



# Value Our Vulnerable: #FixThisMess

Join Protect TX Fragile Kids (PTFK) in standing up for our most vulnerable Texans.

## SUPPORT OUR PRIORITY LEGISLATION:

HB1283/SB1113, HB2641, HB3807/SB1715, HB3985/SB1666, HB4541/SB2360, HB4755, HB4823/SB2145, HB5078/SB2143, HB5085/SB1870

## The State of Texas Medicaid Study: ABOUT THE STUDY / METHODOLOGY

PTFK, a grass-roots, non-profit organization (501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4)), commissioned Feedback, LLC, a leading digital ethnographic research company, to conduct a comprehensive behavioral science research study on the state of Texas Medicaid. Targeted data was collected in Texas, statewide and regionally, from conversations across the internet, including social media, comments, message boards, groups and forums. Hundreds of thousands of discussions and engagements were analyzed by PhD-level data scientists and digital ethnographers in order to provide pertinent data and actionable insights in relation to the STAR Kids program, STAR+PLUS, Medicaid, and other healthcare issues facing families and patients with severe disabilities.

### Social Data Pool:

Millions of active social media users in Texas

### Data Analyzed for Study:

150,000+ unique data points from over a decade of Texas Medicaid discussions

## THE PROBLEM

The study shows that Texans, especially children with medical complexity, are experiencing significant gaps in coverage, excessive waitlist times, limited providers, and issues accessing quality care, among other problems with STAR Kids, STAR+Plus, and Texas Medicaid. Children with medical complexity are defined as having multiple significant chronic health problems that affect multiple organ systems and result in functional limitations, high health care need or utilization, and often the need for or use of medical technology.

## TIMELINE: Special Needs Care Access in Texas

**Pre-2016:**  
Star+Plus  
Roll-out

*"Some of our patients have seen the same specialists for YEARS...and now they have to switch?" -care provider, raising early red flags about the shift away from state managed care*

**2016/2017:**  
Star Kids  
Roll-out

*"I was hearing that my GI doctor and some other doctors in this practice were not going to take community first Star Kids after 10/31...We are in panic mode because it is a lot of doctors."*

**2019/2020:**  
COVID Years, Broken  
Systems Strained

*"Denied again. Tried to bypass the wavier lists. Denied even though she meets 2 qualifying requirements. The system is failing my daughter."*

**Current:**  
Care Access Worsens Still  
Under Managed Care Model

*"My daughter also has sb and barely qualified this renewal period even though she's still the same as she was when we first qualified years ago. Our case manager said she's seen a lot of kids being disqualified."*

→ '23

## THE SOLUTION

PTFK urges you to take action to pass immediate patient protections, improve Medicaid rates, and implement an alternative, more appropriate model of care for Texans with disabilities and complex medical needs. This is a critical issue that requires urgent attention and immediate action.

Research was conducted by Feedback, LLC on behalf of Protect TX Fragile Kids, and is a large & robust dataset created from the review of 150,000+ unique data points. To get a customized briefing of the dataset, including insights specific to your district / region, please contact Hannah Mehta at [hannah@txfragilekids.org](mailto:hannah@txfragilekids.org).



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### THE THREAT

The inability to access appropriate care in a timely manner for medically complex Texans results in serious issues and life or death situations. STAR Kids has failed kids.

Hear what Texans are saying. Top takeaways from the research include:

1. All issues experienced by families and patients boil down to a lack of access to care.

“ Having a kid with a disability on privatized medicaid in texas is like watching wolves outside your home trying to decide when to rush in and eat you - you have to be very vigilant because they want to use any possible reason to cut care. ”

2. Families and patients struggle the most with the knowledge barriers and systemic failures of Medicaid.

“ Does anyone have a suggestion for a decent Medicaid PCP? The Medicaid "find a doctor" is very out of date and the few doctor's offices I've called don't even offer their services anymore. ”

3. For the above constituents, it is impossible to divorce Medicaid conversations from politics.

“ My child with a disability has been on a Medicaid waiver list since birth, almost 15 years ago. Texas doesn't care about our children when they're born. ”

### THE CONCLUSION

According to the data, access to care for medically complex Texans has been severely impacted by a managed care model, and Texas Medicaid is not providing necessary care to individuals in need. Constituents recognize that their well-being is dependent upon decisions made by legislators. PTFK urges you to enact immediate safeguards to protect medically fragile Texans. This is a critical issue that requires urgent attention and immediate action.

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