

Note From the CEO



Spring was an eventful time for TN Voices! We continued our efforts to promote mental health awareness and provide essential resources to individuals and families across Tennessee. Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week and Mental Health Awareness month both fell in May, so it gave us even more opportunity to collaborate with leaders statewide and advocate for better access to mental health services for all.

Our commitment to outreach continued, as we engaged with various communities, delivering support and resources to those in need of mental healthcare. We were privileged to support our partners in events such as the NAMI Walk, the Tennessee CASA Conference, the Robertson County Storybook Walk and many activities dedicated to Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. By working hand in hand with these organizations, we hope to advance the support Tennesseans need.

In the spirit of collaboration, we hosted a very successful golf tournament at the Old Natchez Country Club in Franklin. Despite the rain, we welcomed over 100 guests for a fun day of golf, good food, and an auction with fantastic items. We extend our deepest gratitude to our partners, donors, board members, friends, and family for their unwavering support. Please check out photos from all of our exciting event below.

If you or someone you know is facing mental health challenges, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. Our services extend across all 95 counties of Tennessee. Call 1-800-670-9882 or visit tnvoices.org today to access the support you need.

Sincerely,

Rikki Harris, CEO

4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament





Join Our Team



Have you thought of a career in Mental Health?
Check out our open positions at [TN Voices](#).

The Importance of Routines and Rituals

By: Dr. David Mark Thomas, Ed.D, LPC-MHSP

The Importance of Routines and Rituals:

A child who has experienced trauma or neglect in early childhood may find it difficult to establish emotional and social connections at home and in the community. They may find it difficult to trust and feel safe. Trauma is often associated with chaos and loss of control; predictability helps build feelings of safety in trauma-impacted children. Family routines and rituals are healing in that they increase a child's sense of belonging. As we enter the summer season, parents and caregivers have many opportunities to connect with their child by observing treasured family rituals and traditions together.

Routines:

Create routines to add predictability to a child's life which will help them feel safer, relax, and shift their focus from survival to healthy development.

- Routines are helpful for transitions. For example, switching from play time to bed time may be a struggle for younger children. Instead of an abrupt switch, a bed time routine may switch from playing with toys to quiet time watching a show to relaxation time reading books to bed time.
- Routines and rituals are especially important in early childhood because children rely completely on adults for structure.

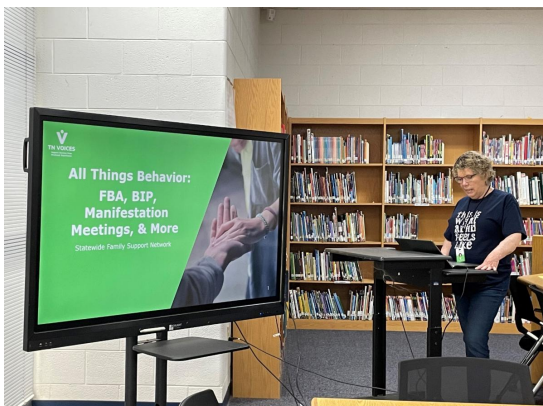
- Household chores can become part of a routine. This allows for children to have a sense of industry and independence, which can help build a positive self-image throughout the course of development.
- As children get older, they can play an active role in creating family routines. They also are better at carrying out routines with less supervision from caregivers.
- Routines in adolescence are more difficult to maintain because the adolescent is more independent and is out of the house more frequently. Regular communication between the adolescent and caregiver should be the focus of routines in this stage of development.

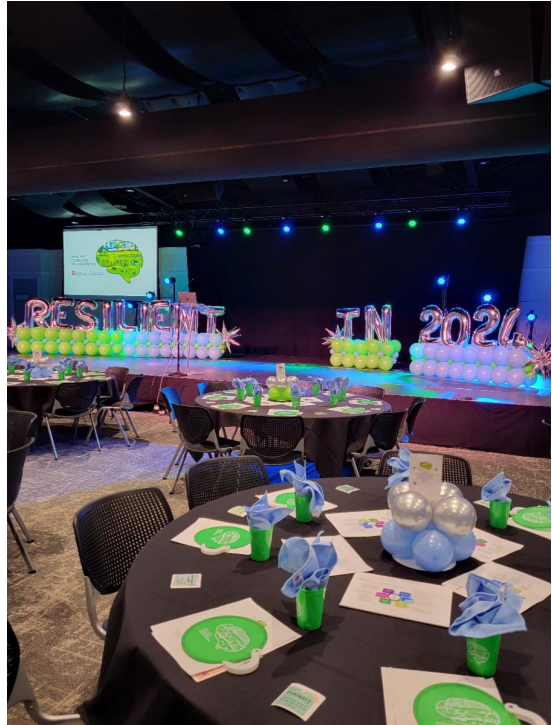
Rituals:

Rituals foster a sense of belonging and identity and are especially important for children with insecure attachments. Some family routines that enhance a sense of belonging include:

- shared family mealtime;
- enjoyable activities on the weekends, such as sports and movies;
- family vacations;
- celebrations, such as birthdays, anniversaries and reunions;
- religious holidays; and
- cultural traditions that recognize ethnic roots, such as gatherings, camps and preparing ethnic foods together.

Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week Recap:





Planning A Day Out or A Vacation

Planning day trips or vacations can be challenging when raising children with a mental health diagnosis. As a parent/caregiver, we know that there is a level of fear or anxiousness that comes with the “What Ifs”. The tips listed below are based on research from different Mental Health Advocacy programs and from those with their own experiences. Of course, planning looks different for everyone, but consider this a starting point.

Here are some tips to help you get on the move and to having a great time:

1. Research! Research! And research some more!

- ✓ Make calls & check online. Do they offer hours that are sensory friendly? These hours would provide smaller crowds, noise reduction, and other accommodations. Movie theatres, zoos, aquariums, theme parks, and other places offer a link on their websites for ADA services. On these links, you can find information on what they offer, where to go to get those services, and other information.



2. Planning Options

- ✓ While doing your research, plan how you'll get there. Choose your route. If it's a long driving trip, plan for needed stops and food choices. If you are flying, plan how you'll navigate airports and what you'll fit into your suitcases.
- ✓ Make lists of items you'll need to bring with you. It's best to have double the items and not need them.
- ✓ Make a schedule around business hours, travel time, and break times.
- ✓ Plan rest! To have fun with this, you can include your child(ren) in this by helping them learn some age-appropriate self-care routines. If it's a day trip, plan for the time when you get home to allow everyone a chance to decompress.

3. *Call your child's doctor.*

- ✓ If going on long trips (a few days, a week, or longer), it's best to call or have a visit. Your pediatrician can provide tips or other tools you'd need to make your trip easier.
- ✓ Get refills. If your child is on any medication, now is the time to ensure you have enough for your trip.

4. *Provide warnings.*

- ✓ Allow your child(ren) to participate in planning. Listen to their wishes or concerns. When they help you make a schedule or decide activities, they will recall what was discussed and planned.
- ✓ Schedules – Make a schedule of events. When are you leaving? What you'll do on arrival? What will you do when you are there? Put down events or shows you want to attend. When are you leaving?
- ✓ Stick to the schedule as much as you can. We can't plan for the unexpected, but as parents/caregivers you can do your best to stay on track.



5. *Make a "Go Bag"*

- ✓ The bag should be easy to access for your child. Use a backpack or fanny pack that he/she can carry comfortably.
- ✓ Bring a favorite water bottle to stay hydrated and bring snacks to prevent hunger crashes during the day or trip.
- ✓ Items that can be included: noise cancelling earbuds or headphones, tablet for music or games or movies, fidget toys, favorite toy or stuffed animal or blanket
- ✓ Small first aid kit or toiletry items such as wipes, hand sanitizer, Kleenexes, or other needs.
- ✓ Some locations may be part of an advocacy program for those with disabilities, mental illnesses, or sensory issues. These programs will often provide their own sensory bag for the location to use. You'd return this bag back to the desk or office when you leave.



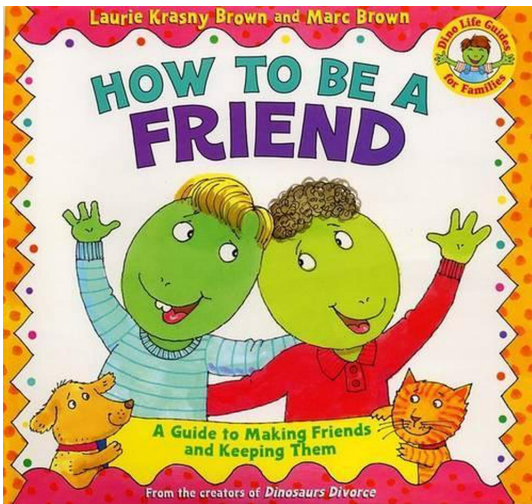
6. *Plan a safe space or exit strategy.*

- ✓ No one enjoys meltdowns in large crowds. Sometimes, having all eyes on you can make matters worse. When doing your research, ask about the least crowded areas or best places to go for some privacy. Some places offer a quiet room/family room. These rooms include sensory friendly activities.
- ✓ Allowing short breaks will help to prevent overstimulation. If your child wants to plan their own breaks or can communicate when he/she needs a break, allow them that opportunity. If he/she cannot communicate that need yet, that's okay too. Either way, allow an adult to go with him/her. These breaks can include walks, bathroom breaks, or finding somewhere to sit away from the crowd. These breaks are a good time to utilize your "go-bag".

Read more
now!

Online Library Resources

How to be a Friend by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown



Fun dinosaur characters teach young children all about friendship—the value of friends, how to make friends, and how to be a good friend.

With playful full-color illustrations, Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown help kids cope with everyday social situations and learn:

- ★ Who can be your friend.
- ★ How to show someone you would like to be friends.
- ★ How to handle bosses and bullies.
- ★ The best ways to be a friend and ways not to be a friend.
- ★ Ways to settle an argument with a friend.

[Listen and Read Along Here!](#)

Search "How to be a Friend" on this page to find the book.

[View more resources in our online library here!](#)

Upcoming Trainings

All classes are FREE!

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA):

YMHFA is designed to help anyone interacting with youth recognize signs and symptoms of mental health problems and know how to connect youth with appropriate help.

These classes are in person. For more information contact Tammy Bass at

Tammy.Bass@tnvoices.org.

July 12th, Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm CT, in person at American Job Center, Cheatham County, Register [here](#).

July 26th, Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm CT, in person at American Job Center, Williamson County, Register [here](#).

August 13th, Tuesday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm CT, in person at Columbia State Community College, Lawrence Co. Campus, Register [here](#).

Parent 2 Parent:

This course will help prepare you to advocate for your child's IEP, 504, mental health, child welfare, or juvenile court involvement. This course counts as a pre-requisite for the FSS Competency Course for FSS Certification. For more information contact

Jennifer Davis at Jennifer.Davis@tnvoices.org.

August 13-14, 8 am - 4 pm CT, Register [here](#).

Common Sense Parenting:

Common Sense Parenting class helps parents understand development, set expectations, and find different ways to nurture your children. Easy to learn ways to help improve communication, discipline, decision making, relationships, self-control and school success. For more information contact Sharon Purnell at

Sharon.Purnell@tnvoices.org or 615-924-0567

Class starts July 1, 6 weeks, Mondays, 10 - 11:30 am CT, virtual, Register [here](#).

All Things Behavior: FBA, BIP, Manifestation Meetings & More:

This class is designed for anyone who wants to understand key elements of behavior management in school settings. In this course you'll get the chance to learn about Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs), Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), and Manifestation Meetings. This knowledge will equip you with the essential tools and insights to be an active part of a child's learning journey. For more information contact Carolyn Lawson at Carolyn.Lawson@tnvoices.org.

July 2nd, Tuesday, 11 am - 12 noon CT, via Zoom. Register [here](#).

Nurturing Parenting Classes:

The Nurturing Parenting Program builds protective factors in families that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children/teens and families. Classes also include the Darkness to Light presentation on the prevention of child sexual abuse. The classes are offered monthly. For more information, contact Randall Sidwell at Randall.Sidwell@tnvoices.org or 865-722-9148.

July 8th - 24th, Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30 - 7 pm CT, via Zoom, Register [here](#).

July 9th - 25th, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 - 7 pm CT, via Zoom, Register [here](#).

August 5th - 21st, Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:30 - 7 pm CT, via Zoom, Register [here](#).

Family Driven IEP:

The Family Drive IEP class provides new ideas on how to apply and promote a family driven approach that ensures family involvement during the evaluation, development, and implementation of the IEP.

July 30th, Tuesday, 11:30 - 12:30 CT, via Zoom, Register [here](#).



TN Voices | 800-670-9882 | tvc@tnvoices.org | www.tnvoices.org

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