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October 2019

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# Advocate



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## Tennessee Makes a Leap, First in Nation to Ask for a Medicaid Block Grant

Advocates have until Oct. 18 to [comment](#) to the state on its plan to be the first state in the nation to change its Medicaid program (called TennCare in Tennessee) to a [block grant](#) program. Currently Tennessee receives 65 percent of the cost of providing health care to the state's poorest citizens from the federal government, resulting in funding that rises and falls with the number of people needing care. Under the proposal, the state would receive a lump sum to provide care.



CFM Strategic Communications Graphic

State policy makers say this will decrease state costs and provide flexibility; advocates say it will decrease services and allow funds to be used for other state purposes. Although outside experts have called the plan released vague, The Sycamore Institute, a nonpartisan information source has an [overview](#) of the program.

In addition to accepting comments, the state is holding public forums on its requested change. On Nov. 20, a plan, required to include consideration of citizen comments, will be submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. CMS is required to respond as to what aspects it will accept and solicit comments itself prior to approving the changes.

[TennCare Public Notice, Amendment 42 Block Grant Change.](#)

Email comments to [public.notice.tennCare@tn.gov](mailto:public.notice.tennCare@tn.gov).

[Sycamore Institute TennCare Block Grant Overview.](#)

[Tennessee Justice Center Information and Comment form.](#)

[Lufhra, S., Kaiser Health News, Everything You Need to Know About Block Grants, January 2017.](#)



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## Number of TN Children Living in Concentrated Poverty Has Dropped, But Still 1 in Every 8 Struggle with Extreme Poverty

A graphic with a dark grey background on the left and a photo of children running on the right. The text on the left reads: "Let's transform high-poverty communities into PLACES OF OPPORTUNITY for kids to play, learn and grow." Below the text is the logo for "THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION". The photo on the right shows four children of diverse backgrounds running happily on a grassy area near a playground. One child in the foreground is wearing a yellow shirt and white shorts, another in a blue shirt and grey shorts, and two others in the background in red and blue shirts.

The 200,000 Tennessee children living in concentrated poverty would nearly fill Neyland Stadium twice and make up almost one of every eight children in the state. These are children living in census tracts with overall poverty rates of 30 percent or more.

The percentage of Tennessee children living in areas of concentrated poverty fell 7 percent between 2013 and 2017, according to "Children Living in High Poverty, Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods," a

new KIDS COUNT® data snapshot released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Using the latest data available from the U.S. Census Bureau, the snapshot examines where concentrated poverty has worsened across the country despite a long period of national economic expansion.

Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT, "[Children Living in High Poverty, Low-Opportunity Neighborhoods](#)," Sept. 24, 2019.

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## TCCY Ombudsman Program Reports on Service to Families

TCCY's Ombudsman for Children and Families is an external, third-party problem resolution mechanism for children in the custody of the Department of Children's Services (DCS), Child Protective Services (CPS), kinship care/relative caregiver program and DCS foster parent issues. In September, the program released a [report](#) covering its successes from 2015 to 2019. From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2019, a total of 537 referrals were received. Demographic breakdowns of these referrals are found in this four-year report. Strengths, opportunities and trends these past few years are highlighted.

[TCCY Ombudsman Program, Four-Year Report, September 2019.](#)

[TCCY Ombudsman Program for Children and Families.](#)

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## Domestic Violence Casts a Long Shadow



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. As UNICEF says, "Some of the biggest victims of domestic violence are the smallest." Exposure to and witnessing domestic violence (also called intimate partner violence) toward a parent is one of the identified adverse childhood experiences with the potential for life-long effects associated with other ACEs when the child does not have access to a safe, stable and nurturing adult relationship. Exposure to domestic violence has specific effects. A boy who grows up seeing his mother abused is 10 times more likely than others to abuse his adult female partner. A girl who grows up in a home with a father who abuses her mother is six times as

likely to be sexually abused. Risk factors for domestic abuse include parenting at a young age. Providing safety, education and supportive relationships can help level the emotional states of children exposed to ACES.

U.S. Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, *Effects of Domestic Violence on Children*, April 2019, <http://bit.ly/2mnUlcn>.

UNICEF, *Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children*, <http://bit.ly/2nk6OxF>.

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## TCCY FY 2021 Budget Recommendations

**TCCY's Budget Recommendations** for the Tennessee Fiscal Year 2021 are on TCCY's website. The 15-page report is prioritized and streamlined as an easily used tool for advocates.

Tennessee General Assembly tool: [Find Your Legislator](#).

The **TCCY Legislative Summary of Bills Enacted** during the first year of the 111th General Assembly is available.

**Sign up to receive TCCY federal policy information** by following the instructions online. Sign up to receive TCCY Tennessee **legislative updates** and the **Advocate** at <https://www.tn.gov/tccy/advocate-collaborate/tccy-ac-advlegis/tccy-ac-advocacy/leg-listserv.html>.

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## Funding Information

**Tennessee Funding and Opportunities for Health Programs.** The Rural Health Information Hub is a project of the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy to meet the information needs of rural health care facilities. As a clearinghouse on rural health issues, it compiles listings of [funding](#) available to states. Other resource information is provided on health and mental health issues.

Rural Health Information Hub, Tennessee Funding and Opportunities, <http://bit.ly/2IIZLye>.

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## Update



**Moore**

TCCY is happy to announce Jerri Moore is transitioning to be the Southwest Tennessee regional coordinator. Moore is currently the System of Care Across Tennessee West Divisional Coordinator. She can be reached at 731-423-6545 and 731-747-5200. The office is located at the Lowell Thomas Building, Tower B, 4th Floor, 225 Martin Luther King Drive Jackson, TN 38301. Please join TCCY in celebrating this change. You can congratulate her by emailing [Jerri.Moore@tn.gov](mailto:Jerri.Moore@tn.gov).

## Mark Your Calendar

TCCY lists relevant state and national events on its [website](#). TCCY sponsored events are listed here.

Oct. 3, 12:30 p.m., **Youth Transitions Advisory Council Meeting**, Goodwill Industries, 1015 Herman St., Nashville. Contact [Steve.Petty@tn.gov](mailto:Steve.Petty@tn.gov).

Oct. 4, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., **Northeast Council on Children and Youth** presents **Train the Trainer: SAMHSA's Trauma Informed Approach, Key Principles and Assumptions**, Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union, Community Rm., 5034 Bobby Hicks Hwy., Gray. Facilitator: Becky Haas. Registration: <http://bit.ly/2zvvtgXH>. **NOTE: Participants must have completed Building Strong Brains or SAMHSA's Trauma Informed Approach.**

Oct. 4, 9 a.m. EDT breakfast, 10 a.m. EDT, **East Tennessee Council on Children and Youth** presents **"The Role of Genetics, Trauma and Social Opportunity in Opioid Addiction,"** Henley Hall, Bridgewater Pl., 205 Bridgewater Rd., Knoxville. Speaker: Dr. Stephen Loyd, medical director, Cedar Recovery. Breakfast Buffet begins at 9 a.m. EDT. ETCCY approved for 2 CEU NASW-TN Chapter. Register: <http://bit.ly/2nxfotq>.

Oct. 4, 8:45 a.m. to 12 p.m., **Northwest Council on Children and Youth** presents **"Cause and Effect: Human Trafficking and ACEs,"** Boling University Center, Rm. 206 ABC, UT Martin. Preregistration by Sept. 24 required. Contact [Dana.Cobb@tn.gov](mailto:Dana.Cobb@tn.gov) or 731-571-7271. Approved for 3 NASW-TN CEUs.

Oct. 10, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., **Council on Children's Mental Health**, Family and Children's Services, 2400 Clifton Ave., Nashville. Contact: [Melissa.McGee@tn.gov](mailto:Melissa.McGee@tn.gov).

Oct. 15, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. EDT, **Southeast Council on Children and Youth Fall Conference, "Diversity: A Celebration of Our Children's Uniqueness,"** Christ United Methodist Church, 8645 East Brainerd Rd., Chattanooga. Speaker: Carol Rerz, Chattanooga Councilwoman. Registration fees: \$25, individual; \$5, agency (2 attendees); \$175, Corporate (10 attendees); and \$150, Vendor/Sponsor (booth fee and 2 attendees). 5 CEUs available. **Registration deadline: Oct. 11.** Register: <http://bit.ly/2lBmHj4>.

Oct. 17, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., **Upper Cumberland Council on Children and Youth** presents **"LGBTQ Inclusion for Youth-Serving Professionals,"** Regional Health Bldg., 1100 England Dr., Cookeville. Speaker: Justin Sweatman-Weaver from GLSEN. Free for UCCCY members; \$20 registration fee for non-members includes yearlong UCCCY membership. Register: <http://bit.ly/2nhe5P1>.

Nov. 4, **Mid-Cumberland Council on Children and Youth Legislative Breakfast**, William O. Beach Civic Hall, Clarksville. Information: [Susan.Cope@tn.gov](mailto:Susan.Cope@tn.gov).

Nov. 7, 1 p.m. to Nov. 8, 12 noon, **Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth Meeting**, Beersheba Springs Assembly, 58 Hege Ave, Beersheba Springs. Contact: [Tccy.Info@tn.gov](mailto:Tccy.Info@tn.gov).

March 10-11, 2020, **Children's Advocacy Days**. Contact: [John.Rust@tn.gov](mailto:John.Rust@tn.gov).

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## In the News

TCCY news releases are available on TCCY's [website](#).

Newland, J., TCCY, [Roots and Wings](#) podcast. Latest issue focuses on mental health challenges of teens.

Ramlagan, N., Public News Service, **New Data: Fewer TN Children Living in Concentrated Poverty**, Sept. 25, 2019, <http://bit.ly/2ndXUBP>.

Sher, A., *Chattanooga Times Free-Press*, **Report: Number of Children "Trapped" in Impoverished Communities Drops in Tennessee, Georgia**, Sept. 24, 2019, <http://bit.ly/2nf4ZSI>

Hall, J., WZTV-17, **Tennessee Shows Reduction in Number of Children Living in Concentrated Poverty: Report**, Sept. 24, 2019, <http://bit.ly/2laiHWt>.

Henderson, T., *Stateline*, **Census Prep Vital to States' Power: Why Some Could Miss Out**, Jan. 31, 2019, <http://bit.ly/2nk6OxF>.

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## Research Information

Spector, C., Stanford University Graduate School of Education, Research Stories, **School Poverty—Not Racial Composition—Limits Educational Opportunity, According to New Research from Stanford**, Sept. 23, 2019, <https://stanford.io/2llqL0O>.

O'Hagen, M., Kaiser Health News, **Want to Reduce Suicides? Follow the Data—to Medical Offices, Motels and Even Animal Shelters**, Sept. 23, 2019, <http://bit.ly/2mssN5s>.

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## Tennessee KIDS COUNT Facts

URLs below graphics link to larger versions of each. More data on Tennessee child well-being is available at <http://bit.ly/15alkVU>.

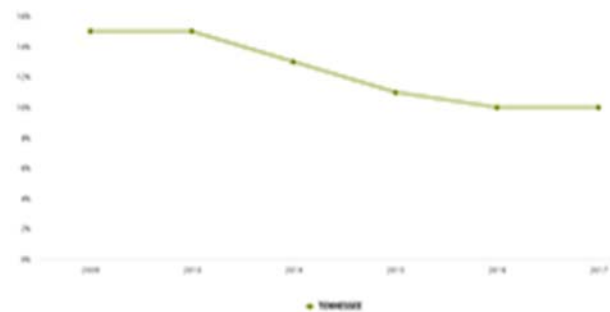
**Children in Extreme Poverty (50 Percent of Poverty Level, Percent)**



Children in Extreme Poverty (50 Percent Poverty) (Percent)

National KIDS COUNT  
KIDS COUNT Data Center, [datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)  
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

**Parents Without Health Insurance (Percent)**



Parents Without Health Insurance (Percent)

National KIDS COUNT  
KIDS COUNT Data Center, [datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)  
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Also available: <http://bit.ly/2mpZLnc>.

Also available: <http://bit.ly/2nn7suh>

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, 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.

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