Summit Kicks Off Initiative for Children

Advocates for children from all over the state met at the Opry House on June 26 to help Gov. Don Sundquist kick off TN KIDS, a community effort for Tennessee’s children.

Dr. Peter Benson of the Search Institute in Minneapolis, Doug Price of FirstBank of Colorado, Chattanooga City Councilwoman Mai Bell Hurley, representatives of participating state departments, and local community activists provided expert testimony about what communities can do for children.

Dr. Fredia Wadley, the state’s chief health officer, is heading the initiative and moderated a panel of community activists.

TCCY was a co-sponsor of the event, and its coordinators are to take a lead role in implementation.

Benson on Community Assets

Benson’s presentation gained power from the 500,000 surveys of young people his organization has analyzed.

He said that in the United States citizens live in the most generationally segregated society ever.

Benson, the author of All Kids Are Our Kids, called for individuals to be subjects – instigators of action – rather than objects – acted upon. He called for an “awakening of people to power.”

“We spend so much time naming the problem, we forget to name the good stuff,” Benson said.

Other barriers to problem solving he identified included expecting too little, blame finding, and holding families responsible for all problems of children.

“If you breathe, you must be on the team,” he said.

Price on Child Care Funding

Doug Price is a businessman who sees the value in supporting child-care programs. He said that social efforts happen at the intersection of altruism and selfishness.

Crime and economic growth and the ability of the next generation to care for their elders are related to the quality of education and care they receive, he said.

And child care problems negatively affect employees’ work, he said.

Parents - employees - carry the weight of paying for child care, he said, providing 72 percent of its cost as compared to the 27 percent paid by government and one percent paid by business.

Child care is subsidized by young women who work for substandard wages, he said.

Continued on page 6.
Search Survey Identifies Roles for Communities

The Search Institute, an organization dedicated to social service research, has developed a way of evaluating the nurturing environment communities provide for their children.

The institute has identified 40 assets that communities should provide teens in order to assure their success. Its research finds that communities providing these assets are more likely to produce children who avoid high-risk behavior, such as violence and substance abuse, and are more likely to hold positive attitudes and engage in positive behaviors.

According to the survey, less than a fourth of teens believe adults in their communities value youth or that schools provide caring, encouraging environments.

Rather than just identifying a problem, Search Institute suggests activities to help families, organizations, religious groups, and communities build more supportive communities. It encourages communities and individuals to be proactive rather than reactive, to focus on an image of what they want rather than what they want to avoid.

Resources, including books and handout materials, are available to help parents, communities, and organizations identify useful actions.

For more information about these resources, contact Search Institute, 700 South Third Street, Suite 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415, (800) 888-7828, or at www.search-institute.org.

The 40 Assets Identified by the Search Institute

In the list below, the percentage listed is the percentage of 100,000 students in grades six through 12 from 213 U.S. cities who say they experienced the asset.

External Assets

Support
1. Family support. Family life provides high levels of love and support (64%).
2. Positive family communication. Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s) (26%).
3. Other adult relationships. Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults (41%).
4. Caring neighborhood. Young person experiences caring neighbors (40%).
5. Caring school climate. School provides a caring, encouraging environment (24%).
6. Parent involvement in schooling. Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school (29%).

Empowerment
7. Community values youth. Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth (20%).
8. Youth as resources. Young people are given useful roles in the community (24%).
9. Service to others. Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week (50%).
10. Safety. Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood (55%).

Boundaries and Expectations
11. Family boundaries. Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person’s whereabouts (43%).
12. School boundaries. School provides clear rules and consequences (46%).
13. Neighborhood boundaries. Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people’s behavior (46%).
14. Adult role models. Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior (27%).
15. Positive peer influence. Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior (60%).
16. High expectations. Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well (41%).

Constructive Use of Time
17. Creative activities. Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts (19%).
18. Youth programs. Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or community organizations (59%).
19. Religious community. Young person spends one hour or more per week in activities in a religious institution (64%).
20. Time at home. Young person is out with friends with nothing special to do two or fewer nights per week (50%).

Continued on page 3.
Internal Assets
Commitment to Learning
21. Achievement motivation. Young person is motivated to do well in school (63%).
22. School engagement. Young person is actively engaged in learning (64%).
23. Homework. Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. (45%)
24. Bonding to school. Young person cares about her or his school (51%).
25. Reading for pleasure. Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week (24%).

Positive Values
26. Caring. Young person places high value on helping other people (43%).
27. Equality and social justice. Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty (45%).
28. Integrity. Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs (63%).
29. Honesty. Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy (63%).
30. Responsibility. Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility (60%).
31. Restraint. Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs (42%).

Social Competencies
32. Planning and decision-making. Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices (29%).
33. Interpersonal competence. Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills (43%).
34. Cultural competence. Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/ethnic backgrounds. (35%).
35. Resistance skills. Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations (37%).
36. Peaceful conflict resolution. Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently (44%).

Positive Identity
37. Personal power. Young person feels he or she has “control over things that happen to me” (45%).
38. Self-esteem. Young person reports having a high self-esteem (47%).
39. Sense of purpose. Young person reports that “my life has a purpose” (55%).
40. Positive view of personal future. Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future (70%).

Assets Related to Positive Behavior
Kids Count Regional Report

Kids Count Region-by-Region Look at the Status of Tennessee’s Children was released in July. The report looks at the state of children in Tennessee’s nine regions and highlights the work of the regional councils and coordinators.

Per capita income has risen in all of the state’s nine regions when compared over a four-year period, according to data in the report. The report also indicates that children are sharing in the prosperity. The number of Food Stamp Program participants and the number of children receiving AFDC dropped in all regions.

However, the fall in public assistance is contrasted with an increase in participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program in all regions.

The regional report examines 16 measures of child well-being in the Northeast, East, Southeast, Upper Cumberland, Mid-Cumberland, South Central, Northwest, Southwest, and Memphis/Shelby County regions. It reports health, social, and economic indicators and is the most comprehensive regional report on child well-being in the state.

Lower teen pregnancy rates and lower high school dropout rates in all regions are good news. Memphis, with the highest teen pregnancy rate, had the greatest improvement. The decline in high school dropout rates ranged from a 62.9 percent drop in Upper Cumberland to a 9.1 percent drop in Southeast.

The percentage of low-birth-weight babies increased or remained the same in all regions. The number of children in special education programs also increased in all regions.

The data on most other indicators is mixed. Some regions have something to celebrate; others, work to do. The report is designed to arm concerned citizens in each of the regions with the information they need to determine ways to help their children.

Governor Establishes TN KIDS Awards

The governor has established a $5,000 TN Kids Award to recognize communities that demonstrate an exceptional commitment to improving the lives of their children and families. It is designed to join families, community leaders, businesses, churches, synagogues, and other interested citizens in partnerships with children’s initiatives.

Any Tennessee city or county may apply by submitting a letter of intent by October 1, 1998, and a completed application by April 1, 1999, to William C. Haynes, Tennessee Department of Health, Office of the State Health Officer, 3rd Floor, Cordell Hull Building, 426 Fifth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37247-0101.

Applicants should include citywide or county-wide coordination, identification of needs, and unified community involvement; have well-planned public information efforts; and sponsor, with community groups, activities to recognize outstanding programs and children.

For more information, call (615) 741-3111.
### Regional Report Finds Good News and Bad News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good News</th>
<th>Bad News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest child death rate in the state.</td>
<td>Highest percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest teen violent death rate in the state.</td>
<td>Second highest percentage of births lacking adequate prenatal care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest teen pregnancy rate in the state.</td>
<td>Highest percentage of children receiving special education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest percent of births lacking adequate prenatal care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
<td>Ranks sixth of nine regions in state on infant mortality rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second lowest child death rate.</td>
<td>Teen violent death rate up 68 percent from 1992 report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>East</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next to lowest in state in teen violent death rate.</td>
<td>Highest indicated child abuse rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In lowest third of state in percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
<td>Ranks next to last of state regions in percent of high school dropouts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third highest per capita income in state.</td>
<td>Ranks next to last in rate of children in state custody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southeast</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest percent of low-birth-weight births in state.</td>
<td>In highest third of state regions on child death rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest rate of infant mortality.</td>
<td>Lowest per capita income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest percent of high school dropouts.</td>
<td>Teen violent death rate up 56 percent from 1992 report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Cumberland</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second lowest percent of births lacking adequate prenatal care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second lowest rate of indicated child abuse and neglect.</td>
<td>In highest third of state regions in percent of high school dropouts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest percent of children receiving free/reduced price lunches and population enrolled in TennCare or receiving Food Stamps.</td>
<td>In highest third of state regions in percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid-Cumberland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>In lowest half of state regions in percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
<td>Indicated child abuse and neglect rate up 40 percent from 1992 report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In lowest half of state regions in infant mortality rate.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Second lowest percent of children under 18 receiving AFDC.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>South Central</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest rate in state of children in state custody.</td>
<td>Highest child death rate in state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second lowest percent of children under 18 referred to juvenile court.</td>
<td>Highest teen violent death rate in state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second to the lowest in state in percent of high school dropouts.</td>
<td>Indicated child abuse and neglect rate up 130 percent from 1992 report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northwest</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of high school dropouts has fallen 32 percent from figures in 1992 report.</td>
<td>In highest third of state on percent of births lacking adequate prenatal care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen pregnancy rate fell 11 percent from figures in 1992 report.</td>
<td>Second highest in state on percent of low birth weight births.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income increased 24 percent from 1992 report.</td>
<td>Teen violent death rate up 87 percent from 1992 report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southwest</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second lowest in state regions on rate of children in state custody.</td>
<td>Highest percentage of births lacking prenatal care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In lowest third of state regions on rate of indicated child abuse.</td>
<td>Highest rate of children in state custody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest per capita income.</td>
<td>Second highest rates of infant mortality, child death, teen violent deaths, and teen pregnancy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memphis/Shelby County</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highest in state on percent of low-birth-weight births and infant mortality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highest in state in teen pregnancy rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highest in state of children under 18 receiving AFDC.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Regional News

Regional Councils Tapped by Governor

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth co-sponsored the Governor’s Summit on Tennessee’s Children, and the regional councils and coordinators have been selected the lead organizations in working with communities to facilitate broad-based efforts by business and community representatives to implement and plan TN KIDS initiatives.

The Tennessee Department of Health Regional Community Development staff will also provide technical assistance to the communities to help them assess needs and develop community plans.

An overriding goal of these activities is to help communities build the assets available to their children.

The activities will give life to the initiative’s vision: Through the combined efforts of our communities, public organizations, and businesses, children have responsible, nurturing families; quality child care available when needed; enter school healthy and prepared to learn; experience success during school; and graduate with skills needed to be productive citizens.

The initiative has six goals:

✔ Have children born healthy and keep them healthy;
✔ Assist parents in protecting and nurturing children;
✔ Provide quality child care when needed;
✔ Have children prepared to learn when they arrive at school;
✔ Provide environment so that children will succeed in school;
✔ State agencies will develop the infrastructure to assist communities in providing opportunities for children to succeed.

Summit

Continued from Page 1.

Price quoted Allan Bloom: “The greatness of a nation is measured by the future it provides its children.”

Films and a panel discussion highlighted state, community, and business activities to help children.

Strategy

The governor reported on the strategy behind TN KIDS, which was developed by a year-long planning process funded by the Danforth Foundation. It included:

✔ Priority on early intervention and prevention services;
✔ Coordination of services for families and children at the state and local level;
✔ Increased involvement of families and communities in programs for children;
✔ Evaluation of measurable goals and objectives.

In addition to TCCY, state departments are collaborating in the Initiative:
Department of Health, which is the lead planning agency;
Department of Children’s Services;
Department of Human Services (Families First);
Department of Education;
Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation.

No person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, or ability to pay, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity operated, funded, or overseen by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY). It is the intent of TCCY to bind all agencies, organizations, or governmental units operating under its jurisdiction and control to fully comply with and abide by the spirit and intent of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
Regional Councils Help Communities Plan

Citizens in Tennessee’s nine regions are solving problems in their communities. Some of the activities are highlighted below. For more information, contact the regional coordinator.

**Mid-Cumberland Region**
Mid-Cumberland Council on Children and Youth’s Child Welfare Committee has initiated region-wide efforts to make the interview rooms where children visit with their families under Department of Children’s Services supervision more child friendly by furnishing them more attractively. This project was the result of a survey of DCS offices.

**Upper Cumberland Region**
The one-week Creative Arts Day Camp sponsored by the Child Protection Council of Cannon County with the Cannon County Drug Free Alliance and the Woodbury Lion’s Club involves 60 children ages 5 to 12 in the arts. The teachers volunteer their time, and the $30 fee is waived for children who live in public housing. Older children volunteer to help with the camp. The group also sponsors a science camp.

**Southwest Region**
The Hardeman County Community Health Council has built a community partnership that has established new programs for children in that community. It is planning for an after-school program at the Bolivar Middle School. Members of the partnership include ministers, government agencies, and nonprofits.

**Memphis/Shelby Region**
Activities in the Memphis and Shelby community region are varied and diverse. The Memphis/Shelby County Children and Youth Council is developing a Read to Children project in conjunction with the Hamilton Elementary School Initiative. Residents of Hurt Village sponsor a summer camp. Autozone employees started a food drive. Law enforcement officers serve through Big Brothers and Big Sisters’ Bigs in Blue program.

**Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth Regional Coordinators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Diane Wise</td>
<td>207 N. Boone St., Suite 800</td>
<td>(423) 928-0224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Robert Smith</td>
<td>531 Henley St., 7th Floor</td>
<td>(423) 594-6658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Marilyn Davis</td>
<td>540 McCallie Ave., Suite 643</td>
<td>(423) 634-6210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Cumberland Council</td>
<td>Kathy Daniels</td>
<td>435 Gould Drive</td>
<td>(931) 432-4494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Cumberland Council</td>
<td>Scott Ridgway</td>
<td>710 James Robertson Parkway, 9th Floor</td>
<td>(615) 532-1579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Elaine Williams</td>
<td>Post Office Box 397</td>
<td>(931) 388-1053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Debbie Anderson</td>
<td>Post Office Box 505</td>
<td>(901) 588-0458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Tennessee Council</td>
<td>Rodger Jowers</td>
<td>225 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive</td>
<td>(901) 423-6545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memphis/Shelby County Council</td>
<td>Juanita White</td>
<td>170 N. Main St., 9th Floor</td>
<td>(901) 543-7657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meetings and Events

Council Activities

Northeast Tennessee Regional Council
Aug. 5, CHILD WATCH Training, Johnson City Medical Center
Oct. 1, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Conference, Morristown

East Tennessee Regional Council
Sept. 2, Meeting: Brain Research in Young Children
Oct. 7, Meeting: Mental Health Awareness
Nov. 4, Child Care Mini-conference, Anderson Co.

Upper Cumberland Regional Council
Sept. TBA, Legislative Child Watch receptions
Oct. 6, Networking Conference, Fall Creek Falls State Park

Mid-Cumberland Regional Council
Fall Networking Conference: Juvenile Justice Reform Commission, Fall 1998

South Central Regional Council
Aug. TBA, County Meetings on County Priorities and State of the Child
Aug. 21, Regional Meeting: Regional Priorities, Motlow State Com. College
Sept. 18, Regional Meeting: Juvenile Justice, Maury Regional Hospital
Oct. 2, Regional Meeting and Mini-Conference, Motlow State Com. College

Northwest Tennessee Regional Council
Aug. 28, Quarterly Council Meeting, TBA
Nov. 6, Fall Conference, Paris Landing State Park

Southwest Tennessee Regional Council
Aug. 14, Meeting: Resiliency in Children
Nov. TBA, Meeting with Northwest Council

C-PORT Review Schedule
Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Shelby, exit conference - TBA
Sept. 28-Oct. 2, Northeast, exit conference - Oct. 9
Oct. 26-30, Knox County, exit conference - Nov. 5
Nov. 16-20, South Central, exit conference - Dec. 1
Call TCCY at (615) 741-2633 for more information.

Special Events

Northeast TCSW Regional Conference, Thursday, Oct. 29, Johnson City
Middle East TCSW Regional Conference, Friday, Nov. 6, Knoxville
Southeast TCSW Regional Conference, Tuesday, Oct. 27, Chattanooga
Middle TCSW Regional Conference, Thursday, Oct. 22, Nashville
Sept. 17-19, Vanderbilt Symposium on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Willis Carroon Center, Nashville
Sept. 27-28 - Education Edge Conference at the Nashville Renaissance Hotel
Oct. 3-5, Tennessee Voices for Children State of the Child Conference, Nashville
Nov. 8-10, TN Association of Mental Health Organizations Annual Meeting, Knoxville Hilton

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
P. Larry Boyd, Chair
Rogersville

Beth Alexander, Nashville
Judy Gilley, Cleveland
Kimalishea Anderson, Knoxville
Connie Givens, Rogersville
Jarrett Austin, Nashville
Drew Johnson, Johnson City
Suzanne Bailey, Chattanooga
Jim Kidd, Fayetteville
James Berrong, Maryville
George Lovell, Columbia
Shirlene Booker, Gray
Sharon T. Massey, Clarksville
Callie W. Birdsong, Nashville
Linda Miller, Memphis
Betty Cannon, Nashville
Mary Kate Ridgeway, Paris
Kristin Cunningham, Franklin
James Stewart, Jackson
Deborah M. Davis, South Pittsburg
Brenda Vickers, Cookeville
Erica Davis, Memphis
Donna Roberts Wohlford, Bristol
Kevin Gallagher, Memphis
Jeune Wood, Memphis

Linda O'Neal, Executive Director

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