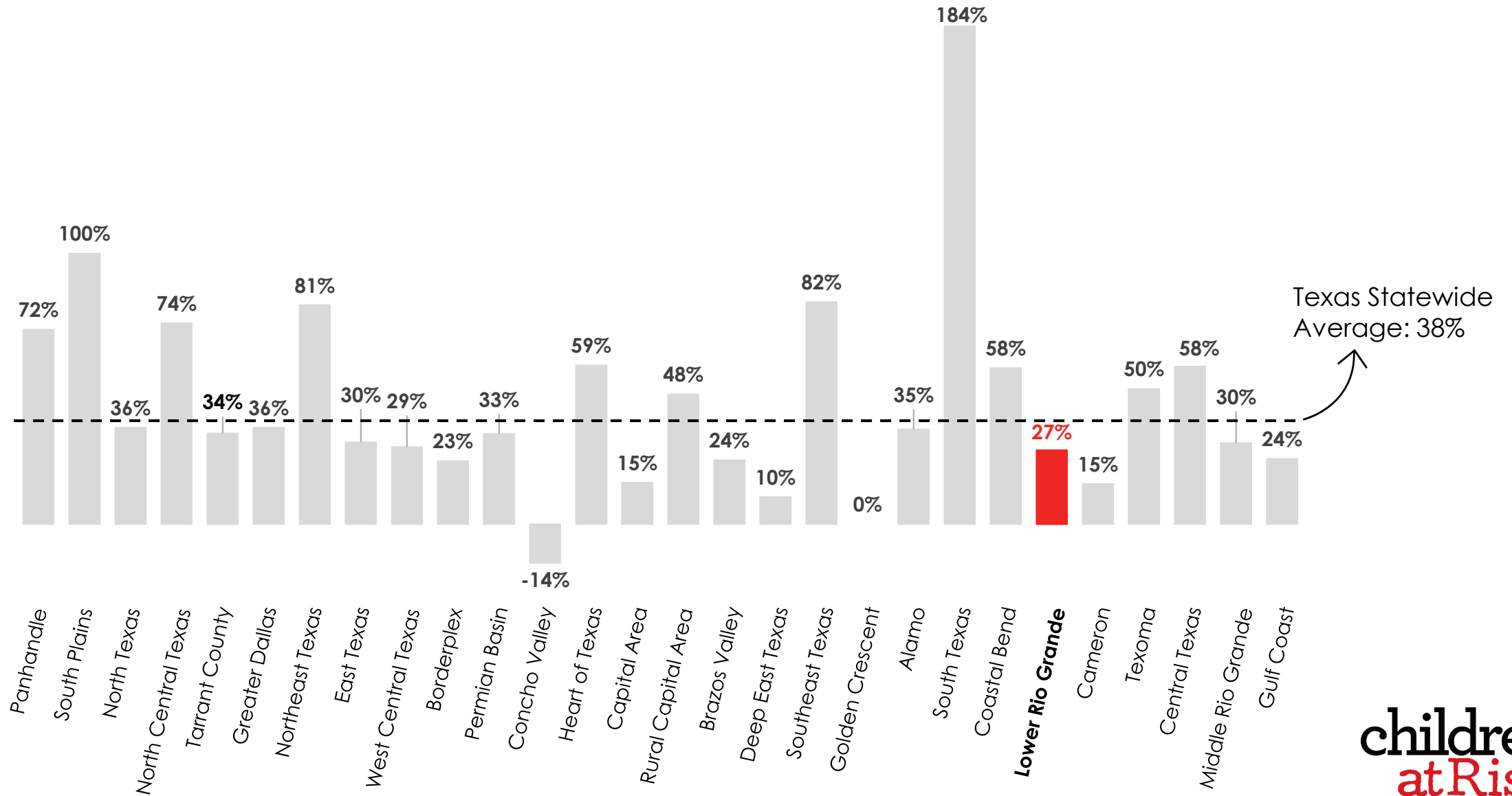
Child Care  
Management Services



# TRS versus Non-TRS Subsidy Providers by LWDB



# Percent Change in TRS Participation from 2022 to 2023





# Paving the Way to Quality Recommendations

## Recommendations for Local Communities



- I. Ensure LWDB **funds are utilized effectively** and spent on **quality improvements needed** in their communities.
- II. Consider additional **local incentives** to **increase overall provider participation** in the TRS system.
- III. Focus on **collaboration with non-traditional partners** to address service gaps and better support both center based and family child care providers.

## Recommendations for the Texas Legislature



- I. **Invest** in child care through:
  - Reimbursement rates
  - Additional funding to serve more children (waitlist)
  - Supply Building Grants
- II. Support increase in **Family Child Care** providers

## Recommendations for Texas Workforce Commission

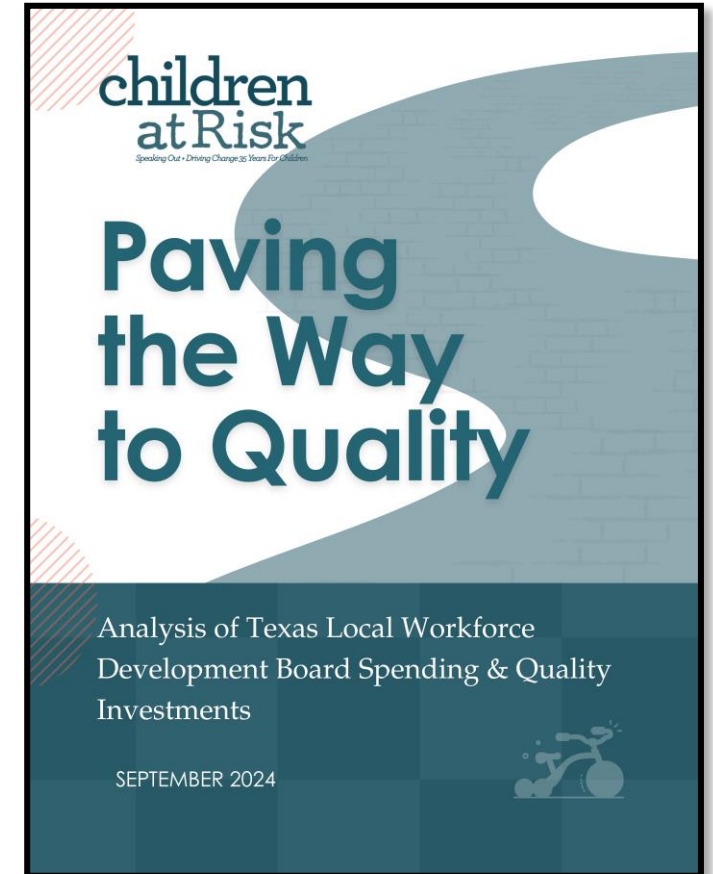


- I. Enhance consistency and transparency by **improving guidelines and resource allocation** for LWDBs.
- II. **Promote statewide collaboration** by encouraging LWDBs to share best practices and work together to improve quality and access.

# Paving the Way to Quality

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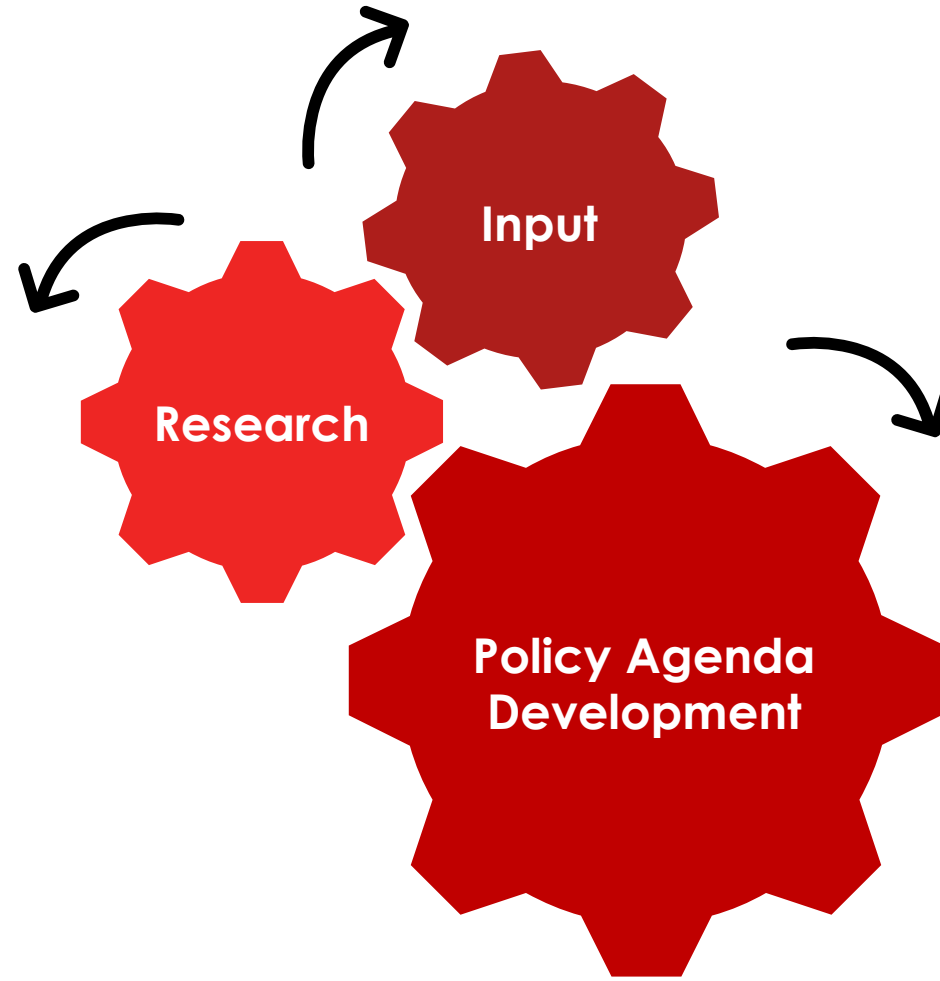
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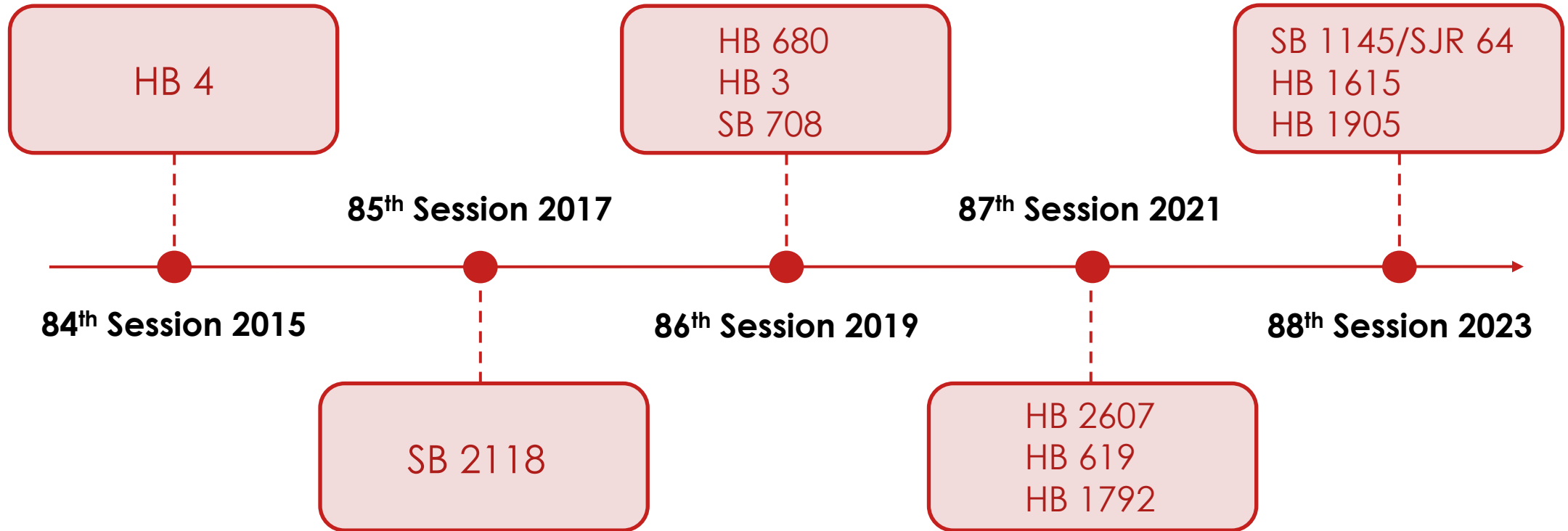
# Using Results in Advocacy Work

# Preparing for Legislative Session

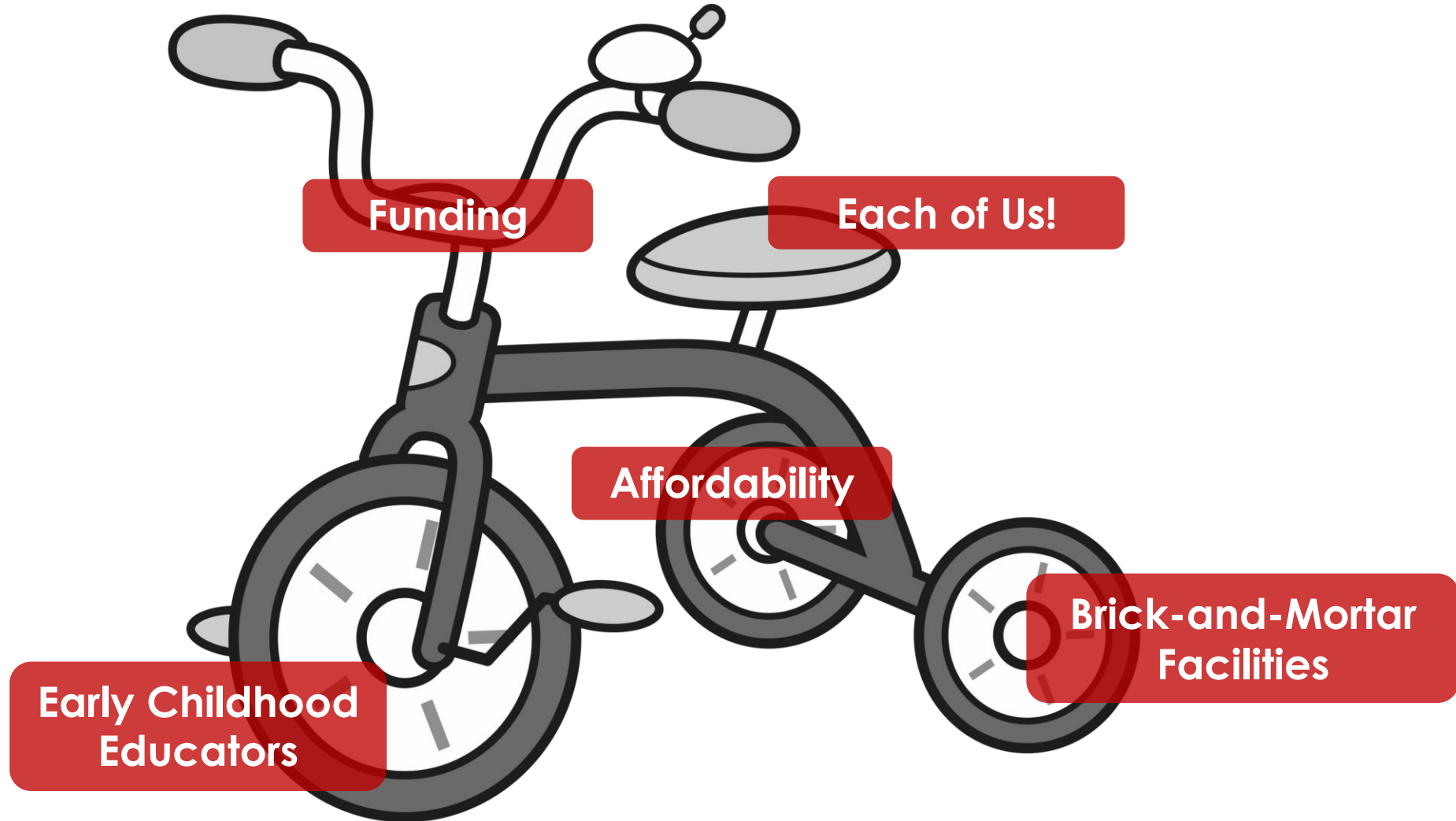
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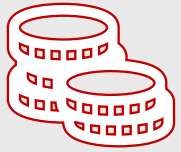
# A Look Back...



# The Trifecta for Success



# Looking Towards the 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature



## Invest in child care through:

- Direct Care of Children
- Reimbursement Rates
- Child Care Supply Funding



**Remove** patchwork of **local regulatory barriers** that burden Texans who want to open **family child care homes**



Prioritize **income-eligible child care employees** for child care scholarships **for their own children**



Reduce **administrative obstacles** to develop **public-private Pre-K partnerships**



Consider **business tax incentives** for businesses supporting child care for employees



# Resources at childrenatrisk.org

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## PAVING THE WAY TO QUALITY



**Learn more at:**

[childrenatrisk.org/pavingthewaytoquality](https://childrenatrisk.org/pavingthewaytoquality)

## LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT ONE-PAGERS



**Learn more at:**

[childrenatrisk.org/legislative-district-ece](https://childrenatrisk.org/legislative-district-ece)

## SIGN UP FOR ACTION ALERTS



**Learn more at:**

[childrenatrisk.org](https://childrenatrisk.org)

# Thank You!

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