

SUPPORT GROUPS



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



THE NETWORKER

1st Quarter 2011 Edition

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Arm Yourself with the Latest Facts (via NAMI)



Mental illnesses are serious medical illnesses. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence. Mental illness falls along a continuum of severity. Even though mental illness is widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion—about 6 percent, or 1 in 17 Americans—who live with a serious mental illness. The National Institute of Mental Health reports that one in four adults—approximately 57.7 million Americans—experience a mental health disorder in a given year.

The U.S. Surgeon General reports that 10 percent of children and adolescents in the United States suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders that cause significant functional impairment in their day-to-day lives at home, in school and with peers.

The World Health Organization has reported that four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the US and other developed countries are mental disorders. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.

Mental illness usually strikes individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and the old are especially vulnerable.

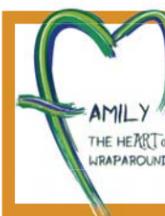
Without treatment the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives. The economic cost of untreated mental

illness is more than \$100 billion each year in the United States.

The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective: between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.

With appropriate medication and a wide range of services tailored to their needs, most people who live with serious mental illnesses can significantly reduce the impact of their illness and find a satisfying measure of achievement and independence. A key concept is to develop expertise in developing strategies to manage the illness process.

Early identification and treatment is of vital importance; By ensuring access to the treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and the further harm related to the course of illness is minimized.



SAVE THE DATE!
TVC's 2011 State of the Child Conference will be October 20-21
With Keynote Speaker KARL DENNIS! Don't miss it!

EAST TN

Knoxville

"Family to Family"

K-Town Office
 Fort Hill Building;
 901 East Summit Hill Drive
 2nd Tues. of every month 6:00-7:30pm
 Shani Cutler 865/474-6689
 scutler@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/Maryville

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

Lenoir City/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

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

Nashville

Grandparents' Support Group

TVC Headquarters
 701 Bradford Avenue
 2nd Tues of every month 6pm
 Childcare Available
 615/269-7751 or tvc@tnvoices.org

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

BE IN THE KNOW!
Join or start a TVC Support Group. Call
1-800-670-9882



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

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SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION IS UPDATED REGULARLY AT
WWW.TNVOICES.ORG/SUPPORTGROUPS.



MATT TIMM HONORED BY SECA

TVC's Director of Early Childhood Programs Matt Timm received the Southern Early Childhood Association's President's Award, which was presented at their 2011 Conference in January. The award is presented annually to an advocate for children who has contributed significantly to the well-being of children in his other state and/or throughout the Southern region.

Citing his work with TVC and RIP, as well as his work as a community organizer and voice as a member of the Tennessee Association for the Education of Young People, SECA stated that "Dr. Timm is an extremely compassionate, knowledgeable, and caring individual whose first priority is always the children."

We couldn't agree more here at TVC. Congratulations, Dr. Matt!

MEETING WITH THE FIRST LADY

On April 13, 2011, TVC staff members Paul Coggins, Monica Causey and Dr. Matt Timm met with First Lady Crissy Haslam and Deputy Speaker of the House, Steve McDaniel (R-Parkers Crossroads) in the First Lady's office. The purpose of this productive meeting was to discuss ways in which the Love, Read, Learn program sponsored by TVC's TN Parent Information Resource Center (TPIRC) and the Family Engagement component of the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)/Team TN state partnership administered by TVC might support the First Lady's recently announced statewide initiative to creatively seek out ways to increase and inspire parental involvement, both in Tennessee schools and during early childhood development, with special emphasis on early childhood reading proficiency. ~Contributed by Dr. Matt Timm



Pictured above, L-R: Rep. Steve McDaniel, TVC's Paul Coggins, First Lady Crissy Haslam, and TVC's Monica Causey and Matt Timm

Congrats to Naquisha Williams

Naquisha Williams, a member of our Middle Tennessee Youth In Action Council was selected as a delegate for the 2011 Tennessee Youth Leadership Forum at Vanderbilt University! Naquisha was selected out of many youth applicants through an intensive application process and phone interview.

The Tennessee Youth Leadership Forum is a training initiative of the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Forum is designed to provide 10th, 11th, and 12th grade high school students who have disabilities with information about disability issues, and to help them become advocates for themselves and others in their communities.

Participants attend a four-day conference on the campus of Vanderbilt University, where they participate in small and large group discussions, listen to local and national speakers in the field of disabilities, travel to Legislative Plaza to tour the Capitol and meet with legislators, and complete written materials that are designed to augment their self-advocacy and leadership skills.

Congratulations Naquisha, you make us proud!



MORE FROM THE REAL TALK, REAL TEEN SUMMIT



MT. PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL AND YIA COMBAT BULLYING

Hoping to address the well-publicized bullying that plagues middle schoolers, and especially those suffering from mental health disorders, Mt. Pleasant Middle Schoolers and YIA Council members created "No Bully Zone Day." Encouraged by Statewide Youth Engagement Specialist James Martin, who gives talks weekly to kids at the school who have behavioral problems, many kids and member of the Mt. Pleasant Youth In Action Council assembled to speak up about how bullying affects their lives. As part of the campaign, students signed a pledge to treat their classmates with civility. "We used Michael Jackson's song 'Man in the Mirror' as a theme, to show students they need to look at themselves and what they're doing, but also that students being bullied need to look in the mirror and know that that person deserves respect," he said. "Bullying can be stopped before it starts if students are brave enough to speak openly about it, and a forum like this gives them that opportunity."



New Employee

ASHLEY ABERNATHY
TeenScreen Case Manager

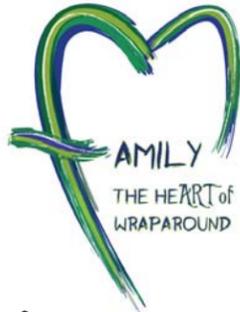
Ashley joined TVC as an intern in Summer 2010 and was later hired to take over the role of case manager within the program. The Texas native has lived in the Nashville area since high school, pursuing her undergraduate education at MTSU and completing her degree in Business at Union. She worked in banking for a year before returning to school to receive her Masters in Social Work and changed her career path after realizing how much she enjoyed working with children. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her friends, family, and boyfriend; playing on the lake, or being lazy at home.

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SAVE THE DATE!

TVC will host its State of the Child Conference October 20-21 at Legacy Farms in Lebanon. This year's theme, "Family: The Heart of Wraparound," focuses on family, youth and professional involvement in the wraparound process.

And most exciting, Wraparound Expert **KARL DENNIS is the 2011 Keynote Speaker!**
STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS!



Lights! Camera! Youth in Action!

Kudos to the Middle Tn. Youth In Action for steering such an awesome event! The Real Talk Real Teen Action Summit was held on March 26, 2011 on the campus of Tennessee State University Downtown Avon Williams campus with close to 100 teens and 20 parents in attendance. Youth enjoyed a fun and informative day that allowed them to express themselves, receive support resources and voice their concerns in their own unique way.

In the past year, as new members to the Community Take Back Initiative Task Force, our Middle Tennessee Youth In Action Council members served as youth board members to begin a great vision for leading this event. With other youth from youth serving agencies, they developed vital discussion topics for youth led workshops. They planned and executed those plans as Youth Engagement Leaders for the Real Talk Real Teen Action Summit.

The purpose of this one-

day summit was to generate vital youth driven dialogue and provide immediate access to local resources that will address some of the pressing safety issues our youth face. The operations and session facilitation of workshops were managed and maintained by youth engagement leaders and an adult co-facilitator. Workshops were dedicated to specific areas such as education, mental/physical health, creative expression, youth welfare, and safety issues.

Youth participants were given targeted professional guidance, information, resources, and skills needed to become active participants in improving education health and safety outcomes for themselves, their peers and the community. Stratford High School art students displayed awesome artwork in our "Art Spectacular" presentation area that highlights one deserving art class selected from our many great high schools in the Middle Tennessee

area that focuses on keeping the arts as an important tool for students to express themselves in the classroom.

We also had fun in our "Destination Me" segment which was a working lunch group of teens and a parent group whose goal was to develop a picture collage based on how they see their future and how they will get there using art supplies and magazine cut outs. Through the summit, we recognized that anyone and everyone, whether individual, organization, or business can be involved in the process of change, responsibility and resiliency.

Big plans have already begun for next year's event!

~Contributed by Kashonda Babb, TVC



K-Town Gets Festive

For Valentine's Day 2011, K-Town Youth Empowerment Network hosted 19 youth and family members for a holiday-themed dance competition. The contest centered on the Xbox Kinect game, Dance Central, which is an interactive video game played using your body as the controller to perform dance routines to a variety of popular songs. All of the contestants were given a quick dance lesson on the song of their choice, and then had one chance to perform that routine as accurately as possible.

As each youth took to the dance floor to perform, the rest of the party goers watched in anticipation while snacking on pizza and other Valentine's refreshments. Once everyone had a chance to compete, a winner was announced based on the scores each player received on the game system. Rayricus Matthews blew the competition away, and was presented an oversize check from Foot Locker worth \$100. Runners up Anaja Raiteri and Jonathan Peak were also presented with gift cards to Wal-Mart.

All of the youth, and even some K-Town staff, spent the rest of the evening eating, socializing, and dancing the night away.

~Contributed by Taylor Rumsey, K-Town



FIRST LADY PLANTS PINWHEELS

First lady Crissy Haslam partnered with Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee to celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month in April by planting a pinwheel garden at the Capitol. In the ceremony held April 5th, she said it was a great opportunity to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect. The Pinwheels for Prevention campaign has become a focal point of the annual awareness campaign, and the First Lady said pinwheels are re-

flective of bright futures all children deserve. In addition to the blue pinwheel garden, the Capitol was lit with blue lights in observance of child abuse prevention, representing the 95,000 infants to be born in Tennessee this year.
 ~Contributed by Kristen Rector, Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee



SHANI CUTLER SHARES HER EXPERTISE WITH WBIR KNOXVILLE

WBIR-Knoxville's newest series -- "Warning Signs" -- focuses on mental illness in East Tennessee and what kinds of treatments or preventative measures should be taken to ensure that those suffering do not turn to violence or suicide. K-Town's Shani Cutler was interviewed live on February 22nd to talk about the K-Town Youth Empowerment Network and the efficiency of the System of Care Approach.



Pictures c/o Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee

DAY ON CAPITOL HILL *and* CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY DAYS

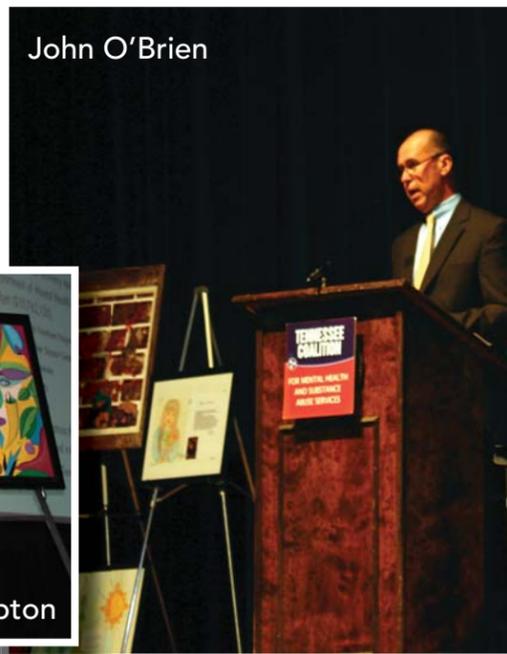
A DAY ON THE HILL *Now More Than Ever*

On March 1, 2011, members of the Tennessee Coalition of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services gathered at War Memorial Auditorium to raise awareness of mental illness among legislators and the general public, and to inform of the need to work together for better behavioral care opportunities across the state. This year's program, emceed by TSU Associate Professor of Communications Alan Griggs featured keynote speaker John O'Brien, Senior Advisor for Health Finance with SAMHSA. O'Brien spoke about the Health Care Reform bills, citing the critical work that must be done to ensure mental health is not left out of its implementation in 2014. "We have to make our voices heard," he said. "We must continue to motivate America to better understand that behavioral health is essential to overall health." Later in the program, a panel consisting of TDMH Commissioner Doug Varney, TennCare Chief of Networks Keith Gaither, and the TN Department of Corrections' Marina Cadreche and William Gupton answered audience questions and lent their individual backgrounds and expertise; they discussed budgets, resources, and the chal-

lenging times facing the mental health field. "As far as budget goes," Gaither said, "All of the good and easy ideas were used a long time ago. Now we have to get creative." Commissioner Varney equated the battle with "sweeping back the ocean with a broom. Demand is tremendous and times are challenging," he said. "But we are sweeping it back."



Marina Cadreche, Com. Varney, Keith Gaither, and William Gupton



John O'Brien

CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY DAYS *The Art of Children's Advocacy*

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth held its annual Children's Advocacy Days at Nashville's War Memorial Auditorium on March 15-16. Many member of TVC's staff attended the program, themed "The Art of Children's Advocacy." This annual event equips child advocates with information and skills to help them speak out on behalf of the state's children. But, TCCY says, "advocacy is more than just information, rules, and relationships: it's an art."

Amid the children's artwork and plentiful youth in attendance, state budget cuts were on the minds of everyone in the room. The 2011 program was opened by

TCCY Chair Cindy Durham, and featured updates by TCCY Executive Director Linda O'Neal, youth poetry read by members of YouthSpeaks Nashville, and many other prestigious speakers. Department of Children's Services Commissioner Kate O'Day, former Executive Director of nonprofit Child & Family Tennessee, assured the audience "I am still one of you," and spoke about her experience working with what resources she has. "The answers to the biggest problems in the state are right here in this room," she said. Tennessee Department of Mental Health Commissioner Doug Varney later supported Commissioner O'Day in saying that she "...understands what we're deal-

ing with here in Tennessee." Commissioner Varney addressed potential budget cuts by focusing on the strength of relationships and partnerships, specifically mentioning the strong partnership between TVC and TCCY, as well as ensuring that TennCare and TDMH continue to "stay relevant" in the new fiscal year. "We aren't taking the easy way out," he said. "We will be looking at specific kinds of cuts for best outcomes."

On the second day, First Lady Crissy Haslam spoke, and TVC's Dr. Matt Timm, along with colleagues, spoke about strategies for social and emotional development in a presentation called "This Stuff Really Works!"



From Left:
DCS Commissioner Kate O'Day; a member of YouthSpeaks Nashville reads her poetry; Dr. Matt Timm presents; and TVC's Kashonda Babb poses with members of the MiddleTN Youth In Council in attendance.

A Letter From the
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Many Thanks

We began 2011 extremely concerned about potential budget cuts and lack of funding for the state's public behavioral health system which is designed to meet the mental health and substance abuse service needs of all Tennesseans. Fortunately, Governor Haslam's administration has restored behavioral health community-based service funding and has protected the critical and fragile infrastructure for children's mental health services in his budget.

The Tennessee Coalition for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services prepared recommendations in a position paper, "Now More Than Ever" which offered solution-focused recommendations to the budget crisis. We are grateful that Governor Haslam's administration has positively addressed these critical issues. Tennessee Department of Mental Health Commissioner Doug Varney's vast experience in the community mental health system has been instrumental in preventing the erosion of current essential services.

We at Tennessee Voices for Children thank Commissioner Varney and Governor Haslam for responding so positively! We feel certain that the Tennessee General Assembly will support this budget. We will continue to work with the Coalition to continue to improve the support and funding for our vital mental health system.

Charlotte G. Bryson