



Youth Transitions Advisory Council
Annual Report – October 2016

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
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Steve Petty, YTAC Director

"I want to live comfortably. For me it is important to break the cycle. I'm the first to get accepted to college and graduate high school in my family."



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STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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TO: Members of the Tennessee General Assembly
FROM: Linda O'Neal, Executive Director
DATE: October, 2016
RE: *Youth Transitions Advisory Council 2016 Report*

In accordance with T.C.A. 37-2-601 – 37-2-606 included in this report as Appendix B, attached please find the Youth Transitions Advisory Council 2016 Report. The Youth Transitions Advisory Council brings dedicated child advocates together from all across the state who are developing and implementing new strategies to meet the challenges of engaging former foster youth as they make the critical transition from adolescence to adulthood. This report outlines the work of the Youth Transitions Advisory Council as we continue to develop strategies to assist these young adults as they prepare for success in the lives ahead of them. Included in this report are the ACCOMPLISHMENTS of the Council in 2016 and a number of recommendations for continued improvement in providing services for former foster youth.

As we all know from experiences with the young adults in our lives, and as a growing body of research confirms, the human brain continues to grow and develop well past the age of majority. Brain executive functions of good judgment and maturity are among the last to develop in the mid-twenties. For good or bad, the choices we make and the goals we set regarding education, career, and interpersonal relationships shape the opportunities and outcomes available to us later in life. For former foster youth, the challenge of that transition is even greater because they often lack the important emotional and financial support nurturing parents provide their adult children.

Prior to the advent of extension of foster care services, former foster youth often were left to fend for themselves upon aging out of state custody. Estranged from their families, lacking adequate education and social skills, many of these young people found themselves in dire circumstances, unable to meet their daily needs, continue their education, compete for jobs, find suitable housing or access adequate health or mental health care services. Many former foster youth experience homelessness, unplanned pregnancies or have encountered the criminal justice system because they aged out of custody without the proper tools to face the challenges of modern life most adults experience today. Extension of foster care services allows these youth the opportunity to complete or continue their education, with access to health care, housing assistance and other supports to help them succeed in life, while at the same time playing an important role in achieving the goals Tennessee has set for improving graduation rates, increasing educational attainment, building stronger families and creating safer communities.

The Youth Transitions Advisory Council and the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth express appreciation to the members of the General Assembly for the opportunity to improve the lives of these young people, and for appropriating much needed funding to the Department of Children's Services to assist these youth at this critical time in their lives. We hope you will find the resources necessary to continue to fund essential services so all Tennessee youth have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2016

In the 2016 session, the Tennessee General Assembly passed and the Governor signed Public Chapter 679 establishing a reasonable and prudent parent standard for children in foster care. The reasonable and prudent parent standard allows children in care to participate in the same types of developmentally appropriate, socially and culturally enriching activities children would if living in their parents' home. The legislation exempts a caregiver acting in compliance with this standard from civil liability relating to injuries the child may incur in such activities.

The Department of Children's Services has begun implementation of the "Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard" including development of a protocol and training. This will provide a more normalizing adolescent experience for youth in foster care. Children in foster care should have opportunities for a "normal" adolescent experience. They should be able to participate in appropriate activities that help them develop interaction and judgment skills needed for success in adulthood. Implementation of a "Prudent Parent" approach means foster parents can make decisions regarding foster youth for such things as participating in sports, spending the night with friends, participating in extracurricular activities, etc., like they would for their own children.

Tennessee DCS increased the Independent Living Allowance rate for young adults in Extension of Foster Care from \$400 a month to \$435 a month. Even a small increase in income is important for these young adults.

Extension of Foster Care (EFC) Services was provided to 755 youth in Fiscal Year 2016. This reflects the total youth participation, regardless of the year they accepted services. Participation has increased for five consecutive years.

In 2016, the mean retention days for remaining in EFCS increased to 259 days from 255 days in 2015 and 231 days in 2014. DCS will continue to evaluate supports needed to increase retention of youth in Extension of Foster Care Services.

The rate of participation of those eligible to participate in Extension of Foster Care Services increased from 40 percent in 2014 to 48 percent in 2015. Participation remained at 48 percent in 2016.

	Total Aged Out	Total Aged Out Eligible for EFCS	Eligible Population Accepting EFCS	Percent Accepting EFCS
FY 2008-09	1209			
FY 2009-10	1162			
FY 2010-11	1131	813	163	20%
FY 2011-12	1084	748	201	27%
FY 2012-13	1017	768	301	39%
FY 2013-14	984	779	312	40%
FY 2014-15	932	731	353	48%
FY 2015-16	996	815	388	48%

In FY 2016, both the Educational and Training Vouchers and Bright Futures scholarship maintained high utilization. DCS Independent Living (IL) did outreach to the population that was adopted or went to Subsidized Permanent Guardianship (SPG) over the last two years. Tennessee Promise has also been a factor in the increase.

FY	ETV	Bright	Total
2013	282	126	408
2014	262	139	401
2015	357	145	502
2016	357	144	501

In 2016, 59 youth are eligible for and receiving the Hope Foster Care grant. While this is less than last year's number, it is higher than the average from 2010 through 2014.

FY	# of scholarships
2016	59
2015	89
2014	52
2013	40
2012	47
2011	45
2010	49

Tennessee DCS Office of Independent and Transitional Living has provided training to 1,835 participants. Trainings included education on transition plans, independent living services, understanding the transitioning population and youth engagement.

Training Group	Participants Trained
Court	8
DCS	1138
Foster Parents	289
Mixed Group	64
Provider Agency	205
Youth	131
Grand Total	1835

Four resource centers, I AM Ready Center Chattanooga, Monroe Harding Youth Connections in Nashville, South Memphis Alliance in Memphis, and Helen Ross McNabb Project Now, Knoxville, are funded for Fiscal Year 2017. They provide Opportunity Passport, transitional services, and assistance in the four largest population centers in Tennessee. All four resource centers received additional funding to support another year of the pregnancy prevention grant “Sisters Saving Sisters” through 2017.

I AM Ready Center received funding from Annie E. Casey/Jim Casey microenterprise/social enterprise focus area of the Family Economic Success Unit’s Jim Casey Small Grants Program. I AM Ready Center also expanded services into neighboring Bradley County with the assistance of CASA.

As of January 2014, young people aging out of foster care are eligible to receive TennCare until they turn 26, pursuant to the Affordable Care Act. In addition, when young people who previously aged out of custody require assistance, DCS and contract providers assist young people in completing applications when necessary. DCS also acts as a liaison with the Bureau of TennCare when challenges arise. An overview of eligibility criteria and instructions for applying for health insurance are provided on the DCS website along with a toll free phone number that will connect youth directly with the Director of the Office of Independent Living at DCS if they require assistance. In addition, young people who elect to take advantage of the Department’s Extension of Foster Care Services are automatically enrolled in TennCare and receive ongoing support in managing their access to healthcare. A review of youth in Extension of Foster Care July through September of 2015 found that all but two youth were enrolled in TennCare. One of the youth not receiving TennCare had moved to another state and applied for Medicaid there, and the other was ineligible because he is an undocumented alien. The Department continues to work to ensure all eligible young people take advantage of the health insurance benefits available to them. The Office of Independent Living has developed materials explaining available health insurance options, which they distribute through a variety of mechanisms. Additionally, on an ongoing basis, a staff person in the Office of Independent Living reaches out to youth who aged out prior to implementation of the Affordable Care Act in order to make them aware of resources available to them.

DCS went into Brian A. maintenance in Section VI.F., Ensuring a Full Range of Independent Living Services for Older Youth. The Settlement Agreement requires that: “DCS shall have a full range of independent living services and shall provide sufficient resources to provide independent living services to all children in the plaintiff class.” DCS will work to sustain maintenance in this area through 2017 and continue to enhance its network.

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) collects information on youth in foster care, including sex, race, ethnicity, date of birth, and foster care status. It also collects information about the outcomes of those youth who have aged out of foster care. States began collecting data in 2010, and the first data set was submitted in May 2011. DCS utilizes the Tennessee National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) data to help understand practices for transition-aged youth. The most recent sample of 19 year olds collected October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 showed that fifty-four percent reported having finished high school or obtained a GED/HiSet. Three percent of the young adults reported completing a higher education degree, or obtained a vocational license or certificate. Of the young adults who reported not having completed an educational goal, fifty-four percent said they were enrolled in and attending high school, GED/HiSet classes, or some other educational program at the time of data collection. Overall, eighty-five percent of the respondents reported they completed an educational program, were still pursuing their education or were employed either full or part time.

DCS has continued efforts to implement strategies to conduct credit checks on 14, 15, 16 and 17 year-olds to determine if any youth is a victim of identity theft or credit fraud and clear the records, if necessary, before age 18. DCS developed training, policy and protocol that will roll out in 2016, and has contracted with a third party agency to batch load all identified young people to the three credit bureaus for review and determination of credit.

DCS will collaborate with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Office of Financial Empowerment, and focus on strategies to improve the financial skills of transitioning youth to prepare them for the complex financial marketplace as they move into adulthood. DCS has started planning for implementation of CFPB’s Your Money, Your Goals Toolkit (YMYG) to DCS staff, providers, foster parents and youth. The training would focus on how to use the toolkit’s modules and supporting tools that complement appropriate foster care program outcomes. Training would be through a direct training model for both government employees and relevant staff in private agencies that are under contract with the state or county program. Topics may include:

- **Credit Reports:** Provide training on how to access the free annual credit report and how to correct inaccuracies found on the credit report. CFPB will also work with the credit reporting agencies to simplify the credit reporting requirement for child welfare agencies.

- Transaction Accounts: Provide training on how to support transitioning youth in opening a transaction account with a bank or credit union or selecting the appropriate prepaid card.
- Savings: Provide training on strategies to help transiting youth develop savings plans and understand the positive benefits of savings.
- Consumer Protection: Provide training on basic consumer protection issues and help human service staff to better understand these protections and where to get help.
- Foster Parent: Provide training for foster parents. If possible, this would be done through a train the trainer or peer learning model.

DCS has implemented a workgroup that consists of Juvenile Justice, Child Protective Services, programs, training and well-being to discuss LGBTQ issues and help regions deal with difficult cases. This workgroup meets monthly at this time. The workgroup will bring in external experts from Oasis Center to help address cultural competency needs and help revamp policies and training.

- DCS offers a foster parent course on a requested basis in the regions and it is offered annually at the conference. The three-hour training is called “Parenting LGBTQ Children: A Parent’s Guide to Embracing a Child’s Authenticity.” This experiential workshop will help empower foster parents with a greater understanding of the best practices for loving, supporting, and advocating for their foster child who identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. Other foster parent trainings offered through DCS on adolescent issues include:

Foster Parent Courses That Contain IL Information:

- Creating Teachable Moments
- Engaging and Parenting Teens
- Parenting the Youthful Offender
- Prudent Parenting Part 1 & 2
- Social Media and Its Impact on Children in the Foster Care System
- How to Protect Children from Cyberbullying

Foster Parent Conference Only:

- Knowledge for Fostering Adolescents
- Success Beyond 18: Transitioning Youth to Adulthood
- Tough Topics from Teens: Answering Difficult Questions
- Truth and Consequences: Helping Teens Make Decisions Based on Future Goals
- Foster Care to Freshman: College and Career Mindset Workshop
- Cyberbullying and Sexting

Curriculums That Include Teen Needs:

- Adoption Related Disclosure
- Connecting with Children and Parents
- Fostering Positive Behavior
- LGBTQ: Issues of Sexuality Among Youth in Care
- Mental Health Training Curriculum for Juvenile Justice
- Working with Gang-Involved Youth

During Fiscal Year 2016, 8 peer advocates supported 660 youth at foster care review boards in the following counties or courts: Blount, Davidson, Coffee, Maury, Montgomery, Sumner, Davidson, Shelby, and Johnson City.. In Fiscal Year 2013, DCS entered into a five-year \$55,500 per year contract with the Administrative Office of the Court to train, monitor and supervise peer advocates to work with Specialized Foster Care Review Boards. The contract established training requirements for peer advocates and included provisions to pay travel, per diem and stipends for the peer advocates. There are over 10 counties with model foster care review boards requesting a peer advocate.

A new initiative this year saw the establishment of foster care review boards that solely review young adults in extension of foster care. This initiative is in collaboration with the Tennessee Board of Regents wherein faculty or staff serve as foster care review board member, providing invaluable information to assist the young adults achieve permanency. During fiscal year 2016, four peer advocates served 60 EFC young adults in three counties with EFC boards.

DCS was represented at multiple conferences in FY 2016, including speaking in front of national advocates:

- Co-Panelist, “Couch Talk on Effective Partnerships,” HHS TPP Conference: Connecting the Dots: Collaborating to Achieve Lasting Impacts for Youth. Baltimore, Maryland, 2016
- Co-Panelist, “Scaling Effective Practices for Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care” The American Youth Policy Forum, Washington D.C., 2016
- Co-Presenter, “Effective Implementation of the SFA by Making Systems Accountable,” Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, National Webinar, 2016
- Presenter, “Prudent Parenting and Normalcy,” TN CASA Conference, 2016
- Participant in two Jim Casey Strategic Planning meetings in Dallas, Texas.

TennCare created the Employment and Community First/Choices program to provide Long Term Services and Supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are on the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities’ waiting list, aging out of foster care or who have elderly caregivers who can no longer care for them. The program will provide supports to allow individuals to live in a community setting and maintain stable employment.

DCS coordinated Youth Leadership Academies and Youth 4 Youth (Y4Y) Board meetings in collaboration with community based partners in all three Grand Regions:

2016

Region	Y4Y meeting	Attendance	Avg. attendance
East	12	203	17
Middle	7	53	6
West	13	210	15

CASA Monroe was recently awarded grant funding from National CASA to train more CASA volunteers in the Fostering Futures curriculum and to provide support and supervision to volunteers being assigned older youth ages 14+. CASA of Bradley County and CASA Corridor (Meigs, McMinn, and Rhea Counties) completed the two-year Youth Advocacy Grant from National CASA as of May 31, 2016. CASA Corridor was able to sustain the Youth Advocacy Coordinator position in McMinn County past the end of the grant period through alternate funding sources. In order to sustain services to older youth in care, CASA of Bradley County has partnered with the DCS Resource Center in Chattanooga to offer meeting space for the I Am Ready Center program in Cleveland, Tennessee.

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services increased funding for *OnTrackTn*, its first episode psychosis initiative, as a result of the U.S. Congress increasing the set aside in the State Mental Health Block Grant. The increased funding was used to open first episode psychosis initiatives in Davidson and Shelby Counties.

Tennessee Housing and Development Agency funded five programs providing housing to transition age youth. Funding was provided through the Emergency Solutions Grant program for rapid re-housing and street outreach activities to Monroe Harding and the Oasis Center in Nashville. Funding was also provided through the Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grants Program for the development of permanent or transitional rental housing to the following: Keystone Development, Inc., Johnson City, Crossroads Campus, Nashville, Crossville Housing Authority, Crossville, and Omni Community Services, Nashville.

In FY 15-16, kidcentraltn.com saw strong growth. Particularly through utilization of search engine marketing (SEM), the average number of unique monthly visitors increased significantly. Over the course of the year, kidcentraltn.com featured topics on its home page that are important

to transitioning youth, such as articles about Tennessee Promise, Independent Living Skills, and Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life after High School.

YV LifeSet had 233 youth in Tennessee graduate from high school and six graduate from college. Several youth from YV LifeSet were able to participate in the Congressional Shadow Day. They shadowed members of Congress and shared their experiences in the child welfare system.

One youth from YV LifeSet completed an internship with Committee on Ways and Means with the U.S. House of Representatives. During the internship she assisted staff with hearing preparation, research and various administrative tasks.

In May, three YV LifeSet youth attended the Young Adult Leadership and Advocacy Training Conference held in Minnesota with the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC). The training focused on foundational public speaking, creating youth networks, youth and media relations, learning to craft your story, working with trauma, and parenting with parent groups and agencies.

YOUTH TRANSITIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS 2016

As described in this report, the Youth Transitions Advisory Council has received reports from the Department of Children's Services regarding the provision of services for youth transitioning to adulthood, representatives from the Resource Centers and other organizations that currently provide services to these youth, advocates for transitioning youth, and most importantly, young adults who have transitioned from state custody. The combined conversations of all interested parties has resulted in the identification of the infrastructure, the kinds of services and supports, needed to help young people successfully transition to adulthood. While this infrastructure is primarily focused on young adults who were formerly in state custody, many of the same resources are also needed by young adults who are transitioning from the children's services systems for individuals with disabilities or mental health and substance abuse treatment needs to the adult service delivery systems.

Though much work has been done by the many stakeholders involved in this process to fulfill past recommendations, much more work is needed on several of the recommendations before they are accomplished, and some will be ongoing over the course of several years. The following items have been identified as issues yet to be resolved and serve as the recommendations of the Council for 2015.

2016 NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Youth Transitions Advisory Council should **monitor any new federal legislation** affecting transitioning youth and identify strategies for their implementation. Tennessee should maximize opportunities to access any new federal funds for transitioning youth.
- ***Building Strong Brains: Tennessee's ACEs Initiative*** is focused on preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) whenever possible and providing services and supports to children and families when they cannot be prevented to mitigate the long-term impact on education, employment and life-long physical and mental health. Young people transitioning from state custody to independence have by definition been exposed to ACEs. Young people transitioning from child to adult mental health, substance abuse and special education/vocational rehabilitation systems have also often been exposed to ACEs. **Transitioning services need to focus on what has happened to these young adults and provide the services needed to mitigate the impact and lead to recovery.**

CONTINUING RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Tennessee DCS, foster parents and contract agencies should focus on earlier interventions with adolescents ages 14-16 year olds to help them prepare for adulthood.** Development of many of the skills needed for successful transition to adulthood should begin with younger adolescents. Decisions made during this time, especially related to education, have a long-term impact on educational opportunities and success.
- **If the immigration status for youth in foster care is in question, there is a need to clearly establish immigration status for youth before they turn 18.** The immigration status of young adults is important in determining their eligibility for certain services. There are also legal differences that relate to minors that are important, so DCS should assist youth in clarifying their status before they transition to adulthood. Improvements in practice and assistance for these youth can greatly improve their potential and prospects for being productive members of society and contributing to the overall economy. DCS should continue efforts to involve attorneys who provide pro bono legal assistance in this process.
- **There is a need for increased awareness regarding implications of immigration status for youth transitioning to adulthood.** In addition to steps to clearly establish immigration status above, DCS should also work with providers to be sure they know when they do or do not have to ask questions about immigration status and how immigration status impacts service eligibility.
- **There is a need to strengthen the connections between and among DCS and other state departments for an expansion in the service array to assist youth with special needs in the successful transition to adulthood.** Youth who have an IEP yet do not qualify for Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disability services (for example, because they have an IQ above 70), often still need assistance. Youth who have other developmental or physical disabilities also have a need for assistance. Special services for this group of transitioning youth include enhanced independent living skills, peer transitional support, support for college accommodations, access to vocational rehabilitation, Labor and Workforce Development programs, community colleges, etc. Efforts should be made to ensure youth are aware of new initiatives that emphasize employment opportunities and meaningful community engagement, such as TennCare's Employment and Community First (ECF) program which *is* open to transition-aged youth with IQs 70 or above.
- **When children who are in custody are eligible for Social Security Supplemental Security Income (SSI), TN DCS and Department of Human Services (DHS) staff**

should assist them in the application process prior to transition. Negotiating the application process for Social Security benefits is a daunting task, especially for young adults who have disabilities. TN DCS staff should assist youth in this process prior to transitioning as they often have access to medical, psychological and other records that would assist in the eligibility determination process. DHS staff should provide appropriate assistance to TN DCS staff in completing the applications and assist in moving applications expeditiously through the process.

- **Transition-age youth who have never been in state custody need services and supports in much the same way former foster youth do.** As efforts have increased to facilitate access to services for adolescents to avoid state custody, many more youth who are very similar to those in foster care transition to adulthood without a stable, supportive and nurturing family. It is in the best interests of those young adults and the Tennessee community for services and supports to be provided to help them become productive, successful adults. The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has three programs funded by SAMSHA providing services to transition age youth: Treatment and Recovery for Youth, Healthy Transitions, and On Track TN. On July 1, 2016, TennCare and DIDDs began providing services for transition age youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities through its Employment and Community First/Choices program.
- **DCS should identify and implement strategies to provide bridge assistance for young people during the initial period of transition.** When transitioning youth experience a gap in assistance that leaves them dependent on unstable and/or unsupportive families or friends, it can result in loss of opportunities to establish a path toward success. Strategies should be in place to ensure they have access to essential supports, including housing and basic needs, until time for college enrollment, move into campus housing, etc. Programs provided by Park Center and YVLifeSet include some limited services to address this need.
- **DCS should implement best practices for pregnancy prevention and for pregnant and parenting adolescents statewide.** These practices should especially be implemented in residential programs, through Resource Centers and other programs/providers. Access to voluntary long acting reversible contraceptives should be available for young women to avoid pregnancy. For those who are pregnant and parenting, best practices assistance should be provided to help them have a healthy, successful pregnancy and become nurturing, supportive parents. Over the past year, efforts by private agencies, A Step Ahead, YVLifeSet, Sisters Saving Sisters implemented through the Resource Centers, and the Oasis Center Teen Outreach Program have worked to reduce unplanned pregnancy and prevent HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. The TennCare Bureau has

revised payment requirements for voluntary long acting reversible contraceptives to make them more readily available.

- **DCS should identify and implement best practices for addressing the unique needs of youth who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered or Questioning (LGBTQ).** The increasing awareness of special issues related to LGBTQ youth highlights the need to improve practice for these youth. LGBTQ youth experience special challenges in custody and in transitioning to adulthood. Identification and implementation of best practices for dealing with these challenges should improve outcomes for these youth and young adults. DCS has a work group focused on policies and training, placements, safety, etc.

The Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) should continue to enhance and expand housing assistance opportunities for transitioning youth. Housing continues to be a major need for transitioning youth. THDA has taken important steps to address this issue by including transitioning youth aging out of care as a priority population due to their increased risk of experiencing homelessness. Funding has been awarded to five programs providing housing to transition-age youth. Funding has been provided through the Emergency Solutions Grant program for rapid re-housing and street outreach activities to Monroe Harding and the Oasis Center in Nashville. Funding has been provided through the Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grants Program for the development of permanent or transitional rental housing to the following: Keystone Development, Inc., Johnson City; Crossroads Campus, Nashville; Crossville Housing Authority, Crossville; and Omni Community Services, Nashville. DCS and THDA should continue to collaborate on strategies to further expand housing options for this population, including consideration of identifying and implementing a dedicated funding stream to meet this need.

- **Transitioning youth need assistance resolving legal issues they may become embroiled in related to their lack of adult experiences and poor decision making.** Transitioning youth become involved in legal issues related to housing such as leases and evictions, family legal issues such as the custody of a child or divorce, and sometimes criminal activities. The Tennessee Bar Association and Access to Justice should establish a pro bono legal services program geared toward the 18-24 year old young adults who need assistance. The Law School Clinics should be encouraged to consider this as an area where they might provide assistance. Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland has received funding for Gilbert Family Fellows to provide attorneys to address legal issues transitioning youth experience in the region.
- **Efforts should be made to identify pro bono legal assistance like that provided by the Knoxville Leadership Foundation to assist youth who have been in custody to**

pursue expungement of misdemeanor charges acquired prior to the age of 18. Even minor offenses on a young adult's juvenile record can present serious challenges for successful transition to adulthood. Expungement would help alleviate barriers for youth related to education, housing, employment or military service. The Tennessee Supreme Court Access to Justice Program could provide leadership in this effort. Gilbert Family Fellows provide this assistance for youth in the Middle Tennessee area.

- **Juvenile Courts should review their practices for reporting to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation to ensure they are not reporting cases unnecessarily.** Unnecessary inclusion of the names and records of youth who have been involved with the juvenile court system presents serious challenges for successful transition to adulthood. These records have an adverse long-term impact on youth in areas like education, employment, housing and military service. The Administrative Office of the Courts should provide training for juvenile court judges regarding this issue. The Administrative Office of the Court has established a committee to review expungement practices as they related to juvenile courts and law enforcement.
- **The Youth Transitions Advisory Council should collaborate with DCS, Higher Education institutions and the Department of Education (DOE) and other stakeholders to develop better strategies to assist youth in maintaining academic eligibility.** The most likely reason youth become ineligible for Extension of Foster Care Services is due to academic ineligibility. Youth who lose Extension of Foster Care Services due to academic ineligibility may resume receiving services upon establishment of a new academic plan

Essential Documentation Recommendation

- **DCS should continue to assist young adults with essential documents (birth certificate, Social Security card, education records, etc.) required for many aspects of adult living.** Essential Documents are listed on page seven of the current Department of Children's Services' "Independent Living and Transition Planning Guide," which can be found at <http://www.tn.gov/youth/dcsguide/manuals/ILTranPlanGuide.pdf>. Current DCS policy calls for all youth ages 17 or older exiting foster care to be provided with one complete set of essential documents required for participating in many of the adult educational, employment, public benefits and other systems. Youth should also receive one set of copies to serve as backup information. Youth also need to be provided with information regarding how to safeguard the documents and procedures for obtaining replacement documents, if needed, and provided assistance when necessary to obtain replacement documents. More work is needed to identify and implement best strategies for securing the documents. DCS continues to work on this and reports currently the number of calls on annual basis is limited, largely to circumstances where youth have lost documents and/or caregivers will not give them access.

Educational Issues Recommendations

- As school systems in the state have scheduling autonomy, including whether they have a block or period system, **options should be available to foster youth who change schools and/or systems to ensure they are able to maintain acquisition of credits and do not lose the hours required for credits acquisition for graduation.** Transportation to the previous school system or other educational options should be provided by the Department of Children’s Services. Opportunities for success in school, especially including class scheduling, should be a consideration in placement decisions. School counselors should collaborate with DCS educational specialists to prevent discrepancies with credit acquisition and recovery, preferably at the time of enrollment. Concerns about the serious implications of this continuing recommendation on youth led to the legislation passed in 2015 and referenced on page 7 to require a full diploma for certain youth who meet state credit requirements. While this serves a part of the problem, it does not and cannot address movement between systems with different scheduling (block or period),
- **Department of Children’s Services staff and staff at the Department of Education, State Board of Education and Local Education Agencies should work together to facilitate successful transition of youth between and among schools.** This should include minimizing placement in alternative classes except in cases where such placement is required for school or child safety, primarily when youth have been adjudicated for the serious offenses that require notification to the school, or when placement is clearly linked to increasing the prospects for earning credit or participating in credit recovery/accelerated credit programs. **In any case, including when school notification is required, there should be an individual determination whether placement in an alternative school is necessary and appropriate.** Providing youth with an opportunity for a “fresh start” may facilitate their future educational and behavioral success and reduce the chances of them connecting/reconnecting with “negative” peers in alternative school. This would be consistent with efforts to ensure services are provided in the least restrictive and most appropriate educational environment.
- **Staff with the juvenile courts and Department of Children’s Services and members of foster care review boards and model foster care review boards should acknowledge the importance of educational services in permanency plans.** Educational services should be recognized as the therapeutic services they are for child well-being. **Plans for placement change/return should consider school timetables whenever possible.** Examples include expediting return home or a planned placement change so children can begin a new school year/semester/grading period back in their home school or in their new placement. In contrast, return home or placement changes should be coordinated to accommodate the end of a grading period, semester or end of course testing. Plans should include strategies to ensure youth have sufficient “seat time” to be eligible to take end-of-course examinations.

Higher Education Recommendations

- **Strategies should be developed and implemented to ensure the necessary steps are taken so youth in custody are eligible to participate in Tennessee Promise.** DCS staff and other providers should assist transitioning youth, and information on how to do this should be communicated clearly in writing and through training by webinar or in person. The Oasis College Connections and other programs across the state, including Tennessee College Access and Success Network, should support youth in establishing eligibility for Tennessee Promise. Tennessee Promise should develop a pool of mentors for children who have been in foster care and young adults with other special needs (mental health, substance abuse, etc.), and those mentors should receive special training to equip them to support these students.
- **When youth transition plans include attending post-secondary education in Tennessee, the plans should include implementation of strategies for applying for financial aid (scholarships/loans/grants) and connecting youth with student life, disabilities and financial aid coordinators or other appropriate resources at higher education institutions to establish a support network for success at the institution.** While this is outlined in DCS policy, there are opportunities to improve its implementation. Youth should be advised of the need for caution in applying for student loans in many circumstances, and the importance of actually utilizing financial opportunities to advance their education. Youth should also be advised to apply for minority scholarships based on their experience in foster care. There is a need for additional help to maintain grade point averages and ongoing eligibility for EFC, etc. Support is needed at universities, community colleges and Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology to provide those young adults who had an IEP or 504 plan in high school with assistance in obtaining educational accommodations in post-secondary education.
- **State-funded higher education programs should explore the feasibility of providing a bus pass as a part of tuition costs, especially for youth transitioning from state custody.** Transportation is a major challenge for foster youth/former foster youth in terms of work and college. Some private institutions in Tennessee already include a local bus pass in their tuition costs. Transportation is an ongoing issue for transitioning youth, and a bus pass could have a major impact on their ability to attend and succeed in higher education. Efforts should be made to focus on transportation providers to enlist their assistance and guidance in identifying strategies to help with transportation options for former foster youth and other transitioning youth. An additional transportation barrier exists for youth who have physical disabilities and require the use of walkers, wheelchairs and scooters. Access to wheelchair-accessible transportation is extremely limited statewide, primarily with limited access in Davidson County. Youth with these challenges may require some extra support in accessing

appropriate transportation in order to succeed in education, employment and other community integration pursuits.

- Participation in higher education is a major pathway to success for young adults, and especially important for youth who are/have been in state custody. **YTAC needs active participation by representatives of the higher education system in Tennessee to facilitate better understanding and implementation of strategies to address related issues experienced by these young adults.** Efforts should be made to engage representatives of the public higher education system (Tennessee Higher Education Commission/Board of Regents/University of Tennessee System) and the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association to participate with YTAC. DCS has met with the Chancellor of the State Board of Regents and the President of the Independent Colleges and requested representatives.

Services and Supports Recommendations

- **Youth who are unable to achieve permanency by age 18 should be encouraged to utilize extended foster care services.** Permanency is the primary goal for all children in state custody. When they are unable to achieve permanency, all stakeholders who come in contact with these youth should encourage them to participate in extended foster care services. All eligible youth should be encouraged to enroll in EFC Services, and DCS should explore the opportunity to add other categories of eligibility allowed by Federal law. This would enable the state to draw down additional Federal funds to provide assistance for vulnerable young adults and provide opportunities to increase participation.
- **Funding for Resource Centers for transitioning youth should be continued and there should be analysis to determine the need for expansion.** Resource centers are important infrastructure for transitioning youth. Ongoing funding provides stability and serves as core funding around which other community dollars can be generated. As described in Tennessee Code Annotated 37-2-603, the resource centers that currently exist in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville should provide a “one-stop shop” for foster youth and former foster youth. Youth often come for assistance in acquiring a GED, and then explore other needs. Optimally, assistance with financial management, job search and other related needs should be provided in one place to facilitate keeping youth engaged and ensure all their needs are met. Resource Centers may be needed in other areas in Tennessee as well, so there should be a review and analysis to determine if needs in other/rural areas justify expansion. In the absence of Resource Centers, other strategies are needed to provide core supports and services. Accessing Resource Centers on-line is an option to explore. Continuation of contracts for the four Resource Centers is essential to maintain current levels of support for youth aging out of foster care.

- **The YVLifeSet (Youth Villages Transitional Living Program) should be continued and funded on an ongoing basis.** Through a combination of state funds and matching funds, the Youth Villages contract was continued in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, a major accomplishment. The Youth Villages Transitional Living Program is highly effective at ensuring youth aging out of care have the necessary skills and supports to be successful adults. Since the program started in 1999, it has served more than 5,000 youth across the state of Tennessee with a success rate of over 80 percent. Youth Villages’ commitment to the aging-out population is well documented. More information about this program is presented later in other parts of this report.
- **Various options to overcome transportation barriers are needed as this continues to be a great need for transitioning youth.** The bus pass option identified under “Higher Education Recommendations” and the provision of one-stop-shop Resource Centers discussed above to facilitate access to the broad range of needed services would both help address transportation barriers. Youth Villages has had a few automobiles donated to their program for youth. Youth at some Resource Centers have used matching funds in Opportunity Passports to purchase automobiles. Other creative strategies should also be identified and implemented.
- **CASA programs should continue to educate both volunteers and youth about extended foster care services and challenges transitioning foster youth experience, and CASA volunteers should serve youth between ages 14 and 21.** CASA volunteers are important resources to help youth make successful transitions to adulthood. CASA volunteers and others who are working with transitioning youth should know the importance of linking them with appropriate educational, legal and other services and supports, and including those items in permanency and transitional living plans. DCS has met with CASA to encourage this emphasis on transitioning youth, and CASA has facilitated training of advocates to provide support for these youth. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth should encourage CASA programs to serve youth ages 14 - 21. The CASA Appointment Order specifies appointment of an advocate for children under the age of 18. CASA should explore the framework of advocacy necessary for serving youth ages 18 – 21 enrolled in Extension of Foster Care Services and explore a template for a CASA Appointment Order to serve these young adults.
- **The Department of Children’s Services has made great strides to facilitate continuation of TennCare eligibility for all foster youth who transition from state custody to adulthood, and these efforts should continue.** TennCare has advised TN DCS that they are automatically approved for continued TennCare under the former foster youth category as required by the Affordable Care Act. This facilitates ongoing access to needed health services and minimizes the likelihood there is a gap in or loss of coverage because paperwork is not completed timely. Clinical practice guidelines should be developed to focus on the

needs of young people transitioning to the adult service systems, and health care providers should be aware of transition needs. DCS should monitor the process to ensure EFC youth are appropriately and timely enrolled as provided by the ACA. TennCare needs to be an active partner in facilitating ongoing eligibility. DCS has been reaching out to former foster youth to help them enroll for continued coverage when they are eligible. It would be helpful for youth to have some training in self-advocating for individual health care needs, especially to strengthen their ability to describe personal physical or mental health challenges that might interfere with their ability to become meaningfully-engaged adults in their communities.

- **All youth who are transitioning need to have a connection to a caring adult who is significant for them and who is available to provide support and guidance.** Mentors or coaches are needed for transitioning foster youth to provide a significant, ongoing supportive relationship, a kind of relational permanency. There should be consideration of the development and implementation of funding for a contract(s) for mentoring/coaching services for youth who are transitioning to adulthood. These mentors/coaches need special training regarding the needs of youth who are transitioning to adulthood and the services and supports that are available to guide them on that journey. If the young person does not already have a connection to a caring adult mentor, when possible, mentors who have personal experience with the foster care system should be identified. As an alternative to a relative or other caring adult, a mentor or coach might serve as a “permanent mailing address” for youth, provide a stable point of contact, or as a repository for copies of essential documents as discussed earlier.
- **The Department of Children’s Services should identify appropriate strategies for transition support services for children who are adjudicated delinquent and do not qualify for Fostering Connections because they are in a secure placement prior to exiting custody.** Many of these youth are also in need of services to increase their opportunities to become successful, productive adults. Current funding levels present challenges, so strategies should be developed to address this need in the future. As noted in the Accomplishments section, three agencies were awarded funding for step-down placements from Youth Development Centers. Hopefully these additional resources will help address this need and enhance eligibility for EFC for youth adjudicated delinquent.
- **Transition plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each young person and should contain the information needed for accessing the services and supports identified by and for the youth for a successful transition to adulthood.** It should function as an individualized “handbook” to facilitate successful transition to adulthood for each young adult and should be based on the young person’s goals, skills, needs and strengths. DCS needs to continue to monitor and train for timely and improved transition planning, and the Administrative Office of the Court should train foster care review boards regarding the importance of good transition planning.

- **Youth in Youth Development Centers need access to Low-Fee Bank Accounts.** DCS should develop relationships with financial institutions to open low-fee bank accounts for youth in YDCs to encourage those youth to begin saving at an early age. Resource Centers already have established relationships with banks through the Opportunity Scholarship program and can assist.
- **Easily identifiable information regarding transitioning services should be available on a youth-friendly website.** DCS should contract for this activity to provide a user-friendly url for the site, but DCS should include language in the contract to ensure it “owns” the url in the event of contract changes in the future. The url for this site should be shared with young people as part of transition planning, and state and community-based organizations that serve former foster youth should share this site with young people. In addition to other information, the site should include information regarding how to access essential documents. DCS should also share a working phone number with the same group for young people who have no or limited access to the internet so they could contact DCS for service information, including how to replace essential documents, if needed. Discussions regarding the best strategies for development, funding and hosting of a website for youth is ongoing. TN DCS created a page on their website to provide Independent Living information. Essential documents should be available: testimonials on Extension of Foster Care Services; and information about eligibility for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. The Independent Living webpage is broken into sections for youth and staff and contain all IL policies and guides. (<https://www.tn.gov/dcs/article/dcs-independent-living-services>)

Legal System Issues Recommendations

- **The Department of Children’s Services should** expand eligibility criteria for Extension of Foster Care to include other categories of youth eligible under the Federal Fostering Connections legislation. Those categories include youth who are working or participating in work activities 80 hours per month, or engaged in activities that lead to employment and need other assistance, including financial management, housing, transportation, etc.
- **Whenever safe and possible, youth in youth development centers should be stepped down to qualifying placements that make them eligible for extension of foster care services.** Appropriate transition plans should be made in sufficient time to facilitate such placements and connect youth with needed services and supports. Transition planning for youth in YDCs needs to begin early after admission as the average length of stay is about six months. As noted in the Accomplishments section, three agencies were awarded funding for step-down placements from Youth Development Centers. Hopefully these additional resources will help address this need and enhance eligibility for EFC for youth adjudicated delinquent.

- **There is a need to increase the availability of model foster care review boards across the state where members have received special training regarding the needs of and resources for youth who are transitioning to adulthood.** Members of such foster care review boards can play a significant role in ensuring permanency and transition plans address the needs of youth who are transitioning to adulthood. Strategies used by model foster care review boards should be used by other foster care review boards to assist in their review of youth who are transitioning to adulthood. The AOC has an ongoing effort to develop model foster care review boards around the state. It is a lengthy process dependent solely on the cooperation and desire of the Juvenile Court Judge in that jurisdiction and availability of interested and qualified board members. In an effort to aid rural areas that have struggled to recruit certain professionals as board members, the AOC is developing manuals specific to each wellbeing component (i.e., health, education, etc.) to assist the boards with identifying barriers in each area and making quality recommendations to remove the barriers. A new initiative this year was the establishment of foster care review boards that solely review young adults in extension of foster care. This initiative is in collaboration with the Tennessee Board of Regents wherein faculty or staff serve as foster care review board member providing invaluable information to assist the young adults receive permanency. During fiscal year 2016, four peer advocates served 60 EFC young adults in three counties with EFC boards.
- **Peer advocates are important resources working with current and former foster youth and model foster care review boards. DCS and AOC currently have a five-year contract for the AOC to train, monitor and supervise peer advocates. Funding for peer advocates should be continued and their availability expanded.** Peer advocates help youth feel comfortable and supported in the foster care review process. DCS and the Administrative Office of the Courts should explore ways to increase the availability of peer advocates for foster youth and former foster youth and identify additional ways to adequately support peer advocates. In Fiscal Year 2013, DCS entered into a five-year \$55,500 per year contract with the Administrative Office of the Court to train, monitor and supervise peer advocates to work with Specialized Foster Care Review Boards. The contract established training requirements for peer advocates and included provisions to pay travel, per diem and stipends for the peer advocates. During Fiscal Year 2016, 8 peer advocates supported 660 foster youth at foster care review boards in the following counties: Blount, Davidson, Coffee, Maury, Montgomery, Sumner, Davidson, Shelby, and Johnson City.. Though the goal for this past year was to have a peer advocate assigned to each county that has a model foster care review board, this was not possible due to lack of sufficient funding and lack of available peer advocates. There are over 10 counties with model foster care review boards requesting a peer advocate.
- **Foster youth should be encouraged to register to vote when they are 18.** Research shows the earlier a person starts to vote, the more likely they are to continue to vote, and

a photo id is required to vote. Foster youth should be encouraged to register to vote in person to ensure they are eligible to vote absentee if necessary in the first election after they are eligible to vote. Resource Centers and the YVLifeSet programs should encourage participants to register and vote. New DCS policy 31.6 provides guidance to ensure youth are provided an opportunity to register and encouraged to vote.

- **Tennessee law needs an amendment to provide a mechanism for continuing judicial oversight for youth who were in custody in another state and are in Tennessee and otherwise eligible for receipt of Extension of Foster Care Services in order to facilitate their receipt of these services.** A mechanism is needed to ensure compliance with requirements for all young people who are eligible for and receiving EFC services in Tennessee. The Administrative Office of the Court's Court Improvement Project has agreed to put this on the agenda for discussion in the coming year.
- **Juvenile Court Judges should be encouraged to appoint CASA volunteers for adolescents 14 and older, and even for older youth who are between ages 18 and 21.** As discussed throughout these recommendations, young adults who have been in foster care are still in need of connection to a caring adult. The CASA Appointment Order specifies appointment of an advocate for children under the age of 18. CASA should develop a CASA Appointment Order that will fulfill the unique needs of youth ages 18 – 21 enrolled in Extension of Foster Care Services.
- **The Department of Correction and Juvenile Court Judges should be encouraged to facilitate the continuation/development of strong bonds between children and their incarcerated parents,** especially mothers and daughters, as research indicates this is important for the success of both the children and their mothers.
- **Courts should ensure transitional permanency hearings occur and DCS legal services should file the pleadings necessary to ensure all factors to encourage successful transition to adulthood are addressed in transition plans and through other appropriate strategies.** Access to housing, educational services, employment, behavioral health services and other needed supports are important for successful transition to adulthood and reduce the likelihood of homelessness, unemployment and criminal justice system involvement.

Training Recommendations

- **Initial and ongoing training regarding the importance of assisting youth in making successful transitions to adulthood needs to be provided to a wide range of stakeholders that all have the potential for making a difference in encouraging positive outcomes for these vulnerable young adults.** Training should include information about the availability of Fostering Connections/EFC and educational, legal and other services and supports that help

young adults navigate the many barriers they face. In addition to the youth themselves, among the stakeholders who could benefit from such training are the following:

- Department of Children’s Services staff;
- Juvenile court judges and magistrates;
- Youth services officers and other juvenile court staff;
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs);
- Guardians ad Litem;
- Attorneys who practice in juvenile court;
- Foster care review board members;
- Foster parents;
- Residential provider agency staff;
- Mental health service providers;
- School guidance counselors/school social workers;
- Peer advocates; and
- Mentors for current/former foster youth.

As reported in the “Accomplishments” section, during fiscal year 2016, DCS trained 1,835 individuals. Whenever feasible, workshops regarding transitioning youth should be presented at appropriate regional and state conferences.

- **Juvenile court judges need ongoing training regarding the different authority they have related to youth who are receiving extended foster care services as young adults compared to youth under age 18 who are still in state custody or age 18 and still under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court for a delinquent adjudication.** While such training was provided at one point, this is an ongoing training need.

Implementation of new and continuing recommendations included in this report would represent an important step forward in providing the infrastructure needed to help young people who have been in state custody be successful. In general, the recommendations have not been prioritized, as they are interrelated, and there is not a single solution to the many challenges faced by these young adults. As the legal parent for young people who have been in state custody, it is the responsibility of the State of Tennessee to provide the resources necessary for them to successfully transition to adulthood.

OVERVIEW

The Youth Transitions Advisory Council was created by the 106th General Assembly to assist the Department of Children's Services in providing continuing supports to youth aging out of foster care at the age of 18. All children serving agencies in state government were required to assist in efforts to find and support the state's former foster youth in completing their education and becoming productive citizens. Since that time, Tennessee has become a leader among states in assisting not only former foster youth, but also young people with serious emotional disturbance, substance abuse disorders and developmental and intellectual delays successfully transition to adult life by providing additional supports to put them on a stronger foundation for the future. The number of youth participating in Extension of Foster Care services increased for the sixth consecutive year. The rate of participation of those eligible in Extension of Foster Care Services remained at 48 percent in 2016.

The number of Education and Training Voucher and Bright Futures Scholarships awarded to youth who have aged out of foster care remained above 500. The Hope Foster Care grant, after experiencing a huge increase 2015, from 49 to 89 students, moved back toward trend, serving 59 young people in 2016.

The General Assembly passed and the Governor signed Public Chapter 679 establishing a reasonable and prudent parent standard for children in foster care. The reasonable and prudent parent standard allows children in care to participate in the same types of developmentally appropriate, socially and culturally enriching activities children living in their parents' homes would. The legislation exempts a caregiver acting in compliance with this standard from civil liability relating to injuries the child may incur in such activities. The Department of Children's Services has begun implementation of the "Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard" including development of a protocol and training. Implementation of a "Prudent Parent" approach means foster parents can make decisions regarding foster youth for such things as participating in sports, spending the night with friends, participating in extracurricular activities, etc., like they would for their own children. This will provide a more normalizing adolescent experience for youth in foster care. Children in foster care should have opportunities for a "normal" adolescent experience, providing them with activities and experiences that help them develop interaction and judgment skills needed for success in adulthood.

YVLifeSet, formerly known as Youth Villages Transitional Living Program, served about 691 youth each day in Tennessee and 1,455 youth participated in the program in FY 2016. Other data for 2016 found 86 percent in school or graduated, 75 percent employed or seeking employment, 83 percent living with family or independently, and 79 percent had experienced no trouble with the legal system in the last 12 months.

Tennessee's four Resource Centers serving youth aging out of foster care continue operations: Monroe Harding Youth Connections in Nashville, South Memphis Alliance in Memphis, Helen Ross McNabb Project Now in Knoxville and in Chattanooga, I AM Ready Center. All four Resource Centers provide life skills, asset management training through the Opportunity Passport, sexual health education, employment assistance and other services unique to the needs of their youth. Just one of the many successes of the Resource Centers is tutoring young people in preparation for their High School Equivalency Exam. The Resource Centers provide specific details of their success later in this report.

Tennessee Housing and Development Agency has put increased emphasis on serving foster youth due to their high risk of homelessness. The 2015 THDA strategic plan included provisions to address the housing needs of youth aging out of foster care. A strategic implementation team is currently in the process of determining resources needed in order to execute the plan. In 2016 THDA awarded a Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grant to Keystone Development, Inc. The units are being developed in Johnson City in partnership with the Department of Children's Services and Youth Villages.

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services continues to provide three programs serving transition age youth and young adults suffering from or at risk of serious emotional disturbance or substance abuse. Awarded in 2013, the Treatment and Recovery for Youth (TRY) grant serves adolescents and young adults in Maury and Madison Counties who have substance abuse disorders.

The Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative works with youth and young adults with or at risk of developing a serious mental health condition and/or co-occurring disorder in improving their health and wellness, leading self-directed lives, and reaching their full potential. Healthy Transitions will focus on three priority populations: those in contact with the criminal justice system; those aging out of foster care through child welfare; those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; and those who identify as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, or Intersex (LGBTQI).

The Tennessee First Episode Psychosis Initiative serves adolescents and young adults between the ages of 15-30, who are experiencing psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, unusual thoughts or beliefs, or disorganized thinking, with symptoms present for more than a week but less than 24 months. Carey Counseling provides the services in the Northwest Region. In the spring of 2016, Congress increased the set aside in the State Mental Health Block Grant program from five to 10 percent for first episode programs. Funding has been provided to establish services in Davidson County by Mental Health Cooperative, Inc. and Shelby County by Alliance Healthcare Services.

TENNESSEE HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Activities and/or programs being undertaken by The Tennessee Housing Development Agency to address the housing needs of youth aging out of foster care include the following:

1. THDA Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grants were made to these agencies providing housing for youth aging out of foster care:
 - 2014 Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grant to the Crossville Housing Authority for new construction of a 4-plex of one bedroom apartments for youth aging out of foster care in Crossville. The grant amount was \$136,050. The units are located in walking distance or close proximity to post–secondary educational institutions, medical facilities, grocery stores, restaurants, discount stores and the Tennessee Career Center.

Youth residing in the apartments receive case management and supervised independent living services from the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services. Services may include job placement assistance, vocational assessments, self-sufficiency skill training and transitional living services. The project was constructed on property already owned by the housing authority, and it was funded by the Housing Trust Fund grant, a zero percent loan made possible through the THDA/Tennessee Department of Revenue Community Investment Tax Credit Program, agency funds, and donations.

Tenants receive Section 8 rental assistance and a homeless priority. The tenants also receive a living allowance through the Department of Children’s Services, and some are employed. The project is complete and fully occupied.

- 2015 Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grant to Crossroads Campus for six beds of transitional housing for youth aging out of foster care and other at risk youth facing poverty and homelessness in Nashville. The program is a pet retail social enterprise providing job training for disadvantaged youth and adoptions for homeless dogs and cats at risk of euthanasia. Earned revenues from the pet shop help to sustain the program. The grant amount was \$159,877.

The project is funded by the Housing Trust Fund grant and private funds raised through fundraising efforts. Project completed March 2016.

- 2012 Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grant to Omni Community Services, Inc. The grant was originally awarded to provide 12 housing units to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The homes are to be located in Davidson, Maury, Benton, Madison, Shelby, Greene and Hamilton counties. The

homes acquired under the grant are typically single-family, three bedroom units and are occupied by three persons per home.

Omni Community Services works with special needs persons of all ages, including youth involved in the foster care system. A recent request was made to expand the scope of the grant to provide housing for youth aging out of foster care. Remaining grant amount at the time of the contract amendment was \$424,000. The Housing Trust Fund grant and agency funds are typically used to acquire existing properties that need little to no rehabilitation.

Project completed December 2015.

2. 2014 Emergency Solutions Grants to the following youth serving agencies for rapid re-housing, street outreach, and funds for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
 - Monroe Harding in Nashville. The grant amount was \$36,615 for rapid re-housing activities.
 - Oasis Center in Nashville. The grant amount was \$63,385 for street outreach, rapid re-housing, and funds for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

3. 2016 Housing Trust Fund Competitive Grant to Keystone Development, Inc. for the development of 12 one-bedroom apartments in Johnson City. Six of the apartments will be set aside for homeless youth many of which will have aged out of foster care. The other six units will be set aside for seniors who will serve as mentors and role models for the youth. The units are being developed in partnership with the Department of Children's Services and Youth Villages. The partner agencies will provide financial assistance and case management. Completion is anticipated by November 2017. The grant amount was \$500,000. Other sources of funding in this project include a Federal Home Loan Bank grant award, a bank loan, and a Johnson City HUD HOME grant.

Strategic Planning

The 2015 THDA strategic plan includes provisions to address the housing needs of youth aging out of foster care. A strategic implementation team is currently in the process of determining resources needed in order to execute the plan.

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

Tennessee CASA continues to support local CASA programs across the state in providing continuing education to CASA volunteers in skills training for older youth advocacy. National CASA's curriculum, *Fostering Futures: Supporting Youth Transitions into Adulthood*, focuses on the unique needs of transitioning youth. Tennessee CASA offers Fostering Futures Facilitator Training on an annual basis to local CASA program staff. DCS Independent Living staff presented information about Extension of Foster Care Services and the new Prudent Parenting legislation at the facilitator training held July 2016. The Tennessee CASA Conference held in May 2016 included training on providing advocacy for older youth. The conference was attended by 175 CASA volunteers and staff from across the state.

Local CASA programs in the Tennessee CASA network continue to apply for grant funding to serve the older youth population. CASA Monroe was recently awarded grant funding from National CASA to train more CASA volunteers in the Fostering Futures curriculum and to provide support and supervision to volunteers being assigned older youth ages 14+. CASA of Bradley County and CASA Corridor (Meigs, McMinn, and Rhea Counties) completed the two-year Youth Advocacy Grant from National CASA as of May 31, 2016. In order to sustain services to older youth in care, CASA of Bradley County has partnered with the DCS Resource Center in Chattanooga to offer meeting space for the "I AM Ready Center" program in Cleveland, TN. CASA Corridor was able to sustain the Youth Advocacy Coordinator position in McMinn County past the end of the grant period through alternate funding sources. Tennessee CASA remains committed to pursuing opportunities to provide older youth in care with CASA advocates specially trained in serving the needs of young adults.

"One problem was that the communication was one way. The case manager did not listen to my schedule needs, they would schedule meetings when I had to work and tell me at the last minute."

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YOUTH TRANSITIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL DATA FROM DCS

➤ **Strategies to access and track effectiveness of Extension of Foster Care services and the operation of the Resource Centers**

The Tennessee Department of Children's Services provides Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program (CFCILP) services through its Independent Living Program (ILP), and monitors the provision of Extension of Foster Care Services (EFCS). As a part of the federal mandate, this Division is charged with building a network of appropriate supports and services for youth transitioning out of care and for those who are likely to remain in care. The primary objectives of Tennessee's service network include helping to ensure ongoing connections with caring adults, the development of productive individuals within their communities, the acquisition and maintenance of gainful employment, the achievement of educational/vocational goals, and the availability of financial assistance and skills training for DCS youth and exiting young adults, as well as designing other resources to facilitate the transition to adulthood. Any youth, including those of Native American heritage, who have been, are or were in the custody of DCS and who meet eligibility criteria as outlined in policy, have the opportunity to request and access ILP services.

The Department's goal is to provide each young person in foster care, age 14 or older, with supports, services, experiences, and opportunities that are: individualized based on the strengths and needs of each individual youth, important to healthy adolescent development, and help the youth successfully transition to adulthood. The strengths and needs of a 14-year-old who is four years from legal independence are generally different from those of a 17-year-old who is facing the imminent assumption of adult rights and responsibilities, and so the planning and services are tailored on that basis.

DCS uses Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program funds to staff Independent Living Program Specialists (ILPS) within each region of the state. The DCS ILPS work directly and collaboratively with Family Service Workers (FSW), foster parents, contracted providers and youth. They are responsible for local program coordination, service delivery, community resource development and ongoing consultation to agency staff, resource parents and youth. Although the primary function of the ILPS is to provide support and technical assistance to staff and resource adults, they also provide direct services and support to youth and young adults through life skills training classes, provisions of the Independent Living Allowance, assistance with financial aid (FAFSA), Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) and other scholarship applications, and support and coordination of statewide youth leadership boards (Youth-4-Youth).

Program Purposes for the next five years are:

- Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 transition to self-sufficiency by providing services.
- Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment.
- Help youth likely to remain in foster care until age 18 prepare for and enter post-secondary training and educational institutions.
- Provide personal and emotional support to youth aging out of foster care through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults.
- Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition into adulthood.
- Improve quality practice of EFCS case workers through convening, trainings and on the ground support/coaching.

The Department of Children's Services continues to be committed to data-driven decision making. DCS continued to measure specific variables over the past fiscal year which is reflected in this report.

Transitional Survey Custody Age 17-19 Monitoring:

DCS is committed to ensuring that 90 percent or more of youth discharged from foster care because they reached the age of 18 shall have at least one of the following apply at the time of discharge: earned a GED, graduated from high school, enrolled in high school or college or alternative approved educational program for special needs children, currently enrolled in vocational training or employed full time. Through a sample review in FY2016, data showed a 93percent compliance rate.

TN DCS will continue to promote educational opportunities for youth in custody and those who leave custody at an older age. During FY's 2014 through 2016, approximately 400 youth in custody obtained high school diplomas or equivalency each year. In FY 2016, 21 completed post-secondary education. The following represent the post-secondary programs completed.

Non EFCS

Middle Tennessee State University
University of Tennessee-Martin
Tennessee College of Applied Technology
Western Kentucky University
Jackson State Community College
East Tennessee State University
NE State Tech Community College
William R. Moore College of Technology
University of Memphis
Tennessee Technological University

EFCS

Tennessee College of Applied Technology
Motlow State Community College
Nashville State Tech Community College
Fortis Institute

The Education Division of the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) advocates for students in state custody who are educated in Youth Development Center (YDC) schools, provider in-house schools, and public schools.

Caregiver/Advocacy efforts include: attending educational meetings, consulting with DCS staff, resource parents, and schools, as well as, providing educational training to departmental personnel and schools. From July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, the Education Division provided consultation to Child and Family Teams, field services worker (FSWs), and public/non-public schools over 71,000 times. Education staff participated directly in more than 2100 Child and Family Team Meetings and 1350 Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 Meetings. Additionally, the Education Specialists advocated for students in nearly 250 disciplinary hearings and 200 specialized foster care review board meetings. Staff also provided 237 educational training sessions for approximately 3,000 surrogate parents, resource parents, FSWs, and school staff.

Both the YDCs and the provider in-house schools provide a full high school curriculum that leads to a regular high school diploma. Opportunities for credit recovery, self-paced learning, and mastery learning are also made available. In instances where students leave a YDC or a provider in-house school prior to completing graduation requirements, there are 15 Education Specialists across the state (one in each DCS region) who help students transition back into public schools or into adult education programs in order to finish their course work and earn a regular high school diploma. DCS staff, provider in-house schools, and public schools are trained to consult these Education Specialists to assist in the transition process.

Students who are in or have been in state custody and transfer back to public schools often find that graduation requirements vary among school systems and cause additional barriers for them as they try to obtain a high school diploma. As of July 1, 2015, a new law (Public Chapter #357, Senate Bill # 537) was enacted that will help eliminate this barrier. The new law states, “No LEA shall require any enrolling or transferring student, who is in grade eleven (11) or higher and in the custody of the department of children's services or exiting its custody, to meet more than the minimum requirements for graduation set forth by the state board of education. The LEA shall issue a full diploma to any such student who meets the minimum requirements.”

Students who are educated in provider in-house schools and in YDCs who are significantly behind in credits based on their age are provided the opportunity to earn a High School Equivalency Diploma. The decision to allow a student this option for obtaining a high school credential is made by the Child and Family Team. This has allowed a significant number of students to leave custody with the opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education, enroll in vocational training programs, or enter the workforce.

The Office of Independent Living (IL) is focused on ensuring that education is a major focus in transition planning to ensure young people are meeting their educational goals. Both IL and Education encourage young people to advocate for their education in order to be successful in their future educational endeavors, and get involved in school programs, including TRIO, to support their well-being.

The AOC is educating courts/FCRB in the importance of educational questions, records, and support services to ensure enhanced educational goals.

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) collects information on youth in foster care (via a survey) who are 17 years of age, including sex, race, ethnicity, date of birth, and foster care status. It also collects information about the outcomes of those youth at that time and then when a sample of the youth who completed surveys turn ages 19 and 21. This follow up sample consists of youth who exited foster care at age 17 or who aged out of foster care.

TN DCS utilizes the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data to help understand the circumstances of our transition aged youth. The most recent sample of 19 year olds collected October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 showed that fifty-four percent reported having finished high school or obtained a GED/HiSet. Three percent of the young adults reported completing a higher education degree, or obtained a vocational license or certificate. It should be noted that the recent sample contained more than twice as many youth respondents as the 2013 sample.

While the percentage of respondents who completed an educational goal is lower than the last sample of 19 year olds, which warrants further research, other factors such as continuation in an educational program and employment are included this time. Of the young adults who reported not having completed an educational goal, fifty-four percent said they were enrolled in and attending high school, GED/HiSet classes, or some other educational program at the time of data

collection. Overall, eighty-five percent of the respondents reported they completed an educational program, were still pursuing their education or were employed either full or part time.

In FY 2016, the use of Education and Training Vouchers and Bright Futures Scholarships remained relatively stable from the last fiscal year. TN DCS Independent Living (IL) did outreach to the population that was adopted or went to Subsidized Permanent Guardianship (SPG) over the last two years.

- **Feedback from DCS Older Youth in Care Survey 2016**

The Department's Office of Independent Living again conducted a survey of older youth in foster care, asking those youth (a) to provide information on the extent to which they have had opportunities and activities related to key independent living skills and competencies and (b) to assess their level of competence in each key area and (c) understanding of normalcy activities. Data from 948 youth responding in a one month period was collected. This data will help us understand how the TN child welfare system is exercising normalcy/prudent parenting and assisting in development of life skills for our young people. Overall, 17+ year olds report more skills and confidence in their skills than the 14-16 year olds. Life skills; budget, car maintenance, budgeting, resume building, housing and FAFSA are areas to improve for all ages. Youth reported they have limited access to bank accounts to assist in normalcy. Youth in foster/kinship placements have slightly higher levels of normalcy and life skill development than congregate care.

- **Strategies for maintaining accurate numbers of young adults served by Extension of Foster Care**

In addition to using TFACTS data, Independent Living Program Specialists maintain data that demonstrates overall provision of Extension of Foster care services via a monthly report that is submitted to Central Office. This report includes certain identifying information on the clients and dates of service. The monthly reports are compiled upon the conclusion of each fiscal year to produce each year's data. Data reported for youth in custody is derived from TFACTS system records, and DCS added the ability to extract TFACTS data for young adults receiving Extension of Foster Care Services. Data related to IL staff participation in CFTMs and training provided by such staff is tracked manually.

➤ **The number of services provided by the Department of Children’s Services;**

**Services Available to Youth in State Custody
and Those Who Receive Extension of Foster Care Services**

1	Post-Secondary Application Fees
2	Testing Fees (SAT, ACT, GED)
3	Tutoring
4	Educational fees
5	Independent Living Class Stipend (to Support Life Skills Instruction)
6	Graduation Package
7	Yearbooks
8	Membership/Activity Fees for Extracurricular or Leadership Activities
9	Senior Event-Related Transportation
10	Honor/Senior Class Trip (School Related Activity)
11	Housing Application/Fees for Post Custody
12	Materials/Uniforms for Vocational Studies
13	Completion of Job Readiness Training
14	Job Start-Up Costs
15	Driver’s Education Class Fees
16	Driver’s Testing Fees
17	Car Insurance
18	Transportation Grant
19	Car Repairs
20	Housing Related Fees
21	Tools/Equipment (Technical/Vocational Programs)
22	Other Special Needs Unique to Youth Services
23	Child Care Assistance
24	Youth Leadership Stipend
25	Independent Living Allowance
26	Educational and Training Voucher (Scholarship)
27	Bright Futures (State Funded) Scholarship
28	YVLifeSet (Youth Villages Transitional Living Program)
29	Opportunity Passport™ (per the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative) - Provided Via the Resource Centers
30	Placement Services
31	Case Management
32	Household Furnishings

➤ **The number of young adults who received these services during FY 2015-16 and length of stay in EFCS**

TN DCS provides youth aging out of state custody services through multiple sources. This is based on their eligibility, and services are provided by TN DCS as well as through TN DCS contracts with private providers and community agencies.

Services Provided:

- YVLifeSet (formerly Transitional Living): 1455.
- Resource Centers: 182.
- Extension of Foster Care Services: 755 Individuals/772 EFCS Episodes.

Sources: Grantee Reports, Independent Living Monthly Report, Independent Living Scholarship Report

FY 2016 EFCS Retention: Days in EFCS

In FY 2016, the mean (days) was 259 days, median (days) was 168. In 2015, the mean days were 255 days. TN DCS will continue to evaluate supports needed to increase retention of youth in Extension of Foster Services. TN IL does know that the two main reasons for termination of services are youth not maintaining academic eligibility, and youth requesting termination of services. TN DCS IL has held two webinars on “EFCS Quality Case Management” to help EFCS staff improve their engagement and practice with the young adult population.

Region	Mean (Days)	Median (Days)	Mode (Days)
Northwest	249	163	0
Southwest	293	177	1095
Shelby	251	213	58
Davidson	304	264	611
Mid Cumberland	233	141	242
South Central	284	183	76
Upper Cumberland	243	137	0
Northeast	295	144	1096
Knox	299	190	1095
East	218	122	0
Smoky Mountain	268	194	111
Tennessee Valley	212	132	201
Total (Days)	259	168	1095

Program Exits

The following represent the circumstances by which young adults leave extended foster care, that are captured for reporting purposes:

- Successful Completion of Educational Program;
- Voluntary Termination of Services (Self Termination);
- Transition to Adult Services;
- Unable to Locate;
- Academic Ineligibility;
- Risk to Self or Others (example: committing a violent crime, which is in violation of the Rights and Responsibilities Agreement young adults sign when accepting extension of foster care services);
- Turned Age 21;

	Academic	Deceased	Risk to Self/Others	Self	Completion of Ed. Program	Transition to Adult Services	Turned Age 21	Unable to Locate	Grand Total
Davidson	29	0	1	5	1	1	1	1	39
East	8	0	1	8	0	4	1	5	27
Knox	1	0	0	21	0	1	3	1	27
Mid Cumberland	24	0	0	13	1	2	2	8	50
Northeast	14	0	0	14	0	3	5	2	38
Northwest	20	0	1	7	1	1	0	0	30
Shelby	17	1	1	9	0	4	4	10	46
Smoky Mtn	15	0	1	11	8	1	4	7	47
South Central	16	0	0	9	1	1	1	7	35
Southwest	10	0	1	6	0	1	2	0	20
TN Valley	28	0	4	11	1	0	2	4	50
Upper Cumberland	25	0	0	2	2	2	4	0	35
Grand Total	207	1	10	116	15	21	29	45	444

The primary service offered when young adults transition from extended foster care, other than Transition to Adult Services, is the YVLifeSet (formerly Transitional Living) Grant service. Young adults whose extended foster care services were terminated due to academic ineligibility are often assisted by Transitional Living with reestablishing a viable educational plan, and may return to request extended foster care prior to turning age 21. Young adults who transition to adult services have SSI established and are then receiving mental health and behavioral health services in coordination with the state's Medicaid program, TennCare, or services through the state's Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. One-hundred twenty-six young adults did complete their HiSet or high school diploma in FY 2016, but may be categorized as another exit type due to furthering their education or self-termination. These young adults successfully completed one aspect of their education, but exited without completing their entire goals.

➤ **The number of youth who exited state custody and received scholarship assistance from DCS to continue into post-secondary educational programs during FY 2015-2016:**

The Department offers young adults who were in foster care or who are in foster care on their 18th birthday the opportunity to continue to receive a variety of supports and services beyond age 18 to help them successfully transition to adulthood. The Department of Children’s Services is the sole administrator of Education and Training Vouchers. The Office of Independent Living has a Scholarship Administrator who manages the ETV funds available and State Funded Scholarship. ETV applicants are required to provide documentation of total cost of attendance and the financial aid package for the programs they are enrolled in to the Scholarship Coordinator who reviews this information and establishes ETV awards accordingly. DCS is able to provide an unduplicated number of ETV’s awarded each year. The program will continue looking at ways to maximize the impact of funding and involving communities and individual colleges and universities in providing increased opportunities for this population. Data is currently being reviewed to help determine fluctuations in ETV awards, identifying the factors affecting this to inform strategies for maximizing utilization. The Bright Futures State Funded Scholarship awarded through the Governor’s Office will continue in the coming year, and \$500,000 is the amount the State Legislature has allocated toward this program.

In FY 2016, youth had a significant increase in use of scholarships through DCS. DCS IL did outreach to the population that was adopted or went to SPG over the last two years. Tennessee Promise has also been a factor in the increase.

2015	ETV	State	Total
Tennessee 4 Year University	66	38	104
Tennessee Community Colleges	166	69	235
Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology	39	29	68
University of Tennessee System	11	9	20
Private 4 Year Colleges	38	0	38
Non State Technical Colleges	37	0	37
Total	357	145	502

Source: Independent Living Scholarship Report

2016	ETV	State	Total
Tennessee 4 Year University	65	43	108
Tennessee Community Colleges	45	54	99
Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology	173	39	212
University of Tennessee System	8	8	16
Private 4 Year Colleges	41	0	41
Non State Technical Colleges	25	0	25
Total	357	144	501

➤ **Number of children in state custody during FY 2015-16**

Overview	
Total Children in Custody	13,934
Adjudication	
Dependent/Neglect	11,202
Unruly	300
Not Listed	198
Delinquent	2,234
Gender	
Male	7,944
Female	5,990
Age Range	
0-12	7,419
13-19	6,515
Race	
White	10,425
Black/African American	3,345
Multi-Racial	68
Asian	26
Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	25
Nat. Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21
Unable to Determine	11
Missing	13

Children by Adjudication, Gender, and Age Group							
		Female			Male		
Adjudication	Total	0-12	13-19	Total	0-12	13-19	Total
Dependent/Neglect	11,202	3,457	1,962	5,419	3,811	1,972	5,783
Unruly	300	3	129	132	4	164	168
Not Listed	198	69	35	104	59	35	94
Delinquent	2,234	2	333	335	9	1,890	1,899
Statewide	13,934	3,531	2,459	5,990	3,883	4,061	7,944

Children by Region and Age Range			
		Age Range	
Region	Total	0-12	13-19
Davidson	864	336	528
East TN	987	539	448
Knox	1,182	838	344
Mid Cumberland	1,506	663	843
Northeast	1,292	749	543
Northwest	820	483	337
Shelby	1,496	715	781
Smoky Mountain	1,365	804	561
South Central	933	349	584
Southwest	688	339	349
TN Valley	1,285	664	621
Upper Cumberland	1,473	909	564
Missing	43	31	12
Statewide Total	13,934	7,419	6,515

Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services – TFACTS

- **Number of EFCS young adults served FY 2016 broken down by adjudication, gender, race/ethnicity, region/county;**

By Region:

Region	Number
Davidson Region	67
East Tennessee Region	44
Knox Region	47
Mid Cumberland Region	75
Northeast Region	62
Northwest Region	45
Shelby Region	104
Smoky Mountain Region	77
South Central Region	57
Southwest Region	34
TN Valley Region	78
Upper Cumberland Region	65
Grand Total	755

Total Individuals Served: 755

Adjudication (at time exiting DCS custody):

- Dependent/Neglected: 604;
- Unruly: 25;
- Delinquent: 126;

Gender:

- Female: 406;
- Male: 349;

Race/Ethnicity:

Race/Ethnicity	Count of Race
American Indian/Alaska Native	5
American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American	2
American Indian/Alaska Native, White	1
Asian	3
Asian, Black/African American	1
Black/African American	236
Black/African American, White	29
Multi-Racial - One Race Unknown	1
Multi-Racial - One Race Unknown, White	1
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2
Unable to Determine	1
White	473
Grand Total	755

By County:

County	Number of EFCS Episodes	Number of Young Adults Served
Anderson	15	15
Bedford	2	2
Benton	2	2
Bledsoe	2	2
Blount	25	23
Bradley	18	18
Campbell	2	2
Cannon	3	3
Carroll	2	2
Carter	1	1
Cheatham	8	8
Chester	2	2
Claiborne	4	4
Clay	2	1
Cocke	5	5
Coffee	6	6
Crockett	1	1
Cumberland	9	9
Davidson	69	65
Dekalb	3	3
Dickson	6	6
Dyer	3	3
Fayette	5	5
Fentress	5	5
Franklin	6	6
Gibson	12	12
Giles	10	10
Grainger	5	5
Greene	15	15
Hamblen	11	11
Hamilton	37	36
Hardin	1	1
Hawkins	9	8
Haywood	5	5
Henry	3	3
Hickman	3	3

Houston	2	2
Humphreys	4	4
Jackson	1	1
Jefferson	14	14
Knox	50	50
Lake	1	1
Lauderdale	5	5
Lawrence	5	5
Lincoln	5	4
Loudon	2	2
Macon	5	5
Madison	14	14
Marion	3	3
Marshall	4	4
Maury	9	9
Mcminn	9	9
Mcnairy	1	1
Meigs	2	2
Monroe	6	6
Montgomery	21	21
Moore	1	1
Morgan	4	4
Obion	2	2
Overton	4	4
Perry	3	3
Pickett	1	1
Putnam	14	12
Rhea	6	6
Roane	6	6
Robertson	4	4
Rutherford	24	23
Scott	3	3
Sequatchie	2	2
Sevier	16	16
Shelby	106	104
Smith	4	4
Stewart	3	3
Sullivan	17	17
Sumner	4	4

Tipton	1	1
Trousdale	2	2
Unicoi	3	3
Union	5	5
Vanburen	1	1
Warren	6	6
Washington	16	16
Wayne	4	4
Weakley	4	4
White	10	10
Williamson	6	6
Wilson	10	8
Grand Total	772	755

Source: Independent Living Monthly Report

- **The following describes the number of youth who received independent living wraparound services FY 2016.**

Independent Living Wraparound Services Custodial Population 2015-16:

Total IL Wrap Services Provided 2014-2015	Total IL Wrap Services Provided 2015-2016	Total Youth Served 2014-2015	Total Youth Served 2015-2016	Total Expenditure 2014-2015	Total Expenditure 2015-2016
463	447	285	389	\$56,623.88	\$59,786.61

Service	Instances of Service Provided 2014-2015	Instances of Service Provided 2015-2016	Youth Served 2014-2015	Youth Served 2015-2016	Expenditure 2014-2015	Expenditure 2015-2016
Drivers Education	26	37	25	37	\$8,700.00	\$13,636.00
Drivers Testing Fees	0	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Extra-Curricular Leadership Activity/Membership Fees	29	45	28	41	\$5,757.68	\$7,761.73
Good Grades Incentive	88	52	80	49	\$3,570.00	\$2,250.00
Graduation Package	128	135	97	102	\$18,899.14	\$21,789.43
Honor/Senior Class Trip	8	14	7	14	\$1,770.00	\$1,865.00
Housing Application Fees (Post-Secondary)	19	10	16	10	\$3,075.00	\$1,743.00
IL Class Stipend	22	22	22	22	\$1,075.00	\$800.00
Materials for Vocational Studies	0	1	0	1	\$0.00	\$115.00
Other Special Needs	14	14	14	12	\$3,644.07	\$3,008.95
Post-Secondary Application/Registration Fees	48	21	34	14	\$1,805.00	\$655.00
Senior Event Transportation	0	3	0	3	\$0.00	\$70.00
Educational Fees	5	4	5	4	\$2,953.99	\$890.00
Testing fees (GED, SAT, ACT)	28	27	26	26	\$1,215.50	\$1,297.50
Tutoring	7	0	3	0	\$982.50	\$0.00
Yearbooks	31	40	30	40	\$2,326.00	\$2,830.00
Youth Leadership Stipend	10	22	9	14	\$850.00	\$1,075.00
Total	463	447	*286	*389	\$56,623.88	\$59,786.61

Independent Living Wraparound Services Extension of Foster Care Population 2015-16:

Total IL Wrap Services Provided 2014-2015	Total IL Wrap Services Provided 2014-2016	Total Youth Served 2014-2015	Total Youth Served 2015-2016	Total Expenditure 2014-2015	Total Expenditure 2015-2016
375	421	191	328	\$56,525.79	\$65,400.62

Service	Instances of Service Provided 2014-2015	Instances of Service Provided 2015-2016	Youth Served 2014-2015	Youth Served 2015-2016	Expenditure 2014-2015	Expenditure 2015-2016
Auto Insurance	13	22	12	21	\$3,710.94	\$6,464.21
Drivers Education	23	19	23	18	\$8,045.00	\$6,915.00
Drivers Testing Fees	0	1	0	1	\$0.00	\$350.00
Educational Fees	4	0	3	0	\$932.00	\$0.00
Extra-Curricular Leadership Activity/Membership Fees	22	12	17	11	\$2,639.33	\$1,240.00
Good Grades Incentive	14	9	12	9	\$619.00	\$450.00
Graduation Package	83	89	62	60	\$11,588.52	\$12,058.67
Honor/Senior Class Trip	2	6	2	6	\$175.00	\$535.00
Household Furnishings	3	12	2	11	\$1,215.00	\$5,820.98
Housing Application Fees (Post-Secondary)	15	15	15	15	\$2,855.00	\$2,615.00
IL Class Stipend	6	9	6	8	\$225.00	\$425.00
Materials for Vocational Studies	1	1	1	1	\$133.15	\$109.99
Non Recurring Housing Start Up	25	30	20	20	\$8,723.04	\$14,102.12
Other Special Needs	25	24	20	18	\$6,619.59	\$3,844.57
Post-Secondary Application/Registration Fees	30	45	25	29	\$1,760.00	\$1,595.00
Senior Event Transportation	0	1	0	1	\$0.00	\$20.00
Testing fees (GED, SAT,	13	10	11	9	\$822.00	\$556.50

ACT)						
Transportation Grant	45	36	29	24	\$2,345.50	\$1,872.20
Tutoring	1	3	1	1	\$50.00	\$800.00
Vehicle Repairs	5	6	5	5	\$1,410.56	\$1,577.88
Yearbooks	15	18	15	18	\$968.00	\$1,168.50
Youth Leadership Stipend	30	53	22	42	\$1,689.16	\$2,880.00
Total	375	421	191*	*328	\$56,525.79	\$65,400.62
*These are not sums, they are totals						

***These are individual youth served; some youth received more than one type of service during FY 2016.**

Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services – TFACTS

➤ **Number of youth who decline continuation of foster care services and the reasons given for declining the services**

The Youth Engagement Lead continues to be tasked with contacting aged-out youth who did not accept services. Youth Engagement Lead attempted to make contact with adults through outreach. The main reasons young people gave for not accepting EFCS continued to be:

1. Wanting to work instead of attend a post secondary program.
2. Undecided about future plans.
3. Did not want to be involved with DCS.

Then DCS Youth Engagement lead position handled over 100 Formstack inquires through the year, and a high number of phone and in-person referrals. This position submitted seven YVLifeSet referrals, four referrals to Opportunity Passport, two referrals to EFCS, made seven Community Resource referrals and five referrals to TennCare. Three young adults were referred to us by homeless shelters to assist with improving circumstances. The Youth Engagement Lead reached out to homeless shelters across the state. The Youth Engagement Lead will continue to respond to all calls/emails coming in from the community that are routed to the Office of Independent Living from youth, young adults and other stakeholders to assist youth and young adults with any needed resources. This role did outreach efforts to young adults who may be eligible for TennCare through the Affordable Care Act due to aging out of foster care and tried to contact over 300 young people. DCS IL has a new phone number, 844-887-7277, to create improved communication.

One specific group that continues to be less likely to accept Extension of Foster Care services is young people who are adjudicated delinquent. Of the all youth eligible for Extension of Foster Care Services who aged out during FY 2016, six percent (19 percent within adjudication) of eligible juvenile justice youth accepted Extension of Foster Care Services, compared to 39 percent (64percent within adjudication) of dependent/neglected youth.

During FY 2016, 48 percent of the total eligible aged-out population of youth accepted Extension of Foster Care services; 39 percent of dependent/neglected youth, two percent of unruly youth and 6 percent of eligible juvenile justice youth accepted Extension of Foster Care Services. This is consistent with the last fiscal year.

Extension Of Foster Care Services Uptake by Region:

Region	Aged Out	Aged out Eligible	Accepted EFCS	% EFCS Uptake
Davidson	90	59	32	63%
East	56	50	28	56%
Knox	55	46	29	63%
Mid Cumberland	127	110	40	36%
Northeast	74	71	35	49%
Northwest	59	53	21	40%
Shelby	141	80	58	72%
Smoky Mountain	83	74	42	57%
South Central	97	85	23	27%
Southwest	48	40	17	43%
TN Valley	94	77	34	44%
Upper Cumberland	72	70	29	41%
Total	996	815	388	48%

Source: Tennessee Department of Children’s Services – TFACTS and Independent Living Monthly Report

➤ **Number of young adults receiving Extension of Foster Care Services who were in foster care placement, supervised independent living arrangements and other placement arrangements**

EFC youth in foster care placements at some point during FY 2016	342
EFC youth receiving the Independent Living Allowance during FY 2016	466

Extension of Foster Care Placements (Note that some individual young adults received more than one type of placement service during FY 2016):

EFCS Placement Service	Number of Young Adults Per Service (some were in more than one placement during the Fiscal Year)
IL Allowance Regular Rate Extension of Foster Care	450
Contract Foster Care Extension of Foster Care	168
Regular Board Rate Extension of Foster Care	71
Independent Living Residential Extension of Foster Care	54
IL Allowance Graduated Rate Extension of Foster Care	26
Level 2 Continuum Extension of Foster Care	22
Continuum: Level 3 Special Needs Extension of Foster Care	14
Level 2 Congregate Care Extension of Foster Care	6
Level 3 Extension of Foster Care	6
Level 4 Special Needs Extension of Foster Care	6
Level 2 Special Population - Education Extension of Foster Care	3
Level 2 Special Needs - Mental Retardation Treatment Extension of Foster Care	2
Level 3 Continuum Extension of Foster Care	2
Level 4 Extension of Foster Care	2
L3 AS-ND RTC Extension of foster Care	1
Extraordinary Rate Extension of Foster Care	1
L3 SED-PRTF High Extension of Foster Care	1
Level 3 Enhanced Sex Offender Treatment Extension of Foster	1
Total Individuals Served	693

33	Had an EFCS episode during the Fiscal Year but no EFCS placement
22	EFCS episode ended on or after July 1, 2015 and the placement service ended on or before July 1, 2015. The last payment date was in the last fiscal year (June 30, 2015)
6	EFCS placements existed during the Fiscal Year but no payments disbursed
1	EFCS episode started during the Fiscal Year but the placement started after the Fiscal Year
Total: 62	

Source: Tennessee Department of Children's Services – Independent Living Monthly Report,

The Department of Children's Services continues to be focused heavily on implementation of the federal Fostering Connections Act and Tennessee's Transitioning Youth Empowerment Act. The Department continues to focus on training efforts, increased outreach to young people, youth engagement to improve practice, increase services (paid and non-paid life skills development), increase housing opportunities and overcoming barriers to serving special populations.

The Office of Independent Living continued to provide training, as follows:

Training Group	Participants Trained
Court	8
DCS	1138
Foster Parents	289
Mixed Group	64
Provider Agency	205
Youth	131
Grand Total	1835

The Department of Children's Services coordinated Youth Leadership Academies and Youth 4 Youth Board meetings in collaboration with community based partners in all three Grand Regions.

2015

Region	Y4Y meeting	Attendance	Avg. attendance
East	13	249	19
Middle	8	81	10
West	12	169	15

2016

Region	Y4Y meeting	Attendance	Avg. attendance
East	12	203	17
Middle	7	53	6
West	13	210	15

The Department of Children’s Services is implementing the Federal Personal Responsibility Education Program to implement the evidence-based pregnancy prevention Teen Outreach Program® in selected congregate care settings, and the initial results are promising. DCS has expanded the grant to utilize the Sisters Saving Sisters curriculum. The four Jim Casey Resource Centers support Sisters Saving Sisters, a skill-based program designed to reduce the risk of unprotected sexual intercourse among sexually experienced Latino and African-American adolescent females. The program provides culturally and developmentally-appropriate small group sessions that focus on HIV and sexually transmitted disease (STD) risk reduction.

Over the last 10 years, Tennessee enacted foster care reforms that have resulted, among other things, in a reduction in its reliance on congregate care. However, at times, abused, neglected or delinquent youth need residential treatment. An innovative public-private partnership, the Youth Development Learning Collaborative, is improving residential care providers’ ability to provide the supports, opportunities and adult relationships that promote optimal growth and development.

Beginning in early 2012, the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services, the University Of Tennessee Center Of Excellence for Children in State Custody and Oasis Center launched the Youth Development Learning Collaboratives to disseminate Wyman’s Teen Outreach Program (TOP®) to Level 2 and 3 congregate care facilities in Tennessee. TOP® is an evidence-based youth development approach designed to help adolescents develop life skills, healthy behaviors and a sense of purpose. Key elements of TOP® include:

- Twice weekly curriculum-guided discussion groups that are active and engaging and in which youth do most of the talking;
- A significant amount of time spent in youth-driven community service learning projects, at least 20 hours in a four month period;
- Caring adult staff who believe in youth and help them build on their strengths.

TOP® has proven effective in increasing graduation rates and reducing teen pregnancies and other negative behaviors among program participants. Furthermore, TOP® helps congregate care providers “normalize” their settings by engaging youth in experiential learning, healthy risk-

taking and everyday activities that promote growth and development. TOP® provides youth with experiences, not explanations. From March 2012 to April 2014, more than 1,300 youth residing in Tennessee congregate care homes participated in TOP®, contributing nearly 12,000 hours of service to Tennessee communities. Preliminary data and anecdotal reports indicate implementation of TOP® is helping providers meet key outcomes for youth, i.e., reduction of days in congregate care, increases in permanent exits from care, and reduction of reentries into care.

Tennessee providers currently implementing TOP® are Florence Crittenton Agency, Group Effort, Holston Home, Madison Oaks Academy, Monroe Harding, OmniVisions, Porter-Leath, UCHRA and Youth Villages (Nashville). By fall 2016, it is projected that more than 4,000 youth will have been engaged in TOP®.

The chart below (Figure 4) shows the number of girls in Tennessee state custody remained consistent from 2011-2015, but the number of births fluctuated quite a bit from year to year, and by extension so did the birth rate. As a result, it is difficult to draw any conclusion about trends over time. However, of the population of girls in state custody, ages 15-19; on average, there were about 17 births per every 1,000 girls.

Birth Rates Among Teens (15 -19 years) in DCS Custody, TN, 2011 -2015			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Number in Custody</i>	<i>Birth Rate per 1000</i>
2011	74	2716	27.2
2012	29	2807	10.3
2013	60	2847	21.1
2014	39	2885	13.5
2015	42	2880	14.6
2011 -2015	244	14135	17.3
Data Sources TennCare and DCS			

Opportunities:

- While there are some excellent services for some of the state’s more complex youth, there are fewer developmentally appropriate services available for those young adults with a borderline IQ or certain mental health diagnoses. In some instances, youth have particular needs that are going unaddressed due to gaps in the array of services and housing.
- Increasing access to housing for young adults receiving EFCS in west Tennessee is another opportunity TN DCS is exploring. Tennessee Housing and Development Agency

(THDA) has provided information on grants and their web-based housing search. Current DCS providers are developing unique approaches to make housing available as well and applying for local housing authority funding.

- TN DCS continues to strive toward increasing employment opportunities for youth in care. Employment Opportunities for adolescents are necessary to assure economic self-sufficiency and generate self-esteem.
- Focus on earlier interventions with 14-16 year olds, to promote increased opportunities for life skills development.
- Integrate preparation for adulthood with permanency efforts through improved, quality Transition Planning (File reviews and coaching)
- Improve implementation of the credit check process for youth 14 and older in custody.
- DCS will continue to attempt to contact all young adults who could be eligible for TennCare; DCS has provided and will continue to provide an information sheet created by TennCare.
- Improve work around LGBT population and immigrant populations.
- EFCS expansion to include eligibility criteria, such as participating in program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment or employed for at least 80 hours per month.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Engaging adolescents in planning and decision-making regarding their own lives—and the larger community—reaps critical benefits throughout the process of transitioning to adulthood. Along with the ongoing transition planning, normalcy and assisting youth in permanency and preparation for adulthoods, DCS and partners work towards creating many youth engagement activities. Below are some of the activities that went on in FY 16.

1. College and Career Day at Wilder Youth Development Center
2. Future Fair at St. Augustine Catholic Church
3. College Prep Workshop at DCS Corporate Street in Memphis
4. Knox Rocks donated the use of a rock climbing wall for Y4Y activity
5. Y4Y took a tour of Tennessee School of Beauty- The Forgotten Initiative provided treat bags for the kids, and the school allowed the girls to get a haircut or manicure for free.

6. Y4Y Volunteered at the Love Kitchen and donated 100 care packages for homeless individuals.
7. Youth 4 Youth event sponsored by Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority. Jeminka Norton of DCS and Dr. Cara Moore of UTK provided food and shared a presentation on health.
8. 11/24/15Y4Y organized bags for homeless
9. 12/23/15Y4Y handed out bags and volunteered serving food, cleaning dishes at Love Kitchen
10. 1/25/16Y4Y had a New Year's Party sponsored by TVA with food, prize bags, door prizes, special guest speaker that climbed the AT
11. 3/15/16 TCAT Tour
12. 4/21/16: Y4Y Youth Empowerment/Sex Education/College Planning Speaker/meeting
13. 5/3/16: Y4Y/Project Now Spring Fling with food, games, door prizes
14. 6/28/16 Y4Y with special guest speaker around Job Interview Skills and financial planning

YVLifeSet Overview

Youth Villages' YVLifeSet program (formerly known as Transitional Living) is designed to assist young people between the ages of 17 and 22, who are transitioning from child welfare and juvenile justice services to adulthood, in learning the skills needed to live successfully. A successful transition could include maintaining safe and stable housing, participating in an educational/vocational program, developing life skills necessary to become a productive citizen and remaining free from legal involvement. YVLifeSet specialists (directly providing the services to the young people) carry a small average caseload of 8-10 and have multiple contact (via phone or face-to-face) weekly with each young person in order to engage on a high level with each. The program is based on a multiple systems approach meaning services are aimed not only at the individual but at all the areas (systems) that may affect the youth (e.g. community, peer group, family, and school/work).

Youth in the YVLifeSet program are assigned a specialist who is responsible for aiding youth in every step of the transition process. Specialists are responsible for teaching skills and lessons associated with the focal areas and will ensure that youth are capable of accessing community resources such as medical attention, housing, and financial support, if necessary. Specialists will be available to the youth 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They will also make a minimum of one face-to-face contact per week with the youth. The number of sessions can be increased based on the individual needs of each youth.

The focal areas of YVLifeSet include permanency, education, employment, housing (through natural supports), basic independent living skills, and youth engagement. To support youth in their transition to adulthood, the program uses evidence-based interventions and best practices with regards to the following areas: trauma, pregnant/parenting youth, substance abuse issues, physical and mental health, domestic violence, financial literacy, and basic independent living skills.

Since the program was created in 1999, it has helped over 7,700 young people in TN (and 9,800 nationwide) build independent and successful lives for themselves. Youth Villages began providing YVLifeSet services in Tennessee over 16 years ago and has been able to effectively replicate the program in numerous locations. Today, YVLifeSet serves nearly 988 young people daily in Tennessee, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Georgia, and Oregon with a success rate of 87percent.

Partnership with DCS

For more than 16 years, Youth Villages has been providing comprehensive services to young adults aging out of care and other at-risk youth in Tennessee through its YVLifeSet program. In 2007, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services partnered with the Day Foundation and

Youth Villages to reach more youth across the state. That public/private partnership was expanded in 2013 when Youth Villages stepped forward and offered to match dollar-for-dollar state funding for services: Youth Villages offered to contribute \$3 million in private dollars if the state would match those private dollars with \$3 million to provide comprehensive services for young people aging out of foster care. This continued partnership provides the opportunity for every youth aging out of care in Tennessee to receive services.

TN YVLifeSet Data (FY 2016)

- YVLifeSet served about 691 youth daily
- 1,455 youth participated in the program
- 86percent In school or graduated
- 75percent Employed or seeking employment
- 83percent Living with family or independently
- 79percent No trouble with the law

Update on Clinical Trial

Youth Villages' YVLifeSet Program is participating in an independent, random assignment evaluation conducted by MDRC, a non-profit, non-partisan research and policy group that specializes in this type of evaluation. MDRC has an outstanding reputation in the field for methodological rigor and for translation of evaluative findings to policymakers. Dr. Mark Courtney, a researcher with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, leads the study as principal investigator. The study (taking place in Tennessee) includes more than 1,300 youth, making it the largest random assignment evaluation of this type of program for young people in this critical transition phase.

The evaluation will examine the difference that Youth Villages' YVLifeSet program makes for youth aging out of care – its impacts on a range of outcomes, including education, employment, mental health, and financial security. It is intended to provide important information for policymakers and practitioners who are interested in improving the lives of these vulnerable young people.

[Impact findings](#) from the evaluation were released earlier this year, and show that participation in the YVLifeSet program boosted earnings by 17percent, increased housing stability and economic well-being (including a 22percent decrease in the likelihood of experiencing homelessness), and improved some of the primary outcomes related to health and safety (including improvements in mental health and a decrease in intimate partner violence). The program was found to be equally effective across different subgroups of youth, including youth with and without histories of juvenile justice custody, as well as urban and rural youth.

WYMAN’S TEEN OUTREACH PROGRAM®
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

The Department of Children’s Services continues to implement the federal Personal Responsibility Education Program to implement an evidence-based pregnancy prevention model, Wyman’s Teen Outreach Program (TOP®) in selected congregate care settings. One thousand and six adolescents participated in TOP® while receiving Level II or III residential services. A formative evaluation conducted by the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University in 2014 and 2015 indicated a number of promising impacts for youth and for the residential settings where TOP® is implemented:

- Youth showed improved communication skills, increased leadership behaviors, and a growing sense of themselves as people who matter and can make a difference.
- Staff trained in the TOP® model, most of whom were paraprofessional direct care staff was more likely to seek to build rapport with youth and to respond to disruptive behavior with fewer sanctions. Staff was also seen to hold higher expectations of youth and to provide more opportunities for authentic youth engagement and leadership.
- The average number of “serious incidents” reported per youth dropped from 2.53 overall to 1.58, pre to post TOP implementation.

TOP® takes a broad youth development approach to the prevention of pregnancy and other risky behaviors by engaging youth in:

- Curriculum-guided discussion groups that are active and engaging and in which youth do most of the talking;
- Youth-driven community service learning projects.

TOP® provides important opportunities for youth to participate in “normalized” activities, consistent with a new federal mandate to ensure youth in custody are able to have developmentally normative experiences as much as possible. TOP® also helps provide important “protective factors,” things that help individuals overcome adversity and risk. TOP® nurtures the key factors research identifies as protective: social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy or sense of purpose, high expectations and opportunities for participation among them. TOP® service learning activities are particularly powerful vehicles for developing protective factors. Last year foster youth participating in TOP® provided more than 9,000 hours of service to Tennessee communities. Foster youth at Florence Crittenton in Knoxville work together year round to crochet blankets they donate to ill or traumatized infants. Youth at Monroe Harding in Nashville held a bake sale to raise money for Second Harvest food bank. Youth with Upper Cumberland Human Resource agency worked with a community group to clean and rehabilitate the site of an abandoned coal mine, turning it into a historical park. In TOP®, youth plan as well as carry out their service learning projects, practicing skills like planning, decision-making, budgeting, team work, etc.

Training, technical assistance and oversight of the TOP® project is provided by Oasis Center and the Tennessee Centers of Excellence for Children in State Custody. In FY 2015, TOP® was implemented at 17 congregate care sites across the state.

"We need foster parents to understand that we have been through stuff."

Resource Center Reports

South Memphis Alliance, Inc.

History

South Memphis Alliance (SMA) opened its doors in 2000 to help organize neighborhood associations in the urban communities of South Memphis. Over time, SMA expanded services to serve youth in foster care and families in crisis. Despite growth, SMA holds fast to its core belief that civic engagement is the bedrock of strong communities, and that **strong communities promote stable families.**

SMA work focuses largely on five core initiatives:

- **Dream Seekers Initiative** works with young people transitioning from foster care.
- **Hope Chest** includes comprehensive sex education, as well as supports services for pregnant and parenting teens who are or were in foster care.
- **Community Action Panel** is composed of community leaders from over a dozen South Memphis civic groups; and, neighborhood associations.
- **Social Suds Resource Center**, located inside a neighborhood Laundromat, provides a plethora of social services to patrons of the Laundromat.

SMA is one of the most unique community based agencies in the City of Memphis. Our close connection with urban residents creates a level of trust and interaction rarely seen between an agency and members of the community.

Emergency Services

- **Food vouchers,**
- **Bus passes,**
- **Clothing/Uniform vouchers,**
- **Assistance with housing option location,**
- **Household/hygiene items,**
- **Furniture (upon availability).**

Educational Services

- **Intensive life skills for foster youth,**
- **HIV/AIDS education and testing,**
- **Anger management and conflict resolution,**
- **Financial education,**
- **Goal setting,**
- **Teen pregnancy and parenting supports,**
- **Moral Reconation Therapy™.**

Local Partnerships

Tennessee Department of Children Services	Meritan Inc.	Bent Tree Apartments	Metropolitan Inter Faith Association (MIFA)
Southern College of Optometry	Shelby County Office of Childhood and Youth	First Tennessee Bank	MemTV
Memphis Cares	Grizzlies Foundation	State of Tennessee (Shelby County) Community Advisory Board	Shelby County Juvenile Court
Flextronics Logistics, Memphis	CD Council	Pametria Brown, MSW	TennDerCare
United Way of the Mid-South	Memphis Public Library	ResCare	The Grizzlies Foundation
Planned Parenthood of the Greater MidSouth	The Assisi Foundation	Shelby County Family Planning	Southwest Prep Academy
Omni Visions	Memphis Artists for Change	Lemoyne Owen College	St. Jude Research Hospital
Porter Leath	Shelby County Health Department	Maximus	Hope Credit Union

Successes

- Flextronics, a logistics company located in Memphis, TN, has awarded SMA with a \$10,000 grant to provide job readiness to 40 unemployed foster youth. The training will be a 4-week intensive training. The young people will complete 2 week curriculum based training, and then will be placed into a 2 week practical training in which the young people will receive a stipend upon successful completion.
- Our Hope Chest program provides incentives for implementing healthy parenting skills, such as doctor's visits, well-child checkups, breastfeeding, parenting classes and good academic standing for the parents. Twenty-two teens enrolled in and successfully graduated from the **Hope Chest** program this year. This is 3 times the number of young people that successfully completed last year.

Challenges and Barriers

- Housing is a consistent barrier to engagement. The young people are moving multiple times in a year due to their inability to secure housing. Their addresses and their phone numbers change frequently, and they often are unable to connect with needed resources due to no consistent place to stay or be located.
- Transportation needs are a barrier for the population that SMA serves. The agency provides bus passes to participants, but the public transit system in the area is often inadequate.
- Due to transportation issues, youth who enroll in the program at satellite sites often are more difficult to engage for group activities.

Next Steps

- SMA continues to diligently seek housing options and innovations in providing housing for young people transitioning out of care. SMA is applying for funding to build a transitional housing apartment complex to help meet this need.
- Sponsorship for IDA matches, stipends/incentives and computer equipment/ building space are among top priorities.

Success Story

When Michael enrolled in our Dream Seekers program, he said that it was because his foster mom made him. He did not want to participate. He was very respectful, but withdrawn. During

his initial case management meeting, Michael informed his Success Coach that he really didn't care what happens to him or in life and that he didn't want to complete a goal plan because he didn't have any goals. Fast forward three years later and Michael is sergeant at arms for the Shelby County Y4Y Leadership Board. He is enrolled at Southwest Community College, where he is working towards his goal of obtaining his physical therapy certification.

Memphis Resource Center Report

YTAC Annual Report/Update

Report Completed by: Tameka D. Greer

	Previous Year	Year to Date
Opportunity Passport™		
Number of new youth enrolled	50	15
# of Financial Literacy Classes offered	24	4
# of Asset Specific Classes offered	8	2
% of youth with favorable post-test outcome	90%	85%
OPPS Surveys		
% of youth completing an OPPS survey (April & October only)	100%	100% (April)
Community Partnership Boards		
Number of board meetings	4	5
Number of new door openers created	2	1
Life Skills Classes		
Number of life skills classes held	12	4
Total number of participants in life skills classes	62	21
% of youth showing increased proficiency pre to post assessment	100%	100%
Youth Leadership & Engagement		
Number of youth leadership activities offered	16	4

Monroe Harding Youth Connections

History

Monroe Harding (MH) was established in 1893 to provide a home for orphaned children. Throughout the years, it has served over 15,000 youth, and today continues to provide services for youth and their families throughout middle Tennessee. Monroe Harding does for kids in foster care what a family would do. We provide security, support and give young people a chance for success. We are meeting this mission through four key programs serving young people who are currently in or are transitioning from the foster care system: Foster Care, Cooperative Living, Youth Connections, and Independent Living.

Trauma and Resiliency Informed Care—TRIC—is the lens through which we see our work with children and youth in foster care. At Monroe Harding we shift the focus from treating symptoms, to addressing and healing the underlying issues. It's not about what the child did, but what happened to the child.

Core Services

Youth Connections has been in existence for almost 10 years and has focused on quality performance since inception. The center provides an assortment of services focused on empowering youth through their transition out of care. Youth Connections houses six major programs: Opportunity Passport™ financial management, life skills, Stepping Stones employment training, High School Equivalency education, S.H.E. (Sexual Health Education) for young women, and an in-house thrift closet specifically for foster youth. Through our programs and staff relations, we encourage personal stability and a healthy transition into adulthood.

Local Partnerships

Youth Connections continues to partner with the Department of Children's Services and US Bank.

Through our Stepping Stones program, Monroe Harding partners with several local businesses and organizations such as Crossroads Pet Shop and Adopt, Habitat ReStore, Rocket Fizz Candy Shop, and McKendree United Methodist Church. These businesses have agreed to provide internships/vocational training or employment opportunities to prepare young people for the workforce.

Youth Connections informally collaborates with Oasis Center, Y-Build, Job Corp, United Neighborhood Health Care, Goodwill Career Solutions, Youth Villages and the Community Advisory Board to provide services to youth who do not meet the criteria to be in DCS custody.

Successes

Since Youth Connections has been in existence, over 135 young people have obtained their High School Equivalency through their participation in the HiSet classes, and 80 percent of Stepping Stones participants have obtained employment with the assistance of the job coach. Also, in addition to young people learning sound financial management and the importance of saving, numerous youth have matched their savings through Opportunity Passport™ to purchase assets such as transportation, laptops for school and investments in a Roth IRA.

S.H.E. (Sexual Health Education), which has been in existence for just over two years, has so far educated over 100 young women on how to change their behavior to avoid contracting HIV and STDs and to significantly decrease their chances of being involved in unintended pregnancies. We have educated young women not only at the resource center but have also facilitated this program at G4S, Camelot, Oak Plains Academy and Omni Visions residential facilities. In an effort to respond to the needs of the young ladies participating in this program, Youth Connections started a monthly support group, Sisterhood. Sisterhood is designed to give the participants a safe space to continue the conversations regarding sexual health, and to also connect with and provide support for one another through their life experiences and challenges.

Youth Connections is located on the third floor of McKendree United Methodist Church. This downtown Nashville location places the center in the heart of the city and makes it more accessible to program participants. The center is also in close proximity to many of its community partners, including the Department of Children's Services, and closer to many resources such as the Nashville Public Library. The church has also provided volunteers, donations to the thrift closet and support for many of our events.

Youth Connections held two graduation ceremonies celebrating over 15 High School Equivalency and high school graduates. Many of the community partners, as well as the graduates' families attended the ceremonies. Monroe Harding awarded 11 scholarships that totaled just over \$10,000. The participants were able to use their scholarship money for tuition, rent, transportation, or needed supplies for their post-secondary training. Students enrolled at several different higher education institutions including Rhodes College, Nashville State Technical School, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Volunteer State Community College and Volunteer Beauty Academy.

Challenges and Barriers

Many of the young people who come to Youth Connections for services lack support systems that can assist them with navigating the challenging period of transitioning into adulthood. They are often unemployed, lack transportation, are dealing with current and past abuse (emotional, physical and sexual), have had insufficient future planning and are sometimes homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. Many of these presenting issues make it difficult for the young

people to remain focused on following through with completing the goals that they have set for themselves.

Next Steps

Monroe Harding is committed to serving more youth and achieving better outcomes. Just over two years ago, Monroe Harding began making the transition to a trauma-informed agency. The agency is committed to recognizing and responding to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system, including children, caregivers and service providers. Monroe Harding is ensuring that all staff at every level of the organization is trained and the agency is able to sustain trauma awareness, knowledge and skills into the organizational culture, practices, and policies. The agency's goal is to act in collaboration with all those who are involved with the youth, using the best available science to facilitate and support the recovery and resiliency of the youth.

The organization continues to assess its programs and make changes and improvements where needed. Youth Connections will continue with the current programming and strive to reach additional young people, strengthening the manner in which we use the youth voice to improve our services.

Nashville Resource Center Report

YTAC Annual Report/Update

Report Completed by: Pamela Madison

	Previous Year	Year to Date
Opportunity Passport™		
Number of new youth enrolled	43	43
# of Financial Literacy Classes offered	11	11
# of Asset Specific Classes offered	22	18
% of youth with favorable post-test outcome	95%	97%
OPPS Surveys		
(April & October only), % of youth completing an OPPS survey	68%	53% / 90%
Community Partnership Boards		
Number of board meetings	1	3
Number of new door openers created	8	3
Life Skills Classes		
Number of life skills classes held		5
Total number of participants in life skills classes		68
% of youth showing increased proficiency pre to post assessment	100%	100%
Youth Leadership & Engagement		
Number of youth leadership activities offered	10	9

Partnership- I.A.M Ready Chattanooga Independent Living Resource Center

History

The Partnership for Families, Children and Adults (Partnership) has provided services to at-risk youth through various programs since its establishment in 1877. Agency-wide services include foster and adoptive services for dependent, neglected, homeless and runaway youth; family and individual counseling; independent living services; sexual assault and domestic violence services;

Partnership is one of the few accredited human service organizations in Chattanooga. We are accredited with the Council on Accreditation. This assures funders and partners that we have met “best practice” standards in all areas of our organization. We are also a licensed child placement agency, throughout the agency we approach all clients with a trauma informed, strength based and culturally sensitive philosophy.

Mission Statement

Partnership Mission statement is as follows: “Partnership is a community impact organization whose mission is to strengthen families and individuals of all ages. Our services provide benefits through an effective array of critical services and collaborative partnerships that continually evolve to meet community needs.”

Vision Statement

Partnership Vision statement is as follows: “Partnership is the recognized leader in providing excellent human services that meet the ever changing needs of our communities’ families and individuals of all ages.”

Core services

Partnership Programs Impact – The Entire Circle of Life

The Partnership is Chattanooga’s oldest and largest human services non-profit organization. Partnership has over 20 programs that provide individuals and families with the tools and resources to build stability and create independence. From children to elderly, Partnership programs impact the entire circle of life in the Greater Chattanooga area. These programs are not geared to help an individual for a day, a month or even a year. Instead, the Partnership aims to develop a lifetime of success for the most vulnerable in our community.

Partnership 5 Centers of Service:

Youth Services-Elder Services-Family Strengthening Services-Credit Counseling Services – Crisis Services

Partnership reaches a diverse range of individuals & families through Five Centers of Service. Partnership programs focus on specific needs of the Greater Chattanooga community providing experienced social workers, counselors & other highly trained professionals. Together, these separate, but complimentary Centers of Services provide support to Families & individuals who may have many related needs.

Youth Service core services are Family Foster Care, Emergency Foster Care, Respite Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care and Independent Living Services (IAM Ready Center). The IAM Ready Center celebrated its 2 year Anniversary on June 25, 2016, the center is co-located with the City of Chattanooga's Youth and Family Development Department (YFD), creating a one-stop shop for program participants. YFD services include Education, Leadership, Career Development, Social Services and Recreation services provide every child/family with the opportunity for success, safer streets and promoting economic development.

IAM READY Center serves young people between the ages of 14-26 who have spent at least 1 day in foster care after the age of 14, living in or around the Hamilton County Area. Services available include a financial education curriculum that teaches basic knowledge such as: savings, asset building, credit, credit reports, money management, budgeting. The program is in the process of opening up an additional office location in the Cleveland, TN area.

In addition to financial skill-building and support, IAM READY Center participants have access to streamlined and specialized services within the Hamilton County community, specifically related to the key outcome areas defined by the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative that are evidence-based to be essential for a successful transition into adulthood. Participants are connected with resources and tools within their community to help them establish their own social capital and support networks.

Local Partnerships

Partnership organization has partnered with the City of Chattanooga's Youth & Family Development Department to implement the Jim Casey Initiative in the Chattanooga area, both organizations have committed to providing resources and opportunities for young people. The Community partners include key members from many of the areas in which we are hoping to affect outcomes, including: education, employment, housing, physical, & mental health, social capital and financial capability.

Education: Chattanooga State, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Hamilton County Board of Education. Unum employees provide on-site mentorship to program participants.

Employment: Southeast Local Workforce Investment Board, Tennessee Career Center of Southeast Tennessee, Youth and Family Development- Career Development, Erlanger Medical Center,

Housing: Pathways for Young Adult Program-Transitional Living, Youth Villages, Partnership Foster Care, Chattanooga Homeless Coalition, Chattanooga Housing Authority, Partnership New Visions Program.

Physical & Mental Health: Health Connect of America, Mental Health Co-Op, Fort-Wood, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Healthy Transitions Program, Hamilton County Health Department.

Social Capital: Department of Children Services, UNUM, City of Chattanooga, T-Mobile.

Financial Capability: Partnership Credit Counseling Services, First Tennessee Bank

Successes

- Since opening day of June 25, 2014 The IAM Ready Center has enrolled 75 Youth into the program. The program has provided a total of \$4,625 in asset purchases/ matches to program participants.: Housing (\$1,625), Health (\$350), Education/ Training (\$650), Vehicle (\$2,000).
- The collaboration with city of Chattanooga Youth Family Development has been extremely helpful. Young adults are benefiting from the Career Development Program, Lexia Reading program, Title II Commodities and various educational programs young adult specific. Program participants have access to all 28 Educational centers throughout Hamilton County area.
- Unum employees participated in Life Skills classes providing instruction, mentorship and Leadership participation. Based on class room feedback, Unum employees are highly recommended to continue to participant with program.
- T-Mobile donated school/ program supplies to the program this year, along with hosting a door opener event and leadership engagement.
- The IAM Ready Center hosted the Reality Check II, this year the focus was primarily on new existing students enrolled in the IAM Ready Center for the current year, our goal was to have an enhanced approach to current clients in the IAM Ready Program. The Reality Check served 28 clients, guest appearances by NFL player Tredayl Sands,

Hamilton County Juvenile Court Judge, Robert Philyaw, Lori Hammond, DCS, and Court Director, Antonio Petty.

- Created an IAM Ready Video that highlights a perspective from the youth and foster foster care staff.
- Received a \$25,000 Grant from Jim Casey Partnership to implement a microenterprise coaching program in our IAM Ready Independent Living Centers. The program is for youth aging out of foster care. This is a one-time grant. Partnership will have to secure additional funds to sustain program.
- Partnership is currently providing Transitional Housing through sub contract services with Pathways Young Adult Program, we have served (9) male youth through Extension of Foster Care Services, Partnership has extended those services to Include a New Visions Program to serve (5) female youth, this program is currently accepting referrals.
- Partnered with Erlanger/ Soleduex Services – to provide janitorial/housekeeping jobs for program participants, Mr. Robert Love in the process of creating additional dialogue for additional resources and support. The program just recently employed its first IAM Ready participant.
- The organization continues to assess its’ programs and make changes and improvements where needed. Partnership IAM Ready Center has hired Robert Love full time as the program coordinator, his time is fully dedicated to the IAM Ready Center, engaging the community through presentations, community fairs in Hamilton County and Bradley County.
- The program has secured a location for an additional site in Cleveland, TN, the organization partnered with CASA program in Cleveland, TN to offer a training site/ location. Youth that normally traveled to Chattanooga, TN to participate in the IAM Ready program, will be able to receive services in Cleveland, TN. The projected grand opening is October 5, 2016.

Challenges & Barriers

- Many of the young people that come to the IAM Ready Center for services lack support systems that can assist them with navigating the challenging period of transitioning into adulthood. They are often unemployed, have a lack of transportation, are dealing with current and past abuse (emotional, physical, and sexual), have had insufficient future planning and are sometimes homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. With many of these presenting issues, it makes it difficult for the young people to remain focused on following through with completing the goals that they have set for themselves.

- Additionally, Youth aging out of foster care often do not have access to medical care or knowledge of medical coverage/ benefits. Additional funding is needed for case workers and matching funds for program participants.
- Collaboration with DCS is a continuing improvement. Strategic planning is needed on an ongoing basis. Partnership staff participated in strategic planning with Knoxville DCS on Independent Living Services and Extension of Foster Care Services. Recommend that DCS IL staff, Youth Villages Life Set staff be provided on site office space within resource centers to fully compliment one stop shop aspect.
- Transportation remains a barrier for participation, but adding an additional location site in Cleveland, TN will provide clients in that area and opportunity to receive IL services.

Next Steps

Partnership's IAM Ready Center year 2 program will focus on reaching or exceeding program established outcomes, continued focus groups to re-assure that the youth enrolled are represented through Youth 4 Youth Participation.

I.A.M Ready: Strategic Plan

- Youth will be hired by PFCA staff to serve as youth liaison to ensure effective partnership.
- Recruit & engage youth for on-going Youth leadership Board (YLB)
- YLB will increase membership by recruiting/ adding 2-5 members to the YLB Board.
- Identify additional funding need areas YLB stipends, discretionary funds, financial literacy training and potential partners that can provide support.
- Improve mechanisms for disseminating information and message (email, newsletters, Facebook, presentations, PSA's, interviews with media outlets)

IAM READY 2nd Year Report
July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016

IAM READY REPORT CHATTANOOGA	July, August, Sept	Oct, Nov, Dec	Jan, Feb, March	April, May, June
Opportunity Passport™				
Number of new youth enrolled (38)	8	5	10	8
# of Financial Literacy Classes offered (16)	4	4	4	4
# of Asset Specific Classes offered (7)	2	1	1	3
% of youth with favorable post-test outcome- (90%)	95%	96%	95%	94%
Survey				
(April & October only), % of youth completing an OPSS survey		70%		100%
Community Partnership Boards				
Number of board meetings (5)	1	1	1	2
Number of new door openers created (13)	3	4	3	3
Life Skills Classes				
Number of life skills classes held (16)	4	4	4	4
Total number of participants in life skills classes (244) Asset Building (38) Good Credit (38) Money Mgmt. (38) Education/Training (32) Housing (34) Transportation (35) Saving/ Investing (29)	60	59	52	73
% of youth showing increased proficiency pre to post assessment (95%)	95%	95%	95%	95%
Employment				
35 of 38 program participants are employed of in school.	7	8	10	10

Helen Ross McNabb Center's Project NOW

History

Helen Ross McNabb Center is a premier not-for-profit provider of behavioral health services in East Tennessee. Since 1948, the Center has provided quality and compassionate care to children, adults and families experiencing mental illness, addiction and social challenges. As the Center celebrates more than 66 years of providing services to communities in East Tennessee, its mission remains clear and simple: "Improving the lives of the people we serve." Following a merger with Child & Family Tennessee in August 2013, Helen Ross McNabb Center assumed management of Project NOW and has 32 years of experience working with runaway, homeless and at-risk teenagers, complemented by 19 years providing outreach services to youth in local schools, 11 years providing street outreach services, 16 years of offering transitional living services for older youth and young adults and four years of permanency services for youth in foster care.

Core Services

Project NOW (Navigating Opportunities that Work) is one of over 35 evidence-based programs operating under the umbrella of Helen Ross McNabb Center. Over the past year, Project NOW serves to provide Resource Center services to youth. Due to Jim Casey changes, youth are no longer required to open Individual Development Accounts; they can now open or use a bank account with ANY financial institution. The role of Project NOW is to proactively assist them in completing this task during their active program engagement. Participants are adolescents and young adults age 14 to 26 (up to the client's 26th birthday), who have a current or previous connection to the state's foster care system (at least one day after the age of 14). Project NOW allows youth access to the agency's existing transitional living services for youth and additionally included an IDA component for interested youth, meeting what is traditionally an unmet need of youth in transition in East Tennessee. The project serves any youth meeting criteria living within the 16 county DCS Knox, Smoky Mountain, or East Tennessee regions. Clients were offered 17 activities through Knoxville's Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (JCYOI) approach, all of which fall within the domains of independence identified in the past in the reclaiming youth approach to positive youth development.

Local Partnerships

Community Partners include:
Knox County, Smoky Mountain and East Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
Helen Ross McNabb Center’s Runaway Shelter, Transitional Living Program (TLP) and Street Outreach
K-Town Youth Empowerment Network & K-Town Coordinating Council
Knox County Juvenile Court
Knox Area Compassion Coalition
Youth Villages Transitional Living Program (TLP)
Goodwill Industries
University of Tennessee Work Achievement Values Education (WAVE) GED program
Knox County Public Defender’s Office
University of Tennessee Center for Parenting
Boy Scouts of America
Knoxville Interfaith Network (KIN)
Youth Villages Governor’s Mentoring Program
Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union
YMCA Knoxville
YWCA Knoxville Housing
Knox County Health Department
Tenants Choice Property Management
Knox Auto Parts
Emerald Youth Foundation
Knoxville CAC Transit
Omni Visions
Camelot Care Centers
ChildHelp USA TN
Tennessee School of Beauty
Excent Ultimate Life Summit

Socially Equal Energy Efficient Development (SEED) of Knoxville
Smoky Mountain Financial
Hiwassee College
Middle Tennessee State University
Children’s Defense Fund; Haley Farms
Tennessee Housing Development Authority
Knoxville Homeless Coalition
Knox County CASA
Knoxville Leadership Foundation – KnoxWorks
Workforce Connections
Kroger
Subway
Dominos
Chick Fila
West Chevrolet
Sequoyah Hills Service Center (mechanic)
Newell Rubbermaid
Staffing Solutions
Doug Justus Used Cars
Food City
Grace Lutheran Church
Salsa Rita’s
Ascension Episcopal Church
Tennessee Career Center, Morristown

Successes

- Number of Opportunity Passport participants ever enrolled: 189
- Number of participants currently enrolled: 82
- Number of participants currently inactive: 62
- Number of participants currently exited: 45
- Project NOW continues to see high referral numbers in recent months. DCS and Youth Villages continue to be the two main referral sources.
- Locations have been secured for ongoing delivery of financial literacy classes, life skill classes and asset trainings. Saturday and Sunday programming is available for youth to increase program participation and attendance.
- Several youth have expressed interest in co-facilitating financial classes. A minimum of 7 youth have helped lead financial classes in this quarter of 2016. Three youth have been identified to help co-facilitate the upcoming financial literacy class in November 2016.
- The number of Project NOW youth active on the Youth 4 Youth board has been increasing. At least a minimum of eight youth have attended two of three Youth 4 Youth meetings per quarter.
- Debt reduction programming has prevented several Project NOW youth from facing eviction.
- Staff has been involved with DCS and the East Tennessee Council on Children and Youth.
- Coordinating Council helps address strengths and needs of youth in transition.
- The Project NOW Facebook page has aided in the delivery of program updates, resource attainment and community linkage. Facebook has been successful in the distribution of information related to independent living, shared successes, and inspirational posts.
- Participants continue to take advantage of speaking engagements and leadership opportunities.
- Project NOW staff continues to encourage youth to take advantage of community service and leadership opportunities. Thus far, participants have taken advantage of many different speaking opportunities on topics related to Project NOW and foster care as well as some of personal interest to the individuals such as fitness and nutrition. Additionally, youth have been nominated for, and accepted, positions of distinction and awards from various entities:
- One youth is a member of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth appointed by the Governor. She was able to act as a representative for the Coalition on Juvenile Justice in July 2015 that convened in Washington D.C.
- Community networking has allowed for personal assistance of participants to help locate and secure stable employment and housing;
- Relationships have been formed with mentors through Mentors 4 Youth that have enriched the lives of the youth involved
- Staff initiated formal connections with Tennessee Career Center (employment) and KnoxWorks (employment);

- Youth were offered opportunities to participate in the Jim Casey Youth Leadership Institute in St. Louis, Missouri. A Project NOW youth has been selected to attend. She will have the opportunity to:
 - Deepen her understanding of the Initiative’s Theory of Change (what we want to accomplish and how we are measuring progress),
 - Build her capacity to use Initiative and other data as a tool for improving outcomes for youth in care,
 - Expand her knowledge of current policies that young people and sites identified as most important in galvanizing public will and policy to better focus on needed reforms,
 - Increase her capacity to strategically utilize their real life experiences with child welfare systems as a tool for advocating for themselves and improved systems, and
 - Increase the capacity for new Jim Casey and AECF staff to continue to provide the Youth Leadership Institute
- Project NOW’s participants are becoming increasingly involved on the local Youth 4 Youth board.
- Clients continue to participate in local PATH panels, as well as those for surrounding counties. Clients have worked with Independent Living Specialist and Resource Parent Support to alleviate placement barriers for foster youth especially the older population. Potential resource parents were able to gain a youth perspective, as the client shared what being in foster care was like for her when she was a teenager.
- Youth 4 Youth participants continue to have an opportunity to critique the Tennessee Foster Youth Handbook, especially as it relates to their independent living needs.
- Project NOW has collaborated with Mentors for Youth (through DCS) to help with the facilitation of asset training and life skill attainment on a monthly basis.
- Youth who age out of care are now eligible for TennCare up to the age of 26.
- The national Foster Club created an opportunity for intensive leadership and public speaking training. Youth had the opportunity to travel to youth events to inspire their younger peers still in the foster care system. In addition, All-Stars raise awareness about the over 400,000 young people in foster care and the 29,000 who age out every year nationally.
- Project NOW continues to operate under a set of strategies that will continue to improve outcomes for youth in transition. Project NOW participants have the opportunity to speak at orientation to share their experience with new members. They also have the opportunity to engage by helping co- facilitate the financial literacy training.
- The partnership continues to grow with the Educational Opportunity Center with University of Tennessee - Knoxville.
- Project NOW coordinator has received approval from Helen Ross McNabb Center to use Facebook for program events and opportunities. Email notifications are used to make quarterly contact with all youth and as an attempt to update demographic information. Phone contact is kept on a regular basis with youth who are active.

- The Project NOW coordinator continues to participate on the Youth Transitions Advisory Council in an attempt to improve public will and policy concerning youth in transition.
- Staff continues the process of compiling a resource board and a resource guide for youth in need of specific assistance. Areas of focus include legal matters, education, mental health/physical health, housing, community engagement, independent living, belonging, transportation, alcohol/drug treatment, and financial capability, and employment opportunities.

Challenges and Barriers

- Transportation needs can be a barrier to serving young people in transition. We have found that many youth do not have access to personal transportation and, even though Financial Literacy courses are held near a major bus stop, not all youth have access to public transportation.
- Fulfilling contractual obligations of additional services can sometimes be challenging, given staff limitations and respect for youth's personal time and other obligations/commitments.
- The high volumes of interest have left little time for Project NOW staff to verify partners. A collaborative list of past and potential partners has been developed in an attempt to create new MOU's (memorandum of understandings) for door-openers.
- An area for improvement within Project NOW is to build community support and door openers.
- Time constraints have limited staff opportunity to follow up with past resources and partnerships.
- Involvement with the TVA banking partner has been improved and we enjoy a very supportive relationship. Multiple compliments have been received from various staff members at TVA about their interest and passion toward the youth involved in the program and our activities. This has been very helpful to youth acquiring financial services through this partner.
- Youth continue having difficulty in fulfilling all requirements for matches and some have a difficult time with the survey process. Youth begin the process and for various reasons, do not finish the full enrollment process in Jim Casey Opportunity Passport. This is usually due to a transportation issue.
- Some difficulty in reaching all outcome measurements and maintaining stable connections with youth participants due to the program having only a single staff person and increasing caseloads.

- Challenges in accountability and commitment due to use of external financial institutions.
- There is a limited availability for Project NOW training and events through the John Tarleton Conference room
- Stable housing and employment continues to be a barrier for transient youth.

Next Steps

During the next year, Helen Ross McNabb Center's Project NOW will continue to:

- Enroll youth in Financial Literacy courses,
- Specifically addressing issues relating to those who fail to complete the entire enrollment process.
- Assist interested youth in opening Individual Deposit Accounts (IDA) with Project NOW's banking partner;
- Build community partnerships around education, employment, housing, health, personal development, and other support services;
- Continue efforts to actively seek new and innovative ways to facilitate permanent connections for youth, in alignment with current initiative focus;
- Continue to increase local networking collaborations and efforts towards youth services;
- Continue to make accommodations as needed to assist with youth enrollment, active participation, and successful completion of financial education programming.

Knoxville Resource Center Report

YTAC Annual Report/Update

	Previous Year July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015	Year to Date July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016
Opportunity Passport™		
Number of new youth enrolled	58	20
# of Financial Literacy Classes offered	4 sessions	2 sessions
# of Asset Specific Classes offered	28 including one on one sessions	19 one on one sessions
% of youth with favorable post-test outcome	100%	100%
Community Partnership Boards		
Number of board meetings	12 Youth / 4 Community	3youth / 1 community
Number of new door openers created		14
Life Skills Classes		
Number of life skills classes held	16	16
Total number of participants in life skills classes	34	78
% of youth showing increased proficiency pre to post assessment	100%	100%
Youth Leadership & Engagement		
Number of youth leadership activities offered	21	3

Well-Being in Tennessee

Well-being is a multi-faceted and complex construct.

To provide a more comprehensive, age-appropriate picture of how young people are doing in the four domains of well-being, composite scores were constructed with existing Opportunity Passport™ Participant Survey (OPPS) data.

Each score is measured on a 5.0 scale.



Participants in Opportunity Passport across the state, are strong in areas of health and safety, but there is opportunity for growth in economic well-being.

Data for Opportunity Passport Assets and Matches

Asset Purchase Category	*Number and % of Participants		Total Dollars and % of Total		Number and % of Assets Purchased		Average Dollars Assets Purchased	Initiative Matched Amount	Other Partners Matched Amount	Total With Initiative	Total All Matches
Credit Building	7	3.41%	\$5,307.00	32.46%	9	36%	\$589.67	\$2,205.00	\$2,205.00	\$7,512.00	\$9,717.00
Education and Training	1	0.49%	\$400.00	2.45%	1	4%	\$400.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$600.00	\$800.00
Housing	4	1.95%	\$1,950.00	11.93%	4	16%	\$487.50	\$1,175.00	\$1,950.00	\$3,125.00	\$5,075.00
Participant Specific	2	0.98%	\$1,450.00	8.87%	2	8%	\$725.00	\$1,130.00	\$1,450.00	\$2,580.00	\$4,030.00
Vehicle	9	4.39%	\$7,240.00	44.29%	9	36%	\$804.44	\$3,475.00	\$4,475.00	\$10,715.00	\$15,190.00
	23		\$16,347.00		25		\$653.88	\$8,185.00	\$10,280.00	\$24,532.00	\$34,812.00

Jim Casey Match for FY 16- since 2000 went over 100,000 in matches for youth formerly in foster care.

Training Hours and Participants

Asset category	Participants trained	Percent	Total hours
Credit Building	28	43.08%	57
Education and Training	42	64.62%	218
Health	25	38.46%	51.5
Housing	20	30.77%	63
Investments	20	30.77%	43
Microenterprise	6	9.23%	19.5
Participant Specific	8	12.31%	14
Vehicle	25	38.46%	60.5
Total trained/hours	**174		526.5
Total number of trainings	***254		
Unduplicated count of participants: 65 Percent of Total: 31.71%			

"Keep us busy, they need to keep us out of trouble and active. The foster parent, she had books, I don't read. We just sat there she was old we need to be engaged. We had a swimming pool party once and that was the best thing we did."

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

TREATMENT AND RECOVERY FOR YOUTH GRANT

In 2013, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) approached the chair of the Youth Transitions Advisory Council about the Council supporting an application for a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to deliver treatment and recovery support services to adolescents and transitional aged youth. The Youth Transitions Advisory Council would collaborate with grantees and provide consultation and state-level support. The grant was awarded in September 2013 in the amount of \$3.8 million over four years through September 29, 2017. Approximately 280 youth/transitional aged youth have been served through the first three years of the grant. The target number to be served over the life of the grant is 400.

The Department contracts with Centerstone Research Institute for data and evaluation and with Centerstone of Tennessee and Pathways, Inc. as the service providers to implement the Treatment and Recovery for Youth (TRY) grant in Maury and Madison counties. The TRY Team has become an integral part of the Youth Transitions Advisory Council. Team members from TDMHSAS, Centerstone and Pathways are always in attendance and are active participants in meetings, providing updates on progress toward grant goals at each Council meeting.

The evidence based model used with the grant is the Adolescent – Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA). The goal of the model is for the youth to find the healthy and positive behaviors more rewarding and "reinforcing" than their unhealthy substance abusing lifestyle. A-CRA helps youth and their parents identify pro-social activities and services in their community to become involved in that provide important alternatives to time spent using substances. In addition, A-CRA teaches skills to improve communication, problem solving and the ability to create positive relationships. A-CRA shows several positive outcomes, including reduction in substance use, legal involvement and co-occurring mental health problems. TDMHSAS has begun the process of developing a multi-year workforce development training plan that will enhance services delivered by adolescent and transitional youth-serving providers across the state. The A-CRA model training was provided to seven agencies in June 2015 serving either youth or transitional age youth and again in July 2016 to an additional five agencies. A conference was held in August, 2016 focusing on alternative methods of treatment for substance use disorder.

TRY grant partners have delivered TRY Project and A-CRA informational sessions and trainings to numerous community agencies and programs, including juvenile courts and public schools. To date more than 1,300 professionals and youth advocates have been educated on the TRY Project and A-CRA.

Another important part of the grant is the development of local advisory councils that work to disseminate information and reach out to community partners serving youth. There have been some exciting events targeted to youth that have been organized through these councils.

TENNESSEE HEALTHY TRANSITIONS INITIATIVE

The Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative is a five-year \$5 million discretionary grant awarded to the TDMHSAS by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration September 2014. The purpose of the Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative is to assist Tennessee youth and young adults with or at risk of developing a serious mental health condition and/or co-occurring disorder in improving their health and wellness, leading self-directed lives, and reaching their full potential. This goal will be accomplished through providing coordinated public awareness, outreach and engagement, and access to treatment and resiliency and recovery support services to youth and young adults ages 16-25 with or at risk of serious mental health conditions or co-occurring disorders in two targeted communities. Healthy Transitions provides targeted and innovative awareness, outreach, and specialized treatment and recovery support services to the following prioritized populations of youth and young adults ages 16-25: those in contact with the criminal justice system; those aging out of foster care through child welfare; those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; and those who identify as being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, or Intersex (LGBTQI).

Local Laboratory 1 is located in a rural seven-county area in Northwest Tennessee (Benton, Carroll, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion and Weakley counties) and is being implemented by Carey Counseling Center, Inc. *Local Laboratory 2* is located in Hamilton County in Southeast Tennessee and is being implemented by Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System. The two Local Laboratories began providing services in February 2016 and enrolled a total of 43 youth and young adults. Services and supports include the following: care coordination utilizing the Transition to Independence Process (TIP) Model; Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Supported Employment; supported education; and peer support services. Tennessee Voices for Children houses the Statewide Youth Coordinator and assists with statewide public awareness efforts. Centerstone Research Institute houses the Lead Evaluator, who coordinates evaluation activities.

In addition, TDMHSAS partners with key stakeholders and youth and young adults from both state and local levels to convene a State Transition Team (STT). The STT collaboratively prioritizes system improvements to the child and adult mental health systems and other relevant child and adult system partners, including funding mechanisms, administrative structures, regulatory requirements, policy, and array of services and supports available to youth and young adults with or at risk of serious mental health conditions or co-occurring disorders. Using data from the Local Laboratories to inform priority areas, the STT will work in partnership with

member organizations and individuals to develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and/or interagency agreements as needed to enhance the coordination of services for youth in transition across departments and agencies and address funding and policy changes needed to realize system improvements. The STT functions as a public-private partnership with reporting responsibilities to three statutorily mandated councils: the Youth Transitions Advisory Council (YTAC), the Council on Children’s Mental Health (CCMH), and the TDMHSAS Planning and Policy Council.

Team members from TDMHSAS, Tennessee Voices for Children, Centerstone Research Institute, Carey Counseling Center, Inc., and Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System regularly attend and are active participants at Youth Transitions Advisory Council (YTAC) meetings, now providing updates on progress toward grant goals at each Council meeting.

TENNESSEE FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS INITIATIVE (FEPI)

In the Fiscal Year 2014 appropriation, Congress allocated additional funds to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to support “evidence-based programs that address the needs of individuals with early serious mental illness, including psychotic disorders.” States were required to set-aside 5 percent of their Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) allocation to support this evidence-based program. The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) began planning for the implementation of the 5percent set aside to address early intervention programming as soon as the 2014 budget legislation passed. The proposal approved by SAMHSA included provisions for a First Episode Psychosis (FEP) treatment program focusing on a rural area of Tennessee using a Coordinated Specialty Care model. The proposal provided a beginning budget, staffing, and implementation model designed to be flexible in the face of the challenges of implementing an urban program in a rural area. With innovations focusing on the use of technology and a one-provider arrangement, the proposal was approved and implementation began within 30 days following approval.

In FY16, Carey Counseling Center, Inc. (Carey) provided services for a second year through its OnTrackTN program in a seven-county area in the northwest corner of Tennessee. The counties in the service area are Lake, Obion, Weakley, Benton, Carroll, Gibson, and Henry. The program serves adolescents and young adults between the ages of 15-30, who are experiencing psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations, unusual thoughts or beliefs, or disorganized thinking, with symptoms present for more than a week but less than 24 months. To date, Carey has admitted 25 clients to the program in advance of the second anniversary of the program’s start, which exceeds the program’s original goal of 20.

In the spring of 2016, Congress increased the set aside in the State Mental Health Block Grant program from five to 10 percent for first episode programs. TDMHSAS submitted a proposal to expand FEPI through the 10% set-aside, which was approved by SAMHSA. The proposal identified the following two priorities: (1) Expand the OnTrackTN program to two additional sites in Tennessee and (2) Create a statewide First Episode Psychosis Initiative (FEPI) Learning Collaborative consisting of, at minimum, all three OnTrackTN sites. In May 2016, TDMHSAS released an Announcement of Funding requesting proposals to implement OnTrackTN in two of the following three counties: Davidson, Hamilton, and Shelby. A review panel scored the proposals and contracts were awarded to Mental Health Cooperative, Inc. in Davidson County and Alliance Healthcare Services in Shelby County.

In addition to the success of the OnTrackTN program itself, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), in collaboration with Vanderbilt University's Psychiatric Hospital, Carey Counseling Center, Inc., and the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO), hosted an educational conference entitled "First Episode Psychosis: Developing New Directions in Tennessee." The conference was attended by approximately 200 statewide and national professionals and other interested individuals.

Team members from TDMSHAS and Carey Counseling Center, Inc. regularly attend YTAC meetings, now providing updates on progress toward grant goals at each Council meeting.

APPENDIX A
MEETING AGENDAS AND SUMMARIES

"With court we don't have a voice at all... you can't say nothing you are just there you should have some sort of input about what is going on."



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Andrew Jackson Building, Ninth Floor
502 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0800
(615) 741-2633 (FAX) 741-5956
1-800-264-0904

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

August 12, 2015

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time

Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

937 Herman Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37208

Agenda

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements/Acceptance of May and June 2015 Meeting Summaries

- *Linda O'Neal, Executive Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.*

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update –

- *Michael Leach, Director, Office of Independent Living, DCS.*
- *Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director, Office of Independent, DCS.*

Update from Resource Centers

- *Pamela Cash, Youth Connections at Monroe Harding.*
- *Keisha Shervington, Project Now! Helen Ross McNabb.*
- *Tameka Daniel, Dream Seekers, South Memphis Alliance.*
- *Jack Parks, I AM READY, Chattanooga/Hamilton/Southeast.*

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program

- *Joseph Goldsmith, LifeSet Coordinator, Youth Villages.*

Update from Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant

- *April Tanguay, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.*
- *Ashley Harrington, Centerstone.*
- *Erica Spencer, Pathways.*

Overview of Wyman's Teen Outreach Program

- *Jane Fleishman, Oasis Center.*

Preparation for 2015 Annual Report due October

- **Review of Accomplishments and Recommendations**

Future Meeting Topics

Next Meetings

Other Business



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Andrea Jackson Building, 9th Floor
502 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0800
(615) 741-2633 (FAX) 741-5956
1-800-264-0904

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

August 12, 2015

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time

Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

Estavon Carter	Briana Johnson	Jack Parks
Tameka Daniel-Greer	Nyasha Justice	Steve Petty
Jane Fleishman	Richard Kennedy	Keisha Shervington
Joseph Goldsmith	Michael Leach	Natasha Smith
Ashley Harrington	Kisha Ledlow	Shawn Smith
Ginger Harris	Pam Madison	Sherry Smith
Brandon Honey	Chelsey McDaniel	Ned Solomon
Kimberly Jeffries	Teresa Moore	Wendy Spence
Joan Jenkins	Linda O'Neal	April Tanguay

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements (O'Neal)

- O'Neal welcomed the group, expressed her appreciation for those attending, and asked for introductions and announcements.
- O'Neal announced registration is now open for the System of Care 3rd Annual Conference on August 28-29, 2015 at the Embassy Suites Nashville-South/Cool Springs in Franklin, Tennessee. It is a free conference, but registration is required. She also mentioned the Cultural and Linguistic Competency Training Summit will be held September 16, 2015 in the Nashville area.

Acceptance of May and June 2015 Meeting Summaries (O'Neal)

- O'Neal asked members to review the May and June Meeting summaries and asked for revisions or edits.
- **IT WAS MOVED (HARRINGTON) AND SECONDED (PARKS) TO ACCEPT THE MAY 2015 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- **IT WAS MOVED (HARRINGTON) AND SECONDED (GOLDSMITH) TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2015 MEETING SUMMARY. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Department of Children’s Services, Office of Independent Living Update (Michael Leach)

- Leach provided a summary update for the Office of Independent Living (IL).
- He specifically focused on the DCS policies and procedures 16.3 and 16.8 for foster parents and congregate care setting staff that promote reasonable and prudent parenting and will put a priority on normalcy. Leach said DCS will have to train caregivers, foster parents, staff, etc. DCS anticipates implementation of the prudent parenting standard by September 29, 2016.
- Liability protections have been added essentially making DCS foster parents state employees for purposes of the Claims Commission.
- IL conducted a survey of older youth in foster care focusing on home care (shopping, cleaning and cooking); finance; getting around (transportation); housing; jobs; post-secondary education; and opportunities that the young person had to participate in extracurricular activities, to make friends and socialize, to develop and pursue a hobby or special interest, or attend life skills classes. The survey results have been shared with DCS leadership, staff, partners, and providers, and statewide Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts have taken place and are ongoing to respond to opportunities for improvement identified by the survey.
- The state youth advisory board contributed to a few of the improvements to the policies and procedures. They will meet again in September.
- Leach said he will be happy to send out the policy to everyone. O’Neal said Steve Petty will send it out.
- Leach reported IL recently started credit checks for their youth and found five who have had their identities stolen to obtain credit and thousands of dollars in goods.

Update from Resource Centers

- **Youth Connections at Monroe Harding (Pam Madison)**
 - Madison reported there were 14 new enrollees from June through July. A new life skills coach who is very energetic and enthusiastic has started working with the youth.
 - She reported several youth made enough match money this summer through Opportunity Passport to assist them in their education and purchasing transportation.
 - A small grant from Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA) for housing was received, but they have had problems finding something affordable. Some of the youth do not meet the job requirement for renting an apartment since they have

not worked for two years. However, two weeks ago, they were successful in finding an apartment for one young woman. They will continue to assist her with her rent and utilities through the end of this year.

- Madison reported they are continuing with their Stepping Stones Employment Assistance Program in partnership with local businesses.
 - HiSET enrollment was down this summer, but there are openings for new enrollees. There are a couple of spots for those youth who have not been in foster care. Monroe Harding can provide bus passes to help with transportation. As an incentive, a donor will contribute \$650 to each youth who receives his or her HiSET.
 - Madison shared there are several youth who have started Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Mortuary Science College and other colleges.
 - She specifically shared an update on the young man who received a scholarship from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She said they had to transport the youth six hours to school. They took him shopping for school clothes and essentials since he is playing football. She said it was an eye-opener to the challenges these youth go through because he had never had a brand new pair of football cleats or tried on clothes at a store before then.
 - Madison also highlighted the Sexual Health Education (S.H.E.) program for sexually active young ladies age 16-21.
- **Helen Ross McNabb – Project NOW! (Keisha Shervington)**
 - Shervington reported since 2011, there have been 159 enrollees, 110 participants and 68 percent retainment. She said 13 are inactive, 36 youth exited the program and there have been 109 referrals since January.
 - She said they have partnered with Mentors 4 Youth for training and life skill classes. Their motto is “Make Your Next Move a Move UP!”
 - Chick-Fil-A continues to support their initiatives by providing food contributions for enrollment classes and other events.
 - She praised Genesis Hardin who has recently participated in the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Youth Summit and represented Tennessee at the Jim Casey Youth Leadership Institute in St. Louis, Missouri.
 - She said they have 20 youth interested in their August class.
 - Shervington introduced Estavon Carter, a young man who spoke about the life skills he has received from the program.

Update from Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant (April Tanguay and Ashley Harrington)

- Tanguay provided an update on the three-year plan. She stated year two will end August 29th. They are a few days away from meeting their goal of 100 enrollees before the end of year two.
- She reported over the summer they focused on Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA) training, System of Care (SOC) one-on-one training, Wrap around service training and Cultural Competency training.
- Tanguay reported the goal for year three is to have 120 enrollees and another ACRA training in July.
- Harrington reported that Centerstone is one person away from meeting their goal for enrollees before the end of year two.
- She said they too focused on training and helping youth find jobs and enroll in college.
- Harrington stated 16 providers are on track to be certified for ACRA so they can go back and train other staff. It costs about \$5,000 per person to be certified and takes about one year. Some people were certified within six months. Tanguay added Chestnut Health System provides ACRA certification.

Update from Resource Centers (continued)

- **Dream Seekers/South Memphis Alliance (Tameka Daniel-Greer)**
 - Daniel-Greer stated they were preparing for graduation. Five of the six eligible youth graduated by August and two will attend Community Colleges while the other three will attend a University. They currently have two college graduates.
 - She said they have 13 currently enrolled in the Opportunity Passports program. Some of the youth have already maxed out of the program and two matched funds to purchase vehicles.
 - Daniel-Greer said they have two Sisters Saving Sisters classes scheduled.
 - The center conducted surveys of youth who have been active in the program. Staff has already made contact with 80 percent of the youth involved as they have recently participated in events or used the center.
 - She said they received a \$1 million grant from the city and are looking to move into a new facility.
 - They will have a community service event August 20th and currently have 38 youth going out to the Food Bank. She said the youth decided to focus their energy on housing and food disparity.
- **I.A.M. READY Center, Chattanooga/Hamilton/Southeast (Jack Parks)**
 - Parks reported the I.A.M. Ready Center just celebrated its one-year anniversary in June.

- It is a Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative operated by the Partnership for Families, Children and Adults to prepare youth aging out of foster care for the realities of the real world.
- The Center serves young people between the ages of 14-26 who have spent at least one day in foster care after the age of 14, living in or around the Hamilton County area.
- Parks shared lessons learned and advised every service provider in the room to conduct focus groups with the youth they serve.
- He reported they have 44 participants with seven enrollees between July and August.
- Services available include literacy, financial education, tutoring, a baby university for youth with children (infant-four years old), career development training, leadership programs like My Brother's Keeper Initiative and legal assistance to address subpoenas and social services issues.
- Parks said they also have a Sisters Saving Sisters program and recently held a Dancing with the Stars Fundraiser netting \$20,000 in funding.
- He said they have revised the program brochure to get the word out and are on the radio every Monday to provide updates to the public about their events.

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program (Joseph Goldsmith)

- Goldsmith reported they had 1455 young adults enrolled across Tennessee this year.
- He said 78 percent either graduated or were enrolled in school; 72 percent seeking employment or employed; and 92 percent were living either with family or independently.
- He said 673 youth across Tennessee are served each day.
- In June, Governor Haslam held a press conference at Youth Villages to highlight results released from clinical trial.

Overview of Wyman's Teen Outreach Program at the Oasis Center (Jane Fleishman)

- Fleishman gave a brief overview of the services Oasis provides to youth.
- In early 2012, the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, the University of Tennessee Center of Excellence for Children in State Custody and Oasis Center launched the Youth Development Learning Collaborative to disseminate Wyman's Teen Outreach Program (TOP®) to Level II and III congregate care facilities in Tennessee.
- TOP® is an evidence-based youth development approach designed to help adolescents develop life skills, healthy behaviors and a sense of purpose. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes it as a model "best practices list" program.
- There are 17 sites now and they will add more sites in Youth Development Centers (YDCs) this year. Wyman owns the model and their role is to train staff on the model and provide technical support.

- Youth are encouraged to talk 80 percent of the time and facilitators to talk 20 percent of the time to allow youth to advocate on their behalf. This is a youth driven program teaching them about values, decision-making, sexual health and planning for the future, etc.
- Through community service, the youth also learn the impact of self-efficacy.
- Celebration is the last part of the program allowing the youth to enjoy their achievements.
- Oasis is currently working with training DCS staff to work on models for their Juvenile Justice staff.
- Fleishman said there is Quarterly e-newsletter they send out. Anyone can sign up on the website <https://www.oasiscenter.org>.

Preparation for 2015 Annual Report due October 31, 2015

- O’Neal went through the recommendations from last year one by one and participants provided suggestions.
- Shervington from Helen Ross McNabb left some suggestions before she had to leave.
- O’Neal said Petty will send the recommendations out for review.

Other Business

- O’Neal asked Kisha Ledlow, Project Director, Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative to provide an update.
- Ledlow said they are still in the beginning stages and announced there will be a conference, *First Episode Psychosis: Developing New Directions in Tennessee* on September 3-4, 2015 at the Embassy Suites Nashville-South/Cool Springs in Franklin, Tennessee. It is a free event and registration is open.

Future Meeting Topics/Next Meetings

- Briana Johnson, Labor and Workforce Development reminded the group of the Career Centers as a job resource. She also offered to give a presentation at a future meeting.
- The next meeting will be November 5, 2015.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:44 p.m.



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Andrew Jackson Building, Ninth Floor
502 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0800
(615) 741-2633 (FAX) 741-5956
1-800-264-0904

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

April 28, 2016

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time

Midtown Hills Police Precinct

1443 12th Avenue South Nashville, TN 37203

615-880-1411

Agenda

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements/Acceptance of August 2015 Meeting Summaries

- *Richard Kennedy, Associate Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.*

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update –

- *Michael Leach, Director, Office of Independent Living, DCS.*
- *Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director, Office of Independent, DCS.*

Update from Resource Centers

- *Pamela Cash, Youth Connections at Monroe Harding.*
- *Mary Binger, Project Now! Helen Ross McNabb.*
- *Tameka Daniel, Dream Seekers, South Memphis Alliance.*
- *Jack Parks, I AM READY, Chattanooga/Hamilton/Southeast.*

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program

- *Joseph Goldsmith, Youth Villages LifeSet.*
- *Heather Brown, Youth Villages LifeSet.*

Update from Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service

- **Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant**
 - *April Tanguay, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.*
 - *Ashley Harrington, Centerstone.*
 - *Erica Spencer, Clayton Ramsey, Pathways.*
- **Healthy Transitions and First Episode Psychosis Program**
 - *Kisha Ledlow, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services*

Update from Tennessee Housing and Development Agency

- *Shay Grier, Tennessee Housing and Development Agency*

Presentation from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development

- *Briana Moore, Department of Labor and Workforce Development*

Next Meeting

- *June 23, 2016, in conjunction with the Council on Children's Mental Health*
- *August 4, 2016*
- *October 6, 2016*

Other Business



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Youth Transitions Advisory Council

April 28, 2016

12:30 pm – 3:30 p.m. Central Time
Midtown Hills Police Precinct

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

Phil Acord
Dave Aguzzi
Julia Barlar
Liz Blasbery
Amy Campbell
Tameka Daniel-Greer
Sujit Das
Jane Fleishman
Shay Grier
Ginger Harris

Elizabeth Holmes
Sumita Keller
Richard Kennedy
Michael Leach
Kisha Ledlow
Pamela Madison
Linda McCorkle
Briana Moore
Teresa Moore
Linda O'Neal
Crystal Parker

Steve Petty
Clayton Ramsey
Natasha Smith
Ned Solomon
Wendy Spence
Lisa Stetar
April Tanguay
Amy Vosburgh
Will Voss

Welcome & Introductions – Richard Kennedy, Associate Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

- Kennedy welcomed the group, expressed his appreciation for those attending and asked for introductions.

Acceptance of August 2015 Meeting Summary – Richard Kennedy

- Kennedy asked members to review the August Meeting summary and asked for revisions or edits.
- Mike Leach of DCS indicated the wrong date was listed for the implementation of the prudent parenting standard and requested a change to September 29, 2016. April Tanguay advised the date for the A-CRA training needed to be revised to reflect July not March.
- **IT WAS MOVED (SOLOMON) AND SECONDED (AGUZZI) TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST 2015 MEETING SUMMARY WITH REVISIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Announcements – Richard Kennedy

- Tanguay announced an August event she will discuss later.

- Kisha Ledlow announced the development of a Youth Peer Program.
- Will Voss announced Tennessee Voices for Children will have a Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and Text, Talk, Act Night on Thursday, May 5th from 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. This will be a national dialogue about the importance of mental health and how to help a friend in need.

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update – Michael Leach, Director and Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director, Office of Independent Living, Department of Children Services

- Aguzzi reported on young adults receiving Extension of Foster Care Services (EFCS) for July 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016. There were 676 total EFCS episodes and 666 young adults served during that period. In contrast, there were 636 EFCS episodes and 625 young adults served during the same period in 2015.
- He discussed the federal National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) Pilot Assessment Review conducted by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and some of the findings to help DCS enhance its work on improving outcomes and ensuring youth get appropriate services. The National Youth in Transition Database is a national study that surveys youth about their thoughts and experiences of foster care services and tracks the independent living services that youth receive. The Tennessee Department of Children's Services and YVLifeSet are partners in ensuring best practice, required by the US government.
- Aguzzi shared findings to include not reporting IV-E EFCS as in foster care, extraction code problems point in time (survey, to include when state determined could not take survey), non-paid services not entered into the system, TFACTS survey not correct where enhancement requests were sitting idle for years, informing and engaging youth boards of survey's purpose and use of the NYTD data so data moving forward will be more viable. Aguzzi reported he has been working with the IT department to fix many of these issues and find a way to capture needed data. External surveys are being built in RedCap allowing more surveys to be completed online.
- He indicated there were many examples of quality casework collaboration between DCS staff, Independent Living (IL) Specialists and Youth Villages staff to deliver IL services to transitioning youth, particularly in providing temporary housing and case management services. However, many stakeholders expressed concern about the availability and accessibility of services and supports for special populations of youth with high needs including: youth with juvenile justice histories, LGBT youth, youth with severe mental health needs or substance use disorders, and youth who are pregnant or parenting. Supportive and stable housing (including foster placements for older youth) was the most common need cited by stakeholders for such transitioning youth.
- Aguzzi shared concerns from DCS staff, advocates and young people about the ability of the state's extended foster care program to engage and retain youth in supportive

placements and services between ages 18 and 21. Currently, the state limits eligibility for extended foster care services to youth completing secondary or post-secondary education. Some stakeholders expressed concern that these narrow eligibility rules help only a limited range of youth who are ready to continue their education. He noted employment readiness and attainment is a concern as well. DCS has been working with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development to address those concerns.

- As a result of the review, DCS has begun the following:
 - Tailoring the state's Quality Services Review (QSR) process to focus on the appropriate review of extended foster care cases and ensuring such cases are a part of QSRs statewide;
 - Considering adding or incorporating independent living programming as a CQI topic-based group in the state's CQI team system;
 - Analyzing NYTD data in conjunction with what else is known about services provided to youth (e.g., services not paid for provided by CFCIP, but paid for provided by local housing programs, etc.) to determine which services (type/dosage) really lead to improved outcomes;
 - Conducting analysis of service data by locality to determine gaps in services or service needs;
 - Developing performance measures using NYTD data to raise visibility of practice issues impacting transitioning youth; and
 - Disseminating NYTD data to state staff, youth, service providers, courts, foster parents and other stakeholders.
 - Aguzzi said the NYTD Quality Improvement Plan has been submitted.
- Leach presented updates from the Office of Independent Living (IL). DCS recently was awarded the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Grant of \$2 million to go towards pregnancy prevention. He said he has seen a decrease in youth pregnancies while in state custody.
- He reported the Prudent Parenting Law passed through the legislature this year to give youth in foster care a chance to experience normal activities like their peers. There will be a training through DCS IL and Leach will get information out to Steve Petty to disseminate.
- DCS has finally reached the maintenance phase of the Brian A. lawsuit and will continue to work to maintain improvements made over the last 15 years. One of the Brian A. provisions for the Office of Independent Living is that 90 percent of the youth at the age of 18 are either enrolled in school, graduating with a secondary degree and attending a post-secondary or vocational institution, or are employed full-time. Leach indicated DCS is right around 90 percent in the last two years. Over 400 young people graduated last year and an

additional 126 graduated from Extension of Foster Care. Leach said there are more young people attending college than DCS has ever had, but the challenge is keeping the youth there.

- A second part to the Brian A. maintenance is Independent Living has to have a full service array to show life skills development, different services available to young people as they go through the system, and a permanency outcome goal.
- Leach reported Woodland Hills Youth Development Center has changed its name to Gateway to Independence. There is a semi-new criteria for young people going into the program to place the college-age young people on track with education are located at the Nashville campus to ensure they have the resources needed to continue to post-secondary education in an effort to break the cycle. He said Tennessee College of Applied Technology, formally known as Tennessee Technology Centers, is a school many youth attend.

Update from Resource Centers

- **Youth Connections at Monroe Harding – Pamela Madison**

- Madison reported last year Monroe Harding served just over 200 young people. There were actually 500 young people visiting the center for services in addition to the 200 enrolled in the programs. She said last year 100 young people were served through the Opportunity Passport program.
- Coordinators conduct short quarterly surveys to gather qualitative data on ways to strengthen the program, increase survey responses, and gain more insight for program participants. April and October are months for follow up surveys. The goal is 80 percent to take a 15-minute survey. Monroe Harding had a 85 percent complete the survey.
- Madison spoke about the PREP Program, a comprehensive sex education program. It has been successful. She said Youth Connections hopes to collaborate with A Step Ahead Foundation, a group in Memphis offering young women free long-acting reversible contraception like IUDs to prevent unplanned pregnancies.
- As a result of conversations with some of the young ladies, a new girls' group will begin to allow an open forum for young ladies to have questions answered and create a safe space for open conversations about sex. Next month will be a Sex and Romance Conference with a panelist of four community members, one male and three females, to respond to questions. Madison said girls need to have the male perspective as well.

- Madison provided an update on the GED/HiSet class. Last year, just over 40 young people were served. There is a graduation ceremony twice a year. The next one will be held May 24th. She encouraged everyone to make time to attend to celebrate the youth's achievements.
 - Madison reported Stepping Stones, a job placement program, is going strong. She indicated new partners are always welcome. The youth receive a stipend paid by Monroe Harding.
 - She highlighted the importance of the extension of foster care services because there are a number of youth who leave, but return after a length of time in need of services.
- **Helen Ross McNabb – Project NOW! – Mike Leach**
 - Mike Leach gave an update since Mary Binger was unable to attend. He reported there were about 110 participants in the financial literacy program. Programs include Sisters Saving Sisters, financial literacy classes, advice on how to prepare for a self-sufficient adulthood and assistance in seeking a job or higher education.
 - Project NOW (Navigating Opportunities that Work) uses the evidence-based Jim Casey Model to help youth ages 14-24 who have been in foster care to develop financial skills. During the program, youth open IDA savings accounts that are matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000 for each year the youth participate in the program. Program participants develop a written plan for approved assets such as computers, vehicles and housing, medical or educational expense.
 - **Dream Seekers, South Memphis Alliance (SMA) – Tameka Daniel-Greer**
 - Daniel-Greer reported SMA runs the Sisters Saving Sisters program where 62 young ladies were served this quarter. There are 30 referrals scheduled to attend the next program.
 - She shared that 100 percent of the surveys were completed and thanked Pam Madison for her incentive idea. SMA paid \$10 as an incentive for their youth to complete the survey within the first week and even offered an incentive to the caseworkers with a dinner at their favorite restaurant.
 - Due to the success of Sisters Saving Sisters, funds have been secured to begin a Brother to Brother for the young men.

I.A.M. READY Center – Mike Leach

- Jack Parks could not attend due to an event Saturday, April 30, 2016 called Reality Check. Leach gave an update on his behalf. The Reality Check event has been ongoing for a

couple of years now. Youth will learn life skills such as banking, money management, asset building and good credit, housing and transportation, independent living, employment, driver's education, auto and home insurance, car buying, and much more.

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program – Heather Brown

- Brown reported the program has served 697 youth to date, just over the targeted goal of 691. She said on a daily average 685 youth are served. For this FY, 4,457 youth were served.
- There will be 233 high school/HiSet graduates. A graduation ceremony will take place in May to include December graduates. She said there are three youth graduating from a community college and three youth graduating from a four-year university.
- Brown spoke about the Youth Village (YV) Scholar program. Youth are assigned a LifeSet specialist to work with them throughout college in an effort to motivate them to graduation. A stipend is awarded. There were over 30 youth wanting to apply. She said the application process is very rigorous.
- Representatives from the Legal Aid Society reached out to YV to discuss a partnership to educate the youth on various legal situations. Brown stated the Mid-Cumberland area to include parts of Upper Cumberland is the focus for now.
- More youth are taking advantage of Tennessee Promise and 75 percent of the youth are employed or seeking employment and maintaining these jobs for longer than three to six months.

Update from Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

- **Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant -- April Tanguay, Clayton Ramsey and Amy Vosburg**
 - Tanguay provided an update on the three-year plan. She stated they were two-thirds into year three of the grant and are on target for their goal. Ashley Harrington has taken on a new role within Centerstone. Amy Vosburg has taken her place as Program Manager of the grant.
 - There was a recent and thorough three-day federal site visit. Tanguay reported on the areas of improvement suggested. Areas for improvement included more involvement with the advisory council as it related to best practices and other discussions. Other areas included financial mapping and TennCare funding. Tanguay stated they were asked to expand on the map provided by TCCY. A revised financial map will be submitted May 2016. More involvement from their youth and families of the grant was another area of improvement.

- Tanguay highlighted areas of excellence. She said they are on track with enrollment and above 80 percent with follow-up surveys. Client satisfaction is at an all-time high and evaluation outcomes have been positive. Another plus was the fact there has not been a lot of staff turnover with this grant.
- The Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) also received praise for the community reinforcement approach. There will be another training to assist agencies in becoming certified in July with Mental Health and Substance Abuse youth and adolescent serving agencies. She admitted it has been a challenge to ensure agencies followed through on certifications.
- Ramsey provided the update from the Pathway Site. He said there are currently 46 youth enrolled. The goal is 60 enrollees this year. Over 70 percent of referrals still come from the juvenile court system. Many members of the Advisory Council also belong to the local anti-drug coalitions; therefore, it was a great idea to combine the two coalitions. They will meet in June.
- Ramsey reported five of the 46 youth enrolled are transition-age youth. Four of those transition-age youth have jobs and/or are enrolled in college. Pathways is the leading provider of behavioral health services in West Tennessee and serves over 10,000 individuals and families annually.
- In August, Pathways will work with Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) to host a large community health fair to provide various screenings. Pathways uses some of the funding to reward and support the transition-age youth with dorm preparation and such. Pathways is also collaborating with continues to work with Councilman Johnny Dunn in Jackson, who has been collaborating with the youth as well.
- Pathways is also working with the University of Memphis University of Memphis Lambuth and will use that site for a 5K run.
- Vosburg spoke for Centerstone. There are 35 enrollees to date. Ten of the 35 are transition-age youth and there are three returning enrollees. She indicated many of the youth are coming from other programs and are using this program as a step down. Some are self-referrals and family referrals, but most are from juvenile court. Centerstone recently hired a community specialist and a therapist.
- Vosburg reported she has been working more with the Community Anti-drug Coalition of Rutherford County to try do a little more outreach and exposure for Centerstone.
- The Treatment & Recovery for Youth Conference 2016: Innovations in Substance Use Disorder Treatment will take place August 5, 2016 at Patterson Park Community Center in Murfreesboro. The Conference is made possible by Centerstone, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) and Pathways.

- **Healthy Transitions and First Episode Psychosis Program – Kisha Ledlow, Project Director, Healthy Transitions and Amy Campbell, Centerstone.**

- Ledlow gave a brief overview of Health Transitions Initiative. This five-year federal grant awarded to the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) focused on providing support services to address serious mental health conditions, co-occurring disorders, and risk for developing serious mental health conditions among youth 16 – 25 years old. Ledlow said the initiative is specifically targeting those who are homeless, LBGTQ population, those involved in the juvenile justice system, child welfare and/or DCS.
- There are two sites, Carey Counseling in Northwest Tennessee and Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System in Hamilton County. Carey Counseling started taking referrals in January and currently has 14 enrolled. Volunteer started enrollment in February and has 11 enrolled. The sites will collaborate with local agencies to raise public awareness about mental health, providing education and employment support, and utilizing peer-to-peer specialists to provide wrap around care to clients.
- Ledlow said Healthy Transitions is developing a Young Adult Leadership Council that will engage in helping to design the logo, provide input as to what a successful transition to adulthood looks like and assist other youth and young adults. She said Tennessee is also focusing on renaming the Certified Peer Recovery Program.
- Campbell, Healthy Transitions Lead Evaluator at Centerstone Research Institute, spoke about the Youth and Young Adults serving as research collaborators. She reported there will be listening sessions to learn from and inform work going forward.
- Ledlow spoke about the First Episode Psychosis Initiative, early intervention for young people age 15-30 who are experiencing unusual thoughts or behaviors and hearing or seeing things that others do not. Currently there is one site, OnTrack TN in Northwest, that has been providing services since December 2014. The goal was to enroll 10, but they exceeded it in June 2015. As of April 25, there are 15 active participants and 12 engaged in treatments. She shared a graphic developed demonstrating the First Year Program Evaluation FY2015.
- Last September, TDMHSAS hosted a successful national conference on First Episode Psychosis in conjunction with SAMHSA and Vanderbilt Behavioral Health.

- Recently, Congress doubled the required budget allocation from 5 percent to 10 percent and TDMHSAS will release an announcement of funding to expand to two additional sites in either Memphis/Shelby, Davidson or Hamilton County.

Update from Tennessee Housing and Development Agency – Shay Grier

- Grier reported there will be a new round of housing grant applications in September. More priority will be given to youth transitioning out of foster care. Questions and/or comments should be directed to Toni Shaw, Housing Program Manager, at 615-815-2034 or Shay Grier, Housing Program Coordinator, at 615-815-2114.

Presentation from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Agency – Briana Moore, Workforce Services Program Director, Department of Labor and Workforce Development

- Moore spoke about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that emphasizes program performance at State and local areas level. The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in 2014, is the first major update in nearly 15 years to guide how the public workforce system helps job seekers access education, training, and employment. Compared with its predecessor — the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) -- the new law puts greater emphasis on serving out-of-school youth through training and services that are employer driven and linked to labor market demand. The program provides federal funds for **eligible** youth. Participation is assessed by specific eligibility standards and is determined for interested individuals either as an in-school youth (ISY), 14-24 years old, low-income , or as an out-of-school youth (OSY), 16-24 years old, not attending any school as defined by State law.
- One of the biggest changes is the age was increased from 21 to 24. In addition, now there are 14 program elements. Five elements are new: education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training, services providing in-demand occupations and activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.
- Moore recommends disclosing all possible needs to identify support to be provided. Due to the age extension, more services may now be utilized like programs for adults, dislocated workers and youth activities.
- Youth Councils are not required under WIOA, however, local boards are encouraged to establish “a standing committee” to provide information and to assist in planning, operational and other youth-related service issues.
- For more information, please contact Briana Moore at 615-253-8860 or Briana.Moore@tn.gov.

Other Business

- 2016 Tennessee CASA Conference will be held Friday, May 13, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM (CDT) at the New Vision Baptist Church, 1750 N Thompson Lane, Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:28 p.m.



STATE OF TENNESSEE
COUNCIL ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Andrew Jackson Building, 9th Floor
502 Deaderick Street
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
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1-800-264-0904

June 23, 2016
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Midtown Hills Police Precinct
1443 12th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

**Council on Children's Mental Health/Youth Transitions Advisory Council
Agenda**

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements/Approval of April Minutes

- Linda O'Neal – TCCY Executive Director, and Sejal West – TDMHSAS Assistant Commissioner

Employment and Community First CHOICES

- Katie Powell – Assistant Director of MLTSS, Quality and Administration, TennCare

Voice and Choice for Youth in Custody

- Jane Fleishman, MSW, LAPSW – Oasis Center

Youth MOVE/SOC Grant Expansion Site – Tennessee Voices for Children

- Anna Claire Lowder, LMFT – Tennessee Voices for Children

YV LifeSet –

- Youth Villages – Charmaine Kromer, Executive Director and Heather Tribble, YV LifeSet State Coordinator

Networking Lunch

Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

- Healthy Transitions Initiative– Kisha Ledlow, HTI Project Director
- First Episode Psychosis – Tonya Brown, Carey Counseling
- Treatment and Recovery for Youth – April Tanguay, Project Director

Department of Children's Services

- Office of Independent Living – Mike Leach, Director; Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director; Ginger Harris, Youth Engagement Lead

DCS Resource Centers

- Youth Connections at Monroe Harding – Pam Madison
- Dream Seekers/South Memphis Alliance – Tameka Daniel
- I AM Ready/Chattanooga – Jack Parks
- Project Now! Helen Ross McNabb – Mary Binger

Workgroup Updates / Discussion Plans for Future Meetings

- Melissa McGee – Council on Children’s Mental Health Director, TCCY
- Steve Petty – Youth Transitions Advisory Council Director, TCCY

2016 CCMH Meeting Dates:
August 23, 2016 (TUESDAY meeting at Goodwill)
November 3, 2016

2016 YTAC Meeting Dates:
August 4, 2016 (at Goodwill)
October 6, 2016

Council on Children’s Mental Health Purpose Statement

Design a comprehensive plan for a statewide System of Care for children and families that is family-driven, youth-guided, community-based, and culturally and linguistically competent.



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
COUNCIL ON CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

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Youth Transitions Advisory Council & Council on Children's Mental Health
June 23, 2016
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Midtown Hills Police Precinct
1443 12th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

MEETING SUMMARY

Attendees:

Phil Acord	Bill Dobbins	Melissa McGee	Natasha Smith
Dave Aguzzi	Brenda Donaldson	Elizabeth McInerney	Ned Andrew Solomon
Aimee Alberd	Kendall Elsass	Michele Moser	Wendy Spence
Katie Armstrong	Jane Fleishman	Jessica Mullins	Erica Spencer
Elizabeth Ball	Reginald Gilmore	Wanda Myles	Joan Sykora
Alicia Banks	Kathy Gracey	Amy Olson	Vicki Taylor
Julia Barlar	Dwan Grey	Linda O'Neal	April Tanguay
Carole Beltz	Audrey Grigg	Crystal Parker	Heather Tribble
Kathy Benedetto	Samantha Hammonds	Jack Parks	Keri Virgo
Mary Binger	Ginger Harris	Alison Peak	Amy Vosburgh
Tonya Brown	Rikki Harris	Ashley Peters	Will Voss
Nicole Bugg	Timothy Hickman	Steve Petty	Don Walker
Maria Bush	Kurt Hippel	Taylor Phipps	Shauna Webb
Amy Campbell	Joel Hodges	Katie Powell	Kristen West
Rebecca Carmack	Adrienne Holbrook	Stephanie Pugh	Sejal West
Mollie Carter	Jeremy Humphrey	Dawn Puster	Alysia Williams
Adrian Cartledge	Melissa Jackson-Wade	Clayton Ramsey	Matt Yancey
Monica Causey	Kristy Leach	Joseph Reed	
Tasha Chusac	Mike Leach	Kathy Rogers	
Katari Coleman	Kisha Ledlow	Mary Rolando	
Sarah Cooper	Anna Claire Lowder	Katie Rosas	
Casunda Cross	Pam Madison	John Rust	
Tameka Daniel-Greer	Cheri Mastin	Trillion Small	
Molly Dennert	Chelsey McDaniel	Heather Smith	

I. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements (Linda O’Neal, TCCY Executive Director and Sejal West, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services)

- O’Neal welcomed and thanked everyone for making attendance a priority. She praised Melissa McGee for her work with CCMH and Steve Petty for his work with YTAC and gave a brief background on each Council.
- O’Neal addressed a few housekeeping matters before moving through the agenda. She thanked SGT. Jones and the staff at the Midtown Hills Police Precinct. She reminded attendees the sign-in sheet is essential for reporting requirements related to the federal System of Care grant.
- Introductions were made and O’Neal called for announcements.
- The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), in partnership with the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) and the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO), are sponsoring the 4th Annual System of Care (SOC) Conference July 11-12, 2016 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Cool Springs. This conference is supported through TDMHSAS’ System of Care Expansion Initiative from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and there is no charge to attend this conference. Preliminary program and registration materials are available at <http://www.tamho.org/uploads/pdfs/SOC%202016%20Conference/PremProg%202016%20SOC%20Conference%20V7.pdf>.
- O’Neal announced scholarships are still available for the Certified Family Support Specialist program. Please contact Brenda Donaldson, Family and Youth Engagement Coordinator with TDMHSAS at 615-770-1788 or email fcfs.tdmhsas@tn.gov.
- Wendy Spence, CASA, announced early registration is open for the Connecting for Children’s Justice Conference scheduled for October 2-4, 2016 in Murfreesboro. Visit <http://www.tnccjconference.org/> for more information.
- Michele Moser announced TAMHO and AIMHi TN will host a conference focused on infant and early childhood mental health on September 22-23, 2016. More details expected to come soon.
- Centerstone will host an event, *Innovations in Substance Use Disorder Treatment* at the Patterson Park Community Center in Murfreesboro on August 5, 2016. This event is supported through TDMHSAS’ Treatment and Recovery for Youth grant, also from SAMHSA. There is no cost to the event and Eventbrite registration will open soon.
- West thanked everyone on behalf of Commissioner Varney and reported on a new learning collaborative between TDMHSAS and the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities focusing on peer support services, specifically those targeted towards transition-aged youth.

II. Approval of Meeting Summaries

- O’Neal thanked Natasha Smith of TCCY for preparing the meeting summaries for both CCMH and YTAC meetings.
- Motion to accept the April 23, 2016 meeting summary for CCMH (**HARRIS, MOTION, ACORD, SECONDED, PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**)
- Motion to accept the April 28, 2016 meeting summary for YTAC (**SPENCE, MOTION, FLEISHMAN, SECONDED, PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**)

III. Employment and Community First CHOICES -- Katie Powell, Assistant Director of MLTSS, Quality and Administration, TennCare

- Powell gave an overview of the program and a refresher course on TennCare, the state’s Medicaid program and agency. Medicaid provides both medical and non-medical services to help pay for healthcare for certain groups of citizens – primarily children, pregnant women, older adults and people with disabilities. The non-medical services are known as “long term services and supports” or LTSS. Medicaid LTSS can be provided in the community called home and community based services or HCBS.
- The new Employment and Community First CHOICES (ECF CHOICES) program will only offer home and community based services (HCBS).
- Medicaid LTSS can also be provided in an institution like a nursing home or Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID). Tennessee’s programs are part of a nationwide movement to rebalance LTSS so that more people can live at home and in the community if they choose.
- Current LTSS programs and services for those with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) are three HCBS waivers (Comprehensive Aggregate Cap, Statewide and Self-Determination) and Intermediate Care Facilities for ICFs/IID).
- There are currently 9,000 people with intellectual disabilities served through Tennessee’s LTSS programs. Tennessee spent \$936 million (state and federal funding) for Medicaid LTSS on people with intellectual disabilities in Tennessee. The average cost of providing services to people with intellectual disabilities in Tennessee is nearly twice the national average making the program not sustainable and limiting the ability to serve more people.
- There are over 6,000 people with intellectual disabilities on the waiting list for services. People with developmental disabilities (other than intellectual disabilities) do not currently qualify for HCBS waiver services.
- Powell reported demand for LTSS, in particular HCBS is growing. In addition to people with developmental disabilities and intellectual disabilities, youth transitioning out of school and aging caregivers also are in need of these services. Three percent of the TennCare population accounts for 50 percent of the program costs (physical health,

behavioral health and LTSS). More than 75 percent of people with intellectual disabilities receiving LTSS are in the three percent.

- Powell spoke about the opportunities created from a new program like Employment and Community First CHOICES. She said the program allows TennCare to provide services people and their families say they need while allowing TennCare to provide these services more cost-effectively. The program will serve more people, including those on the waiting list and with other kinds of developmental disabilities.
- Another benefit of the program is that it aligns incentives toward employment, independent living, community integration and the things that people with disabilities and their families value the most.
- Employment and Community First CHOICES (ECF CHOICES) is a new program planned to start on July 1, 2016.
- Powell gave a brief history of the development of ECF CHOICES. There was a lot of stakeholder engagement leading to key messages and themes from public comments shaping the concept and program.
- With ECF CHOICES, Tennessee will become the first state in the country to develop and implement an integrated, home and community based services program aligning incentives toward promoting and supporting integrated, competitive employment and independent living as the first and preferred option for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Powell reported ECF CHOICES is for people with intellectual disabilities who are not currently receiving services. She admitted it will take time to be able to serve all of the people who need support. The initial enrollment will target groups identified by stakeholders like people with aging caregivers and young adults transitioning from school and other people who need employment supports.
- She said people in current waivers are not impacted, but can choose to move to the new program later.
- Powell detailed the services EFC CHOICES offers and highlighted three benefits groups: Essential Family Support (Group 4), Essential Supports for Employment and Independent Living (Group 5) and Comprehensive Supports for Employment and Community Living (Group 6).
- She indicated in year one Group 4 planned to serve up to 500 individuals, Group 5 up to 1,000 individuals and Group 6 up to 200 individuals. Each group has specific criteria. A pre-admission evaluation and the behavior assessment will be used to ensure the correct services are provided. TennCare is aware of the gap with youth transitioning out of DCS. Powell shared that TennCare is working on ways to amend the requirements for the groups in an effort to allow more youth to qualify for Groups 5 and 6.
- Powell said the benefits of the program were based on feedback from stakeholders. Feedback included having 14 employment services and supports, wrap around services to support community integration, i.e., transportation, creating a pathway to employment

for those with significant disabilities, consultation with experts from the federal Office on Disability Employment Policy, outcome or value-based reimbursement and other strategies to align incentives toward employment, no facility-based services but all community-based or in-home services, many new services to empower individuals and their families toward independence and integration like peer to peer support, and supports up to the same level as available under the current Statewide waiver (for people with intellectual disability) like appropriate 24-hour residential services. Powell said the benefits are targeted based on need.

- Not all services are available in every benefit package. There will also be expenditure caps for each group.
- Powell stressed the new program will be different from the current waivers because it will be operated by TennCare health plans (Managed Care Organizations or MCOs). She reported MCOs help TennCare by making sure LTSS are coordinated with other services like medical and behavioral services.
- Powell reported every person receiving services will have a Support Coordinator employed by the MCO who works with the person to develop a Person-Centered Support Plan.
- In addition, the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD) will play an important role as a partner with TennCare by conducting intake for people not already on Medicaid, and therefore do not have MCO assignment, assisting the MCOs with annual quality monitoring of certain providers and collaborating to track critical incident management and to conduct certain critical incident investigations.
- Powell said starting July 1, 2016, applicants can use a self-referral form on the TennCare website to apply for the program. Applicants who already have Medicaid should contact their MCO with questions. Applicants who do not already have Medicaid should contact DIDD Regional Intake Offices with questions and for assistance to apply for both ECF CHOICES and Medicaid. Amerigroup and Blue Care will provide services the first year. United Healthcare will implement enrollment in 2017.

IV. Voice and Choice for Youth in Custody – Jane Fleishman, Statewide Training and Development Director, Oasis Center

- Fleishman gave an overview of the evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention model, a Wyman Teen Outreach Program (TOP) that began in 2012. TOP takes the youth development approach by providing opportunities for voice and choice, supporting healthy development and school success and decreasing risky behaviors with the curriculum-driven discussion groups and youth-driven service learning programs.
- She stated the program reaches youth aged 12 to 18 who are in custody, residential treatment (level II and III DCS-licensed facilities) or DCS Youth Development Centers (beginning 2016).

- Between August 2014 to July 2015, there were 910 youth engaged in TOP at 19 sites across Tennessee: Monroe Harding (Nashville), Volunteer Academy (Gallatin), UCHRA (Cookeville, Crossville and Sparta), Florence Crittenton (Knoxville), Porter-Leath (Memphis), Omnivisions (Lebanon, Mt. Juliet, Cleveland and Elizabethton), Madison Oaks Academy (Jackson), Holston Home (Greenville), Youth Villages (Nashville), G4S Academy for Young Women (Nashville) and Mountain View Youth Development Center (Dandridge).
- Fleishman said TOP is a positive youth development approach supporting youth to reach normal developmental milestones. There is a sense of belonging and connectedness to social groups and institutions, mastery of competencies, independence, confidence and leadership and generosity.
- TOP provides engaging opportunities for youth to practice social and cognitive skills, to be generous and contribute to the community. Examples of this generosity included an Angel Tree at the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency (UCHRA), Thanksgiving Dinners at Gateway to Independence (GTI) Program at Woodland Hills and a lemonade stand at an Omni Vision event. Fleishman notes, “The youth involved in TOP realize they are not the only ones who have problems and after a while every storm runs out of rain.”

V. Youth M.O.V.E./System of Care (SOC) Expansion Site – Anna Claire Lowder, LMFT, Tennessee Voices for Children

- Lowder explained Youth M.O.V.E. (Motivating Others through Voices of Experience) gives voice to the youth and is a youth led national organization devoted to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development by uniting the voices of individuals who have experience with various systems including mental health, juvenile justice, education and child welfare.
- She provided detail criteria of the four program components Direct Service Delivery, Youth M.O.V.E. Councils, Coordinating Councils for Community and Partnerships. The youth must reside in Hickman, Rutherford or Williamson counties and be between 11-21 years of age.
- Lowder shared pictures of the youth guided positive peer interactions and reported the youth learn leadership and advocacy skills during program participation. More videos and pictures are on Youth M.O.V.E. Facebook and YouTube sites.
- Youth M.O.V.E. Hickman is comprised of four middle and high school groups. There are monthly meetings and events with elected officers. The primary focus is suicide and self-harming prevention and anti-bullying.
- Youth M.O.V.E. KHROME (Kids Helping Rutherford County and Others Morph into Excellence) is a faith-based community group with the same focus as the Hickman County group.

- Lowerder explained the Coordinating Councils are comprised of community partner and caregivers and described the partner relationships with various schools, juvenile courts, state and local government and mental health organizations. Through these partnerships, Youth M.O.V.E. is able to provide Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessments and SOC philosophy recommendations, mental health awareness events and community SOC trainings to enhance and sustain the infrastructure.

VI. Youth Villages (YV) LifeSet – Heather Tribble, LifeSet State Coordinator, Youth Villages and Staff

- Melissa Jackson Wade gave an overview of the program setup to help youth aging out of state custody, juvenile justice or other vulnerable situations. The participants are 17-22 years of age. Wade reported Youth Villages LifeSet program has served nearly 9,000 youth since 1999 and 950 youth daily. The program is currently located in seven different states including Tennessee. This is the first program in the country showing positive impacts from this population across multiple states.
- Wade went on to say there are specialists available 24/7 to assist the youth during the eight to 10 months they are in the program.
- Stephanie Pugh explained the transitional living specialists assist youth with education, housing, employment, life skills, physical and mental health and healthy relationships for lifelong connections with caring adults. She discussed the key components of YVLifeSet and the intensity of services, type of services and staff training and supervision. The formalized program model is research-based and youth-driven.
- Pugh reported success at one-year discharge with 88 percent of participants living at home with family or independently, 85 percent in school, graduated or employed, and 82 percent with no involvement with the law.
- Dawn Puster gave a briefing on the scholar program and reported about 70 percent of foster youth are interested in going to college but only 20 percent will apply and three percent will graduate. Nineteen scholars who have graduated and 60 scholars currently. Puster stated the youth receive a monthly stipend to assist with the cost of living and highlighted the required pay it forward component that involves community service.
- Puster said scholars attend trips to Washington, DC and other locations and mentioned there is no outside funding for this program.
- Tribble shared the data from the rigorous random assignment study conducted by Professor Mark Courtney of the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. She said the results are recent and the study found 13 percent decrease in mental health problems, 30 percent decrease in violent relationships, 17 percent increase in employment and 7 percent increase in earnings, 22 percent decrease of homelessness

and a 13 percent decrease of hardship and lack of food. Courtney concluded, “that we found even moderate impacts across so many domains is amazing because the program is so individualized.”

VII. Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

➤ Healthy Transitions Initiative (HTI)/First Episode Psychosis Program – Kisha Ledlow, HTI Project Director and Amy Campbell, Centerstone Research Institute (CRI)

- Ledlow stated the purpose of TN Healthy Transitions Initiative was to assist Tennessee youth and young adults ages 16-25 with or at risk of developing a serious mental health condition or co-occurring disorder in improving their health and wellness, leading self-directed lives and reaching their fullest potential. She added the goal is to keep youth and young adults from falling through the cracks.
- She spoke about the state and local levels of the program and presented an update about the service delivery over the past year. There are both formal and informal peer support services with youth councils, support groups, etc. The process entails the Referral, Screening, Peer Support, Enrollment and Service Delivery. Most referrals are from courts, schools, other mental health agencies, families, etc. The youth are screened for substance abuse, mental health disorders, trauma and other risk factors.
- Ledlow mentioned the creation of the Young Adult Leadership Councils (YALC) and said over the next year, she hopes to ensure youth and young adults stay engaged with YALC at the local and state levels. YALC will host its first meeting July 9, 2016 at the Oasis Center.
- Campbell spoke about the focus groups held to incorporate the youth and young adult voice when creating a service model. There were two focus groups in Northwest Tennessee with high school and college-aged young adults. There were 14 participants across the two groups with 15-18 (Carroll Academy) and 18-32 (Bethel University).
- She said she learned that Snap Chat and Instagram were the new social mediums because Facebook was for “old folks.” The focus groups also discussed key marketing and outreach methods, key engagement strategies and key needs and struggles. Some of the feedback has been incorporated in the services provided.
- There is an initiative to train the youth and young adults in research skills and data collection.
- Ledlow emphasized the need for public awareness by sharing the social media sites like Facebook (Tennessee Healthy Transitions Initiative), Twitter and Instagram (@HT_TN).

➤ **First Episode Psychosis, OnTrack TN – Tonya Brown, Carey Counseling Center, Inc.**

- Brown explained first episode psychosis and how various experiences may affect adolescence. She said the onset is usually occurs in late adolescence or early adulthood. Psychotic symptoms, cognitive deficits and social impairments contribute to disability.
- She reported reasons for delay in seeking treatment of first episode dilemma includes unaffordability, inadequate specialized services, stigma and distrust in the healthcare system, insidious onset and lack of knowledge.
- Brown expressed the goals of OnTrack TN is to improve outcomes, provide rapid access to treatment, share the decision-making in available treatments and to increase community awareness.
- She stated the services will be provided for up to two years with the focus based on individual needs. Brown provided details of the treatment timeline and described it in three phases. Phase one covers the first three months where engagement with the team occurs and there is an initial needs assessment. Phase two covers months four to eighteen where ongoing intervention and monitoring occurs. Phase three covers months 19 to 24 where ongoing/future needs and services are identified.
- Brown described the initial screening and eligibility process and noted the grant can cover services for those who cannot pay. Due to limited funding, participants must reside in Benton, Carroll, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion or Weakley counties. She noted eligibility rules out primary diagnosis of substance induced psychosis or psychosis secondary to a general medical condition, a diagnosis of mental retardation and a serious or chronic mental illness significantly impairing function independent of psychosis.
- Brown shared the semi-annual program evaluation date for FY2016 and pointed out one team can only serve a few people at a time. Due to the increase of funding through SAMHSA, two additional sites will be added soon.

➤ **Treatment and Recovery for Youth (TRY) Project -- April Tanguay, Project Director and Team from Centerstone and Pathways**

- Tanguay provided an overview of the population served and a briefing on the data outcomes for TRY clients who have co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. About 65 to 70 percent of the clients are co-occurring. SAMHSA grant is starting its fourth year. It is a harm-reduction evidence-based model for youth and young adults aged 12-24.

- Rebecca Carmack from Centerstone shared slides showing the percent of co-occurring clients reporting use of alcohol and marijuana. Majority of the clients are referred by the courts. As for the percent of clients reporting mental health symptoms, violent behavior went up slightly. She said most of the violence is from clients hitting a wall.
- Clayton Ramsey from Pathways spoke about the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) model. He encourages the youth to participate in sports, finding a job etc. He said this model is more cost-efficient than other models.
- Amy Vosburgh from Centerstone spoke about the goals of counseling. She said during this procedure if a client has a co-occurring diagnosis, there is a great chance that the client is going to identify an area beyond substance use on which they need to work. Vosburgh explained if a client chooses school as a problem area he will usually identify anger, anxiety, depression, ADHD symptoms, etc. as reasons he may struggle while in school. She said therapists can encourage coping skills and ways to handle these situations instead of substance use.
- Ramsey spoke about medication management and stated the current procedure is utilized by the therapist when dealing with issues such as depression, ADHD, mood disorders, anxiety and even more serious co-occurring diagnosis to provide treatment that is more beneficial when using medication. At times, clients consistently report self-medicating because of feeling depressed, angry, and anxious, etc. This process links clients with a medically monitored regiment which can help with psychological symptoms.
- He describe anger management as the problem where many adolescents have the inability to successfully handle their anger so at times they will turn to substance use to cope. He believes continued involvement of family is the key to a successful outcome.

VIII. Department of Children’s Services (DCS)

➤ Office of Independent Living – Mike Leach, Director and Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director

- Leach reported there are 8,043 children and youth in custody. He said about 3,000 of the 8,043 are age 14 and older.
- He provided an update on the Brian A. Settlement Agreement. He said the state had been required to reach more than 140 benchmarks to transform foster care. The state now enters a yearlong maintenance period, during which they must sustain their performance on every measure—the final step before requesting an end to court oversight.

- DCS is currently working on accreditation through the Council on Accreditation. He said eight percent of youth in state's custody age out of foster care and there are over 1100 adoptions a year. The goal is to reunify the youth with families and that 90 percent go to a permanency option.
- He shared the data showing outcomes of youth four years after exiting foster care. The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative estimated that related losses incurred through public assistance, incarceration, and lost wages cost the U.S. \$7.8 billion per year.
- Leach said building connections to families, friends and communities is a predictor of success. He reported chemical changes in the brain prime adolescents for risk-taking and presents opportunities for them to learn from experience and mistakes and, with adult support, gain greater self-regulation, coping, and resiliency skills.
- He believes that if young people in foster care are given opportunities to exercise their still-developing brains by planning their own lives and making their own decision, they have more success.
- Leach talked about the three-year comparison of the Quality Service Review (QSR) System Performance Status Indicators that looks at youth aged 14-17. Currently there have been 109 cases for 2016 as compared to 107 cases in 2015 and 89 cases in 2014.
- He spoke about the data for total aged out eligible for extension of foster care services (EFCS). In 2014, the retention rate of EFCS population was 235 days. In 2015, it increased to 255 days. Leach indicated that this is equivalent to two college semesters meaning young people are dropping out after the first year.
- Aguzzi reported on the TN National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data and the three-year survey mandate. He said Tennessee is incarcerating more youth than the national average. The data is based on the sample size of 17 year olds. Aguzzi explained the need to analyze the data to see if majority of the youth surveyed are juvenile justice involved and that could be the reason why Tennessee's number is higher than the national average.
- Aguzzi suggested finding a way to connect young people to services, expanding the eligibility criteria to allow more youth served and moving barriers to find employment will lead to successful outcomes.
- Leach stated DCS is currently working on drafting legislation to allow DCS to potentially serve young people adopted before 18 which will allow them to come back and request foster care services until age 21. Those who come into custody after 18 but before 21.
- Leach went over the Well-Being in Tennessee data. He said it is consistent with the KIDS COUNT data recently released. Youth aged 14-18 fared better.

Participants felt strong in areas of health and safety. He said the most room for growth was in economic well-being.

- Leach shared educational data and reported there were 400 high school and 18 college graduates in FY16 compared to 423 high school graduates and 21 college graduates in FY15. In addition, currently 93 percent of youth discharged at 18 shall have earned a GED, graduated from high school, enrolled in high school or college or an alternative approved educational program, currently enrolled in vocational training or employed full-time.
- Leach highlighted all of the services in Tennessee for youth including Extension of Foster Care Services, YV LifeSet, Teen Outreach Program (T.O.P.), Sisters Saving Sisters (SSS), Jim Casey Resource Centers in four communities, Independent Living (IL) Wraparound funding, Bright Futures Scholarship, Medicaid to 26 young people and referrals for employment support. Leach indicated DCS can usually assist in getting Medicaid to those youth who aged out within a couple of days.
- Leach announced Tennessee DCS coordinated Youth Leadership Academies and Youth 4 Youth (Y4Y) Board meetings in collaboration with community-based partners in all three grand divisions. He said the ongoing focus is to train staff to develop quality transition plans, strengthen youth engagement and build youth voice, focus on earlier interventions with 14-16 year olds, integrate preparation for adulthood with permanency efforts, provide credit checks for those 14 and older, provide more employment and housing opportunities, create an awareness of the shared accountability and a more comprehensive system to prevent youth and young adults from falling in the gap (those with mental health issues and lower IQs).
- Leach talked briefly about Prudent Parenting and Normalcy and said legislation recently passed for foster parents to assist their foster child in obtaining a drivers' license. DCS is working hard to incorporate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Office of Financial Empowerment financial literacy in the training to come up with strategies to improve the financial skills of transitioning youth.
- Leach shared resources for youth in transition and added the annual YTAC report sent to the General Assembly is a great resource.

IX. DCS Resource Centers

➤ I.AM. Ready/Chattanooga – Jack Parks

- Parks reported he currently serves 46 clients with no involvement in the youth violence occurring in Chattanooga. I.AM. Ready is in its third year and is expanding to provide services to youth outside the Chattanooga area. CASA will

collaborate with I.A.M. Ready to provide services in the Cleveland/Bradley county area.

- Parks said the program was awarded a \$25,000 grant from Casey Foundation to allow youth to be entrepreneurs. This is a nine-week course and at the end of the nine weeks, the youth will present their idea before Chattanooga's Shark Tank. In addition, there was a \$10,000 donation to provide asset purchases. The Chambliss Child Care Center is also collaborating with I.A.M. Ready.
- Other programs include the Sexual Health Education (SHE) program serving six or seven young women and A Step Ahead Foundation partnership to assist with long-acting birth contraception.
- This Saturday, June 25th, I.A.M. Ready will have a Dancing with the Stars fundraiser.

➤ **Project NOW! Helen Ross McNabb – Mary Binger**

- Binger spoke about Project NOW (Navigating Opportunities that Work) and gave a brief overview. The program uses the evidence-based Jim Casey model to help foster care youth ages 14-24 to develop financial skills. She reported there are 130 participants in the financial literacy class. Binger added the courses include teaching the youth about debt reduction, car buying and budgeting and shared the matching program can continue for up to three years after the financial literacy course.
- Binger reported the services offered extend to those in foster care for only a day. Other services offered are Sisters Saving Sisters (SSS), advisement on how to prepare for a self-sufficient adulthood and assistance in seeking a job or higher education.
- There are two monthly meetings and the center offers a residential component, drop-in center, bus passes, extensive resources and referral-based services. Binger said the center is strategically placed to assist in connecting resources like mental health resources.

➤ **Youth Connections at Monroe Harding – Pam Madison**

- Madison gave an overview of the four programs throughout Nashville area and the resource center located in downtown Nashville. She indicated that Youth Connections is a resource center for young men and women, ages 16-26, who are currently in or have aged out of foster care or state custody and has been around for about 11 years.
- She reported 65 youth currently active in the Opportunity Passport program and said the program can match up to \$3,000 over the lifetime of the program.

- Madison shared services the young people receive like assistance with employment, housing, High School Equivalency (HiSet)/GED classes, tutoring, post-secondary education planning, sexual health education (SHE program), and financial education classes.
- Madison reported the SHE program served about 40 females and they are working on a program for the males.
- She highlighted the HiSet program and the graduation ceremonies held for the young people and their families. Madison shared there is a generous donor who gives all of the graduates \$650. She also spoke about the scholarship program.
- Madison said in addition to the core classes offered, Monroe Harding has a great location in downtown Nashville where youth can hang out, shoot pool, make a snack, or use the computer lab to research jobs, check email, Facebook, etc. All program participants have access to laundry facilities and showers and can pick up personal hygiene and small household items from the free thrift store.
- She highlighted the weekly career classes and paid intern programs. She also listed the local businesses who are partnering with Monroe Harding to provide meaningful life skills to the youth and young adults.
- Madison said mentors for their males are needed and asked for assistance in this area.

➤ **Dream Seekers/South Memphis Alliance (SMA) – Tameka Daniel-Greer**

- Daniel-Greer gave a brief overview of the South Memphis Alliance Renaissance Center (SMA). SMA is a community-based support for young people in the Memphis area and serves youth and young adults across a range of populations, in an effort to increase the health and knowledge and stability of young people and ultimately the entire family. They are located in a laundromat and provide services while clients do their laundry.
- There are currently 80 enrollees in Opportunity Passport Dream Seekers program comprised of foster care youth between the ages of 14 to 25. Most are referred from other foster care providers. SMA also provides dream seekers assistant with psycho education therapists, employment, financial education, sexual health education and parenting classes.
- Daniel-Greer thanked Flextronics for giving \$10,000 to provide job readiness and potentially an internship.

X. Workgroup Updates/Discussion Plans for Future Meetings – Linda O’Neal

- O’Neal thanked attendees for being present until the end.

Next CCMH Meeting Dates:
August 23, 2016 (***Tuesday Meeting at Goodwill***)
November 3, 2016 (Midtown Police Precinct)

Next YTAC Meeting Date:
August 4, 2016 (Goodwill)
October 6, 2016 (Goodwill)

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Council on Children’s Mental Health Purpose Statement

Design a comprehensive plan for a statewide System of Care for children and families that is family-driven, youth-guided, community-based, and culturally and linguistically competent.

*"They should not treat each child
like a case."*

*"They should value the
opportunity to help the kids that
need their help."*



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Andrew Jackson Building, Ninth Floor
 502 Deaderick Street
 Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0800
 (615) 741-2633 (FAX) 741-5956
 1-800-264-0904

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

August 4, 2016

12:30 pm – 3:30 pm Central Time
Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee
937 Herman Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37208
[**615.742.4151**](tel:615.742.4151)

Agenda

Welcome/Introductions/Announcements/Acceptance of June 23, 2016 Meeting Summaries	<i>Linda O’Neal, Executive Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.</i>
Presentation from Gateway to Independence	<i>Darrel Pannell, Superintendent, Gateway to Independence</i>
Presentation from Get Covered TN, Family and Children’s Services	<i>Sharon Barker, Certified Navigator, Get Covered TN</i>
Department of Children’s Services, Office of Independent Living Update	<i>Michael Leach, Director, Office of Independent Living, DCS. Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director</i>
Update from Resource Centers	<i>Pamela Madison, Youth Connections</i> <i>Tameka Daniel Greer, Dream Seekers</i>
	<i>Mary Binger, Project Now!</i> <i>Jack Parks, I AM READY</i>
Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program	<i>Nikki Swann, Youth Villages LifeSet</i>
Update from Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Service	
Treatment and Recovery for Youth Grant	<i>April Tanguay, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</i> <i>Amy Vosburg, Centerstone</i> <i>Erica Spencer, Clayton Ramsey, Pathways.</i>
Healthy Transitions Initiative and First Episode Psychosis Initiative	<i>Kisha Ledlow, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services</i>
Update from Tennessee Housing and Development Agency	<i>Toni Shaw, Tennessee Housing and Development Agency</i>
2016 YTAC Annual Report due October 31, 2016	<i>Review Recommendations and Accomplishments</i>

Next Meeting	<i>October 6, 2016 Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee</i>
Other Business	



STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Andrea Jackson Building, 9th Floor
502 Deaderick Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0800
(615) 741-2633 (FAX) 741-5956
1-800-264-0904

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

August 4, 2016

12:30 pm – 3:30 p.m. Central Time

Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

Phil Acord
Dave Aguzzi
Heather Allen
Sharon Barker
Julia Barlar
Sonya Bellafant
Mary D. Binger
Liz Blasbery
Andy Buckner
Amy Campbell
Susan Cope
Tameka Daniel Greer
Jane Fleishman

Cari Hassell
Timothy Hickman
Elizabeth Holmes
Willie E. Jones, Jr.
Sumita Keller
Richard Kennedy
Michael Leach
Kisha Ledlow
Chelsea McDaniel
Melissa McGee
Teresa Moore
Jessica Mullins
Linda O'Neal
Darrell Pannell

Steve Petty
Latoya Phillips
John Rust
Toni Shaw
Natasha Smith
Ned Andrew Solomon
Wendy Spence
Nikki Swann
April Tanguay
Vicki Taylor
Will Voss
Lorraine Watch

**Welcome, Acceptance of June 2016 Meeting Summary & Introductions – Linda O'Neal,
Executive Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth**

- O'Neal welcomed the group, expressed her appreciation for those attending and asked members to review the June Meeting summary. She asked for revisions or edits.
- Leach requested revisions to page four, bullet nine to read that TennCare, not DCS is working on ways to amend the requirement. In addition, he suggested edits to page eleven, bullet two, last sentence to read Aguzzi explained the need to analyze the data to see if majority of the youth surveyed are juvenile justice involved could be the reason why Tennessee's number is higher than the national average.
- The last revision Leach suggested was on page 12. He asked that it read DCS is working hard to incorporate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Office of Financial

Empowerment financial literacy in the training to come up with strategies to improve the financial skills of transitioning youth.

IT WAS MOVED (ACORD) AND SECONDED (FLEISHMAN) TO ACCEPT THE JUNE 2016 MEETING SUMMARY WITH REVISIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- O’Neal asked for introductions.

Gateway to Independence – Darrell Pannell, Superintendent, Gateway to Independence

- Pannell provided a brief background and overview of Gateway to Independence (GTI), formerly Woodland Hills Youth Development Center (YDC). GTI is a transitional program that offers technical certifications, job training and online college courses to students in Tennessee youth development centers. Students can choose a technical/vocational path or an academic path. In addition, there are important life skills classes like budgeting, nutrition and college research to assist the students’ transition into the workforce and community.
- Pannell said GTI is still a YDC, but operates as an Independent Living program. Since October 2015, there has not been a staff assault in five months. He reported 16 out of 32 students recently graduated. Seven are ready to attend college and a few are now employed. Pannell takes pride in teaching the young men to change their mindset and to accept responsibility for their actions. He stressed the importance of family interaction, so once of quarter, they host a family day where they send a bus to transport the out of town families and provide lodging for them.
- Currently, there are approximately 26 different mentors coming into GTI to teach the young men various life skills including violence against women. Pannell has implemented programs like the Teen Outreach Program, Blessing bags for the homeless, volunteering at the nursing homes, All Pro Dads, Boys to Men Program, Dress for Success. He said redirection is a key element and the data indicates this incentive-based program model is working.
- Pannell explained there is a process for the students to earn daily points for good behavior. The points/levels system teaches the young men to view the world differently by recognizing their achievements instead of dwelling on their failures. Instead of believing someone took their points away from them, Pannell gets them to see they simply failed to earn their points allowing them to make better choices. The incentive-based program model gives the students an opportunity to demonstrate they are trustworthy and are applying the skills learned.
- O’Neal concurred with Pannell and stated the atmosphere has a noticeable change.

- Pannell said at the end of each month, the youth have the opportunity to trade their points to buy items from the store as a reward. The biggest challenge is funding. Many times, the staff will personally supply the items. Pannell reported support from community leaders like Representative Harold Love, Jr. and others.
- Pannell proceeded to answer questions.
 - McGee asked about the therapeutic side. Pannell said there is a partnership with Vanderbilt to meet the needs of the various students and they recently began a mother's support group for the mothers of the young men in the program. He reported the youngest student is 16 years old. They also have one student with a mental disability and two registered sex offenders. Pannell said it is challenging, but they are flexible to meet the needs of each youth.
 - When asked about the post-release data, Pannell answered that the program runs from three to six months. He recently released ten youth so there is no post-release data at the moment. He said one of the long-term goals is to have someone designated to follow up with the youth and provide such data.
 - O'Neal asked about the process for youth from other areas. Pannell said that most of the young men in his program are court-ordered through DCS and indicated that there is there is an interview process in place for those youth coming from other areas. Pannell added GTI sends a bus for parents to come to visit their sons on the second and fourth weekend of each month.
 - When asked about the relocation plans to New Vision, Pannell said the move will happen once the fence is up, hopefully by the middle of September. He said the youth are vested in the program and enjoy having pictures on the wall and bright colors. Based on their levels, the youth can personalize their room and have television privileges. Pannell reported they are currently working on having an honors dorm with eight beds as an incentive.
- O'Neal added the National Guard Challenge program will move into the old Woodland Hills facility once GTI relocates.
- Lorraine Watch, the volunteer coordinator reported they utilize the volunteers to get donations and in-kind contributions. She reported they look at the religious needs of the youth and make every attempt to ensure those needs are met.
- Pannell said three of his kids participated in an essay and art contest at the Nashville Public Library and placed. He also mentioned they have a diversity meal each month to introduce the young men to different restaurants. They also visit various churches. The youth must earn 15 good days in a row to go out into the community.
- Pannell reported the incentive-based program is already established in Middle and West Tennessee and they are working on implementing the program in East Tennessee. The

number of youth the program can house is approximately 44 youth. Today there are 29 and they are currently recruiting from other YDCs. Under Pannell's leadership, the facility is COA accredited.

Get Covered Tennessee, Family and Children's Services (FCS) – Sharon Barker, Certified Navigator, Get Covered Tennessee

- Barker explained her role as a certified navigator and explained Get Covered Tennessee is a statewide network of agencies that will provide a physical Affordable Care Act presence in all 95 TN counties – a first for TN.
- Family and Children's Services (FCS) is a non-profit that has been around for seven years. They offer free services. There are six certified navigators. Navigators serve as an in-person resource for Americans who want additional assistance when shopping for and enrolling in plans through the Health Insurance Marketplace. They also assist with appeals. The funding for the navigators comes from The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, CMS.
- Barker explained the Affordable Care Act allows children to stay on their parents' insurance until they are 26 years old. For those transitional youth who were in foster care when they turned 18, they too may receive TennCare/Medicaid until age 26. Barker stressed the navigators are there to assist youth keep coverage.
- Many people are unaware of their eligibility and/or how to enroll in coverage. FCS engages in outreach, education and enrollment. Barker said the navigators help identify and overcome barriers limited English speaking clients. They are capable of serving clients who speak English, Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish, Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian.
- Barker highlighted a quick guide to immigrant eligibility chart because individuals must have documentation showing they are legally here in the United States to be eligible for health care. Many of the children are eligible even when their parents may not be eligible. Since Get Covered Tennessee is specific to Tennessee, the navigators are very knowledgeable of the various alternative programs so no one is turned away feeling hopeless.
- Barker reported there is a website www.getcoveredtn.org with more information. She also met with Juvenile Court Judge Sheila Calloway a few times and now Get Covered Tennessee has a link on the Juvenile Justice website.

Department of Children's Services, Office of Independent Living Update – Michael Leach, Director and Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director, Office of Independent Living, Department of Children Services

- Leach spoke about the ongoing quality practice meetings with the extension of foster care staff to assist their young people in making a successful transition.
- DCS Independent Living, in conjunction with Harmony Family Services held a summer 2016 Grand East Independent Living Leadership Academy at Montvale camp. Approximately 25 youth and 10 DCS staff attended the two-day event. Harmony staff facilitated the activities and everyone had a great time learning life skills such as budgeting, meal preparation, car maintenance, healthy relationships. They also enjoyed s'mores by the campfire, swimming, ropes course and much more.
- Leach said the department is currently in strategic planning mode and reported three community youth boards across the state. Multiple focus groups were also held at the YDCs.
- He shared that “Reality Check” events were held at Mountain View, Upper Cumberland and Chattanooga. This is an event designed to simulate the basics of balancing a household budget, all while making some very big life decisions.
- Leach spoke briefly about the upcoming Foster Parent Conference scheduled for September. He also highlighted the new Child and Family Team brochure created by young people who wanted to know what the meetings were about and how they should get involved to feel empowered to say what they need to say in the meetings.
- Aguzzi shared Extension of Foster Care Services (EFCS) data. He said more young people were served this year than last year. There were 770 episodes and 754 young adults served this year compared to the 714 served last year. Aguzzi pointed out the reason for more episodes is due to young people leaving and then returning to extension of foster care more than once in a fiscal year.
- Aguzzi reported they had 334 total active young people served at the end of June. More data and statistical information will be included in the upcoming annual report.
- Aguzzi mentioned Youth Villages LifeSet grant as a public private partner with DCS. He also talked about DCS expanding the supervised independent living programs, group living and placement options. Aguzzi stated several options have been added over the past few months.
- Leach reported that DCS received a Pregnancy Prevention grant allowing programs like Sisters Saving Sisters to continue. He said about 2,000 young people were served last year with pregnancy prevention efforts. DCS continued to enroll young people in TennCare as well.
- Leach answered a few questions from the representatives from Gateway to Independence about services for their young people.
 - Aguzzi said there is more flexibility for extension of foster care youth because they are not in the state’s custody. Leach added DCS is constantly monitoring the

federal regulations, policy changes and looking at legislation to see what options are available to assist more young people.

- Leach clarified the additional beds mentioned earlier are through current providers already contracted with DCS. Aguzzi explained supervision is usually in the day. Leach added there is no need for 24 /7 supervision for the independent living placement.
- Leach said there is a possibility of setting up a Montvale Camp experience for the young men from Gateway to Independence.
- Leach announced he will now oversee Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Council on Accreditation (COA) and the Provider Quality Team (PQT). He said the transition from his current position to the new one is going to be slow.
- Leach and O’Neal said Tennessee is so far ahead than a lot of states when it comes to policy for the child welfare system, the juvenile justice system and other issues.

Update from Resource Centers

- **Youth Connections at Monroe Harding –Mike Leach**
 - Leach gave a brief update on behalf of Pam Madison. He briefly spoke about the continuous work with Opportunity Passport, Sisters Saving Sisters, HiSet and the employment partnership with local businesses.
- **I.A.M. READY Center – Mike Leach**
 - Leach reported for Jack Parks. He said they continue to increase their enrollment in Opportunity Passport and reported the center recently received a grant for a Shark Tank-like program to teach entrepreneurial skills.
- **Dream Seekers, South Memphis Alliance (SMA) – Tameka Daniel-Greer**
 - Daniel-Greer reported SMA received a small grant for job readiness. There are 94 current and active youth enrolled in Opportunity Passport. After today, there will be 103 youth enrolled. There is a waiting list for the program due to its popularity.
 - The Sisters Saving Sisters program has 78 young ladies enrolled. There are 30 referrals scheduled to attend the next program.
 - They also were awarded a \$250 million matched grant to build the youth center.
- **Helen Ross McNabb – Project NOW! – Mary Binger**
 - Binger participated in the Reality Check event at Mountain View. She briefly described the event. Liz Blasbery from Chambliss Center for Children explained the Reality Check program began through the Hamilton County Chamber of Commerce and was replicated.

- Binger spoke about the Sisters Saving Sisters program for Knoxville and the surrounding counties. She asked for referrals especially in the counties with high pregnancy rates. Binger said she is looking into a program for the young men due to the multiple requests.
- Project NOW (Opportunity Passport) continues to grow. There are currently 89 youth enrolled. Binger has seen an increase in training and education matches. Binger noted increased participation amongst some of the community partnerships and Foster Care parents especially when it comes to topics like financial literacy and sex education.

Update from Youth Villages LifeSet Program – Nikki Swann, Youth Villages LifeSet

- Swann reported there are currently 693 young adults in the program and 247 in Middle Tennessee specifically. She said on average about 685 youth are served daily.
- Swann spoke about education and said this year 249 young people will attend college while 86 percent of the youth are either in school or already graduated.
- She gave a brief overview of the Youth Villages (YV) Scholars program, which offers young adults in YV LifeSet the additional support to meet their educational goals that may have seemed previously unattainable. Each year, Youth Villages selects as YV Scholars a group of young people participating in its transitional living program. As YV Scholars, these young adults from across the country receive extra support from Youth Villages to go to college and make a successful transition to adulthood. Swann reported there were 24 new YV Scholars this year. The current scholars recently visited Washington, DC and met members of Congress.
- The YV Scholars program is made possible through private donations, including gifts from Youth Villages' own employees, who give to the program through the annual Our Family Campaign. To maintain the scholarship, the youth have to maintain academic and community service requirements.
- Swann spoke about The Backpack Heroes initiative that provides almost all children in Youth Villages programs the back-to-school supplies they need in several regions around the country. Most of these children simply cannot afford a backpack or school supplies for the upcoming school year. Youth Villages count on "Heroes" from the community to donate backpacks and school supplies or financially sponsor a child or family. Everything that is collected will go directly to children in the area you choose.
- She highlighted a peer-to-peer educational event recently held at Bridgestone Arena that provided an opportunity for transitional living program participants to network with one another and work on employment skills as practicing job interviews, developing resumes, learning how to dress professionally and getting tips on managing parental responsibilities while working and meeting with coaches and mentors.

- Swann provided a brief overview of the Youth Villages LifeSet Program (YV LifeSet). She shared data for FY2016 and reported 1,455 youth participated in the program. 75 percent are employed or seeking employment, 83 percent are living with family or independently and 79 percent of the youth have had no trouble with the law.
- Swann reported the YV LifeSet Program is participating in an independent, random assignment evaluation conducted by MDRC, a non-profit, non-partisan research and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor. MDRC is best known for mounting large-scale demonstrations and evaluations of real-world policies and programs targeted to low-income people.
- The Tennessee study includes more than 1,300 youth, making it the largest random assignment evaluation of this type of program for young people in this critical transition phase. Swann explained impact findings from the evaluation showed participation in the YV LifeSet program boosted earnings by 17 percent, increased housing stability and economic well-being, decreased the likelihood of experiencing homelessness by 22 percent and improved some of the primary outcomes related to health and safety to include improvements in mental health and a decrease in intimate partner violence. The program was found to be equally effective across different subgroups of youth.
- Swann reported this year there were 233 youth in Tennessee to graduate from high school and six to graduate from college. She said several youth participated in the Congressional Shadow Day and shared their experience in the child welfare system with members of Congress. One youth completed an internship with the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means. In May, three youth attended the Young Adult Leadership and Advocacy Training held in Minnesota with the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC). The training focused on foundational public speaking training, creating youth networks, youth and media relations, learning to craft your story, working with trauma and parenting with parent groups and agencies.

Update from Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

- **Healthy Transitions and First Episode Psychosis Program – Kisha Ledlow, Project Director, Healthy Transitions and Amy Campbell, Centerstone**
 - Ledlow gave a brief overview of Health Transitions Initiative. She reported that both sites are now fully staffed.
 - From January to August 4, the program received 112 referrals, screened 64 of those referrals and enrolled 34. Six participants have been discharged leaving a total of 28 currently enrolled.
 - Ledlow said the first training on the transition to independence model was held two weeks ago. They received an overview of the model and the team learned how to

conduct Strengths Discovery and Needs Assessments and how to effectively engage with young adults in their future planning.

- She reported they had their first statewide young adult leadership council meeting. There were eight excited participants from across the state full of ideas. One young lady drove three to four hours on a Saturday afternoon to be there. The group is in the process of scheduling the next meeting in September.
- Campbell spoke about the local young adult leadership council in Northwest Tennessee and Chattanooga.
- She mentioned collaborating with a consultant from Vanderbilt to create a youth participatory action research project to jumpstart the youth engagement effort and to generate conversation about young adults experience with services, the barriers in assessing services and their preferences. The young adults will be trained in a research method of their choosing.
- The kickoff-training meeting for the research project was on July 23. There were 22 young adults interested, but due to logistical difficulties, seven showed up, six from Chattanooga and one from Northwest Tennessee. Campbell explained the training included basic research methods, diversity and inclusion training, community resource mapping and Photovoice data collection (method of data collection in which researchers ask participants to use photographs to document aspects of their lives and experiences).
- Campbell said they are looking to wrap up the research training by the end of September in Chattanooga. She reported they will provide an opportunity for the participants to speak locally with community members, partners and agencies. There is also an opportunity for them to present their work at the American Evaluation Association Conference in Atlanta.
- Ledlow explained the eligibility criteria for participation in the Healthy Transitions program before reporting on the first episode psychosis program.
- She reported there is one site fully developed in Northwest Tennessee with 12 youth and young adults currently enrolled and 22 enrolled to date.
- Due to an increase in funding, they were able to expand services to two new sites, Alliance Healthcare Services in Shelby County and Mental Health Cooperative in Davidson.
- Ledlow said they are in the process of renewing a contract with OnTrack USA to provide training to launch a statewide learning collaborative.

Update from Tennessee Housing and Development Agency – Toni Shaw

- Shaw reported THDA has money for housing. THDA is now seeking creative and innovative rental housing development proposals for the 2017 Fall Round of Competitive Grants under the Tennessee Housing Trust Fund (THTF). The maximum grant amount is \$500,000 and there is no grant minimum. Applications for the grant will be due in

September. There will be a grant workshop on August 10th at Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee. The money can be used for transitional housing or permanent housing. It may also be used to renovate housing. There is a 50 percent match required. The match can include the value of services. The next grant round will be in March.

- On October 12-13, 2016, the 2016 Governor's Housing Conference will take place. You may register now at tnghc.com.

2016 YTAC Annual Report – Linda O'Neal and Steve Petty

- O'Neal explained the report for the General Assembly is due October 31, 2016. She noted the first recommendation from last year regarding DCS's reasonable and prudent parenting policy is now an accomplishment for 2016. She reviewed the recommendations and accomplishments.
- O'Neal announced Legal Aid Society is offering service to transitioning youth with immigration issues. The funds are provided through the Gilbert Family Fellowship. Catholic Charities is another partner willing to assist transitioning youth.

Other Business

- Petty mentioned Centerstone and the TRY Grant Conference is tomorrow, August 5, 2016 in Murfreesboro. The next meeting will be held on October 6, 2016 at Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

APPENDIX B

TCA 37-2-601

TCA 37-2-417

TCA 37-2-418

"It's a lot of people in the meetings CFTM there are too many people in the meetings and you don't really know them or what they know about your case they are making big decisions. If you are not involved in the case you should not be at the CFTM."

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*** Current through the 2013 Regular Session ***

Title 37 Juveniles
Chapter 2 Placement of Juveniles
Part 6 Post-Custody Services

Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-2-601 (2013)

37-2-601. Establishment of post-custody services advisory council.

(a) (1) The executive director of the Tennessee commission on children and youth shall establish a non-funded, voluntary, post-custody services advisory council, which shall be responsible for:

(A) Identifying strategies to assess and track effectiveness of post-custody services and the operation of resources centers authorized by this part; and

(B) Identifying the following:

(i) Strategies for maintaining accurate numbers of children served by post-custody services;

(ii) The number of services provided by the department of children's services;

(iii) The number of children who accept these services;

(iv) Reasons why children do not accept these services; and

(v) The number of children who continue their education and the number who do not.

(2) The advisory council shall report no later than October 31 of each year to the Tennessee commission on children and youth, the civil justice committee and health committee of the house of representatives and the health and welfare committee of the senate, making recommendations for the continuing operation of the system of post-custody services and supports.

(b) The department of children's services and other state agencies that provide services or supports to youth transitioning out of state custody shall participate fully in the council and shall respond to the recommendations put forth by the council as appropriate.

HISTORY: Acts 2009, ch. 415, § 1; 2011, ch. 410, § 3(j); 2013, ch. 236, § 78.

37-2-602. Determination of whether youth applicants for assistance were formerly in state custody -- Identification by state agencies on agency forms -- Sharing of information.

(a) All state agencies that administer cash or in-kind assistance, or both, to youth eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) years of age within the course of normal business shall make reasonable

efforts to determine if an applicant for assistance has ever been in the custody of the state. If the applicant has been in state custody, the state agency shall share information with the applicant regarding possible services to be provided by the department of children's services, other state agencies and community partners.

(b) State agencies shall modify agency forms to identify youth who have been in state custody as the agencies' forms are otherwise revised and updated.

(c) The department of children services may share services information for former foster youth and youth transitioning from state custody through already established models such as, but not limited to, web sites, emails, verbal notifications or other printed material.

HISTORY: Acts 2009, ch. 415, § 1.

37-2-603. Establishment of resource centers to provide or facilitate assistance.

(a) The private, nonprofit community is urged to establish a network to provide information, assistance, services and supports to persons from sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) years of age who were in foster care on the person's eighteenth birthday and persons from sixteen (16) to twenty-four (24) years of age who have been in foster care at any time after the person's fourteenth birthday.

(b) The resource centers shall provide or facilitate the assistance necessary to:

(1) Deal with the challenges and barriers associated with the transition into adulthood and early adult years;

(2) Support post-secondary education, vocational training and job skills development for such person;

(3) Find and retain employment, housing, transportation, parenting and family support, health care and mental health care; and

(4) Navigate systems and procedures that impact the person's education, employment, health and mental welfare and basic needs.

(c) These services shall be available at any time until the person reaches twenty-four (24) years of age regardless of whether the youth elects to remain in a voluntary post-custody arrangement with the department or the youth chooses to terminate any relationship with the state.

(d) The resource centers shall be supported in part by the department in the community where the centers are located, subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated for this purpose. The department is authorized and encouraged to share staff with the resource centers, as well as provide financial support.

37-2-604. Preparing foster children for independent living.

In preparing a foster child for independent living prior to the child reaching eighteen (18) years

of age, the department shall provide information on the resource centers established pursuant to this part to all children over sixteen (16) years of age in foster care. The information shall include the address of the nearest resource center and services available from the center. Each child shall be encouraged to maintain periodic contact with resource center personnel and to provide current and accurate residence and contact information to the resource center. Ninety (90) days before a child leaves state custody the department of children's services shall notify the child of all information, services, web sites and assistance available for post-custody.

HISTORY: Acts 2009, ch. 415, § 1.

37-2-605. Construction of part.

Nothing in this part shall be construed to require a person to have maintained continuous contact with the resource centers or the department in order to be eligible to receive services from the resource centers or the department.

HISTORY: Acts 2009, ch. 415, § 1.

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Title 37 Juveniles
Chapter 2 Placement of Juveniles
Part 4 Foster Care

Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-2-417 (2013)

37-2-417. Tennessee's Transitioning Youth Empowerment Act of 2010.

(a) This section may be known and cited as "Tennessee's Transitioning Youth Empowerment Act of 2010."

(b) The department of children's services is authorized to develop a program to provide services to youth who are transitioning to adulthood from state custody. Services may be provided on a voluntary basis to any person who is at least eighteen (18) years of age but less than twenty-one (21) years of age, who was in the custody of the department at the time of the person's eighteenth birthday and who is:

- (1) Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;
- (2) Enrolled in an institution which provides postsecondary or vocational education;
- (3) Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment;
- (4) Employed for at least eighty (80) hours per month; or
- (5) Incapable of doing any of the activities described in subdivisions (b)(1)-(4) due to a medical condition, including a developmental or intellectual condition, which incapability is supported by regularly updated information in the permanency plan of the person. In such a case the person shall be in compliance with a course of treatment as recommended by the department.

(c) Services may also be made available to any person who meets the requirements of subsection (b) but refused such services at the time of the person's eighteenth birthday if at any time the person seeks to regain services prior to the person's twenty-first birthday.

(d) The advisory committee established in § 37-2-601 shall serve as an advisory committee for programs and services established by this section.

(e) The commissioner of children's services shall establish policies and procedures in order to create and implement this program.

(f) The department is authorized to seek federal funding or to participate in federal programs developed for this purpose.

HISTORY: Acts 2010, ch. 1065, §§ 1-3; 2012, ch. 653, § 1.

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*** Current through the 2016 Session ***

Title 37 Juveniles
Chapter 2 Placement of Juveniles
Part 4 Foster Care

Tenn. Code Ann. § 37-2-418 (2016)

37-2-418. Reasonable and prudent parent standard -- Definitions -- Application -- Liability.

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Age- or developmentally-appropriate" means:

(A) Activities or items that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity or that are determined to be developmentally appropriate for a child based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities that are typical for an age or age group; and

(B) In the case of a specific child, activities or items that are suitable for the child based on the developmental stages attained by the child with respect to the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of the child;

(2) "Caregiver" means the child's foster parent, whether the child is in a family foster home or a therapeutic foster home, or the designated official at a child-placing agency; and

(3) "Reasonable and prudent parent standard" means the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interest of a child while also encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the department to participate in age- or developmentally-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

(b) Every child-placing agency that makes the determinations in subsection (c) shall designate an on-site official who is authorized to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard and assist a caregiver in application of the reasonable and prudent parent standard.

(c) A caregiver shall use the reasonable and prudent parent standard when determining whether to allow a child in foster care to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

(d) The caregiver and the child-placing agency, if applicable, shall not be liable for injuries to the child that occur as a result of acting in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard. Any caregiver or child-placing agency acting in good faith in compliance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard shall be immune from civil liability arising from such action.

(e) The immunity provided in subsection (d) shall not apply if the injuries to the child were caused by gross negligence, willful or wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing. Any liability under this subsection (e) that may be attributable to the department or any of its employees shall be strictly adjudicated before the claims commission pursuant to title 9, chapter 8, part 3, as applicable.

HISTORY: Acts 2016, ch. 679, § 1.