



Department of
**Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services**



Happy Spring!

A Message from Commissioner Williams

Dear friends, partners, colleagues, and advocates,

Governor Bill Lee and leadership from the Tennessee General Assembly are renewing the plan to establish a multi-hundred million dollar investment to form a Mental Health Trust Fund for K-12 services. We are wonderfully blessed to live in a state that, emerging from a global pandemic, is able to make a landmark investment that is truly legendary.

Thanks be to each of you for your continued support, your thoughts and prayers, and your incredible work on behalf of Tennesseans living with mental health and substance use challenges. Please see the following for the remarks that I delivered

at the announcement.

Blessings,

Marie

In public service, you pray to be in the right place at the right time with the right tools to help as many people as possible. With this ambitious, unprecedented, landmark investment, Tennessee is saying to the students of today and the students of years to come, "Your mental health matters and there is hope."

Today marks a momentous day of expectation and promise.

For students who have silently struggled from Memphis to Mountain City, there is hope although COVID has been hardest on our state's young people. For we know younger Tennesseans self-report symptoms of anxiety and depression at rates much higher than their parents or grandparents. Young people who have taken their lives, for their friends and family, today is a day of hope.

For teachers, principals, and superintendents who are well aware of the latest prevalence data that puts the rate of serious emotional disturbance at 13 percent among Tennessee youth age 9 and up. That's more than one in ten in every classroom. More than 140,000 children across this state. That was before COVID-19 hit.

There is hope, for parents who know all too well the feeling of hopelessness when you are living paycheck to paycheck and wondering what to do because your child is not acting the same. For parents experiencing sadness, fear, and anxiety, and the helpless of not knowing where to turn, there is hope. As you know all too well and has been confirmed by researchers at the Vanderbilt Center for Child Health Policy, they polled parents and found more than one in five was concerned their child had an undiagnosed anxiety issue with far higher impacts on lower income households.

For the nurse who works in an area emergency department who emailed me recently and asked, "How can I help make a difference for kids who are coming into my emergency room?" as she knows first-hand the recent reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention which point to a notable uptick, nationally, in emergency department visits for children struggling with mental health issues.

Governor Lee, Lieutenant Governor McNally, House Speaker Sexton and their colleagues in the General Assembly have made incredible investments over the last several years for our children which have created pockets of hope like the small rural West Tennessee school that has embraced mental health and resiliency the same as physical health. They have dedicated a small classroom for mental health supports where kids can come by and hang out and get to know the local community

behavioral health provider counselors. When we visited early last year, we saw evidence and outcomes that struggling students were finding help, help to face overwhelming anxiety, fear, and depression. They had a space. A safe space to learn coping strategies through the types of services that these funds will establish throughout this state. Their commitment to this trust fund will allow our schools and behavioral health providers to exponentially expand services so no child or family will suffer silently.

In closing, Frederick Douglas once said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men," and we know that to be true. We are truly grateful and excited for this announcement which is an investment in our state's future and a prayer answered above any expectation.

Gov. Lee and legislative leaders renew proposal for mental health trust fund

Proceeds from investment to pay for services for school-aged youth

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee re-introduced the Mental Health Trust Fund in a renewed proposal to assist K-12 families who are facing significant mental health issues in the wake of COVID-19. This proposal allocates \$250 million in available funds to create strong mental health services for school-aged students through a systemwide, evidence-based approach.

"The mental health of all Tennessee students is essential to their safety, education and success beyond the classroom," said Gov. Lee. "While my administration proposed these critical mental health supports last year, we now have the available funding and a greater need than ever before to ensure our students have access to mental health resources. I thank the members of the General Assembly for their partnership in this important effort."

[Read the full news release on TN.gov at this link.](#)







Watch video from the Mental Health Trust Fund announcement

2021 Overdose Report highlights changing dynamics in addiction crisis

NEW: 2021 report on overdose in Tennessee has been released

View the report here: <https://tinyurl.com/jw24w797>

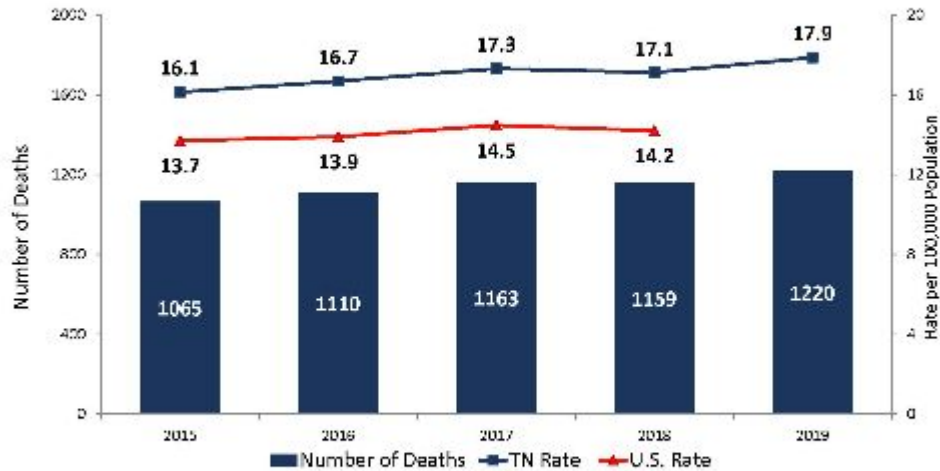


TN Department of Health

The 2021 Annual Overdose Report, produced by the Tennessee Department of Health's Office of Informatics and Analytics, documents state trends of overdoses, opioid prescribing patterns, county data, efforts to address the overdose epidemic, and more. [Read the overdose report here.](https://tinyurl.com/jw24w797)

TDH has also published a report on 2019 suicide deaths.

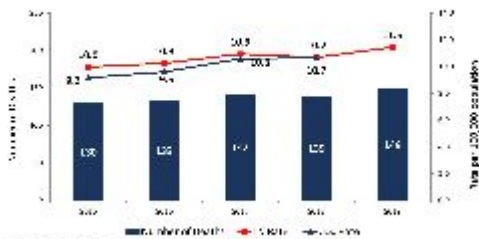
Suicide Deaths in Tennessee: 2015-2019



Source: Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Vital Records and Statistics, Death Statistical File; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2015-2019). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Trauma, Emergency Preparedness, and Response. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/wisqars/default.asp?lang=en>. [12/29/2020]



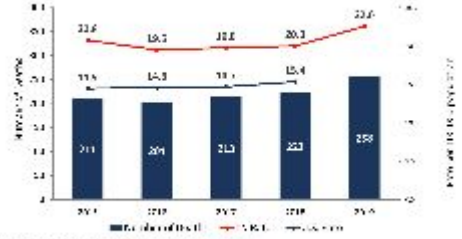
Suicide in Children & Youth (10-24): 2015-2019



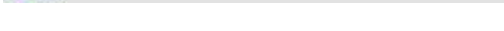
Source: Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Vital Records and Statistics, Death Statistical File; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2015-2019). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Trauma, Emergency Preparedness, and Response. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/wisqars/default.asp?lang=en>. [12/29/2020]



Suicide in Older Adults (65+): 2015-2019



Source: Tennessee Department of Health, Division of Vital Records and Statistics, Death Statistical File; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2015-2019). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Trauma, Emergency Preparedness, and Response. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/wisqars/default.asp?lang=en>. [12/29/2020]



More data about Tennessee death statistics [can be found here](#).

Find [warning signs of suicide](#) and connect with citizens working to save lives at the [Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network](#).



Learn about our [Be the One Suicide Prevention Campaign](#) on our website.

To request a free training at your organization, workplace, community group, or church, email: betheone.info@tn.gov

Our Office of Crisis Services and Suicide Prevention would be happy to speak with you!

Cannon named a Tennessee Rising Star Nurse Leader



Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute is delighted to announce that J. Rose Cannon has been selected as a Tennessee Rising Star Nurse Leader! She will be part of an elite group of young Tennessee nurse leaders representing the three Grand Regions of Tennessee, a variety of backgrounds, frontline clinicians, academicians, and managers.

This selection was based on criteria determined by leaders from the Tennessee Action Coalition, Tennessee Nurses Association, and Tennessee Hospital Association; and speaks to her leadership among peers and others, professional growth and development, contribution to building a culture of health in the community, and commitment as a role model for health.

As part of this cohort, Rose will become a member of the *TN 40 Under 40* program's learning collaborative where she will have learning and leadership opportunities.

Congratulations, Rose!

Thanks to our Social Workers!

Social workers are essential!



March is Social Work Month — a time to recognize this profession (and the amazing professionals) who choose this work. Wherever social workers are employed, people are helped, and positive change happens! We are so grateful for the social workers who have chosen work with us and in the behavioral health field. Thank you for all you do!

Let's hear it for our awesome RMHI Social Services teams!



Moccasin Bend

Director Bo Walker, LCSW, DCSW

Xinia Arana, MSW	
Destiny Brand, MSW	
April Brewer, MSW	
Stephanie Dale, MSW	
Alexis Debardeleben, MSW	
Akeisha Fraser, MSW	
Marilyn Havis, MSW	
Kandace Hixson, LMSW	
	Mellita Hollis, LMSW
	Mallory Iles, MSW
	Joyce Mead, MSW
	Linda Moss, LMSW
	Geneva Newell, MSW
	Brittany Norris, LMSW
	Lynsie Paul, MSW
	DeAnna Wooden, MSW
	Teresa Brown, BS



Middle Tennessee

Director Lisa Brown, LCSW


Tamarin Allen, MSW	Victoria Dinkins, MSW
Kathryn Bennett, LMSW	Kelly Giambalvo, MSW
Elizabeth Brown, MSW	Debbie Lawrence, LMSW
Vanessa Brown, LCSW	Jennifer Lee, MSW
Mary Corbett, MSW	
Kiara Dawkins-Freightman, MSW	
Markesha Lucas, MSW	Susan Slay, MSW
Brandon McKnight, MSW	Josett Smith, MSW
Debra Nilson, MSW	Glenn Vann, LCSW
Nikeshia Rivera, MSW	D'Asia White, MSW
Richard Selikoff, LCSW	Matthew Woodfin, MSW



Western

Director Melissa Norvell, LAPSW

Corcella Buchanan, BA	
Mary Bufford, LMSW	
Melissa Fowler, LAPSW	
La'Bria Hardge, MSW	
Mindy Hopper, LMSW	
Mia Jumper, BSW	
	Jessica Lake-Walker, BS
	Shawn Mahaffey, LCSW
	Essie Mitchell, BSW
	Andrea Newman, BSW
	Myra Rivers, M.Ed.
	Max McDonald, BSW
	Nakita Odom, MSW



Memphis

Director Aiisha Williams, MSSW

Flora Black, LMSW
Angela Davison, BSW
Lisa Evans-Smith, BSW
Pamela Fleming, MSW
Amani Loggins, LMSW
Jennifer Newson, BSW
Eunice Wesson, BSW



Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

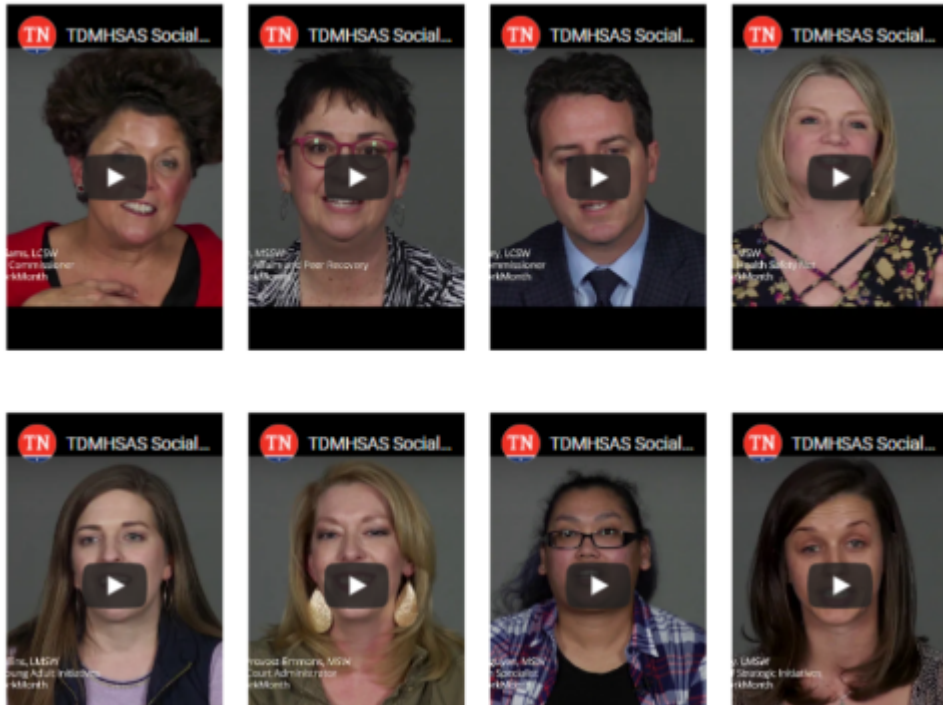


Written by Current Pio [?] · 2 mins ·



Check out our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#) accounts to see our social worker spotlights! [Visit our website](#) to hear from some of the social workers working in various roles at Central Office, including Commissioner Williams who began her career as a social worker helping the homeless in West Tennessee.

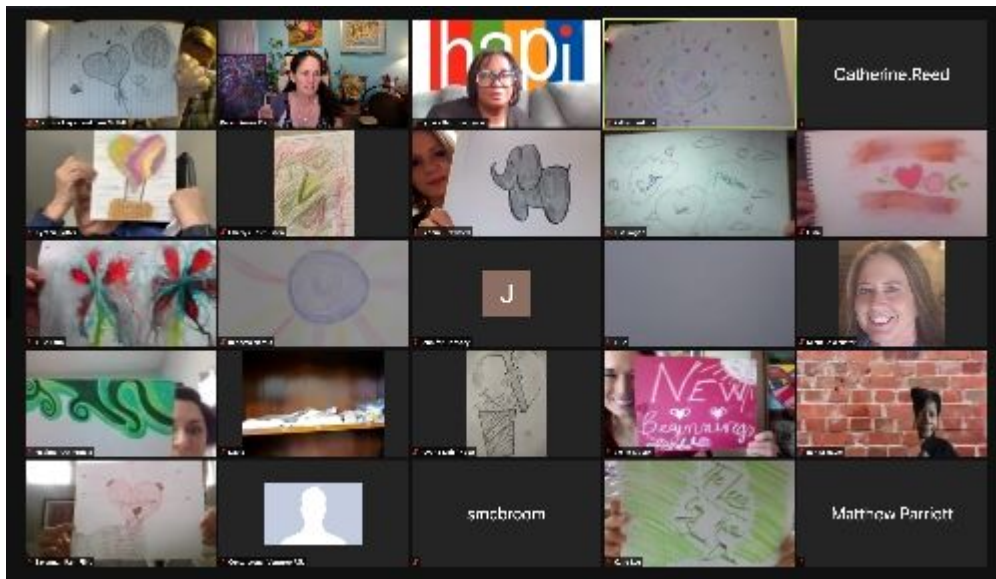
Video Profiles



"As practitioners, social workers are trained to help people address personal and systemic barriers to optimal living. They are employed to effect positive change with individuals, families, groups, and entire communities."

National Association of Social Work (NASW)

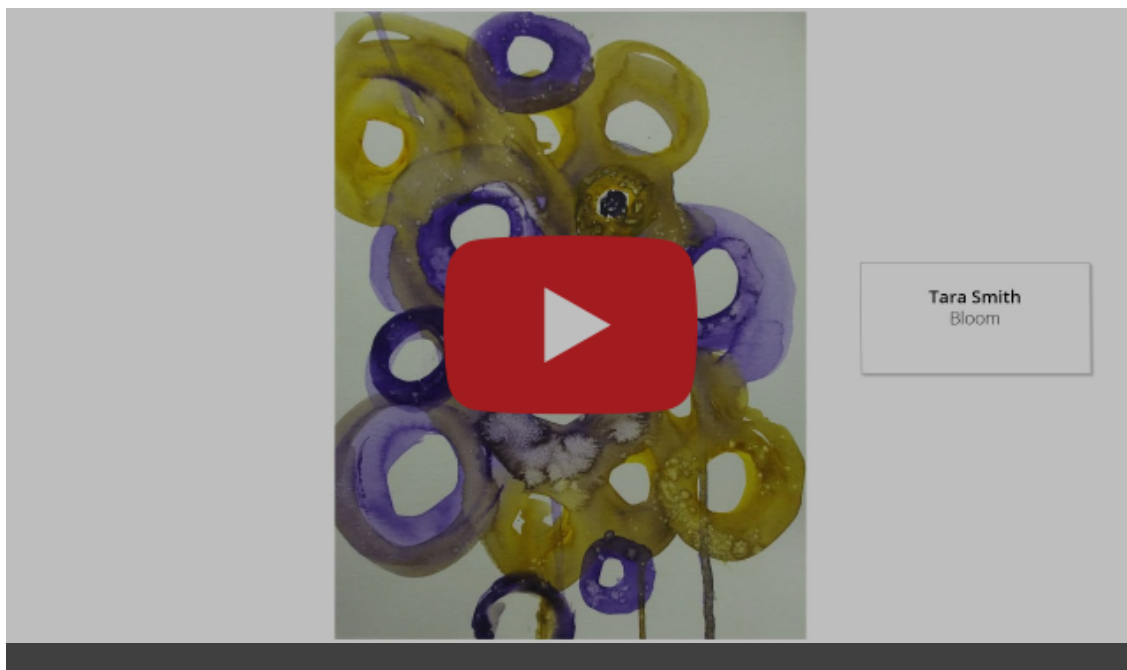
Hearts unite at virtual Art for Awareness



A heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in the 2021 edition of Art for Awareness, including Kelly Dorsey for providing the keynote, Karen Renée Robb for sharing her Healing Arts with us, Statewide Peer Wellness Coach Dina Savvenas for leading the wellness activity, Governor Lee and Commissioner Williams for their remarks, ALL the artists who submitted artwork, and the Healing Arts Project, Inc. for partnering with us again this year.

Visit [the home of Art for Awareness on our website](#) to watch more videos from the event and view artwork from previous years. We look forward to seeing everyone in person in 2022!

2021 art is featured in an online art show



Day of Hope 2021

Last year, [Governor Lee proclaimed March 10 as Tennessee's Day of Hope](#) in an effort to educate, energize, and empower Tennesseans to do what they can to get involved and reverse the trends of deadly drug overdoses and suicides. This year — because of the awesome grassroots efforts of coalitions, organizations, businesses, citizens, and volunteers — the second (hopefully annual) "Day of Hope" was held statewide. Educational webinars, trainings, and social media awareness campaigns were some of the many featured events this year. A big thanks to everyone who participated, donated time and resources, and helped spread the word!



Our hope comes from ...



Where does our hope come from? For starters, from people like the Sevier County Cares prevention, community members who get involved to make a difference, AND everyone who shares their personal stories of recovery! [Visit Sevier County Cares on facebook](#) to see more of this great awareness campaign and [check out their website](#) for more ways to engage with neighbors making a difference! [Or visit our website to find and connect with a coalition near you!](#) Volunteers of all ages and families welcome!

Robeson promoted to Assistant Director

Help us welcome Alicia to the Safety Net team!



Alicia Robeson has been named Assistant Director of Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) and Older Adults, joining the Office of Behavioral Health Safety Net. In this new position, Alicia provides leadership and oversight of the PASRR and Older Adult Program. She also serves on the Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementia Advisory Council and as a member of the TN Commission on Aging & Disability.

Alicia has been with TDMHSAS for more than 5 years as a Program Manager in the Office of Older Adults, PASRR & Disaster Mental Health Services. In that role, she provided exceptional customer service identifying and recommending

appropriate level of care services and community supports for older adults. She has provided service administration, technical assistance, and training to her colleagues and mental health consumers. Alicia has collaborated with other offices, departments, and agencies to develop and improve the PASRR evaluation process, managed the Older Adult Program, monitored service providers, and worked on special projects. Alicia created our Continuity of Operations Plan in the event of natural disasters and statewide emergency declarations, in partnership with TEMA, receiving federal accreditation. In 2019, Alicia graduated from the Commissioner's Inaugural Leadership Academy.

Alicia graduated Cum Laude from Hollins University, earning a B. A. in Liberal Arts, with a minor in Fine Art. She studied Creative Writing, Communications, and Theater Arts at the University of London, King's College which she used as a TV Writer/Producer for HGTV, Food Network, Discovery Network, Country Music Television, and Great American Country before changing careers in 2015 to pursue her goal of helping other Tennesseans by joining TN state government.

Please join us in congratulating Alicia on her new role! We are excited to see the impact she will continue making on older adults and people with mental health care needs across the state of Tennessee.

Coalition News

*People magazine highlights Kimberly Ladd as one of the
"Women Changing the World"*



CREDIT: ANDREA MORALES

We couldn't agree more! Congratulations to recovery warrior Kimberly Ladd, founder of the Maury County Prevention Coalition! [Don't miss her story.](#) We know this article has inspired countless people just as Kim, her work, and her passion to help others has inspired us!

More of the many ways TN's prevention coalitions are helping change the world ...



Left: Supporting our Regional Overdose Prevention Specialists and helping end overdose! (Roane County) **Right:** Taking every opportunity to make a lasting, positive difference in the lives of young people. (Scott County)



Left: Being "Difference Makers" in our school systems! Congrats Lawrence County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition! **Right:** Hopping to it! Connecting with influencers to save lives!



Left: Educating and empowering students during Quit Week (DeKalb County) **Right:** Cleaning up cigarette butts at a local park. (Blount County)

Shout Out!

Linda Sykes, Procurement - Western Mental Health Institute

I would like to give a shout out to Mrs. Linda Sykes in Procurement. She always has a smile on her face regardless of how she is feeling and greets us with the warmest greeting. She made me feel so special to be a part the team when I joined in January. She is truly the light in Procurement. Whenever we ask her about anything, she gives us the answer with ease. She is very knowledgeable, and I for one am so happy that I can learn as well work alongside with such a



remarkable woman.

- Cawasaki Jones, WMHI Clerk

Thanks, Cawasaki, and welcome to #TeamTDMHSAS!

If you'd like to "shout out" to a TDMHSAS colleague, please send an email to OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov. Tell us who you'd like to recognize and why.



*By Arthur Reed, Information Security Analyst
Strategic Technology Solutions, TDMHSAS*

Messaging attacks sometimes called "smishing" (a play on the word phishing) are when cyber attackers use SMS, texting, or messaging technologies to reach out to you and try to trick you into taking an action you should not take.

Perhaps they want to fool you into clicking on a malicious link, or get you to call a phone number so they can obtain your banking information. Just like in traditional phishing email attacks, bad guys often play on your emotions to act.

Here are some common signs of messaging attacks:

- A sense of urgency
- Requests personal information or passwords
- Message sounds too good to be true.
- Message urges you to check out a picture or video by clicking a link—be careful clicking links from numbers you don't recognize.
- Message comes from a coworker or friend—but doesn't sound like them. Give them a ring to verify.

If you get a message that makes you have a strong reaction, wait a moment and give yourself a chance to take some deep breaths and think it through before you respond.

Save-the-Dates

April Planning & Policy Council meetings

Pursuant to Governor Bill Lee's Executive Order 78, which extends Executive Order 71, Planning & Policy Council meetings, where noted, will be open to the public and held via electronic means aka conference call. Please call in to the conference line number listed next to the meeting you wish to participate in and follow instructions given by the individual leading the meeting. The recordings will be posted to the department website within two business days.

Statewide Adult Committee

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

10 a.m. - 11 a.m. CST

WebEx Information: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003/Meeting number (access code):
185 182 5825

Region VI Planning and Policy Council

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. CST

WebEx Information: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003/Meeting number (access code):
185 683 3407

Region III Planning and Policy Council

Thursday, April 15, 2021

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. EST

WebEx Information: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003/Meeting number (access code):
185 953 6322

Region VII Planning and Policy Council

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. CST

WebEx Information: Toll-Free: 415-655-0003/Meeting number (access code):
185 606 1922

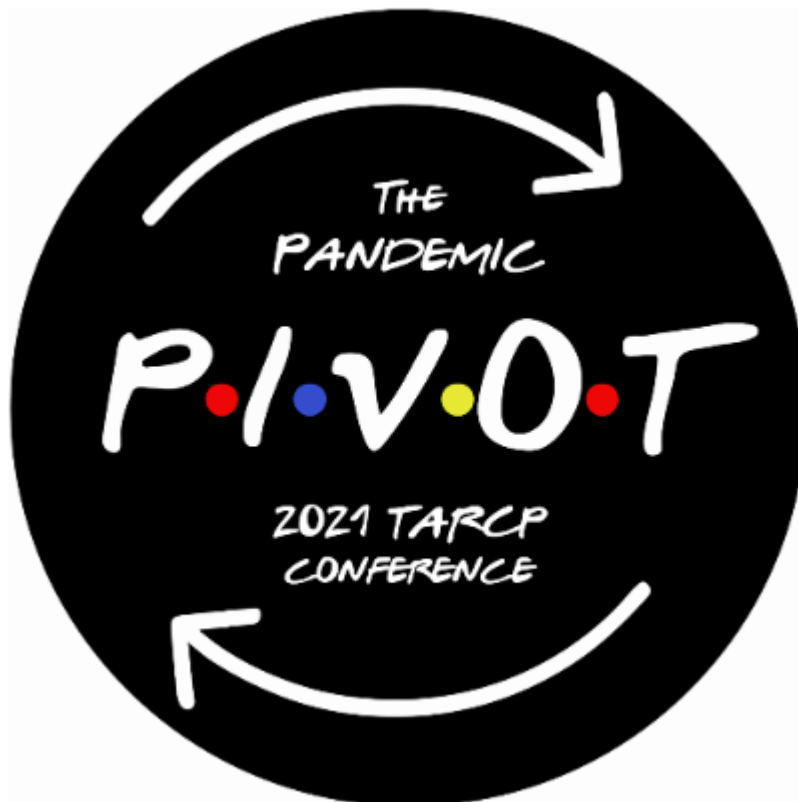
National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is April 24!



The next national Take Back Day is April 24, but events are happening

statewide all month! Visit tntogether.com to find (and register) an event in your community. To safely dispose of pharmaceuticals any day of the year, [use this handy, interactive map](#) provided by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to find a permanent disposal box near you,

Tennessee Association of Recovery Court Professionals conference starts March 30



The 16th annual conference has pivoted to an online platform March 30-April 1. Hear from more than 100 experts and speakers including Governor Lee, Commissioner Williams, Rebekah Provost-Emmons, Dr. Monty Burks, and many more. There will also be a Ceremony of Remembrance and Celebration for Ellen L. Abbott. [See the full conference schedule and register here.](#)

Shelby County Summit ATOD Summit is April 8

SHELBY COUNTY ALCOHOL TOBACCO & OTHER DRUGS SUMMIT



ChurchHealth

VIRTUAL EVENT

APRIL 08 2021

Alcohol kills on average 95,000 Americans every year. Tobacco related deaths average 480,000 per year! Hear from local experts about current data and find out what we can do to help prevent unnecessary ATOD related deaths.

• *Up to 6 Continuing Education Hours*

For more information,
and to register visit
memphisprevention.org

This project is funded under a Grant Contract with the State of Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.



Hear from local experts about current data and find out what we can do to help prevent unnecessary alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-related deaths. This is a free, online experience offering up to six continuing education hours. Learn more and register on the Memphis Area Prevention Coalition website.

Our Housing & Homeless Services conference is April 23



Tennessee Statewide Housing and Homeless Services Conference

(A Virtual Conference)

April 23, 2021

Sponsored by



Department of
**Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services**

In Partnership with



tamho
tennessee association of
mental health organizations

This project was developed under Federal Grant Number 6X06SM083700-01M001, Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) X06SM083700-01 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of HHS, and should not be construed as such.

Stay tuned to the [Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations](#) for details and registration information.

Resources

COVID-19 counseling services for Tennesseans



If you're feeling overwhelmed, disconnected, hopeless, or just sad—you're not alone. Please know that help is available. Hope is real.

COVID-19 Counseling resources are available in every Tennessee County. [Find the contact for your area on our website.](#)

Hope Line: Support for Tennesseans 60+

TN HOPE LINE

Connect with compassionate,
trained, and loving listeners for
help, hope, & encouragement.



ARE YOU

**LONELY?
AGE 60+?**

M-F 9-3CT

844-600-8262

A partnership of The Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives,
Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, and Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability

Emotional support for healthcare workers ...

COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT LINE FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Need to talk to someone about feelings of stress, anxiety, sadness, or depression related to work? The COVID-19 Emotional Support Line for healthcare workers can help.



888-642-7886

Calltakers are available: 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. (CT), 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. (ET)



And support for teachers ...

COVID-19 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT LINE NOW OPEN TO TENNESSEE EDUCATORS

CALL: 888-MHART-TN
or 888-642-7886

HOURS: 6 am - 10 pm CT
7 am - 11 pm ET



In the event of a mental health emergency ...

STATEWIDE
CRISIS LINE
HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS
855-CRISIS-1 TN.gov/CrisisLine
855-274-7471 

For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...



TN
REDLINE 
1.800.889.9789
CALL OR TEXT 

To talk with a TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate ...



Office of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

HELPLINE

1-800-560-5767

OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov

We can help with

- finding mental health and substance abuse resources in your area
- questions about insurance
- where to find housing options
- communicating with mental health and substance abuse providers
- questions about the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist program
- filing a complaint

We are available

- Monday through Friday
- 8 am to 4:30 pm
- Closed on state holidays

If we cannot answer your question, we will work with you to find the appropriate resource.

www.tn.gov/behavioral-health



Department of
**Mental Health &
 Substance Abuse Services**

OUR MISSION: CREATING
COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS
TO RESILIENCY, RECOVERY & INDEPENDENCE
 FOR TENNESSEANS LIVING
 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND
 SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

OUR VISION:

A STATE OF *RESILIENCY, RECOVERY, AND INDEPENDENCE*
 IN WHICH **TENNESSEANS**
 LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
 AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS **THRIVE**

AS A DEPARTMENT, WE VALUE:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>CUSTOMER FOCUSED:
 <i>An unwavering commitment to keep patients and those who serve them at the forefront of every decision.</i></p> <p>INTEGRITY:
 <i>Honesty and truth in all we do.</i></p> <p>INSPIRED PURPOSE:
 <i>The call to action in service of a cause greater than one's self.</i></p> <p>EXCELLENCE:
 <i>The highest standards for services, efficiency, and conduct.</i></p> | <p>COMPASSIONATE AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:
 <i>The commitment to make effective decisions and inspire others through active listening and empathy.</i></p> <p>SOLUTIONS AND OUTCOMES-ORIENTED:
 <i>The commitment to positive outcomes and meaningful changes in response to the critical needs of the Tennesseans we serve.</i></p> <p>PARTNERSHIP:
 <i>Beyond teamwork, collaboration based on mutual success to the benefit of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve.</i></p> |
|--|---|

*We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update!
 If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment,
 provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the*

distribution list, please email: the Office of
Communications at OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov.

And please connect with us on social media!



Find us on
Facebook

Thanks to our [Facebook family](#) for "liking" us and sharing our posts!



Follow us on
Instagram

Join us on
Linked 



Website



Facebook



Instagram



LinkedIn