



Advocate

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Fifty Years of Fighting Poverty: Ball Has Moved Down the Field, But Goal Not Yet Reached

Fifty years have passed since President Lyndon Johnson declared a War on Poverty, introducing legislation aimed at helping people in poverty. Significant success has been achieved: the percent of people living in poverty has declined by more than one-third since 1967. Programs, like Social Security, have been most successful serving the elderly. Thirty-five percent of those 65 years or older lived in poverty in 1960; this percentage dropped to 14.8 by 2012. However, child advocates have less to cheer about, as the percent of children in homes with inadequate incomes in 2012 was only one percentage point less than that of 1964. Sadder is the conflict between our long held belief in America as the land of opportunity and the difficulties youth born in the lowest income category have moving up, as only half manage to do.

Information on the effectiveness of programs proposed 50 years ago and the need for more work is available from the following:

- Child Trends, Five Ways Poverty Harms Children: <http://conta.cc/1eSOcp6>;
- Council of Economic Advisers, The War on Poverty 50 Years Later: A Progress Report: <http://1.usa.gov/1kCajar>;
- Urban Institute, Recent Changes in Child Poverty Driven by Labor Market: <http://urbn.is/Le2iJ7>;
- A Study of American Attitudes About Work, Economic Opportunity, and the Social Safety Net: <http://bit.ly/KjtJ2M>.

U.S. DOJ, DOE Propose School Discipline Guidelines to Keep Youth Safe and On Track for Success

A few years ago, TCCY initially funded the SHAPE (School House Adjustment Program Enterprise) program with Memphis City Schools (now funded by the school system) that reduces the number of students referred to juvenile court. Advocates have been concerned about the “School to Prison Pipeline,” schools’ use of law enforcement as discipline that directs students into the justice system. Suspensions and expulsions as discipline mean students miss important learning time and increase dissatisfaction with school.

The U.S. departments of Education (DOE) and Justice (DOJ) have released recommendations to assure equity in school discipline and improve school climate and safety. The report highlights examples of the disproportionate impact of policies and practices on minority children. The guidance suggests ways to assure school safety, improve school climate and assure all students are treated equally when it comes to discipline. Information is available from the following:

- Education Week Report (registration required): <http://bit.ly/1m3nL2m>;
- DOE Guidance Package: <http://1.usa.gov/1lWc28r>;
- U.S. DOE Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline: <http://1.usa.gov/L39N5t>;
- Federal School Climate and Discipline Resources: <http://1.usa.gov/1cWR2tu>;
- Breaking Schools’ Rules, a statewide study of links between school discipline and student success: <http://bit.ly/1dkhn6o>.

TCCY Seeking Data Manager

TCCY is hiring an experienced individual to serve as Data Manager. This position will support data needs of all three TCCY divisions: KIDS COUNT, Juvenile Justice and Field Operations (Regional Councils). The successful candidate will be a member of the KIDS COUNT division. Graduation from an accredited college or university with a master’s degree in statistics, social science, economics, public policy or related area and experience equivalent to two years full-time professional work creating and maintaining databases and/or conducting statistical analyses is required. Applicant must have strong analytical and problem-solving skills and must be fluent in the use of Microsoft Access and Excel (experience with Visual Basic is preferred) and with statistical software (SAS and/or SPSS preferred). A more extensive job description is available at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/JOB-data-manager.pdf>. Apply to KIDS COUNT Director Rose Naccarato at Rose.Naccarato@tn.gov by Jan. 24.

Time for Advocate, Youth Award Nominations:

Presentations to be Made at 2014 Children's Advocacy Days, March 11-12

One of the pleasures of TCCY's annual Children's Advocacy Days is the opportunity to honor advocates and others. TCCY is accepting nominations for awards through Jan. 31. The Jim Pryor Child Advocacy Award honors people who have spoken up for children and made a difference. The Youth Excellence Award honors a youth who rose above the actions that brought him or her in contact with juvenile court and is now giving back to the community. More detailed information and nomination forms are available at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/awards.shtml>.

2013 Jim Pryor Child
Advocacy Award
Winner, former Metro
Nashville Juvenile Court
Judge Betty Adams
Green



2013 Youth
Excellence Award
Winner Drake
Dudley, Meharry
Medical College
Student



Legislature Begins Work

The Tennessee General Assembly returned to work on Tuesday with plans to hit the ground running. The Senate had scheduled committee meetings, and a number of bills were filed prior to the beginning of the session. Child advocates expect legislation on education issues (Common Core, vouchers and charter school authorization) and substance abuse issues. TCCY's youth policy advocate, Steve Petty, has begun tracking bills affecting children and reporting on them. Links to bills filed, TCCY budget recommendations and legislative updates are available at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/legislat.shtml>.

Steve does an excellent job of explaining legislative activity in a weekly summary. Sign up to receive weekly updates on legislative action, other alerts and this newsletter at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/listserv.shtml>.

TCCY Welcomes New, Returning Staff Members



TCCY is pleased to welcome a new South Central regional coordinator and a returning juvenile justice specialist. Shaun Noblit staffs the South Central Regional Council on Children and Youth. Prior to accepting the South Central regional coordinator position with TCCY, Shaun, a graduate of Trevecca Nazarene University, spent four years serving as a youth service officer in the Juvenile Court of Lawrence County, Tennessee. He may be contacted at Shaun.Noblit@tn.gov and (931) 309-4969.

The agency is also pleased to announce Craig Hargrow, Second Look Commission director, has taken on the additional responsibility of directing TCCY's Juvenile Justice Division. Craig, an attorney, served as a magistrate with the juvenile court in Clarksville and in the DCS legal division. He can be contacted at Craig.Hargrow@tn.gov and (615) 741-1154.

Vicki Taylor has returned to the Juvenile Justice division. After leaving TCCY, she worked in the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Counseling, as a master's vocational rehabilitation counselor. Contact Vicki at Vicki.Taylor@tn.gov and (615) 532-1571. She is joining veteran juvenile justice specialist extraordinaire, Zanira Whitfield (Zanira.Whitfield@tn.gov and (615) 532-1582).



Yolanda Webb is joining Carin Harris as an intern working in with TCCY's Ombudsman Program. Yolanda is a student at MTSU, and Carin is completing a program in Lipscomb University's Conflict Management Program.

Second Look Commission Releases Recommendations on Repeat Child Abuse Investigations

The Second Look Commission (SLC), staffed by TCCY's Craig Hargrow, examines what led to children coming into contact with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) with a second or subsequent incidence of severe child abuse. The Commission is made up of key stakeholders who analyze confidential records. The December 2013 report is available on TCCY's website at <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/slc-areport13.pdf>.

Mark Your Calendar

Jan. 17, East Tennessee Council on Children and Youth co-sponsors "Update on Children's Cabinet Lunch and Learn," 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Family Justice Center Auditorium, 400 Harriet Tubman, Knoxville. Register at <http://etccychildrenscabinetupdate2014.eventbrite.com>.

Jan 29, U.S. DOE Civil Rights Guidance Webinar, 3:30 p.m. EST/2:30 p.m. CST, <http://bit.ly/1gqDI6P>.

Jan. 31, Northwest Council on Children and Youth Legislative Forum and Networking Event, 8 a.m.-11 a.m., University of Tennessee Martin. Contact Dana.Cobb@tn.gov.

Jan. 31, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Southeast Tennessee Council on Children and Youth Legislative Brunch, Rhea County High School Auditorium, 885 Eagle Lane, Evensville. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/legislative-eventbrunch-tickets-9556659225>.

Feb. 7, East Tennessee Council on Children and Youth presents "Seeking Justice for All: One Child at a Time," 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Family Justice Center Auditorium, 400 Harriet Tubman, Knoxville. Register at <http://etccyjuvenilejustice2014.eventbrite.com>.

March 11-12, Children's Advocacy Days: "The Sport of Advocacy," War Memorial Auditorium, Nashville. Contact Richard.Kennedy@tn.gov. Register at <http://bit.ly/1eDZlCU>.

In the News

Memphis juvenile court monitor cites improvements (subscription may be required).

<http://tnne.ws/L3bv76>

Generational Poverty: Cycle Difficult to Break. Children born into poverty struggle with barriers.

<http://bit.ly/1aBBoSy>

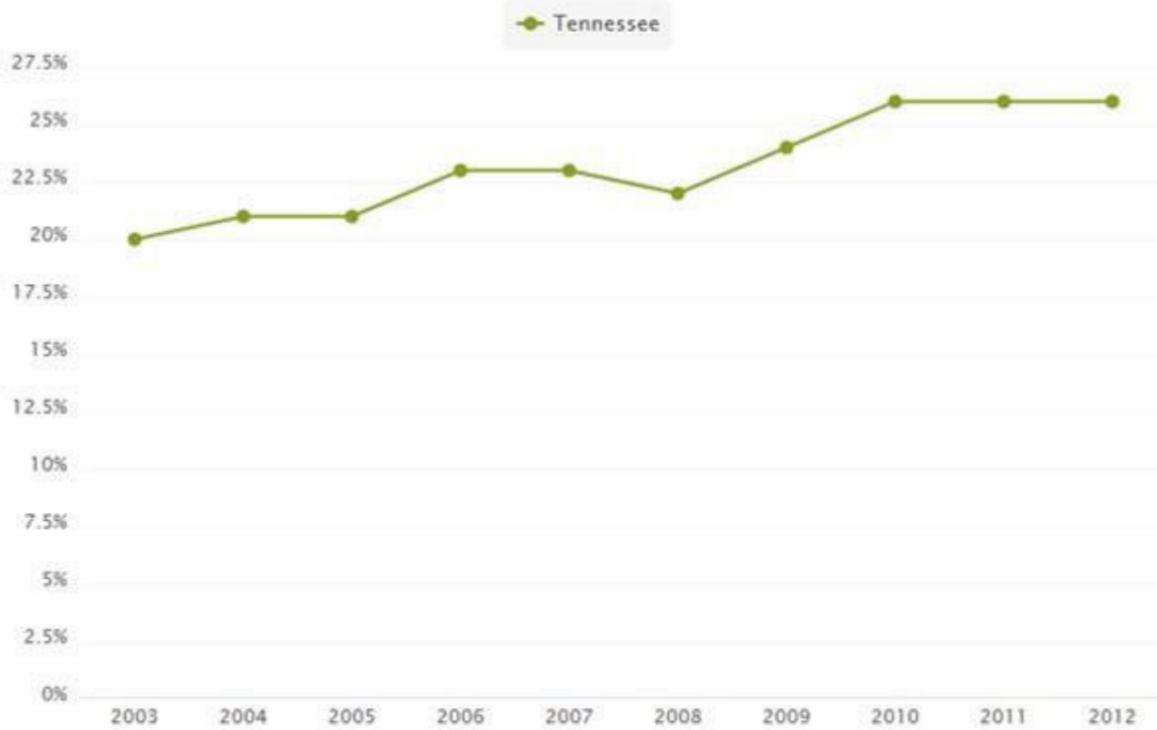
Report finds improvements at DCS: Still, [Second Look] Commission Learns That More Kids Are Victims of Repeat Abuse Than Thought. The (Nashville) Tennessean reported on the release of the SLC report (subscription may be required). <http://tnne.ws/1daP1fV>

Financial Network Finds Tennesseans Giving Up \$2.88 for Every \$1 in their Federal Taxes Used to Fund Medicaid Expansion, as reported in Memphis Business Journal. <http://bit.ly/1bOyNCO>

New Research Information

Education Week releases Quality Counts 2014 ranking of the state of the states in education (registration may be required): <http://bit.ly/JVM1HM>.

Tennessee KIDS COUNT Facts: Children in Poverty, 2012



CHILDREN IN POVERTY (PERCENT)

National KIDS COUNT

KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org

A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

More data on Tennessee child well-being is available at <http://bit.ly/15alkVu>.

To suggest content or manage subscriptions to *The Advocate*, contact fay.delk@tn.gov.

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Fay L. Delk, M.A.

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

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