

TN VOICES

THE COLLABORATIVE LEADER GUIDING
MENTAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

Spring 2022



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Spring 2022

a letter from the CEO



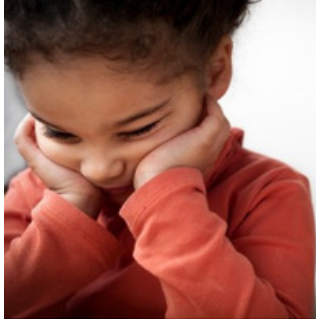
It feels like a relief that Spring finally arrived. A little more sunshine, and warmer weather can make a significant impact on our mental health. As we move into this new season, TN Voices is gearing up for events including our Charity Golf Tournament on May 17th and Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week May 1st - 7th as well as an expected launch of our new publicly accessible application for mental health screening and awareness.

During this past quarter I had the pleasure of addressing two audiences of mental health advocates, one at the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's Child Advocacy Days event and the other was the young adult focused Healthy Transitions Summit. Something I shared with those audiences is what I believe will change the course of the future for mental health – you. We all have a role in advocating for mental wellness whether you are a person in the industry or not. Through volunteerism, philanthropy, reading our educational materials, and sharing our information on social media, you can be part of de-stigmatizing mental health and positioning yourself as someone who is there for a friend or family member in need. We invite you to engage with us as we create hope for all generations!



Fact Sheet

Current data from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration indicates that 140,000 U.S. children lost their primary or secondary caregiver due to the COVID-19 pandemic. TN Voices would like to share this fact sheet on “Children and Grief” from our free online fact sheet resources. For information on other topics, please visit www.tnvoices.org/mental-health-conditions-fact-sheets.



Children and Grief Fact Sheet

The Facts

Grief is a normal reaction for children who experience a significant loss. Adults and children often grieve differently. It is important to understand how a child perceives death and loss based on their current age and developmental level.²

Some children may experience serious problems with grief and loss. If these warning signs persist, professional help may be needed.

The Warning Signs

- Inability to sleep, loss of appetite, prolonged fear of being alone
- Acting much younger for an extended period
- Losing interest in daily activities and events for an extended period
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Significant drop in school performance or refusal to attend school
- Believing they are talking to or seeing the deceased person for an extended period¹

Support & Treatment

Encourage a child to express all feelings associated with grief. Understand that the child may cry in one moment and be happily playing the next. This is a developmentally appropriate way that children express grief. Children often process emotion through play. Be developmentally appropriate, direct, and honest when speaking with your child about the loss.²

If you notice that your child seems unusually upset and unable to cope with grief and loss, your child may be experiencing adjustment disorder. It is a good idea to speak with your child's doctor if you feel your child is not recovering from a loss in a healthy way.²

¹ American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2018. Retrieved from: https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Grief-008.aspx

² Child Mind Institute, 2020. Retrieved from <https://childmind.org/article/helping-children-deal-grief/>

TNV in the Media

Check out our latest article in Nashville Parent Magazine and learn more about how we help toddlers, families, and teachers learn to build social emotional wellbeing.



SPONSORED CONTENT

TN Voices for Children: Building Hope for all Tennesseans

TNV is a non-profit organization of more than 100 social workers, peer support specialists, therapists, and care coordinators who are dedicated to providing advocacy, peer support, counseling services and trainings to children, teens, young adults, and adults in all 95 counties in Tennessee. Our vision is to build hope for all generations and our mission is to be the collaborative leader guiding mental health transformation. TN Voices speaks out as an active advocate for the emotional and behavioral well-being of Tennesseans by providing essential services, support, and advocating for policy change at the local, state, and federal level. We are passionate about helping and supporting fellow Tennesseans.

Expanding the Early Childhood Program

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) selected 10 agencies across the state to receive funding to expand mental health services for children and youth, including TN Voices. This funding has allowed TN Voices to expand our Early Childhood Program, which we believe is critical to establishing children on a path of wellbeing and success.

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We seek to develop children's healthy social emotional development across the state of Tennessee by providing support to early childhood educators and caregivers. The goal of the Early Childhood Program is to support the adults in a child's life to promote necessary social-emotional skills for children to develop a foundation for success in the early years and beyond! Pre-K students are expelled at rates three times higher than K-12 students, and preschool expulsion is linked to negative outcomes later in life. It is estimated that over 5000 pre-kindergarten children are expelled each year.

TN Voices believes all children can be kept in the classroom when caregivers and educators receive ample support so they can deliver high-quality supportive environments and nurturing relationships to children. With new funding from the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, TN Voices is proudly expanding the Early Childhood Program to deliver more assistance to early childhood educators, and in turn ensure children feel nurtured and supported.

TNV in the Media Continued...

Pyramid-Model Framework is Nationally Recognized

Our Early Childhood Program serves teachers, administrators, parents, and caregivers of children birth to 8 years old in multiple settings including Head Start centers, voluntary Pre-K, faith-based Pre-K, and elementary schools. Services offered include training and technical assistance, individual classroom consultation and coaching, site-wide program consultation and development, and child-focused consultation.

Our Early Childhood services follow the Pyramid Model Framework – an evidence-based and nationally recognized program that targets early childhood social skills and challenging behavior. The Pyramid Model Framework delivers nurturing relationships and a high-quality environment to all children, targeted social-emotional instruction and strategies, and individualized interventions for children needing more support. The Pyramid Model Framework helps educators teach children how to self-regulate, identify emotions, appropriately communicate emotions, and solve social problems, which are necessary life skills.

TN Voices is pleased to have Katherine Bell, MA, as the Early Childhood Program Director. Katherine's professional background includes experience in early childhood education, organizational leadership, and children's mental health. Katherine is a Pyramid Model trainer, coach, and consultant who is passionate about partnering with educators and families to better understand children's behavior and to promote optimal social emotional development.

TN Voices Early Childhood Program is available statewide, including Nashville and Middle Tennessee. We would welcome the opportunity to work with your organization to create bright outcomes for Tennessee's children. If you would like more information, please visit our program website (www.tnvoices.org/programs/early-childhood) or give us a call at 615-269-7751.

We stand ready to partner with preschools, parents, and child-serving professionals to increase the access to care and decrease expulsion, behavioral challenges, or social emotional development for young children and their families.



Katherine Bell, Early Childhood Program Director



Events



Lenoir City High School Teacher In-Service Day

TN Voices was able to speak with teachers and other staff from Lenoir City High School during a teacher in-service day. The Lenoir City High School personnel were excited to hear what services TN Voices has to offer in their community and for the families and students they serve. TN Voices was able to connect and learn about the community as well as interact with educators and hear their needs and struggles surrounding mental health.

Remote Rocky Top Kick off

TN Voices was able to participate in Anderson Co. Family Justice Center's Remote Rocky Top Kick off. TN Voices has been partnering with the Anderson Co. Family Justice center in ensuring families in Anderson County know the services available to them. The Anderson Co. Family Justice Center has decided to go to Rocky Top, TN and be present in the community every third Thursday of the month starting in March 2022. This February event was an introduction to the providers the families may find during their attendance to any of these events moving forward. TN Voices was invited to have a booth presenting information to anyone in attendance. There were many other services providers to include: United Way, Helen Ross McNabb Sexual Assault Center of East TN, Omni Community Health and Legal Aid of East TN, just to name a few. TN Voices was able to connect with new and build on community partnerships. It was a great day to meet the community where they are.



Events



Survivor Connection West

Survivor Connection West worked with our Partners (Blue Care and Community Health) in Shelby County to inform the community about available services offered through TN Voices, Blue Care, Community Health, Camelot, and other agencies from the area.

This event provided take-home meals for children, baby supplies, snacks, prizes, games, activities, free Covid test and Vaccines, information on community resources and services, and more (while supplies last).

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Shirley Williams, Outreach Specialist attended the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Eagles Nest Family Services, Jackson, TN, founded by Gwen Gavin. The ceremony was held December 17, 2021, at Haywood County Chamber of Commerce, in Brownsville, TN. City Mayor William B. Rawls, Jr was on hand for the celebration.

Gwen and Shirley have been collaborating and networking for the past two years with helping families in navigating systems in communities in West TN. Gwen supports Shirley by referring families to the Statewide Family Support Network Program and Shirley supports Gwen by providing training to the clients of Eagles Nest Family Services. Shirley Williams was happy to be present to support, Gwen Gavin, another partner advocate.



Events



Child Advocacy Days

Tennessee Commissions on Youth's Children's Advocacy Days (CAD) is an event with a 30-year history. It is an opportunity for children's advocates, service providers and others to come together to be inspired by speakers, leaders, and peers. The event draws approximately 600 individuals interested in children and family issues. CAD consists of training, networking, advocacy, and celebration.

TN Voices was pleased to sponsor the Children's Advocacy Days 2022. Attendees heard from key leaders and advocates of children's mental health. Our CEO, Rikki Harris, spoke to the attendees about Building Hope for the Future of Children's Mental Health. The staff of TN Voices share a mission for our work that is driven by personal experiences. Connecting to our purpose in our work and collaborating for a shared purpose, not only unites us, but it sparks innovation, energy, and renewed commitment to the field of mental health. Rikki reminded the audience that those who call themselves advocates are the future of children's mental health. With opportunity to improve children's current outcomes, we have work to do now to ensure children's futures are free from the challenges we are facing today. We must never stop advocating and serving.



Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Conference

TNV participated in the Inaugural Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Conference hosted through the Knoxville Family Justice Center on Friday March 25, 2022, at the UT Conference Center. Lupe Armengol was a speaker in the Social Advocacy Track sharing a presentation entitled "Voices to Be Heard," revealing what it means to advocate for victims of crime, impacted families, and the community. The presentation highlighted how community agencies can provide empowerment to victims by shifting their perspective to being survivors. Lupe shared, "As a survivor, they have a voice to be heard, and we can support them on their path to hope and healing."

The Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Conference was an opportunity to learn and collaborate about ending domestic violence in our community through education, policy development, victim services, and more. Conference attendees included community leaders, victim service providers, social workers, healthcare providers, school faculty, faith leaders, law enforcement, court personnel, attorneys, and legal support staff.

Lupe serves TNV families and staff as the Program Manager for the Survivor Connection Program in the east and northeast regions providing intensive in-home services that directly improve the health and well-being of victims of crimes of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and underserved victims.

Thank you, Lupe for ensuring everyone in our community has a voice that is heard, and hope is offered to everyone!



Engage With Us and Learn More



CAN+DID podcast highlights

Ever thought about what your hairdresser or barber has to do with mental health? Take a listen to this podcast episode where co-host Will Voss interviews his barber and learns how mental health shows up with his chair every day. Click to **LISTEN**

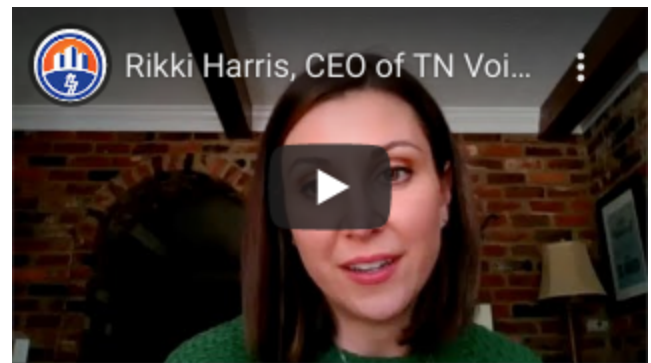
As part of TN Voices' celebration of Black History month, we honored African Americans through our CAN+DID podcast. Listen to another episode where host Rikki Harris and co-host Will Voss are flipping the tables on one of the most impactful interviewers in broadcast media. Kirstin Garriss is an award-winning journalist whose series Black in America earned her an Emmy Nomination. In the series, Garriss interviews 4 generations of Black men, including Host Will Voss. This impactful interview offers insight to anyone listening on the long lasting, generational effects of racism on mental health. **LISTEN** now.

Find CAN+DID on all podcast listening platforms

TN Voices guest appears on United Way of Greater Nashville's podcast

If you want to learn more about early childhood work and the new TN Resiliency Project at TN Voices, check out our guest appearance on the United Way of Greater Nashville's podcast. CEO Rikki Harris and Katherine Bell share how TN Voices works collaboratively to empower early educators to do better for kids in our entire community.

LISTEN here



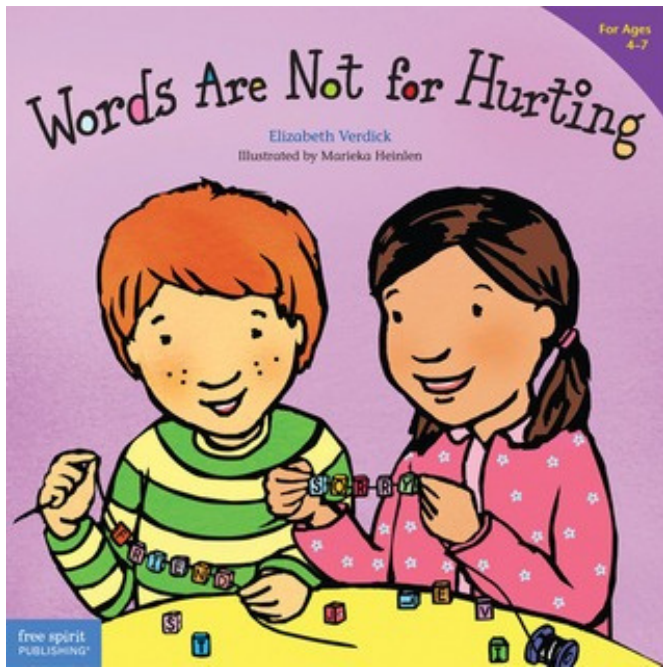
TN Voices guest appears on CityCurrent podcast

Host Jeremy C. Park talks with Rikki Harris, CEO of TN Voices, a nonprofit organization of more than 100 social workers, peer support specialists, therapists, and care coordinators who are dedicated to providing advocacy, peer support, counseling services, and trainings to children, teens, young adults, and adults in all 95 counties in Tennessee. During the interview, Rikki shares some of the history for the organization, talks about their efforts and impact, how the pandemic has accelerated the need for support, how the community can help and more.

LISTEN here

<https://www.blueprintnashville.org/podcast>

Online Library Book Highlight



Words are Not for Hurting **by Elizabeth Verdick**

This children's book is part of our free online library which includes audio and visual books available for download at no cost.

Intended for children ages 4-7, Words are Not for Hurting helps children recognize that there are millions of choices when it comes to the words they choose to say. Using age appropriate vocabulary and illustrations, this book explores the way in which children use their words to express their feelings.

The older children get, the more words they know and can use—including hurtful words. This book teaches children that their words belong to them. They can think before they speak, then choose what to say and how to say it. It also explores positive ways to respond when others use unkind words and reinforces the importance of saying "I'm sorry." Includes tips for parents and caregivers.

For more free downloadable resources from our online library please visit

invoices.org/online-resources.



Education and Mental Health

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FAMILIES
Bringing Lived Experience to Family Support



EDUCATION AND MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19

How are Children and Caregivers Doing

A YEAR LATER?

663

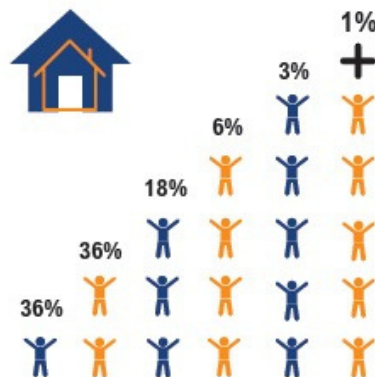
Families Responded

1,371 +

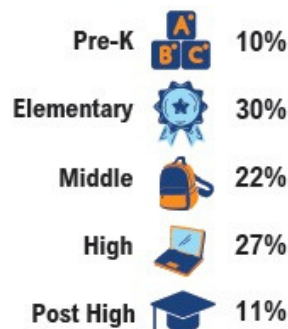
Children Represented

Families Responded
from all 50
States and the
District of Columbia.

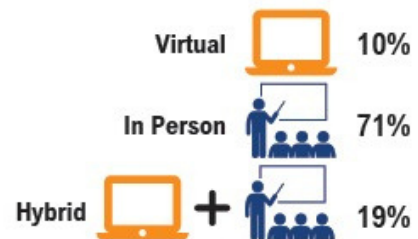
of Children Living at Home



Grade Levels

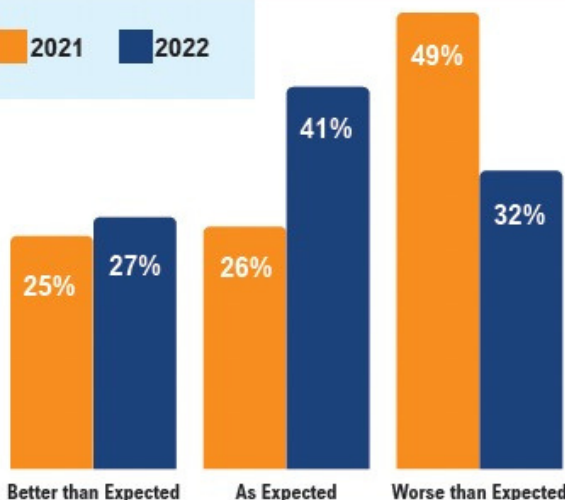


Education Model



How Do Caregivers Feel School is Going for Their Children?

2021 2022



As a rule, I feel most people are doing the best they can under the circumstances - teachers and school staff, students and parents. I'm thankful our school is not stressing about "meeting requirements" and is instead focused on the emotional well being of our students. It would be nice if COVID didn't impact learning, but it is and it will. (South Carolina)

In-person learning this year is significantly better than the hybrid approach last year both for engagement and grades. (Maine)

It seems no one truly knows what to do with 504s/IEPs when a student is at home. (Arkansas)

Education and Mental Health

What Do Caregivers Say is Most Challenging?

#1



Balancing School and Work (Time)

This has been the most stressful time of my entire life. As a single mom, I have tried to balance everything and at the end of most days I feel like I have failed in at least one category. It's like trying to succeed at an impossible task and the repeated daily failure is wearing on me and my self-esteem. As a result I am more anxious and my kids are too. I am really trying to get better so I can be better for them. (New Hampshire)

I pay a lot of money out of pocket to have a babysitter help with remote schoolwork so I can keep my fulltime job. (Pennsylvania)

#2



Meeting Special Education Needs

One of my children with an IEP is receiving support, the other requires home health instruction and has not had any services. My child who has a 504 plan is struggling due to a lack of support. (California)

Reliance on technology in the classroom does not meet my child's learning needs and his school refuses to implement his 504 plan designed to help him be more successful. My child has suicidal thoughts almost every school day because he feels like he is a terrible kid. (Kentucky)

#3



Access to Childcare

I'm struggling to find daycare due to my child's behavior and special needs. I'm experiencing a high level of stress and anxiety without daycare when the school calls me to pick up my child due to behavior issues while I'm at work. (North Dakota)

School hours are shorter than usual and having kids at home while I'm working is challenging. Childcare is either unavailable or the cost is beyond the means of my single income and I do not qualify for assistance, so I often feel stuck. (Georgia)

#4

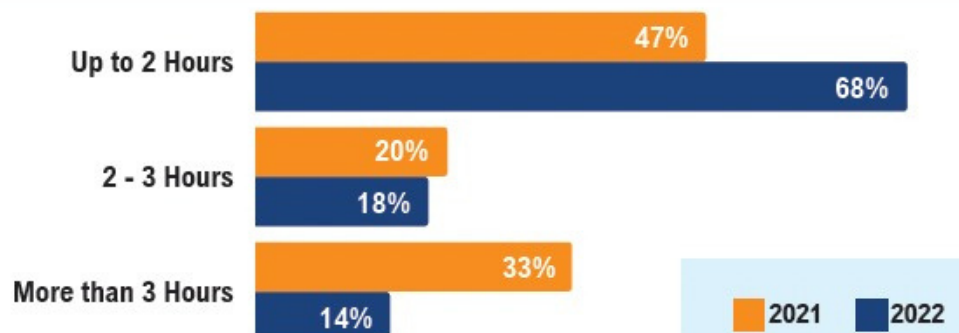


Support from School/Teachers

My son dreads Zoom and being on camera because he suffers from social anxiety. I wish they didn't require this for his classes so he could enjoy them more and focus on his learning. (Washington)

The teachers are very stressed with extra work and this is apparent in the classroom and in student interactions. They need more support. (North Carolina)

Hours Caregivers Spend Managing School at Home Daily



Join Our Team



Below is a list of our current open positions:

- ***Certified Psychological Assistant***
- ***Clinical Program Manager***
- ***Early Childhood Family Support Specialist-Davidson County***
- ***Early Childhood Family Support Specialist-Middle TN***
- ***Early Childhood Family Support Specialist-Shelby County***
- ***Family Support Specialist (FAST Program)***
- ***Mental Health Residential Specialist***
- ***School Based Behavioral Health Liaison (Wayne County)***
- ***Survivor Connection Family Support Specialist-East TN (Hamblen County)***
- ***Youth Screen Regional Site Coordinator (East TN)***
- ***Youth Screen Site Coordinator (West TN)***

Each position is unique in location and qualifications. For a complete list and description of each open position, check out our website at <https://tnvoices.org/about-tvc/employment/>

We're Hiring!

TN Voices is working diligently to expand our organization and that starts with YOU! We are now offering many new positions all across the board, and we are thrilled to be offering new opportunities within our organization.

TN Voices is an agency that focuses on not only the empowerment of children, youth, and adults, but also the empowerment of our staff. A career at TN Voices offers a motivating and team player environment. This also includes a comprehensive benefits package for full-time employees including Health, Dental, Vision, Company Paid Life Insurance, 403b plan with match and supplemental benefits options – in addition to thirteen (13) paid holidays and a generous PTO accrual system.



We would like to thank you for following along with us this quarter and for investing your time, finances and resources into TN Voices. We have grown so much this season, and we hope to continue to grow alongside you as we all move out of Languishing and into a new season of Flourishing. Please take a moment and view our year of media highlights.

May you prosper this spring and stand with us in HOPE.

Your TN Voices Family

2021 Highlights



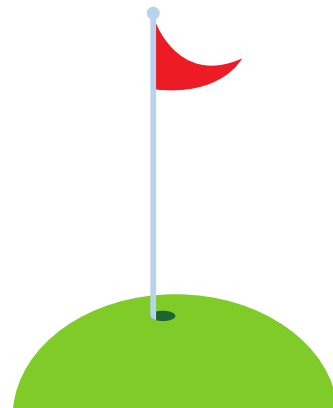
Coming Up...



TN Voices Green Ribbon Gala

November 11, 2022, 6pm at The Bell Tower in Nashville. An evening out to celebrate and support the work of TN Voices and raise funds to help more Tennesseans with their mental health needs. Dinner, drinks, auction, and entertainment.

<https://tnvoices.org/green-ribbon-gala>



TN Voices 2nd Annual Golf Classic

May 17, 2022 at The Hermitage Presidents Reserve.

11am Registration/Lunch

1pm Shotgun Start

Sponsorships and tickets on sale now!

Silent Auction, lunch, and networking

<https://tnvoices.org/tn-voices-charity-golf-classic>