

Stay informed and dive deeper into the latest updates from Texana Center!

As a trusted governmental entity and tax-exempt Community Center, Texana Center has been proudly serving as the Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA), and the Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDA) since 1999.

Join us in exploring how we're making a **positive impact** in the six counties we serve and discover more about the vital services we offer.

Your journey to understanding and supporting our mission starts here!

I am often asked ***"What does Texana Center do?"***

For this inaugural edition of Texana Pathways, I want to help answer that question. As a community center, Texana provides a **vital lifeline for individuals** who face the challenge of serious mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD, formerly mental retardation), and autism.

We are proud to be the expert for mental health, developmental disabilities, and autism in Fort Bend, Waller, Austin, Colorado, Wharton, and Matagorda Counties.

Community Centers serve individuals, families, and communities. For individuals experiencing crises, Community Centers provide critical crisis intervention response and essential follow-up.

Community Centers are accountable stewards of public funds, **fulfilling roles and responsibilities to:**

- Secure local matching funds for the state dollars received.
- Leverage resources to enhance services.
- Acquire grants and gifts.
- Educate the public.
- Facilitate local planning, and identify service gaps.
- Coordinate with local partners and volunteers.
- Coordinate with other stakeholders.
- Respond to disasters and other community needs.

As a Community Center, Texana Center is governed by a publicly appointed Board of Trustees with leaders representing each of the counties served.

Texana Center is a unit of local government, and an agency of the state as defined in Texas Health and Safety Code.

We operate within the oversight of the federal, state, and local government, abiding by annual fiscal audits and regulatory standards, performance contracts, LBB performance measures, and laws.

As the Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA), we are the safety net provider for all individuals in the counties for mental health crises.

We provide the following:

- Mental health care for children and adults
- Crisis services include the 24/7 hotline, 24/7 mobile crisis services, linkage with 988, crisis assessments in jails
- Intervention and prevention including criminal justice diversion, suicide prevention, and Mental Health First Aid
- Help access health-related social needs including food, housing, safety, transportation, and utilities.

As the Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDA), **we perform the following** on behalf of the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC):

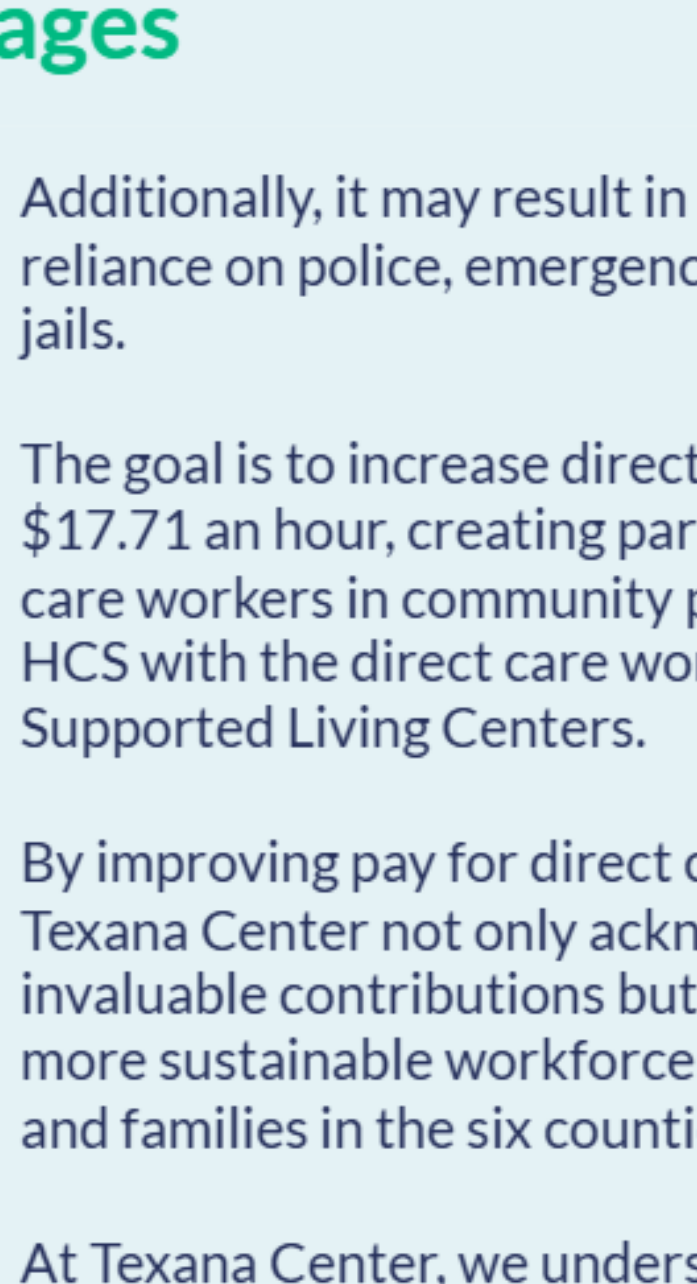
- Long-Term Access
- Community-Based Services
- Crisis Services
- Case Management

As an Autism service provider, Texana fulfills an identified need in our local service area. These services consist of the Children's Center for Autism, Center for Advancement, and Texana Fulshear Café, among others.

Our mission is to deliver positive, life-changing services to children and adults with mental health issues, autism, and developmental disabilities.

I invite you to read our newsletter to learn more about the ways that Texana clears the path with care for those we serve.

Shena Ureste
Chief Executive Officer



Legislators Urged to Act on the IDD Crisis and Insufficient Direct Care Wages

Individuals with intellectual disabilities or autism have complex medical and behavioral health needs that **demand specialized care.**

Direct care professionals are essential to meeting these needs, working tirelessly around the clock to provide critical services that ensure the health and safety of those in their care. Their commitment is vital, and their work must be recognized and supported.

Unfortunately, these dedicated professionals are underpaid, which does not reflect the critical nature of their work. Direct care workers in the Medicaid Waiver Program—Home and Community-Based Services (HCS) earn only \$10.60 an hour. At this low rate, they supervise and care for three to four clients, drive individuals to doctor appointments, assist with personal care tasks like bathing, dressing, and cleaning, prepare home-cooked meals, and administer medication. Individuals with intellectual disabilities rely on these direct care workers for daily, essential support to ensure their safety and well-being in the community.

The care system for individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism is in crisis.

As direct care workers leave for higher-paying opportunities in other fields, people in group homes are left with insufficient supervision, inadequate staffing, or poorly trained staff. This leads to potential medication errors, missed medical treatments, and increased risks of injury due to aggressive behaviors.

Additionally, it may result in inappropriate reliance on police, emergency rooms, and jails.

The goal is to increase direct care wages to \$17.71 an hour, creating parity for our direct care workers in community programs like HCS with the direct care workers in State Supported Living Centers.

By improving pay for direct care workers, Texana Center not only acknowledges their invaluable contributions but also creates a more sustainable workforce for individuals and families in the six counties we serve.

At Texana Center, we understand that the workforce shortage in services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) requires action from lawmakers.

We are dedicated to informing legislators and state officials about this issue.

Over the past year, we hosted two IDD Summit meetings, where we invited elected officials and community stakeholders to hear directly from families about how the IDD crisis has affected them. At these meetings, local law enforcement, hospitals, and waiver providers also discussed the challenges they face in supporting individuals with IDD during a crisis.

During the 89th Legislative session, we encourage community members and stakeholders to support efforts aimed at increasing pay for direct care workers. These workers play a vital role in ensuring that individuals with intellectual disabilities or autism can live independently and maintain a high quality of life.

Texana Center Provides 24/7 Support for Mental Health Crises

Texana's Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT) works to provide **immediate support** for individuals facing a mental health crisis, reinforcing our unwavering commitment to community well-being.

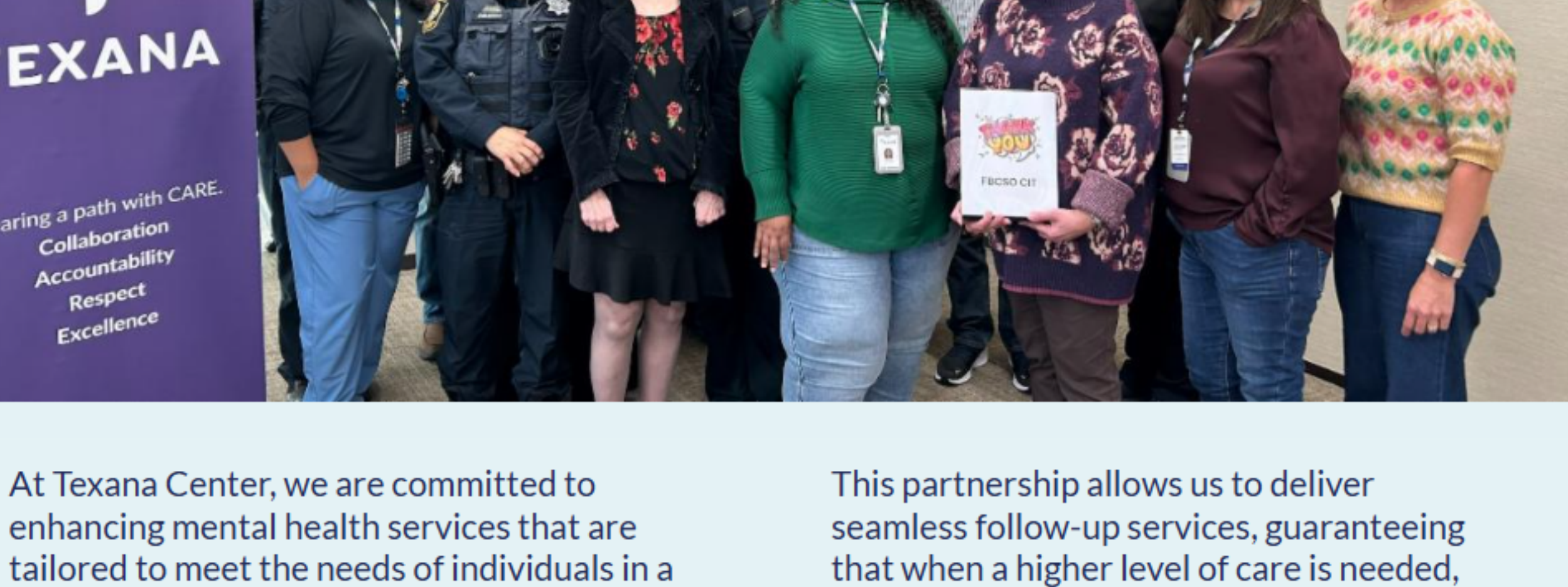
Our 24/7 access to crisis services ensures that individuals in distress feel heard and supported at all hours, recognizing the urgent need for empathy and care during challenging times.

MCOT is trained in delivering trauma-informed care, showcasing their dedication to providing personalized support tailored to each client's unique needs.

If you know someone who is in a mental health crisis, please call our Crisis Hotline at 1-(800) 633-5686 or dial the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.

Our team represents a vital lifeline for individuals seeking immediate support and providing reassurance in a mental health crisis.

Texana Center Partners with Fort Bend County Crisis Intervention Team to Provide Lifesaving Support for Mental Health Crises



At Texana Center, we are committed to enhancing mental health services that are tailored to meet the needs of individuals in a mental health crisis.

Our collaborative approach with the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) exemplifies our dedication to effectively de-escalating crises and assuring mental health stabilization in the least restrictive environment possible.

When a situation arises, Texana Center along with the CIT, in partnership with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office (FBCSO), takes the lead by displaying authoritative and compassionate support to individuals in need of immediate care.

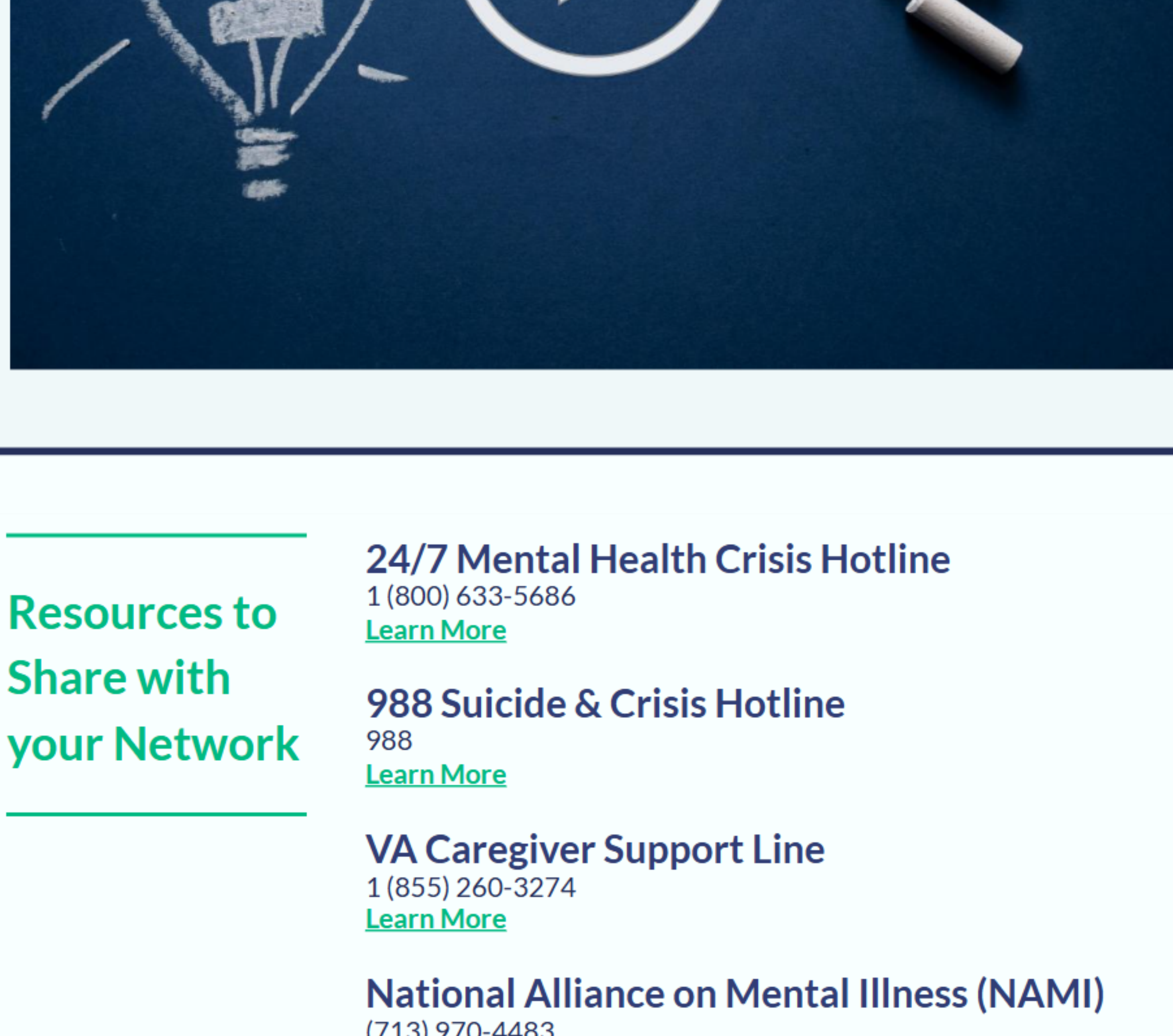
This partnership allows us to deliver seamless follow-up services, guaranteeing that when a higher level of care is needed, we are there to guide individuals and families through their recovery journey.

Together, let us empower each other to make mental health support not only accessible but also profoundly effective, fostering a community where hope and resilience thrive!

The Children's Center for Autism Offers Expert Guidance on Accessing Vital Services at Texana Center

The Senior Manager at the Children's Center for Autism, Holly Dillen shares valuable insights on the **comprehensive services and support offered here at Texana Center**, helping families navigate resources and empowering children to thrive within the community.

The Children's Center for Autism is **dedicated to providing personalized care** and support tailored to meet the unique needs of a child, fostering growth, development, and success every step of the way.



Resources to Share with your Network

24/7 Mental Health Crisis Hotline
1 (800) 633-5686
[Learn More](#)

988 Suicide & Crisis Hotline
988
[Learn More](#)

VA Caregiver Support Line
1 (855) 260-3274
[Learn More](#)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
(713) 970-4483
[Learn More](#)