

Special Points of Interest

- **What does the TN Justice Center do? How can they help you?**
- **New Transitions Housing Program**
- **Spotlight on the Northeast Region**
- **Update ... Information on the TFACA Regional Conferences**



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The Tennessee Justice Center



The Tennessee Justice Center (TJC) is a nonprofit, public interest law and advocacy firm. They help parents advocate for their children to get medically necessary health and mental health care from TennCare. The Tennessee Justice Center helps families in need access health care.

Here are the stories of two former foster children we have helped this year. Mary and Joe's foster son, Timmy, is severely autistic and intellectually disabled. Timmy is almost completely nonverbal and can use very limited sign language. But he loves music, watching Barney, and playing on the swing in his yard. Timmy's doctor prescribed speech therapy to help him communicate better, but many speech therapists would not treat Timmy. They thought he was too hard to handle. Then Timmy's parents found Susan Hock. She is a speech therapist at the Parent-Child Services Group in Knoxville. Ms. Hock stuck with Timmy. He started showing signs of improvement. He would sit still, pay attention, and learned how to use some sign language. However, TennCare said that Timmy would have to switch to a new therapist in his provider network. Frustrated, Mary and Joe called the Tennessee Justice Center (TJC).



ALL children deserve quality health care!

TJC worked with the family to keep getting Timmy the care he needed. TJC filed an appeal and sent TennCare letters of support from Timmy's doctors. TennCare representatives soon decided that Timmy could keep getting therapy from Ms. Hock. Mary said afterwards, "I was very pleased with the results of the appeal ... I also appreciate the concern and care that TJC showed us."

Story continued on page 2

Pinwheels for Prevention

Join us in preventing the abuse and neglect of our nation's children by participating in Pinwheels for Prevention™, Prevent Child Abuse America's campaign introducing the pinwheel as the new symbol for child abuse and neglect prevention nationwide.

The pinwheel represents Prevent Child Abuse America's efforts to change the way our nation thinks about prevention, focusing on community activities and public



policies that prioritize right from the start to make sure child abuse and neglect never occur. Nearly 900,000 pinwheels have been displayed since April 2008. Join us by bringing **Pinwheels for Prevention** to your community!

Learn More about child abuse prevention. **Lend Your Voice** to bring about change for children in the U.S. **Volunteer** your time and talent. **Donate**. Find out how you can get involved **in your state**.

PinwheelsforPrevention.org

Tennessee Justice Center continued from page 1

Sarah and John adopted Stephen from the custody of the Department of Children's Services when he was 15. Stephen is a senior in high school, and he hopes to play for the varsity soccer team this year. In February, Sarah received a letter stating that Stephen would lose his TennCare coverage because he was not eligible. Sarah spoke with Susanne Bennett, who runs the LEASE program at the Tennessee Justice Center (TJC).

Susanne's research revealed that, as part of the adoption agreement, the state had agreed that Stephen would be covered by TennCare. Susanne helped Sarah file an appeal telling TennCare about its mistakes. A lawyer from TJC then wrote a letter to TennCare, informing them of the problem.

A few days later, TennCare agreed that Stephen should remain covered. Getting TennCare coverage made it possible for Stephen to see a doctor without expensive copays. Sarah said, "Susanne was a great help. She told me my rights and arranged for an attorney to help get things straightened out. Without her help we would still be fighting this."

Do you have questions about TennCare eligibility for your child? Are you having trouble getting care like glasses, dental work, or surgery, etc. for your child? You can call TJC at 1-877-608-1009 for help, visit their website www.tnjustice.org, email Susanne Bennett at sbennett@tnjustice.org, or check out their blog at <http://tennesseejustice.blogspot.com>.

What is EPSDT?

What can you do if TennCare says a child cannot get care because it's not medically necessary?

Use a law called "EPSDT!"



Need help with TennCare?

EPSDT is a federal law that TennCare **must** follow. You can use this law to help kids on TennCare get the health care they need. EPSDT stands for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment. It gives kids on TennCare, up to age 21, the right to treatment they need.

This includes treatment for physical health and mental health.

EPSDT says a child should get treatment, even if it won't make them better, if it will keep them from getting worse.

The state must cover *all* medical care that children on TennCare need.

2011 Annual TFACA Awards

Each year TFACA gives awards to recognize some special people. They include

1. Resource Parents of the Year (Kinship, Foster, Adoptive)
2. Local Association of the Year
3. Child Care Professional of the Year

Criteria for Nominations:

- Nominees must be approved resource parents or have been employed with DCS for two (2) or more years
- Resource parents must have met the annual training requirements
- Nominees must work well in partnership with the Department and resource parents
- Nominees must be advocates for the children they serve
- Nominees must fulfill DCS expectations

Please provide types of children served (sibling groups, medically fragile, teenagers, special needs, etc.); number of

children currently placed; names and ages of each. Has this resource parent adopted (names and ages, if appropriate)?

In your own words (200 or less), please describe what makes this person, or couple, stand above the rest in providing excellence in service to the children in their home (include how criteria have been met).

To nominate parents, a professional, or an association, send the nominee's name, address, county/region, email and phone number to

Ronya Faulkner, Program Specialist
Tennessee Center for Child Welfare
MTSU P.O. Box 143
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

By no later than July 1, 2011

TFACA Membership ... It's important to belong!

Membership is open to all foster or adoptive parents, employees of the TN DCS and citizens concerned about the well-being of foster and adoptive parents and children. Dues are only \$15 per person/\$30 per couple. Active members pay annual dues and will have the right to vote and be eligible for election as officers or directors of the TFACA. Help support this wonderful organization by joining today. Fill out an application at

www.tfaca.org/membership.html



Resources ... Resources ... Resources!

NEW TRANSITIONS



New Transitions is a housing program that provides stable, quality, affordable, and safe housing to youth exiting foster care while being a pathway to permanency for our residents.

CONTACT:

Courtney Adams
(615) 351-0795

NewTransitionsProgram@gmail.com

Benefits:

- Builds a sense of community
- Stable, affordable housing
- Life skills support
- Self-governing housing
- Integrative housing available
- Apprenticeships available
- Access to legal services
- Case file recovery program
- Strategic exit plan
- Free real estate services
- Rental credit
- Access to housing (after our program)
- 6-8 month program



What Transitions needs:

Youth 18—21
Female or Male
Employed
Education enrollment
Can pass a drug test
Rent is \$200.00 per month
Utilities included
Must be in POST CUSTODY

Cold, Flu, Allergy Medicines Covered by TennCare

With cold and flu season still hanging around and allergy season kicking in, here is some information about cough syrups and cold medicines covered by TennCare.

The medicines below are **covered by TennCare, with a prescription, and do NOT require a prior authorization (PA).**

Abreva (Docosanol)
Chlorpheniramine
Diphenhydramine (benadryl)
Guaifenesin DM
Loratadine-D
Saline nasal drops
Phenylephrine (Oral only)
Brompheniramine/pseudoephedrine
Dextromethorphan
Guaifenesin
Loratadine
Pseudoephedrine
Cetirizine

TennDent Is the New TennCare Dental Benefits Manager

<http://www.tn.gov/tenncare/mem-dental.html>

TennCare dental benefits are handled by a contracted dental benefits manager. Effective 10/1/2010, TennCare's current dental benefits manager is TennDent. This means that Dentaquest is not the benefits manager, but TennDent is.

Dentists who previously were enrolled as a dental provider with Dentaquest may or may not yet be enrolled in TennDent. Ask the dentist if they are enrolled in TennDent. If they are not, and you need to ask about a dentist that is enrolled, call TennDent (toll free) at **1-877-418-6886**.

If you have problems locating a dentist enrolled in TennDent after calling the toll free number contact your **DCS Health Advocate Representative**.

The DCS policy about how often children 12 months and older should receive a dental cleaning is not affected.

That policy remains the same. For more info on the policy, go to <http://www.state.tn.us/youth/dcsguide/policies/chap20/20.12.pdf>

Resources ... Resources ... Resources!

ASTHMA SPACERS: Breathe easy...it's covered under TennCare!

Asthma spacers come in different brands, just like brand-name medicines. Some of the companies participate in the federal Medicaid "rebate" programs and some do not. So, while the asthma spacers are covered under TennCare for children, there can be confusion at the pharmacy counter.

The spacer with the brand name of **Opti-chamber** is **NOT** on the rebate list. If the prescription is written for this, it will deny at the pharmacy counter as "Non-rebateable/ Non-covered product." That is confusing, because the words "non-covered" are used, but asthma spacers are covered!

Ask the pharmacist to provide a substitute, getting permission from the prescribing provider as applicable. The brand **Aerochamber** is on the "rebate" list and can be provided!

What is participating for rebate and what isn't might change. Just remember that asthma spacers are covered and ask for a substitute if the pharmacy says it is not covered.



Optichamber -
"not eligible for rebate/
Non-covered product"



Aerochamber - Covered

Do you want your children to be the healthiest they can be?

If your foster child is waiting for health or mental health care, help that child by filing a TennCare appeal! An appeal is a way to fix TennCare problems. Find an appeal form online at

<http://www.state.tn.us/tenncare/forms/medappeal.pdf>

Federal Medicaid law and a Tennessee Federal Court Order say Children with TennCare **must get** medically necessary medical and mental health care.

Another Tennessee Court Order says that **any** of these people can file a TennCare **appeal for a child** in State Custody:

- Birth parent
- Foster parent
- *Guardian ad litem* (GAL)
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA Volunteer)
- Youth Services Officer
- Case Manager
- People who give health care or mental health care
- Other advocates

For more information or help filing a TennCare appeal, please call the Tennessee Justice Center at 615-255-0331 or 1-877-608-1009 or go online at www.tnjustice.org

Apply for NFPA Scholarships

The National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) offers scholarships for foster youth, adopted youth, or biological youth of currently licensed foster parents who wish to further their education beyond high school, including college or university studies, vocational and job training, and correspondence courses, including the GED. Foster parents must also be members of NFPA.

Each applicant must submit a completed application form. For each application submitted, the following are required:

- A minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation from foster parent(s), social worker(s), residential center, principal/teacher/guidance counselor, or employer
- A 300–500 word typewritten statement detailing "Why I want to further my education and why I should be considered for a National Foster Parent Association Scholarship"

For more information, visit online at

www.nfpainc.org

Click on "Tools and resources/youth scholarships"

Scholarship Resources

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption Scholarship Information

Below are links to two scholarship venues for older youth adopted from foster care, supported by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (they are fiscal agents on both and collaborate on the selection of applicants). The first is in partnership with Capital One and Children's Action Network, and the second is in partnership with SlateXP and Umps Care Charities. Neither is deep with funding, so scholarships are limited, but they are additional opportunities for our youth.

1. **Capital One Fostering a Future**, a scholarship opportunity sponsored by Children's Action Network and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

<http://www.childrensactionnetwork.org/pdf/2011Application.pdf>

2. **Umps Care Charities All-Star Scholarship**, sponsored by Umps Care Charities, Slate XP, and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

http://www.davethomasfoundation.org/Files/Documents/Old-Documents/UMPSCARE_2011Application2.pdf

For more information:

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
www.DaveThomasFoundation.org

Children's Action Network
www.childrensactionnetwork.org/scholarship

Dream BIG ... go to Harvard!

The goal in admissions and financial aid at Harvard is clear: We want to bring the best people to Harvard, regardless of their ability to pay—and we do. About 70 percent of our students receive some form of aid, with nearly 60 percent receiving need-based scholarships.

Families who earn less than \$60,000 annually will pay no (as in zero) tuition, which should encompass all foster children. In addition, families who earn less than \$180,000 annually will have their tuition expenses proportionally reduced.

www.admissions.college.harvard.edu/

2011 TFACA Conference Information

Passing the Torch of Excellence: A New Day of Diversity

East TFACA Grand Region Conference

August 27–28, 2011

Park Vista Hotel and Conference Center—Gatlinburg

(East, Knox, Northeast, Smoky Mountain, and TN Valley Resource Parents)

West TFACA Grand Region Conference

September 17–18, 2011

Fogelman Executive Conference Center
University of Memphis Holiday Inn—Memphis

(Northwest, Southwest, and Shelby Resource Parents)

Middle TFACA Grand Region Conference

October 1–2, 2011

Franklin Marriott Cool Springs—Franklin

(Davidson, Mid-Cumberland, South Central, TN Valley, and Upper-Cumberland Resource Parents)

Conference participants will need to attend the conference in their area.

Door Prizes and Silent Auction

Each association is asked to bring a door prize or silent auction donation to be given away or auctioned during the conference. All proceeds go to the scholarship fund. For more information contact the following silent auction chairs or member chair:

East TFACA

Peggy Carroll - pcarroll@tnadvocate.org

Middle TFACA

Lorraine or Ron Copeland - ronrain801@netzero.net

West TFACA

Fran or Jack Coleman - jacklc@charter.net

Poster Contest

Once again at the conference, all local associations will have the opportunity to participate in a poster contest. If you are interested, contact the following chairs or committee member:

East TFACA

Annette Barker, Barkerkr9@hotmail.com

Middle TFACA

Noelle Fenske, APSU, fenskeh@apsu.edu

West TFACA

Mary Hines, University of Memphis.
mhnsmrtn@memphis.edu

SPOTLIGHT ... Northeast Region

The Northeast Region has a terrific Resource Parent Support Team that has been together for more than five years working hard on behalf of all resource parents, children and families in their region. They discovered that they have learned as much from their resource parents as the resource parents have learned from them, picking up more than a few parenting tips that they have applied to their own children.

Their main priority continues to be to ensure that the resource parents in the NE region have as much knowledge, training, and information as possible available to them as soon as possible. To help reach this goal, they publish a monthly newsletter, "L.U.C.K.Y.—Lives Under Construction, Kids and You." They want their resource parents to feel the monthly newsletter is a

support to their family. Above all, they want to make it as easy as possible for the parents and families to get the information they need and to provide their families with the best possible information to help them be the best resource parents possible.

The NE staff meets monthly as a team to discuss all issues that arise regarding their resource homes. They listen to the Family Service Workers and their resource families in an effort to ensure that all needs are being met. The goal of their newsletter is to INFORM! The newsletter is the best way to update resource families on new policies and procedures, the training schedules, reminders and changes in RPS and placement specialist personnel. They want their resource

parents to feel connected with their team.

The focus is to be a support and sounding board for the resource parents and to provide the families with the information needed to continue to foster and remain fully approved resource homes.

Take time to listen. It only takes a few moments to be a support to a resource family!

DCS Northeast Region
2555 Plymouth Road
Johnson City, TN 37601
(423) 854-5311

**We applaud the NE Region.
Keep up the good work!**



Walk Me Home Events 2011

* Middle TN/Davidson: **May 14, 2011**
Bicentennial Mall, Downtown Nashville

* Knox/Eastern Region: **June 25 2011**
Green Belt, Maryville

* Shelby/West: **August 20, 2011**
Shelby Farms, Memphis

* Chattanooga/Southern Regions:
September 10, 2011
Chattanooga Riverpark, Chattanooga

For more information on Walk Me Home events or to view the terrific new Official Walk Me Home video, go to:

www.nfpaonline.com/wmh

www.tfaca.org

Take a look!

Letter from your TFACA President

Greetings to all,

I hope this finds you all doing well and enjoying this beautiful Spring weather.

I am so excited to talk to you about the four "Walk Me Home Events" that we are hosting in Tennessee this year (see schedule). This is the first year that Tennessee has hosted four events. Our state goal is to raise \$20,000.00 for the Walk Me Home Enrichment Fund. Read about the Enrichment Fund and the process for applying on our website, www.tfaca.org. Please plan on attending one (or all) of the events and join the fun and fellowship—all for the kids!

Secondly, I am excited to talk about our State Conferences 2011. This year we are doing them a little different for several reasons. We experienced a significant budget cut for our annual conference, so we had to be creative in planning our conference(s) in a way to reach more resource parents, decrease

the amount of time away from your homes, and cut down on travel expenses, but most important, make the conference(s) more specific to resource parents and training needs in your particular regions. We will still have the same elections, awards, and scholarship we have had in the past. Our theme for Conference 2011 is **PASSING THE TORCH OF EXCELLENCE....A NEW DAY OF DIVERSITY.**

Please see page 5 for information on dates and locations for the three Grand Regional Conferences. Also, watch for the **SAVE THE DATE** cards coming soon in the mail, and read about the conferences on our website at www.tfaca.org.

I pray for safe travels to each of you and look forward to seeing you at the "Walks" and the Conferences! **REMEMBER, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS!!**

Nancy Woodall-Grooms
President TFACA

A torn jacket is soon mended, but hard words bruise the heart of a child.

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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Cell: 865-850-2964
kdodson@tnadvocate.org

Northeast Region:

Jill Thompson
Cell: 423-290-8110
jthompson@tnadvocate.org

**Advocate Contact
Information continued ...****TN Valley Region:**

Peggy Carroll
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pcarroll@tnadvocate.org

Carla Turner
Cell: 931-581-7854
cturner@tnadvocate.org

Jhonna B. Lane
Cell: 423-443-0558
jlane@tnadvocate.org

Upper Cumberland Region:

Vacant—Contact Dorsell Martinez

Mid-Cumberland Region:

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jneely@tnadvocate.org



MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY

The Resource Connection
c/o Tennessee Center for Child Welfare
Box 143
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132



Visit us on the web ...
www.tfaca.org

EEO/AA CW028-0511



May is National Foster Care Month

May is National Foster Care Month, a time designated by the National Foster Care Month Partnership to shine a public light on the plight of children and youth in foster care. This year, despite a marked decrease in the total number of children in foster care—from more than a half million in 2007 to 463,000 at the end of 2008—serious issues remain, especially for older youth in care. The Foster Care Month Partnership, comprised of nearly 20 child welfare organizations around the country, calls on all Americans to help make a difference in the life of at least one young person in foster care.

A recently released study by Chapin Hall revealed that youth who reach the age of majority (age 18 in most states) and exit the system, experience futures full of hardship. More than one in five will become homeless after age 18; just 58 percent will graduate high school by age 19 (compared to 87 percent nationally); fewer than 3 percent will earn a college degree by age 25 (compared to 28 percent nationally); and one in four will be incarcerated within two years of leaving the system.

Over the last decade, the number of these young people who “age out” of foster care has risen steadily—from 19,000 in 1999 to an all-time high of nearly 30,000 in 2008.

On their own, without the safety net of a family or the education they need to compete in the workplace, these young adults must navigate a weakened economy offering fewer jobs and less support for vital services such as housing.

Everyday citizens can help to change a lifetime for a child or youth in foster care by becoming foster or adoptive parents; serving as relative caregivers, mentors, advocates, or volunteers; helping to educate federal and state public policy leaders on the issues facing children and families; urging state legislators to implement all aspects of the Fostering Connections Act; and encouraging employers/employees to volunteer their time as professional coaches and role models for foster youth or young families with children in foster care.

Visit www.fostercaremonth.org to find out more about the many ways to get involved and make a lasting difference for America’s children.

