

The Statewide Organization of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

THE NETWORKER

THE TENNESSEE COALITION FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES RELEASES POSITION PAPER MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2011

2011 is critical for mental health services in Tennessee. The state's public behavioral health system is designed to meet the mental health and substance abuse service needs of all Tennesseans, with a goal in mind of enabling success, and promoting resiliency, recovery, and inclusion for those who suffer with serious mental health and substance use disorders. Unless action is taken by the new administration and the Tennessee General Assembly, this already faltering system, due to budget cuts and lack of funding, could experience serious erosion leading to collapse. The lives of thousands of Tennesseans will be seriously and negatively impacted.

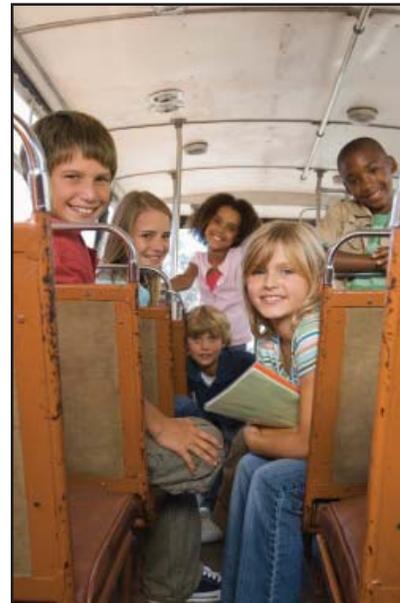
As a member of the Tennessee Coalition for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, TVC is hopeful that in 2011 all current critical services will be preserved and protected. With the state's new administration now in place, the Coalition has pre-

pared a position paper, "Now More Than Ever," with recommendations to the new governor to show our support and have our voices heard. As is stated in the document's cover letter, the Coalition's first White Paper was presented to Governor Bredesen at approximately this same time eight years ago, and significant change has taken place since then. We hope that this 2011 White Paper, sent to Governor Haslam on January 19th, will make a strong impression. In it, we express our thoughts on the current situation and offer solution-focused recommendations.

risk of psychiatric crisis, hospitalization, criminalization, homelessness, or suicide. Lastly, with the continued economic downturn, community services that for the past twenty years have proven essential for adults and children with mental illness or substance use disorders were placed in the non-recurring budget and are slated for termination at the end of this current fiscal year. The Coalition recommends preservation of this very fragile infrastructure by restoring these community-based recovery and resiliency services to the DMH base discretionary budget.

Children and youth are served through multiple systems that are difficult for families to navigate. The System of Care model has demonstrated strong outcomes in several pilot projects across the state. The Coalition recommends adoption of the System of Care model on a statewide basis to coordinate and integrate services to children with mental health and substance use conditions, consistent with long term goals of the Council on Children's Mental Health.

(Continued on next page.)



Drastic changes during the past two decades have affected the mental health system, and just in the past two years the Tennessee Department of Mental Health underwent significant downsizing. In addition, the one remaining children's RMHI inpatient unit was closed and the number of adult beds were reduced, putting in more Tennesseans at increased

TVC ELECTS 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

TVC is proud to announce that Craig Anne Heflinger, Ph.D. has been elected President of the organization's Board of Directors, beginning in the 2011 term. Heflinger is Associate Dean for Graduate Education at Vanderbilt's Peabody College and a longtime advocate for children's mental health.

In addition, for the 2011 term, Jack McKenzie, longtime Board President, will be Immediate Past President, an esteemed position in which he will still offer expertise to the Board and its President. Michele Johnson, Managing Attorney for Tennessee Justice Center, is President-Elect. Dr. Paula Sandidge, longtime Advisory Council Member, will serve as Secretary. Dick Blackburn, Executive Director of Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations and one of the founding members of the Board, will serve as the Board of Directors' Treasurer.

In addition to the officers, the Board is comprised of Heather Dziejewski, Barbara Early, Karen Easter, Wanda Evans, Robin Green, Merrill Harris, Linda O'Neal, Sheila Peters, Ph.D., Debbie Webb, and Steve Wonsiewicz.

WHITE PAPER continued...

Other recommendations include:

- Alternatives to TennCare cuts;
- Medicaid options to build service continuity for transitional youth;
- Strengthening crisis response services to be available on a "firehouse mode"-basis – 24/7 regardless of ability to pay;
- Preservation of funds to maintain 46 Peer Support Centers;
- Preservation of the Behavioral Health Safety Net allocation; and
- Recommendations for a behavioral health system strategic planning initiative, engaging experts and the TDMH Planning and Policy Council to integrate care across systems and to position the State for emerging opportunities in the changing health care landscape.

To view the paper in its entirety, visit
www.tnvoices.org/whitepaper.

A Letter From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We are beginning a critical new year for children and their families. The Tennessee Coalition for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services has presented a paper, "Now More Than Ever," to document the importance of meeting the needs of Tennesseans with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues in a time of economic uncertainty. We want to share this information with everyone including the 2011 General Assembly and Governor Haslam's administration. Tennessee Voices for Children is one of more than 40 organizations participating in the Coalition. We encourage everyone to go to www.tnvoices.org/whitepaper to review the complete document. In particular we support the Recommendations for Service to Children and Youth which includes the following:

Preserve funding for effective, long-standing children's mental health programs necessary to maintain the service infrastructure;

Give priority to the programs, currently funded with non-recurring dollars, that provide early intervention and prevention services to children and their families, including the extremely successful Statewide Family Support Program;

Develop a coordinated and integrated System of Care consistent with long term goals of the Council on Children's Mental Health; and

Develop a statewide plan to build on successes from System of Care pilot projects.

It is so important to protect the fragile infrastructure for the children's mental health system during challenging economic times so that we can continue to shore up critical services when we can.

Charlotte G. Bryson

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2011

Changes in store for Children's Mental Health

WELCOME DOUG VARNEY, NEW TDMHDD COMMISSIONER

TVC is excited to welcome Doug Varney into the crucial position of Tennessee Department of Mental Health Commissioner. Governor Bill Haslam announced in January that Varney, President and CEO of Frontier Health, will take over in the new term. Frontier Health, a community mental health center based out of Gray, Tenn., serves families and individuals affected by behavioral health, substance abuse and intellectual deficit issues. A longterm employee of the organization, Varney worked his way up from psychological examiner, counselor and therapist to President and CEO.

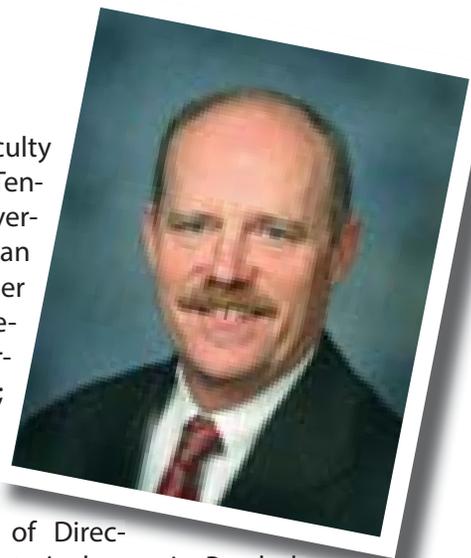
The Department's mission is to plan for and promote the availability of a comprehensive array of quality prevention, early intervention, treatment, habilitation, and rehabilitation services and supports based on the needs and choices of individuals and families served.

"Doug Varney has spent his life dedicated to helping those affected by these issues, and I'm pleased he will be part of our team," Haslam said. "He has spent his career at the community level and having that perspective makes him uniquely qualified to this position."

Varney was a board member and past president of the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations. He is a member of the faculty at the Healthy Appalachia Insti-

tute; adjunct faculty member at East Tennessee State University; past chairman and board member of CareSpark, a regional health information exchange; and a member of the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He has a master's degree in Psychology from East Tennessee State and was formerly licensed as a psychological examiner, marriage and family counselor and professional counselor.

"I'm a mission-oriented person, and I'm excited to use my experience and years spent in this field to help all Tennesseans facing these challenges," Varney said. "I'm honored to be selected by Gov.-elect Haslam, and I'm looking forward to working with the great staff at the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities department."



FAIRWELL TO VIRGINIA TROTTER BETTS

Virginia Trotter Betts will be missed as she departs from the Tennessee Department of Mental Health. In the eight years she served

the state, many challenges were met head on and successes prevailed. Most notably she aided in the transformation of Tennessee's public mental health system toward resiliency and recovery by "bringing science to service" and merging Alcohol and Drug Services with the Department.

Under her supervision, TDMH received National recognition for the Department's leadership in many policy areas, including

suicide prevention, housing and employment, and integrating mental health, substance abuse services, and physical health. Under her supervision the state saw new partnerships with faith and secular communities, which provided recovery and anti-stigma services; an expansion of children's mental health services across age and regional spectrums through a System of Care grant; an expansion/improvement of crisis services to offset reduced inpatient capacity; and more accessible safety net services for uninsured adults, service members, returning veterans, and their families, and persons transitioning from the criminal justice system.

“
We at Tennessee Voices for Children wish to thank Commissioner Betts for her key achievements during her tenure and to enthusiastically welcome Commissioner Varney. Commissioner Varney brings a wealth of experience to this critically important position and we look forward to working with him on behalf of the children and families in Tennessee.
-Charlotte Bryson
”

PROGRAM SCRAPBOOK



K-TOWN ROLLS OUT!

After a year of planning, K-Town Youth Empowerment Network has moved into its "roll out" phase of providing direct services to Knox County youth ages 14-21 with serious mental health challenges and their families.

K-Town's Kick-Off on October 1, 2010 celebrated the growth of its community partnership and marked the official start of Wrap-around services to Knox County youth and their families.



Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett speaks at K-Town Kick-Off Community Partners Breakfast

~Submitted by Wendy Bessman

The K-Town Youth Empowerment Network initiative now includes 40 community partners, including education, child welfare, family advocacy, juvenile justice, faith-based, and managed care organizations.

The festivities began with a Community Partners Breakfast attended by approximately 90 leaders, including Superintendent James McIntyre, Sheriff J.J. Jones, Representative Bill Dunn, Commissioner Jeff Ownby, and Knox County School Board member Pam Trainor. In addition to remarks by Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett, Knoxville Director of Community Development Madeline Rogero read a proclamation from then-Mayor Bill Haslam declaring October 1 "K-Town Youth Empowerment Day." Project Director Mark Wolf reported on K-Town's progress during the first planning year of its six-year grant period, and attendees heard from youth and family members whose lives have been affected by serious mental illness, including Knoxville church pastor and lead singer of local rock band Dishwater Blonde, Davis Mitchell.

The celebration continued that evening on Market Square, where K-Town staff dished up 100 cups of popcorn at its "First Friday Family Information Station" as part of the Knox County Library's Movies on Market Square. The

last event in the Kick-Off trilogy was the K-Town Youth in Action Council "Party with a Purpose" for about 60 youth and family members at Remedy coffee house in the Old City, with dancing, a sundae bar, and a stigma-busting session led by Youth Coordinator Chrystal Armstrong.

Adorning the walls at this event was a gallery of artwork by local individuals affected by mental illness, part of Behavioral Health Awareness Coalition's annual First Friday art show in celebration of Mental Illness Awareness Week. K-Town is off to a great Year Two, as referrals roll in, work groups get going, and the community partnership keeps growing!



From Top, Clockwise: University of Tennessee Social Work Student Volunteers at the Breakfast; Davis Mitchell speaks about his experience as a youth dealing with homelessness, mental illness, and substance abuse; K-Town FSP Shani Cutler shares a laugh with Governor Bill Haslam;

PROGRAM SCRAPBOOK

JACKSON YOUTH RECOGNIZED

Members of the Jackson Youth in Action Council were recognized recently by the Jackson Madison County Anti-Drug Coalition for their participation in the Tennessee Teen Institute Conference. The Coalition sponsored all six members to attend the five-day conference last summer. Pictured below are Deseree Ewing and Richard Dilbeck, who represented the council in receiving their certificates.



YIA COUNCIL MAKES IMPRESSION AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Three high schoolers from Mule Town Family Network's Youth In Action Council made a presentation at the American Evaluation Association's 2010 conference in San Antonio this past November. Stephanie House, Antoinette Hatton, and Deterius McClain, accompanied by Statewide Youth Engagement Specialist James Martin and Centerstone Research Institute's Cheri Hoffman, were the only youth in attendance at the conference, which catered to professionals, researchers, and college students. Their presentation, titled "Youth Led Evaluation in Action: Stomping Out the Stigma of Mental Illness," focused on just that. Martin was very pleased with his group's performance: "They really make such an impact, and people, especially in a situation like this, are really beginning to understand that a lot can be learned when we listen to our youth."

**SAVE
the
DATE!**

Middle Tennessee Youth in Action Council gears up for Real Talk Real Teen Action Summit

Saturday, March 26, 2011. 8am-8pm in Nashville at TSU
YOUTH-GUIDED AND PARENT WORKSHOPS

Contact Kashonda Babb for more information at 615.269.7751.

Hosted by Community Take Back Initiative Task Force & Nashville Community Coalition for Youth Safety by IMF Peniel Initiative

RHONDA EWING SHARES HER EXPERTISE FOR NAMI CLASS

TVC Parent Advocate/Youth Coordinator Rhonda Ewing (pictured at right, third from right standing) provided caregivers and parents of children with behavioral concerns information on special education and IEPs this past November for a NAMI TN Basics Class. Bonita Molbert, President of NAMI Jackson invited Rhonda to present along with Brenda Stacey-Scott, assistant administrator of NAMI TN and her husband G. David Scott, who taught the BASICS class.



It's a Masquerade... Local Service Sorority Honors TVC

Gamma Sigma Sigma National Service Sorority's local White Rose Alumni Chapter held its 2nd Annual White Rose Masquerade Ball in November, with TVC as its 2010 Honoree. To acknowledge our organization's work for children and families in Tennessee, Gamma Sigma Sigma used all proceeds from the ball, which was themed "A Night of Mystery," to purchase items donated to TVC's Youth in Action Councils. Many members of TVC's staff were in attendance, as well as members of the Mule Town Family Network's Youth in Action Council.



From Left: Millie Sweeney and husband Kirk with Craig Anne Heflinger and husband Scott; Michele Johnson and husband Jeff; Adam Horn and wife Lani; Below, left to right: James Martin, Gerron Moore, Tonia Kirkpatrick, Antionette Hatton, and Paula Davis.





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2011
CALENDARS
ARE IN!

Let us
know if
you'd like a
copy of the
TVC calendar!
Come by one of
our offices
or call us
at 615-269-7751.

COMING SOON...

When you log on to tvoices.org, you'll soon see some major changes! And we're not just talking aesthetics. TVC's revamped site will be much more interactive and up-to-date so that the second we know, you know as well. Here's a preview...

TENNESSEE VOICES FOR CHILDREN
Speaking Out for the Well-Being of Children
800.670.9882 - tvc@tvoices.org - www.tvoices.org

EMPLOYEE NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

TVC Welcomes



MELISSA BINKLEY, COACHING PROJECT
COORDINATOR, CSEFEL, TEAM TN

Melissa joins TVC following her work with Books from Birth of Middle Tennessee as an AmeriCorps VISTA. An Arlington, Va., native, she received her B.A. in Psychology and Physics from the University of Virginia and her M.S. in Child & Family Studies from UT-Knoxville. A self-proclaimed "math and science nerd" who "fell into a passion for child development and programming," she also dabbles in the visual arts, including painting, jewelry making, and sewing. Though she's lived in TN since 2006, she says her DC-area roots run deep (she enjoys reading the Washington Post online and cheering on the Redskins, Capitals, and Nationals), but is happiest with her toes in the sand and a view of the ocean.



GILDA LEWIS, SOCIAL MARKETER,
JUSTCARE FAMILY NETWORK

Gilda Lewis, a former professor at local colleges, has joined the JustCare Family Network team. She has her B.A. in English and M.B.A. from the University of Memphis. Gilda loves gardening and cooking, and she has two sons.

Kelly Bryson Receives Award for Civil Rights Work in New Orleans

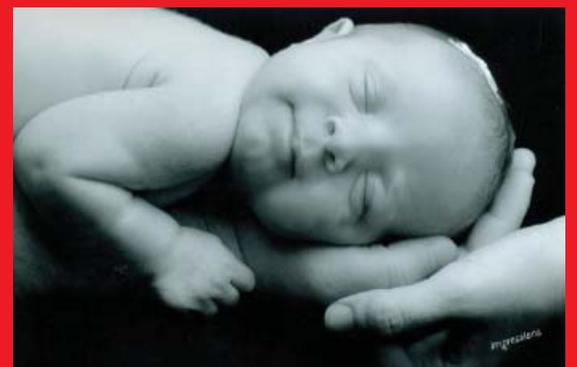
FBI Special Agent Kelly Bryson, daughter of TVC Executive Director Charlotte Bryson, was honored in a ceremony held in Washington D.C. in November for her outstanding supervision and dedicated hard work by the members on her civil rights squad. Bryson served as the FBI New Orleans Division's civil rights supervisor from 2007 to 2010. She has been recognized for her work with the FBI investigations of killings of New Orleans residents by police officers during Hurricane Katrina.



Left to right: Assistant Attorney General Thomas Perez, Special Agent Kelly Bryson, and Acting Chief Robert Moossy.

Congrats!!

Laura Fair and husband Brad welcomed a new baby girl on October 12. Autumn Elizabeth joins sister Grace, 2.



SUPPORT GROUPS

EAST TN

Knoxville

Special Needs Parents
"Support, Ideas & Solutions"
West Park Baptist Church
Parents of children ages 2 to 21
8833 Middlebrook Pike
4th Tues. of every month 7-8:30 pm
Jim Griffin 865/609-2490
Jgriffin@tnvoices.org

Morristown City

"Hand in Hand Family
Support Group"
Morristown-Hamblem Library
417 West Main Street
3rd Thurs. of every month 6:30-8 pm
Parents of children ages 2 to 21
Call in advance if childcare is needed
Contact: 423/289-4217

Blount County

MAC Meeting
(Maryville Autism Coalition)
Fairview United Methodist Church
2508 Old Niles Ferry Road, Maryville
3rd Thurs. of every month 6:30-8 pm
Erin Thompson 865/776-6442
Plaid2000@aol.com

Chattanooga

Awesome Autism
Ronald McDonald 200 Central Ave.
Last Monday of every month
Jackie Benkert 423/886-5430
awesome_autism@yahoo.com

Loudon County

Special Needs Support Group
First Baptist Church in Lenoir City
Parents of children ages 2 to 21
2085 Simpson Road
3rd Thurs. of every month 6:00-8 pm
Barbara Early 865/621-3661
early111@bellsouth.net

MIDDLE TN

Clarksville

Emmanuel Life Center
First Missionary Baptist Church
301 Fairview Lane
3rd Thurs. of every month 6:30-8 pm
Childcare Available
Monica Causey 800/670-9882
or 615/269-7751

Lewisburg

First Assembly of God
1191 West Ellington Pkwy
3rd Thurs. of every month 6:30-8 pm
Kim Young 931/560-3088

Columbia/Maury County

The Family Center
1st Thurs. of every month 6:00-7:30 pm
921 Beckett Street, Columbia
Call in advance if childcare is needed
Kathy Rogers 931/560-3085
Kelly Turco 931/490-0463

Humphreys County

M.A.S.K.
(Mothers and Fathers of Autism
Spectrum Kids)
Last Saturday of every month at 2 pm
Tanya Salley 931/582-6147
Barbara Steuer 615/740-8019

WEST TN

Madison County

TVC Jackson Office
239 North Parkway, Suite C, Jackson
4th Sat. of every month at 1 pm
Childcare Available
Rhonda Ewing 731/984-8599
rewing@tnvoices.org



Charlotte Bryson **Executive Director**
Millie Sweeney **Asst. Director for Programs**
Brian Taylor **Asst. Director for Operations**

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**BE IN THE KNOW! Join or start a
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