



### *A Message from Commissioner Williams*

Dear friends, teammates, and partners,

Summer is in full swing and so are we at the department! We held our first in-person meeting of the Statewide Planning and Policy Council on June 14, and it was a blessing to see so many old friends and new faces in the same place. We provided updates on the FY23 budget, hospital services, housing opportunities, and more.

We're in the midst of kicking off a couple of high-profile projects. The Board of Trustees for the K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund also met on June 14. We shared some information around why their work is so critical and how it complements the investments that Governor Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly have made in recent years in the area of children's mental health. We're currently working with our partners at the Department of Education and the University of Tennessee School of Social Work to conduct a county-level needs assessment which we hope to conclude in the fall.

The other group that's rightly getting a lot of attention is the Opioid Abatement Council. The council members and chairman Dr. Stephen Loyd [will have their first meeting on July 8](#). As established by the General Assembly, the department serves the council in a support capacity as they make decision around how to spend funds from opioid lawsuits. We are excited about this work and how it will benefit Tennesseans and communities.

Whether you're involved in these efforts or any of the many, many other ways in which Tennessee builds the resiliency of those living with mental health and substance use challenges, thank you for what you do!

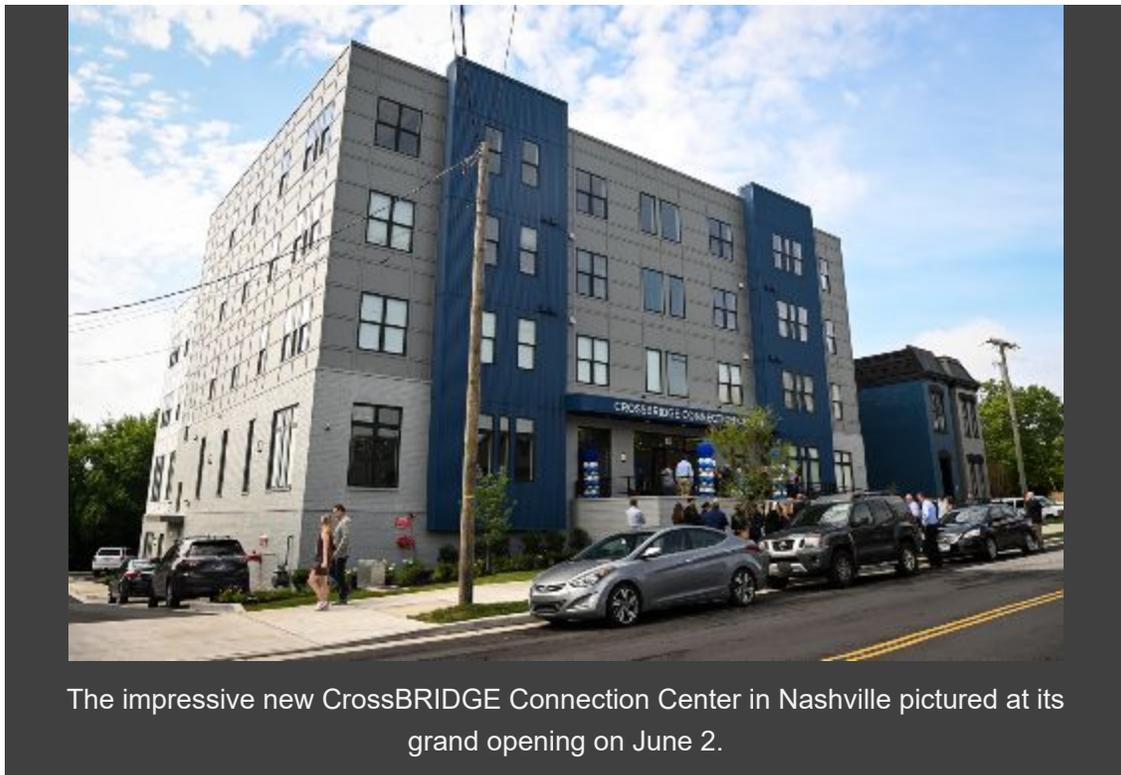
Many Blessings,

Marie

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# Recovery Housing Ribboncuttings

*Events in Nashville and Jackson celebrate new options for people in recovery*



Congratulations to the teams at CrossBRIDGE, Inc. and Aspell Recovery Center for cutting the ribbons on a pair of new housing options for people in recovery!

CrossBRIDGE cut the ribbon on their new Connection Center on June 2 in Nashville. Constructed with a host of sources including more than \$1.5 million in funding from the department, the Connection Center features a total of **84 beds** for people in recovery.

And in Jackson on June 17, Richard Barber and the team at Aspell Recovery Center celebrated a grand opening for their new location for A Mother's Love. The program features 12 beds for moms in recovery and their children. A Mother's Love moved from Humboldt to the main Aspell campus in Jackson with help from a \$400,000 department grant as well as private donations.



All smiles as the ceremonial scissors swing at Aspell Recovery Center in Jackson!  
Picture from WBBJtv.com.

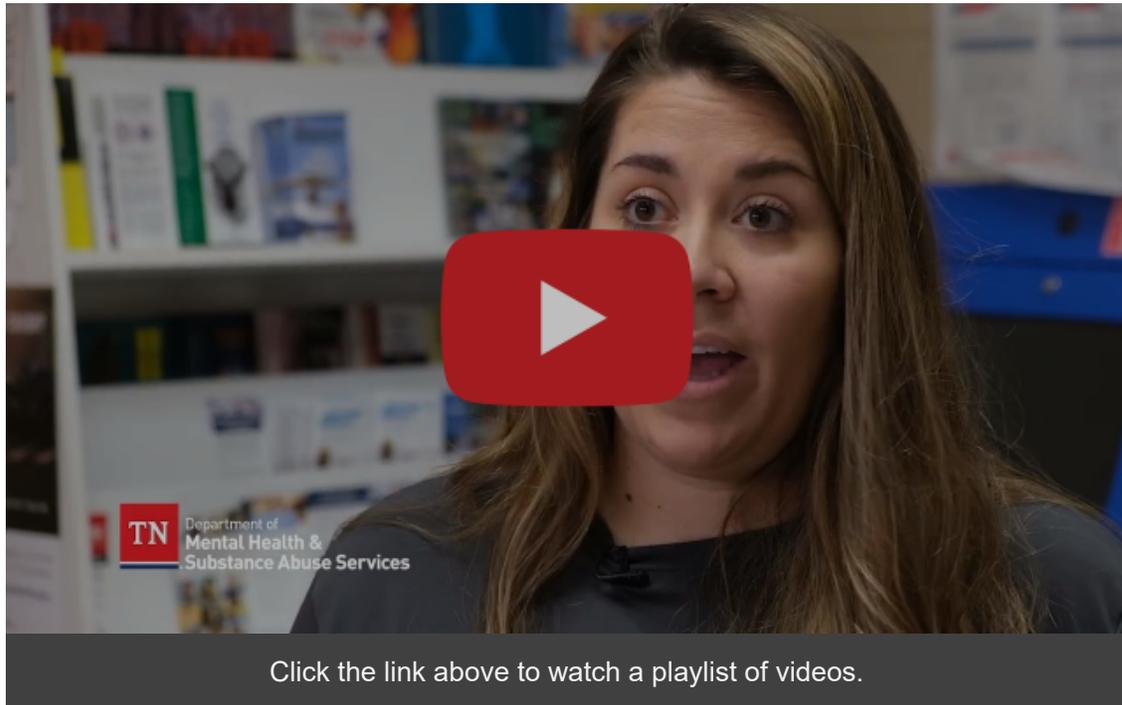
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## First Responder REST

*New video series profiles innovative program that combines naloxone training and distribution with care coordination*

More than 3,000 people died from a drug overdose in Tennessee in 2020, and the final totals in 2021 will likely be worse. With surging death totals driven by fentanyl, the state of Tennessee and its community partners are trying a new approach. The First Responder Resource Engagement Specialty Team (REST) program builds on years of experience training people on the use of naloxone and distributing it to at risk individuals, community groups, and first responders. The model builds on that program and offers first responders resources and care coordination that they can give to people after an overdose or those needing treatment. Housed through Prevention Coalition for Success in

Rutherford County, First Responder REST covers Rutherford and 13 rural counties in southern middle Tennessee. Through April 2022, the program trained more than 2,100 first responders and received more than 400 referrals. Nearly half of program participants have accepted a placement at an inpatient treatment facility. This new video series profiles the program, the amazing people who work in it, and the first responders who help it succeed.



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## Mental Health Crisis Training for 911 Dispatchers



It's critical that interactions between people experiencing a mental health crisis and law enforcement end safely for everyone. Those interactions often start with a 911 dispatcher. That's why NAMI Tennessee recently partnered with

Jennifer Schwendimann, Training Coordinator for the Tennessee Emergency Communications Board, to provide mental health crisis training to 911 dispatch personnel from across Tennessee. Regional training events were held in Jackson, Brentwood, and Knoxville. The two-day training included an 8-hour course with mental health information and scenarios conducted by experienced 911 dispatch personnel. The second day of the training was a “Train the Trainer” presentation empowering the participants to bring this program back to their colleagues.

Jeff Fladen, Executive Director with NAMI Tennessee said, “We are fortunate to have training created by Tom von Hemert who has been a CIT coordinator in Virginia and former president of CIT International. While we encourage dispatch participation in the 40 hour CIT training, sharing this new 8 hour training can spread awareness of mental health crises and response more quickly. We are grateful for the funding and support received from TDMHSAS and the partnership with Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance to make this training possible. It could not have been accomplished without the active involvement of Jennifer Schwendimann, Training Coordinator, Tennessee Emergency Communications Board.”



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## Payne Awarded Collegiate Recovery Advocate of the Year



Congratulations to Nathan Payne! He was recognized at the recent Association of Recovery in Higher Education conference as their 2022 Collegiate Recovery Advocate of the Year! We're proud to have Nathan working on our Collegiate Recovery Initiative—you can find more about it on our website: [TN.gov/behavioral-health/collegiate-recovery](https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/collegiate-recovery)



# Fostering Positive Connections with Young Children



*This article and infographic was submitted by Kristen Mengelberg who works as a Resource Consultant at the Regional Intervention Program (RIP) in Nashville. Learn how you can refer a family to any of the eleven RIP and its locations all across the state at [TN.gov/parenting-that-works](http://TN.gov/parenting-that-works). You can click the image above to see the full-size graphic.*

Building a strong and positive relationship with a child is the foundation for teaching a child new skills and behaviors- it helps them feel loved and connected. However, when children exhibit challenging behaviors, it can be difficult to build those connections. Maybe you feel too stressed or too tired, or simply don't have enough time. Despite the difficulty, it's worth the effort – it's proven that having a positive relationship with a child increases their self-

esteem. They are more responsive, get along with others, and grow up to have good relationships with their own children.

**Fill/Refill the Child's Bucket-** Think of your relationship with a child as a bucket that needs to be filled and refilled on a regular basis. When you are negative or critical it drains from their bucket, but when you use your positive time and attention it fills it back up. Filling a child's bucket doesn't have to be a big, planned event or spending money. It's created in the small moments throughout the day. Pausing and saying, "I love you", giving a hug, being silly together, going for a walk, or simply giving them our full attention is enough.

**Use Encouraging Statements-** It can be easy to focus on the negative behaviors children exhibit, but you need to recognize all the good they do by showing them you noticed through encouraging statements. Be sure to keep your encouragement genuine, positive, and specific. Tell the child specifically what you like and what they did a good job at. E.g., "You cleaned up your toys! You worked so hard on your art!" Catching a child being good will decrease unwanted behaviors and lead to more positive interactions that will teach a child what to do.

**Let the Child Lead the Play-** Children receive lots of directives and instructions from adults daily. Find 5-10 minutes each day to play with a child one-on-one where they can lead and direct the play in any way they wish. There is no right or wrong way to play with a toy as long as they are playing safely. Let them show their creativity and be imaginative. It may be tempting to take control of the play but sit back and try to go with the flow. Limit any outside distractions to be fully present and just have fun!

**Use Neutral Time-** In the moment during challenging behaviors is not the most effective and teachable moment. Instead, wait until everyone, including yourself, is calm and ready to listen. Neutral time is the place to teach, discuss, and collaborate with a child. It's not a time to lecture, but to problem solve and validate the child's feelings to build those connections. Look for the calm moments throughout the day to work together with the child to find better solutions and be willing to listen.

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# Welcome to the Family!



When your team is more like family, people notice. Meet Tannisha Williams and Nia Green—they're nurses at Memphis Mental Health Institute! A few weeks back, Nia shared photos from MMHI's employee appreciation cookout on social media. Tannisha saw them and commented that she wanted to be part of an organization that's a family like that! Nia responded and encouraged her to apply. Tannisha applied, got an interview the next day, and started new employee orientation on June 13th! Welcome to Team TDMHSAS!

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**Shout Out!**



Congratulations to Cornesha Beck for her recent promotion to Psychiatric Hospital Inpatient Coordinator! Cornesha started with Memphis Mental Health Institute in 2018 as a Recreation Therapist. Prior to coming to MMHI she worked with Alliance Healthcare Services (AHS) as a Dispatch Specialist. Cornesha's strong leadership skills & compassion make her invaluable to our customers.

If you'd like to "shout out" to a TDMHSAS colleague, please send an email to [Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov](mailto:Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov). Tell us who you'd like to recognize and why.

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## Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

The Tennessee Joint Task Force on Children's Justice and Child Sexual Abuse (JTF) was created by statute in 1985 by the Tennessee General Assembly, to address the state's response to child sexual abuse and other forms of severe abuse. The JTF consists of child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health professionals, and representatives from state child-serving agencies (including TDMHSAS), throughout Tennessee who are appointed by the TDCS commissioner to help fulfill this task.

[The Outreach and Awareness Committee of the JTF recently updated the Erin's Law Guidelines.](#) While the document was designed primarily to assist schools with selecting curricula and resources to provide age-appropriate instruction to

K-12 students on preventing child sexual abuse, the guidelines can be used by other agencies/organizations that serve children and youth ages 3 to 18. All of the curricula listed in this document have been vetted by the Committee and TDCS Child Sexual Abuse workgroup.

For more information about the Joint Task Force on Children's Justice and Child Sexual Abuse, please visit their website at <https://children.sworpswebapp.sworps.utk.edu/>

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# Save-the-Dates

## *Planning and Policy Council Meetings*

### **Adult Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, July 13, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. CST

### **Region VI**

Tuesday, July 12, 2022

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. CST

### **Region III**

Thursday, July 14, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. EST

### **Region VII**

Tuesday, July 26, 2022

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. CST

To verify the schedule and plans for future meetings, please visit the department website at these links:

[Statewide & Committee Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

[Regional Council Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

*TDMHSAS is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from TDMHSAS programs, activities, and services. To request reasonable accommodations or modifications, please contact Amy Holland at [amy.holland@tn.gov](mailto:amy.holland@tn.gov) at least 10 business days prior to the meeting. Requests for accommodations or modifications made after the deadline will be honored to the maximum extent feasible, but it may not be possible to fulfill them.*



SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE  
AFRICAN AMERICAN FAITH  
COMMUNITIES COALITION



## BIENNIAL SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE

WHERE

VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

WHEN

AUGUST 23  
9 AM - 1 PM CST

GET INFORMED / LEARN THE SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS  
DISCOVER THE RESOURCES / LEARN HOW YOU CAN HELP

**3.5 CONTACT HOURS AVAILABLE**

REGISTRATION LINK TO COME!



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
CAPITOL HILL



## Resources

*In the event of a mental health emergency ...*

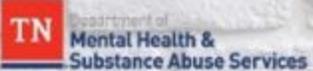
**STATEWIDE**  
**CRISIS LINE**  
**HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS**  
**855-CRISIS-1** [TN.gov/CrisisLine](http://TN.gov/CrisisLine)  
**855-274-7471** 

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*For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...*



**TN**  
**REDLINE**  
**1.800.889.9789**  
**CALL OR TEXT**

*To talk with a TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate ...*

Need help with mental health or substance use services?

Call the TDMHSAS Office of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

# HELPLINE

## 1-800-560-5767

**We can help with:**

- finding mental health and substance abuse resources in your area
- questions about insurance
- finding housing options
- communicating with mental health and substance abuse providers
- questions about the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist program
- filing a complaint



**We are available**

- Monday through Friday
- 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. CT
- Closed on state holidays



Department of  
**Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse Services**

[OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov](mailto:OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov) | [TN.gov/behavioral-health](https://tn.gov/behavioral-health)



**OUR MISSION:** CREATING  
**COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS**  
*TO RESILIENCY, RECOVERY & INDEPENDENCE*  
FOR TENNESSEANS LIVING  
WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND  
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

## OUR VISION:

A STATE OF *RESILIENCY, RECOVERY, AND INDEPENDENCE*  
IN WHICH **TENNESSEANS**  
LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS  
AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS **THRIVE**

## AS A DEPARTMENT, WE VALUE:

**CUSTOMER FOCUSED:**

*An unwavering commitment to keep patients and those who serve them at the forefront of every decision.*

**INTEGRITY:**

*Honesty and truth in all we do.*

**INSPIRED PURPOSE:**

*The call to action in service of a cause greater than one's self.*

**EXCELLENCE:**

*The highest standards for services, efficiency, and conduct.*

**COMPASSIONATE**

**AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:**

*The commitment to make effective decisions and inspire others through active listening and empathy.*

**SOLUTIONS AND OUTCOMES-ORIENTED:**

*The commitment to positive outcomes and meaningful changes in response to the critical needs of the Tennesseans we serve.*

**PARTNERSHIP:**

*Beyond teamwork, collaboration based on mutual success to the benefit of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve.*

*We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update! If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment, provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the distribution list, please email: the Office of Communications at [OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov](mailto:OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov).*

*And please connect with us on social media!*



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Thanks to our [Facebook family](#) for "liking" us and sharing our posts!

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Website



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Instagram



LinkedIn