



Tennessee Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health



THE NETWORKER



Alfredo Aguirre and Millie Sweeney

TVC WINS PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARD

The Karl Dennis Unconditional Care Award

Tennessee Voices for Children was honored with winning the Karl Dennis Award for Unconditional Care at the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health Conference in December. Created in 2002 by the Federation of Families in honor of the work of Karl Dennis in the field of children's mental health, the prestigious award is given to individuals and organizations who exemplify exceptional work in the field. TVC is the second organization to win the award, which recognizes it as a "Champion for Youth and Families."

Each year, the previous winner of the award assists in the coordination of picking the new winner, and last year's recipient was the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (and the first organization to receive the award). Citing TVC's Respite program, Alfredo Aguirre, Mental Health Director for the County, said "Aside from effectively addressing the criteria established for the award and contributing to the field of Children's Mental Health and advocating the Family Voice with Wraparound, TVC also contributed specific programs that had documented good outcomes for specific children and families. They go above and beyond and get results."

We are honored and humbled by this award," says Millie Sweeney, TVC's Assistant Director for Programs. "And we are thankful to work in a field where we see the fruits of our labor through the stories shared of families helped and of children whose lives are made better through services created especially for them."

TVC's contributions cited include:

- Advocacy in the development of a Family Support Specialist certification in Tennessee;
- TVC's representation on the Tennessee Council on Children's Mental Health, as well as 150+ boards, councils, and coalitions to ensure continued Family and Youth Voice within Tennessee's Statewide Children's System of Care;
- The organization's integral role in developing four federally funded system of care sites and other system of care-based programs in the state;
- Assisting the develop family-driven and youth-guided policies and services that enable parents to have a voice in service provision and evaluation while receiving the support they need to maintain their children at home, school, and in the community.

As the executive director of Kaleidoscope, Inc. in Chicago, **KARL DENNIS** heads the first child welfare agency in the country to provide unconditional care for children. He is considered one of the country's leading experts on community-based care and a pioneer of WrapAround services. The popular lecturer and consultant has contributed his vast knowledge of community-based care to individuals and agencies across the United States and several foreign countries.



TVC News and Happenings



Youth In Action Council Member Gerron Moore Honored by the Titans

After scoring the winning touchdown which took his school to the State Championship, Columbia Central High School Senior and Youth In Action Council member Gerron Moore was honored as Player of the Week by the Tennessee Titans on December 1. Gerron is an active member of the youth council and a leader among his peers in his community. James Martin, leader of the Columbia Youth in Action Council is very proud to have him in his group.

Gerron is a wonderful young man with a great attitude and tons of potential, and I know he will go a long way. He has made a strong impact on his community and especially his peers by having a voice for kids who are afraid to speak up.

~James Martin

MT. PLEASANT YIA OFFICERS SWORN IN

On December 22, members of the Columbia Youth In Action Council assisted in swearing in officers of the newly formed Council in Mt. Pleasant, both of which are led by James Martin. Pictured to the right are Council President Stephanie House (left) and Vice President Emily Williamson.



Youth In Action Council Members and Leaders Attend Conference in D.C.



Youth In Action Council members Detrius McClain (Columbia) and Naquisha Williams (Middle Tennessee) pose in front of a Christmas tree in Washington, DC. They received scholarships to attend the 2009 National Federation of Families Conference, where they participated in workshops regarding networking with their peers and in their communities and to develop leadership skills. James Martin and Kashonda Babb, leader of the Middle Tennessee Youth Council, traveled alongside them and attended the conference as well.

Working in Memphis...



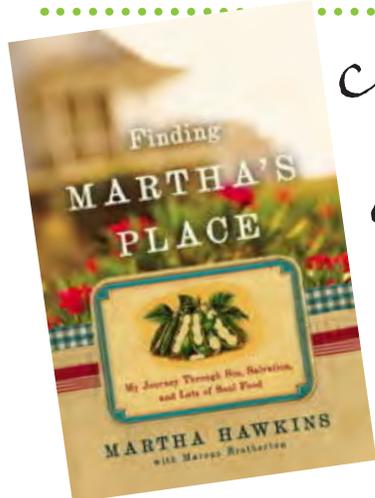
The JustCare Family Network Staff (pictured above) had their first Technical Assistance and Evaluation Site Visits in November! They are getting in gear and eager to start seeing clients in February.

TENNESSEE RECEIVES FOURTH SYSTEM OF CARE GRANT

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (TDMHDD) has received a \$9 million grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to implement a coordinated system of care for youth in Knox County over the next six years, called the K-Town Youth Empowerment Network. The K-Town grant is administered through TDMHDD and operated locally in Knoxville by TVC in partnership with Helen Ross McNabb Mental Health Center. The evaluation will be provided by Centerstone Research Institute. Serving transitional youth, ages 15-21, and their families, K-Town's mission is to develop a service infrastructure that will empower caregivers, youth, and families with the knowledge, skills, resources and support they need for their children and youth to be successful at home, in school, and in the community.



K
TOWN



Martha
Hawkins
Finds
Her Place

Martha Hawkins, owner of nationally-known Southern eatery Martha's Place (in Montgomery, Alabama) and mother of TVC staff member Nyron Hawkins, has published her first book, out in stores this January. Published by Simon and Schuster, *Finding Martha's Place: My Journey Through Sin, Salvation, and Lots of Soul Food* chronicles how Martha overcame an impoverished childhood, depression and subsequent institutionalization, and single motherhood to, relying on faith, hope, and prayer, create a life through a restaurant that nourishes both the body and soul. *Finding Martha's Place* has been picked by Wal-Mart and Sam's Clubs industries as a featured book for African American History Month this February.

Nyron who is Cultural Competency Coordinator for the JustCare Family Network in Memphis, says, "After seeing my mother struggle and overcome many challenges of life due to her depression, I am a strong advocate for families. I know that parents want to be great parents... They just need help."



The Mother/Son Duo

A Letter From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"What will this new decade bring for our Children?"



The Year 2010 is here, starting a new and intriguing decade. Our hopes at Tennessee Voices for Children is that it will bring renewed efforts to ensure that our children and youth with mental health problems and their families will have available to them the most effective and integrated system of care possible

so that our children can lead healthy and productive lives. This will require continued dedication from advocates, child serving agencies, providers, policymakers, managed care organizations, families, and youths.

What Effect will the budget cuts have on our children?

Unfortunately, we start this decade facing severe cuts in programs for children and youth and their families. Last year, the General Assembly restored funding for some critical services for children's programs. This restoration was only for a year and these cuts will now take effect July 1, 2010. These deep cuts include children's statewide family support, early intervention and prevention, child care consultation, respite, and TeenScreen programs which currently provide services to thousands of families. These programs successfully keep children and youth with serious emotional disturbance in their homes, schools and communities.

As the state looks at this year's budget with further cuts required from the state departments, Tennessee Voices for Children strong message is this: **NO MORE CUTS FROM CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS.** Instead, we need to look at the possibility of restoring the cuts that are already scheduled to take effect July 1. Without adequate community children's mental health support, early identification and intervention and prevention programs, our children will pay a very dear price for the next decade.

What happened to the Children's Safety Net?

There is no "Safety Net" mental health program for children and youth as exists for adults. We must protect the children's mental health programs that currently provide the net, but are slated to be cut, that has helped these children succeed in school, remain in their homes and become assets to their community.

Charlotte G. Bryson

SUPPORT GROUPS

EAST TENNESSEE

Knoxville

Special Needs Parents
"Support, Ideas & Solutions"
West Park Baptist Church
*Parents of children ages 2 to 21
8833 Middlebrook Pike
4th Tuesday of every month
7:00-8:30 p.m.
Jim Griffin 865/609-2490
Jgriffin@tnvoices.org

Morristown City

"Hand in Hand Family Support Group"
Morristown-Hamblem Library
417 West Main Street
3rd Thursday of every month
6:30-8:00 p.m.
*Parents of children 2 to 21
Call in advance if childcare is needed
Contact: 423/289-4217

Maryville / Blount County

Maryville Autism Coalition Meeting
Fairview United Methodist Church
2508 Old Niles Ferry Road
3rd Thursday of every month
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Erin Thompson 865/776-6442
Plaid2000@aol.com

Chattanooga

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

Lenoir City / Loudon County

Special Needs Support Group for
Loudon County
First Baptist Church
*Parents of children 2 to 21
2085 Simpson Road
3rd Thursday of every month
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Barbara Early 865/621-3661
early111@bellsouth.net

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Clarksville

Emmanuel Life Center
First Missionary Baptist Church
301 Fairview Lane
3rd Thursday of every month
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Childcare Available
Monica Causey 800/670-9882
or 615/269-7751

Lewisburg

First Assembly of God
1191 West Ellington Parkway
3rd Thursday of every month
6:30-8:00 p.m.
Kim Young 931/560-3088

Columbia / Maury County

The Family Center
921 Beckett Street
1st Thursday of every month
6:00-7:30 p.m.
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
2:00 p.m.
Tanya Salley 931/582-6147
Barbara Steuer 615/740-8019

WEST TENNESSEE

Madison County / Jackson

TVC Jackson Office
239 North Parkway, Suite C
4th Saturday of every month
1:00 p.m.
Childcare Available
Rhonda Ewing 731/984-8599

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Tennessee Voices for Children relies on the personal and financial support of individuals, corporations, small businesses, foundations and others for the continuation and expansion of its programs. Most of TVC's services are offered free-of-charge to participants: the Statewide Family Support Group Network and its family support programs, which provide valuable emotional support, education and information to families of children with emotional and behavioral problems; a 1-800 information and referral line; conferences and training events, and The Networker quarterly newsletter. We need your support to be able to continue to offer these services. With your assistance, TVC can maintain and further expand its services and continue to work towards positive changes in the system of care for children in Tennessee.

Thank you for your support! 

I WILL SUPPORT

TENNESSEE VOICES FOR CHILDREN!



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\$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 other

Please choose one: Capital Campaign Fund General Fund

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Tennessee Voices for Children
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Nashville, TN 37204

