

## [Learn More about Being a Parent Leader](#)

Serving on Groups  
That Make Decisions:  
A Guide for Families

*Linda Litzinger*  
*Texas Parent to Parent*

[www.servingongroups.org](http://www.servingongroups.org)

## Who we are:

Linda Litzinger – parent. Advocacy team at TxP2P. Serve on: THECB Advisory Committee for Persons with IDD. League of Women Voters Social Justice committee. Ad hoc committees.

Amy Litzinger – self-advocate. Advocacy team at TxP2P. Serve **on: TEA's Continuing Advisory Committee, HHSC's IDD Redesign Committee.** and Austin Presbyterian Seminary Alumni Board.

Melissa Fox – parent. Coordinator for the NICU Network. Mountain States Regional Genetics Network Advisory board. Co-lead on their Texas Team.





*Group Activity: Tell us why  
you chose this session?*

TRUE LEADERS  
DON'T CREATE  
FOLLOWERS,  
THEY CREATE  
MORE LEADERS

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea."

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

CURATED QUOTES

Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others.

~John Maxwell

www.gauraw.com

LEADERSHIP  
IS ABOUT MAKING OTHERS  
**BETTER** AS A  
RESULT OF YOUR PRESENCE  
AND MAKING **SURE**  
THAT IMPACT LASTS IN YOUR  
**ABSENCE.**

GREAT LEADERS DON'T  
SET OUT TO BE A  
LEADER...THEY SET OUT  
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.  
ITS NEVER ABOUT THE  
ROLE-ALWAYS ABOUT  
THE GOAL.

LisaHaisha.com

When we take turns doing the hard tasks, when we encourage others, we become stronger through shared leadership.

VERYBESTQUOTES.COM

LEADERS WITH INFLUENCE

**GIVE** WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE TO.  
**CARE** FOR OTHERS.  
**GROW** CONTINUOUSLY.  
**LIVE** AUTHENTICALLY.  
**EMPOWER** OTHERS.  
**MANAGE** HARDSHIP.  
**SERVE** WITH HUMILITY.

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ATTRACT  
WHAT YOU  
EXPECT.  
REFLECT  
WHAT YOU  
DESIRE.  
BECOME  
WHAT YOU  
RESPECT.  
AND  
MIRROR  
WHAT YOU  
ADMIRE.

It does not require many words to speak the truth.

Chief Joseph  
Nez Perce

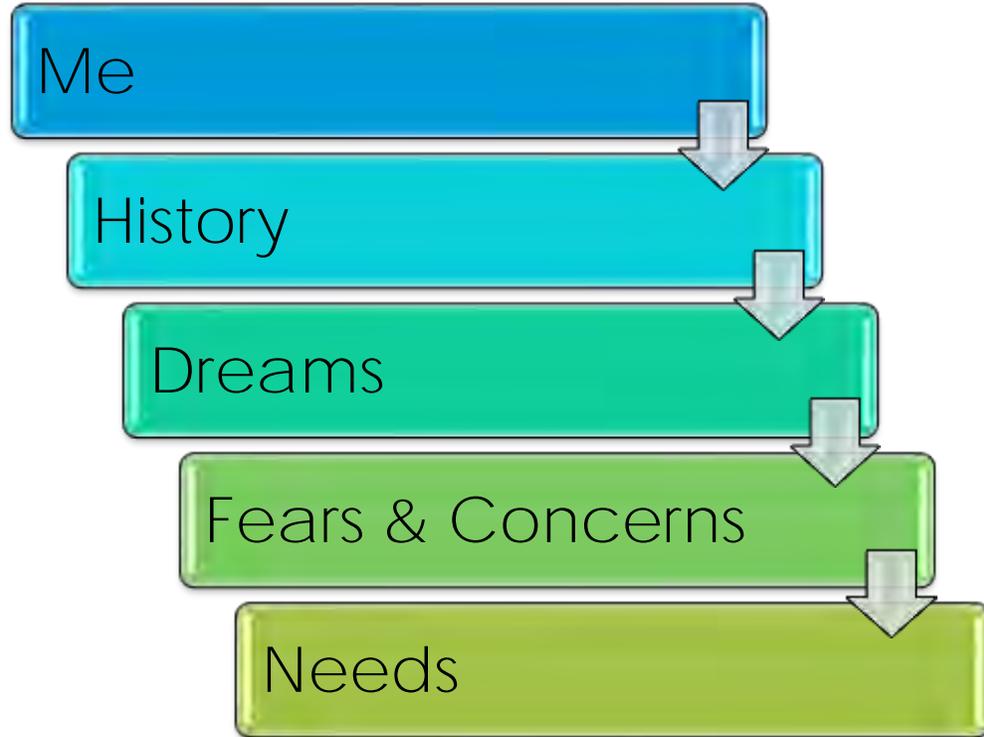
everybody can be  
**GREAT**  
because  
everybody can  
**SERVE**

marlin luther king jr

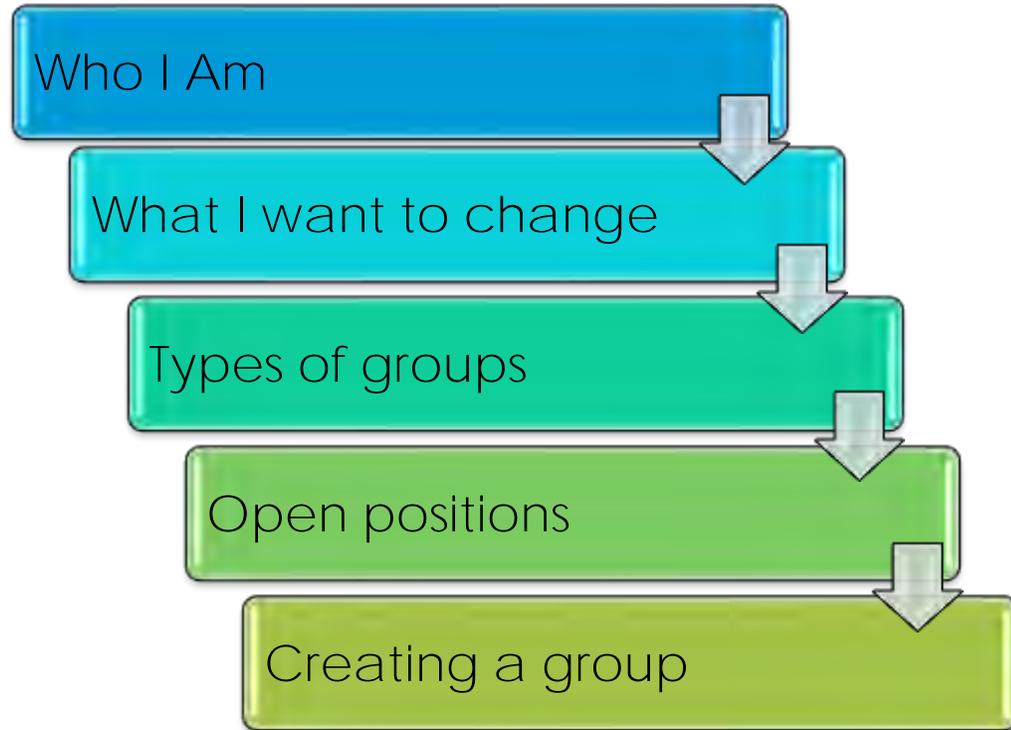
The role of a  
**GREAT LEADER**  
is not to give  
greatness to  
human beings, but  
to help them extract  
the greatness  
they already have  
inside them.

- J. Buchan

# Things to think about as we choose to lead...



# Let's discover.....



# ...and Discover Opportunities to Get Involved

## Questions

- What issues should I become involved with?
- Where do I begin?
- Who can serve on the various groups?
- How can I share in the decision making?

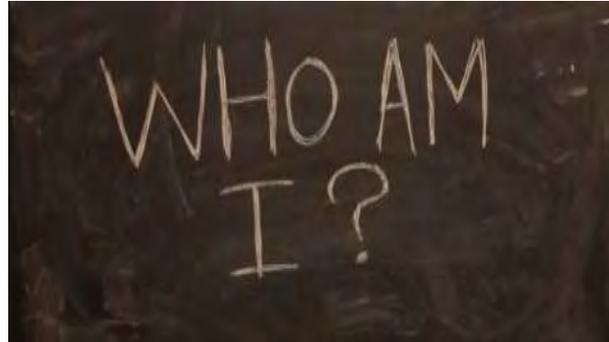
## Steps

- Self-Reflection
- Awareness of Possibilities/Issues
- Opportunities to Explore



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**WHO AM I?: How do you describe yourself? Think about:**

- **What words best describe you?**
- **What skills, gifts, and talents will support your journey as a member?**
- **What other skills and talents will you need?**
- **What do you like/dislike about your current role(s) in working on a team?**
- **What values and beliefs guide your life and work as a person?**
- **What relationships with other family leaders and family organizations provide you with needed support?**



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**HISTORY:** Briefly describe the background and circumstances that led you here today.

**Think about:**

- What is significant about your personal history?
- What is significant about your family or community's history?
- What were your first experiences where you saw yourself as a leader or part of a decision-making team?
- What adult experiences and/or formal/informal training has helped you see yourself as a member of a group or team?







**DREAMS: What dreams do you have in relation to your personal and professional development as a group or team member?**

**Think about:**

- **What contributions and/or changes do you dream about that will involve your participation on a decision-making team?**
- **What one thing do you most want to see happen?**
- **What do you hope to accomplish in one year? 5 years? 10 years?**
- **What other dreams are important to you as you begin this journey?**



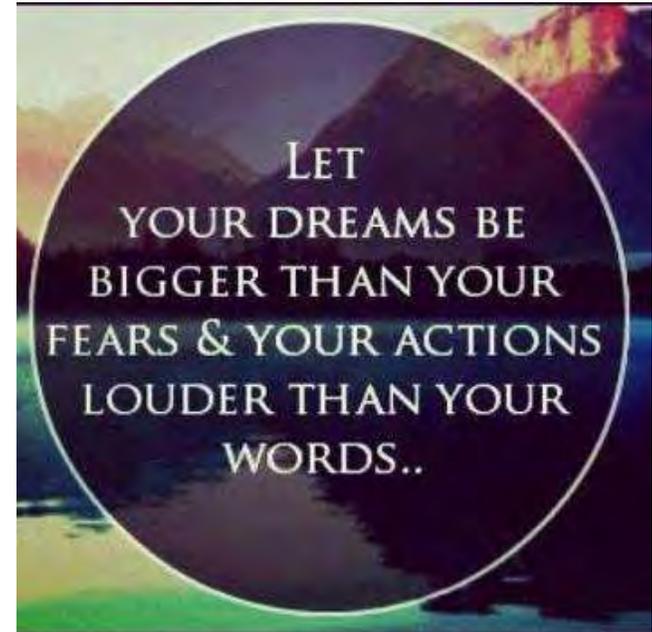
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**FEARS & CONCERNS: Identify your worries or concerns about becoming part of a decision-making group or team.**

**Think about:**

- **What concerns arise when you envision yourself as a leader or member of a team and about your role on the team?**
- **What barrier might stand in the way of your realizing your leadership and participation dreams?**



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## **NEEDS: What needs to happen to make your dreams about leadership and group membership become a reality?**

### **Think about:**

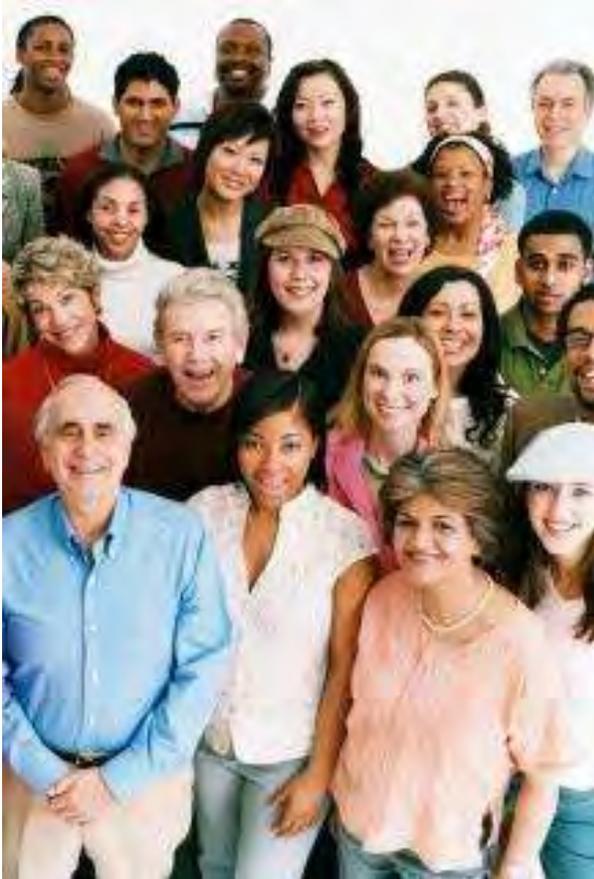
- **What skills would you like to develop further?**
- **What else will you need to expand your role as a leader and team member?**
- **What supports do you need from others? Are you connected to family networks that can provide ongoing support?**
- **Who do I know who might be my mentor in this?**



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# Who can serve on groups?



## Interested Individuals

- Especially if the **group's decisions will** affect them personally
- BUT choose your opportunity wisely-  
*focus on your passion!*
- AND consider the TIME & ENERGY needed to serve



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# Where to begin?



- Find an issue you care deeply about
- Connect to a group with the authority to create or influence change
- Learn about available resources or services
- Prepare yourself to serve



# What Makes Decision-Making Groups *Unique*?



- Issues
- Decision-making authority
- Meeting structure: Formal? Informal?
- Input and feedback
- Processes and data
- Membership
- Diversity of perspectives
- Time since formation and history



# Six Types of Groups



# Governing

## Examples

- City Council
- School Boards, State or Local
- State Agency Advisory Boards
- Taskforce on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Tribal Council



## Activities

- Establish by-laws
- Govern an organization
- Develop policies
- Establish goals
- Employ & evaluate executives
- Negotiate with employee groups
- Allow for community participation
- Communicate with the public & funding sources



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# Advisory

## Examples

- Committee/workgroup
- Advisory Panel
  - HMO Advisory
  - Title V Advisory Group
  - Medicaid Advisory Group

## Activities

- Represent a broader group of people
- Seek out the views of those affected
- Advise on needs
- Bring awareness to issues
- Help develop action plans
- Make recommendations
- Serve as a resource



# Leadership

## Examples

- School improvement teams
- Initiatives/grants
- Associations/Organizations/Coalitions
- Community of Care Consortium for CYSHCN



## Activities

- Initiate awareness of an emerging or systemic issue
- Collectively work on targeted issues
- Conduct listening sessions and public forums
- Actively plan and implement strategies
- Attract a collective voice
- Monitoring entities (watchdog)



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# Planning

## Examples

- Committee
- Workgroup
- Upcoming Event
- Action team
- IEP team
- Plan of Care team

## Activities

- Research and study a specific issue
- Assess needs and develop priorities
- Make recommendations
- Design information and conduct training
- Develop or select a curriculum
- A channel for communication and feedback
- Plan and carry out an activity



# Evaluation



## Examples

- Formal stakeholder groups
- Service improvement teams
- Focused monitoring
- After-Action team

## Activities

- Create an action plan
- Collect, display, and analyze data
- Report results
- Continuous monitoring for progress and improvement



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# Practice

## Examples

- A learning circle sharing knowledge: book club, study group
- A community of practice: sports team, dance group, community band, Toastmasters, Transition Action Group

## Activities

- Provide a structure to communicate, learn, & act
- Continually reach out to others
- Create opportunities for networking & sharing
- Enhance participation and connections
- Discuss emerging or systemic issues
- Promote interagency connections
- Share information and solutions
- Promote the spread of best practices



*"Leadership is when you give of yourself for the greater good of others with no expectation of reward. It's that willingness to jump in a ditch with your whole team so that the next time they fall in, everyone understands the best and **easiest way to get out.**"*

-- Roxanne Reed, Executive Director of the  
Military Spouse Foundation



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*"Leadership is the willingness to speak up when it's easier to stay silent, hold yourself accountable when you have excuses at the ready and inspire without intimidation or the fear another will surpass you. A leader shows more empathy than ego and remains dedicated to the betterment of the whole and not the advancement of one."*

-- Brenda Della Casa, Director of online content and community at Preston Bailey Designs.



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# *Traits of a Leader:*

Think of your favorite parent leader – someone you admire.

What qualities do they have . . .



# *Traits of a Leader:*

- Good listener
- Creative
- Good problem solver
- Incorporates information
- Takes initiative
- Has the courage to speak up



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# *Traits of a leader*

(Continued)

- Uses past experience effectively
- Identifies talents in others and surrounds themselves with a talented team
- Knows how to stay quiet when it is time
- Knows when to let others lead
- Has a vision or mission



# *Traits of a leader*

(Continued)

- Manages to outcomes
- Skilled collaborators
- Bring people together
- Innovator
- Able to guide implementation



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# *What type of leader are you?*

- Working in the background and encourage others to take the lead
- Working out in front – always in the thick of things
- Creating & organizing groups
- Leading by example



# *What type of leader are you?*

*(Continued)*

- Advocating on the behalf of others
- Affecting policy issues and working on the big picture
- Testifying before the Legislature
- Others?



# *Benefits for Parent Leaders*

- Meet some amazing people
- **Hear others' points of view**
- Learning new skills and about new resources
- Find expertise in others
- Acting on a vision



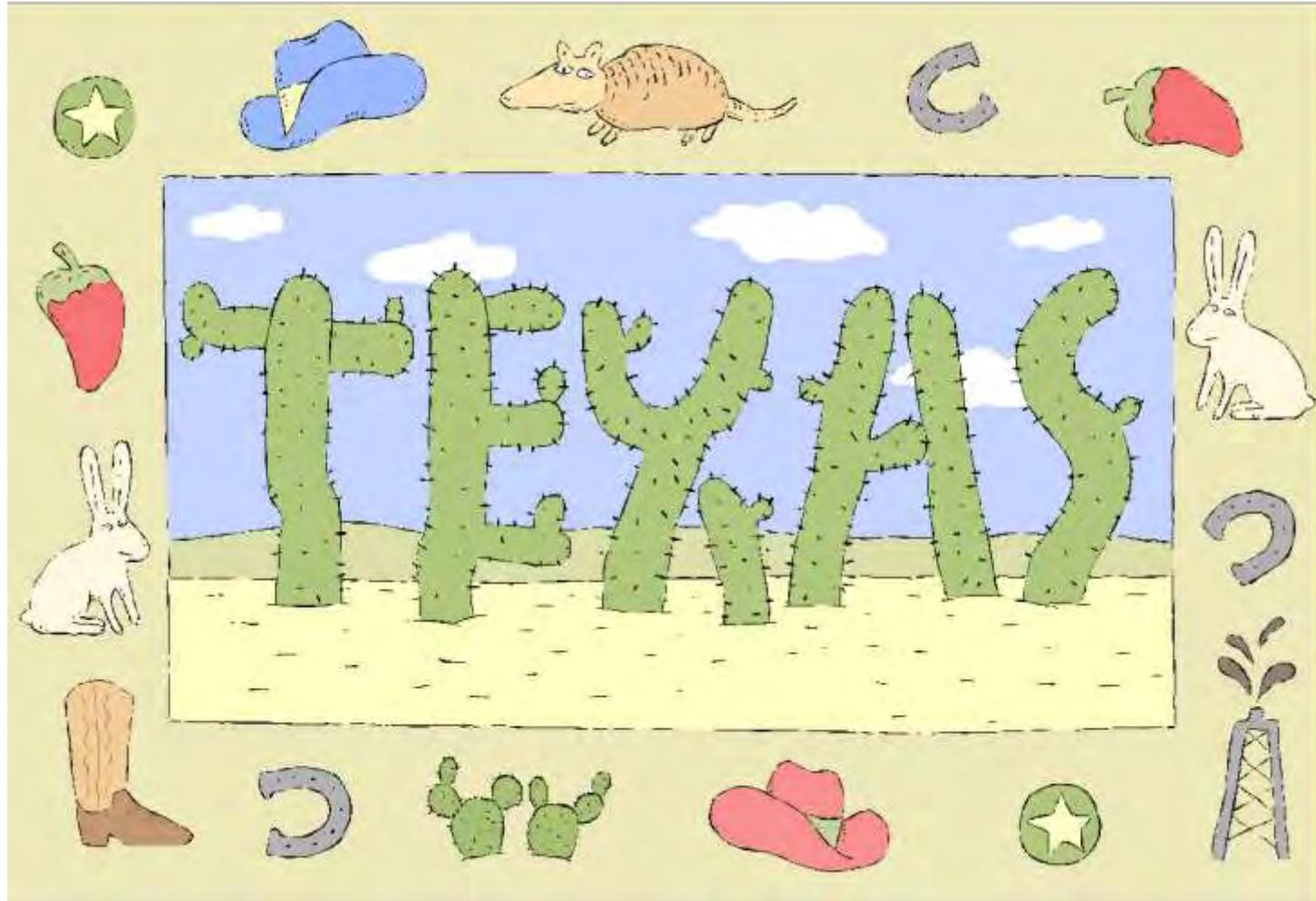
# *Benefits of Parents as Leaders*

## To programs and services:

- Providing parent perspectives
- Bringing a sense of reality to ideas and tasks
- Improving the quality of services and supports
- Ensuring that programs and policies meet the needs of families



# Opportunities and Resources Local to Texas



# ISD SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council)



# Texas Leadership Resources

Texas Partners in Policymaking – applications due March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 for the Class of 2023

<https://txpartners.org/>

Arc of Texas Partners in Disability Leadership grant – Applications open December 2022

<https://www.thearcoftexas.org/get-involved/partners-in-disability-leadership/>

Texas Parent to Parent Advocacy Network – meets by zoom on Wednesdays, 7:30pm

<http://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwrcuGsqT8iHdyQLFDRoXKZ2JwaURu7R-In>

- Coalition of Texans with Disability
- ADAPT of Texas
- SALSA (San Antonio League of Self Advocates)
- The Self Determination Group (North Texas)
- Art Spark of Texas



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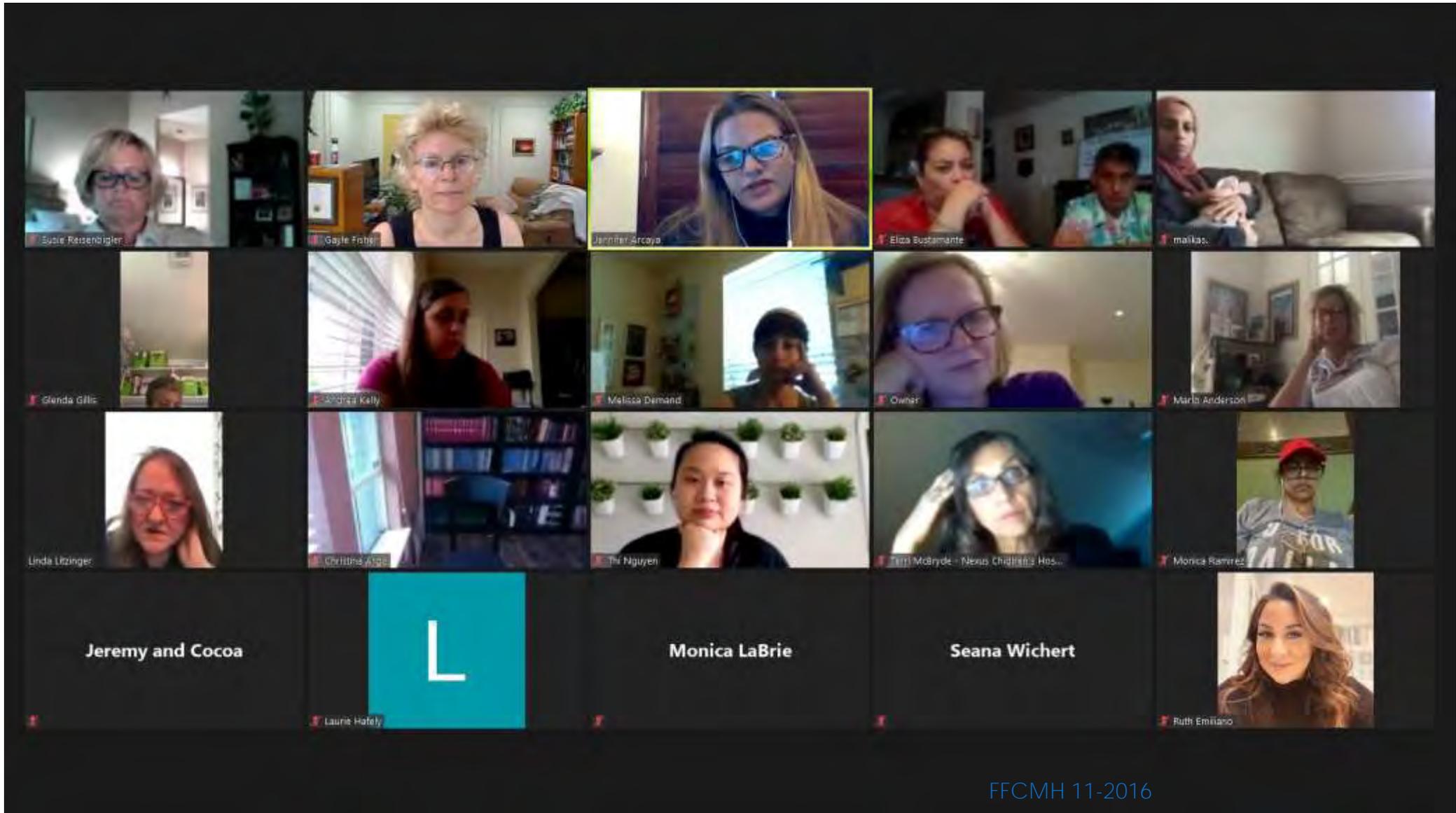


# Leadership by Issue

By Issue (via Facebook), here is a sampling:

- Texans For Special Education Reform
- PTFK Warriors (Protecting Texas Fragile Kids)
- Texas Autism Society
- Texas Prader Willi Association
- DBMAT – Deaf Blind Multi-handicapped Association of Texas
- REV-UP (Register, Educate, Vote, Use your Power)
- Sick of It Texas (Medicaid)
- Down Syndrome Association





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# Texas Agencies and their Committees

## HHSC and DSHS:

70 Advisory Committees

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about/leadership/advisory-committees>

Upcoming advisory meetings

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about/events>

Ways to watch virtually, and sign up to give public comment virtually

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about/meetings>

How to apply to a committee who has advertised an opening.

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about/leadership/advisory-committees/advisory-committee-appointments>

<https://dshs.texas.gov/Advisory-Committees.aspx#app>

## TEA:

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/programs-and-services/continuing-advisory-committee-for-special-education>



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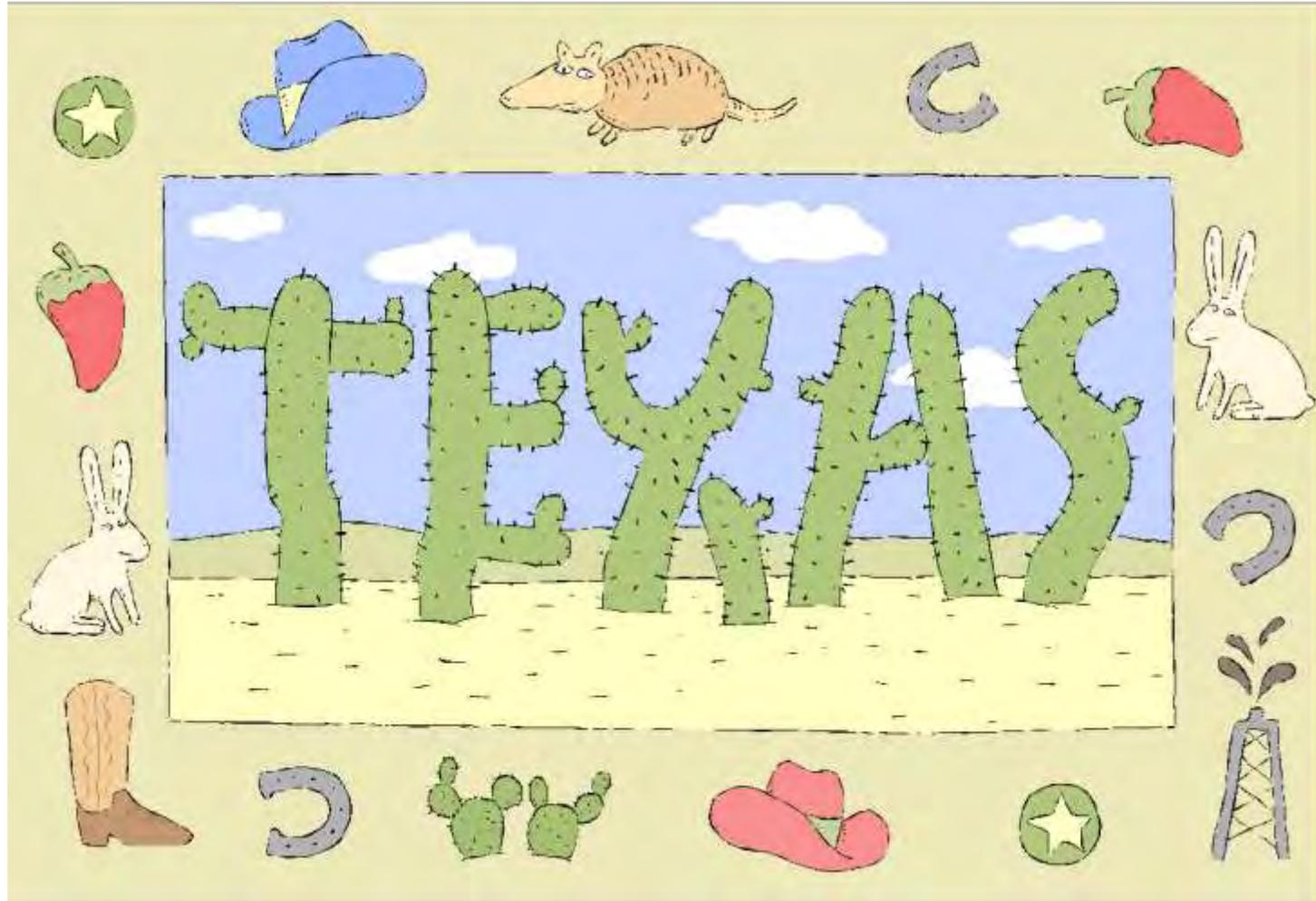


# HHSC Advisory Committee



WV FACETS

# Leaving Texas



# National Resources

Family Voices National Center for Family Professional Partnerships

<http://www.fv-ncfpp.org/>

National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy and Community Empowerment

<http://www.parentsatthetable.org/>

Fostering Parent & Professional Collaboration – Center for Parent Information & Resources

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/improve-parent-professional-communication/>

Accessing Parent Groups – Center for Parent Information & Resources

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/parentgroups/>

National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships Implementation Guide

[http://www.pta.org/national\\_standards.asp](http://www.pta.org/national_standards.asp)



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# National Resources

Shared Work website

[www.sharedwork.org](http://www.sharedwork.org)

Guidelines for Establishing Family Advisory Boards

[ftp://ftp.hrsa.gov/mchb/training/documents/grantee\\_products/00\\_guidelinesforestablishing02.pdf](ftp://ftp.hrsa.gov/mchb/training/documents/grantee_products/00_guidelinesforestablishing02.pdf)

Serving on Boards and Committees

<http://www.nichcy.org/informationresources/documents/nichcy%20pubs/pa11.pdf>

IDEA Partnership – Practice Groups

[http://www.ideapartnership.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=557:change-theory-organization-development-stakeholder-involvement-in-systems-change&catid=37:reports&Itemid=60](http://www.ideapartnership.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=557:change-theory-organization-development-stakeholder-involvement-in-systems-change&catid=37:reports&Itemid=60)



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# *Nothing About Us Without Us!*



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The End ---- any questions?

