



TENNESSEE
COMMISSION ON
**CHILDREN &
YOUTH**

THE ADVOCATE

Embracing Springtime Traditions



Renewal and Growth:
**Embracing Springtime
Traditions**

THE ADVOCATE

Springtime traditions and transitions offer us a reminder of the power in change and the opportunity for personal and collective growth. We hope the articles in this month's newsletter inspire you to harness this energy to nurture resilience, embrace fresh perspectives, and cultivate optimism in the face of challenges. May is also Mental Health Awareness Month, urging us to prioritize the emotional resilience and psychological health of children in Tennessee and around the world.

Legislative Updates

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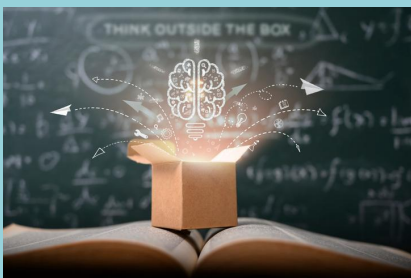


Children and Youth Articles



May is Mental Health Awareness Month, providing a significant opportunity to discuss mental health in children. All children can be sad, anxious, irritable, or aggressive at times, and many find it occasionally challenging to sit still, pay attention, or interact with others. In most cases, these are just typical developmental phases. However, such behaviors can indicate a more serious problem in some children. Click the link to learn more about the signs of mental health conditions in children and how a diagnosis can impact youth.

[Learn More](#)



May marks the end of the school year for many students, making it a fitting time to reflect on educational innovations and best practices. Technology and teaching models change frequently. Click the link to learn about innovative teaching methods, educational



May 1st is International Workers' Day, which can serve as a reminder to advocate for the rights of children, including access to education, healthcare, and protection from exploitation. Click the link to learn about global initiatives, campaigns, and organizations working to improve the lives of children around the world.

[Learn More](#)



Mother's Day can be considered and great time to focus on the importance of family engagement and support in children's development and education. Authentic family and community engagement is a key strategy for improving students' social-emotional and academic outcomes. The Education Trust

technologies, and research findings aimed at improving learning outcomes and addressing educational disparities among children.

[Learn More](#)

recently released three studies that cover a diverse range of topics that surround a family's engagement in education. Click the link to learn more about these studies and find advocacy tools to help guide working with local, state and federal leaders.

[Learn More](#)

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Mental Health Resources

[TN Partners for Health](#)

[TDMHSAS Mental Health Services](#)

[988 Hotline](#)

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TCCY is excited to announce a partnership with Southern Word and it's Youth Poet Laureate program! If you've attended Children's Advocacy Days in the last several years you've likely had the privilege of seeing talented students with Southern Word perform in front of hundreds of attendees. Please help us congratulate Melody Dalili, who was named the 2025 Tennessee Youth Poet Laureate!



Melody Dalili is a poet, motivational speaker, sister, and student. After years of devoting her time to writing, she was named the Inaugural Youth Poet Laureate of Knoxville in 2022. During her term, she advocated for civic issues such as homelessness, racial injustice, child abuse, and suicide prevention. She also initiated the “Poet-trees” project in 9 Knoxville libraries, hoping to make poetry more accessible (and less intimidating!) for children. Dalili is currently attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is planning on majoring in Biology and double minoring in Poetry and Painting. At UNC, she is also a Carolina Covenant Scholar and part of the North Carolina Fellows Program. Towards the latter portion of her freshman year, she was named the Youth Poet Laureate of Tennessee. When Dalili is off the stage, she can be found offering cool shark facts or “whippin’ up” a tasty bowl of chow mein.

The Tennessee Youth Poet Laureate program is a program of Southern Word, Urban Word, and the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth. Contact info@southernword.org for booking inquiries.



Calendar of Events

Thursday, May 2 - Building Bridges 2024: West Tennessee's Path to Resilience and Empowerment - Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, 1770 U.S. 45 Bypass Jackson, TN

Monday, May 6 - The New Direction for the Department of Children's Services - Hamilton Co. Family Justice Center, 5705 Uptain Rd. Chattanooga, TN

Tuesday, May 7 - Northeast Council Quarterly Meeting - Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, May 8 - Resilient Tennessee Regional SUMMIT - Trevecca University, Boone Business Building, 333 Murfreesboro Pike, Nashville, TN

Friday, May 9 - Young Child Wellness Council - MNPD Precinct, 5500 Charlotte Pike, Nashville, TN

Friday, May 17 - TCCY Commission Meeting - Lentz Public Health Center, Nashville, TN

Thursday, May 23 - Council on Youth Justice Meeting - Family and Children's Services, 2400 Clifton Ave. Nashville, TN

Wednesday, May 29 - Identifying and Managing Anxiety in Children and Youth - Upper Cumberland Development District, 1104 England Dr. Cookeville, TN

Thursday, May 30 - Foster Care Summit - Bristol Motor Speedway, 151 Speedway Blvd. Bristol, TN

Friday, May 31 - ETCCY Mental Health Month Lunch on the River - Calhoun's on the River, 400 Neyland Dr. Knoxville, TN

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth | [Website](#)



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