



YTAC Helps Foster Youth Be Successful Adults

Contents

Foster Youth.....	1
YTAC.....	3
Independent Living.....	4
Resource Centers.....	4
Youth Unemployment.....	6
Employment for Youth with Disabilities.....	8
Foster Youth with Disabilities.....	9
Children's Advocacy Days Awards.....	10

Calendar of Events

Events relating to helping children are available at: www.tn.gov/tccy/webcalen.pdf.

TCCY

For more information on the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth and its programs, check out the website at www.tn.gov/tccy.

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
601 Mainstream Drive
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
(615) 741-2633

twitter
www.twitter.com/@tccy

The transition to adulthood is one of the most significant life events, marked in most cultures by religious ceremonies, festivals or family parties.

Up until the 1970s, single adults in their twenties lived in their parents' homes, a trend that returned with the economic downturn. Throughout most of the 20th century the median age of a first marriage for women was in the early to middle 20s, and for men, the middle to later 20s, and ages are currently at an all-time high (American Community Survey, 2010).

The official age of majority, when legal responsibility for a young person ceases to be that of his or her parents, is now 18 in most U.S. states. Parents continue to pay for education, provide health care services, assist with major purchases and, most importantly, advise and guide, in addition to continuing to house their children well past age 18.

Children who age out of state custody do not have this continuing support. Mother birds do not push babies out to teach them to fly, but children in state custody experience something similar, as the transition to adulthood has meant children lose all their supports as they leap to adulthood and independence.

According to a 2011 report by the American Bar Association, on leaving foster care at age 18:

- One in three youth have a driver's license;
- Fewer than four in 10 have at least \$250 in cash; and
- Fewer than one-quarter have the basic tools to set up a household.



Since 2011, TCCY has staffed the Youth Transitions Advisory Council (YTAC), a legislatively created collaboration of child advocates and transitioning youth to strategize solutions to the challenges these youth face all too often alone. The purpose of the Council is also to track the effectiveness of services provided to youth in state custody as they transition from care into adulthood.

Nationally around 26,000 youth age out of state custody. In Tennessee in 2010, 540 youth, 9 percent of all youth exiting care, aged out, according to Fostering Connections.

Outcomes During Transition from Foster Care to Adulthood

	National Data	Regional or Local Data
Earned a high school diploma	54%	50%*
Obtained bachelor's degree or higher	2%	2%
Became a parent	84%	42%
Unemployed	51%	30%
Had no health insurance	30%	29%
Had been homeless	25%	36%
Were receiving public assistance	30%	26%

***Low estimate, may range to 63%
Reported by Foster Care Alumni of America**

Youth aging out of care more than other youth fail to meet their basic physiological needs, most specifically housing. Some youth return to their families after leaving state custody, which can mean returning to the same adverse conditions from which they were removed.

In addition to the trauma that led to older youth (13-17) entering care, these youth were more likely than youth in other age groups to be moved in both the first six months of care and the second six months, according to a 2008 Congressional Research Service report. Teens entering care were also less likely to be adopted or placed with relatives than other children in care.

By nearly every measure of adult success, youth who age out of foster care do worse than other youth. They are less likely to be employed, more likely to be in prison, more likely to become parents too soon and less likely to have secure housing.

Nevertheless, according to a 2008 Congressional Research Service report “Despite the generally negative findings from the two major evaluations on youth aging out of foster care, many youth have demonstrated resiliency by overcoming obstacles, such as limited family support and financial resources, and meeting their goals.”

Research indicates providing supports and services until age 21 leads to better outcomes for youth. Legislation, including the Title IV-E Independent Living Program of 1986 and the Chaffee Foster Care Independence Act in 1999, has increased the level of support for these youth.

Through its transitional living program the Tennessee Department of Children’s Services served 439 children in FY 2012. Youth came from about three-fourths of the state’s counties.

Services provided through the programs, in order of the number of youth served, include graduation packages, post secondary application fees, testing fees, yearbooks, extra-curricular leadership activity/membership fees, good grade incentives, honor/senior trip costs, Independent Living class stipend, material for vocational studies, senior event transportation, summer school, tutoring, housing application fee, job training readiness, job training start up cost, driver’s education, driver’s test fee, auto insurance, transportation grant, vehicle repair, tools for vocational studies, other special needs, youth leadership stipend, child care help, household furnishings and non-recurring housing start cost.

Youth Transitions Advisory Council

The Tennessee Youth Transitions Advisory Council (YTAC) works to identify quality, effective services and supports, as well as opportunities for improvement, by addressing the barriers and gaps these young people experience.

Transitional services are important. Research indicates providing supports and services until age 21 leads to better outcomes for youth. Remaining in care after turning 18 more than doubles the chance a youth will be working or in school at age 19. Young women who remained in care saw a 38 percent reduction in pregnancy before age 20. Research also clearly shows the adverse outcomes for the youth who are not able to access services beyond age 18. Youth transitioning from foster care suffer significantly higher rates of incarceration, homelessness, school dropout, unemployment, unwanted pregnancy and lack of access to health care. Studies show more than one in five youth will become homeless after age 18 and one in four will be incarcerated within two years of leaving the system.

Legislation assuring the continuation of the Tennessee Transitioning Youth Empowerment Act was initiated by Governor Haslam and sponsored by the majority leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives during the 2012 legislative session.

Also that year, as part of the budgeting process, Governor Haslam recommended funding the program with recurring dollars, meaning it would be placed in the base budget and allowing it to be funded on an ongoing basis each year unless identified for elimination. In 2010 and 2011, these programs, along with other programs serving children, were funded from special “rainy day” funds. This was a significant action, since in most budget years under normal economic circumstances, only “improvements to the budget,” or cost increases, requiring additional funding receive a great deal of scrutiny.

TCCY took over staffing of the Youth Transitions Advisory Council from the Select Committee on Children and Youth of the state Legislature, when the Tennessee legislature eliminated select committees with members from both the state Senate and House. It assumed responsibility in 2011.

The Council meets four times per year. It has participation from youth and agencies serving them. For more information, contact Steve Petty, who staffs the Council at TCCY (steve.petty@tn.gov).

The Youth Transitions Advisory Council annual reports are available online at www.tn.gov/tccy/ytac.shtml. 

Exiting Youth Served by DCS in FY 2012 by Adjudication

Adjudication	Number	% of Eligible*
Dependent/Neglected	380	40%
Unruly	8	15%
Delinquent	48	7%
Exited via Interstate Compact	3	NA
Total	439	27%

*Youth who leave foster care at age 18 and are in high school, enrolled in post-secondary education or unable to participate in education because of a medical condition.

Total Served in FY 2012 represents a 30% increase from FY 2011.

Much of the material in this newsletter was excerpted from the Youth Transitions Advisory Council 2012 Report (<http://www.tn.gov/tccy/yt-ar-12.pdf>) and is the work of the Council and its staff person, Steve Petty.

Youth Villages Independent Living Program

One of YTAC's recommendations was a continuation of the Youth Villages Transitional Living Program. The council found the program to be highly effective at ensuring youth aging out of care have the necessary skills and supports to be successful adults.

The program serves young people who exit the foster care, juvenile justice and mental health systems. Services begin at age 17 and extend past age 21. Since the program started in 1999, it has served more than 4,737 youth across the state of Tennessee. Currently, the program is serving more than 450 former foster youth, assuring that 86 percent lived at home or in a home-like environment two years after completing services. More than three-fourths of former clients (77 percent) reported no trouble, and 83 percent were in school, graduated or employed during the same time period.

Success is defined if young adults served:

- Maintain stable and suitable housing;
- Remain free from legal involvement;
- Participate in an educational/vocational program;
- Develop the life skills necessary to become a successful, productive citizen.

Youth Villages credits its success to 24-hour availability of transitional living specialists, minimum weekly face-to-face interactions with youth and more intense interactions for those who need it. An evaluation of the program is available at <http://bit.ly/Zc0gHZ>.

Resource Centers

Tennessee has three resource centers for transitional youth to provide educational training, resource coordination, financial literacy training and implementation of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative to transitioning youth up to age 24. Tennessee resource centers:

- South Memphis Alliance: Dream Seekers Initiative;
- Monroe Harding, Nashville: Youth Connections;
- Child and Family Tennessee (Knoxville): Project NOW.

Tennessee DCS works in partnership with the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative to support the statewide network of resource centers to support transitioning foster youth. The resource centers implement the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative and bring together people and resources to help youth make the connections they need for permanence, education, employment, housing, health care and supportive personal and community relationships. The core strategies and objectives of the Initiative are:

- 1) Youth Engagement: to prepare young people to be meaningfully involved as decision-makers and self-advocates;
- 2) Partnerships and Resources: to access the resources of public and private systems and philanthropic organizations, expand and deepen community support, and cultivate community champions for young people transitioning from foster care;
- 3) Research, Evaluation and Communications: to involve key stakeholders in using data to drive decision making and communications, and in documenting results;
- 4) Public Will and Policy: to advance policy and practice that improve outcomes for young people transitioning from foster care; and
- 5) Increased Opportunities: to create an array of opportunities and help young people gain access to them.

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

Brenda Davis, Chair
Franklin

Phil Acord
Chattanooga

Sidney Bynum
Madison

Lindsay Callahan
Cookeville

Janell Clark
Cookeville

Kelly Drummond
Knoxville

Ethan Flynn
Johnson City

Lynne Fugate
Knoxville

Erica Gilmore
Nashville

Joshua Grubb
Nashville

Jennie Harlan
Columbia

Raquel Hatter
Nashville

Marti Herndon
Martin

Gary Houston
Union City

Amy Lawrence
Knoxville

Carlton Lewis
Nashville

Harold Moses Love, Jr.
Nashville

Rob Mortensen
Nashville

Wendy Shea
Memphis

Christy Sigler
LaVergne

Tawny Spinelli
Nashville

Dwight Stokes
Sevierville

Jill Grayson Stott
Jonesborough

Linda O'Neal
Executive Director

The resource centers offer young people the Opportunity Passport™, the primary component of which is an Individual Development Account (IDA) or a matched savings account. A matched savings account can help young people aging out of foster care learn financial management, obtain experience with the mainstream banking system and save money for assets. Each resource center will enroll a minimum of 40 youth per year in the Opportunity Passport™. Outcomes are tracked through the Opportunity Passport Participant Survey and the Management Information System for Individual Development Accounts (MIS-IDA).

The South Memphis Alliance Dream Seekers Initiative has graduated 62 youth, many of whom are continuing to participate in youth leadership board meetings and other activities. The program is actively working to address their challenges of consistent youth engagement. South Memphis Alliance continues to increase its wide array of community partnerships to enhance the resources available to help youth successfully graduate from their program. SMA received an incentive award from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to provide services to youth targeting two specific zip codes in Shelby County.

Monroe Harding's Youth Connections, created seven years ago in Nashville, was the first resource center in Tennessee. It provides both residential and non-residential programming. Over 74 young people have obtained a GED after participating in the GED classes, and 80 percent of participants in the Stepping Stones program find employment. Youth Connections has established community partnerships with Essex Bargain Hunt Stores, The Shop Barber and Hair Salon and Macy's to assist program participants in finding employment and vocational training. Other community partners are Nashville Career Advancement Center and US Bank.

The newest resource center at Child and Family Tennessee in Knoxville continues working with youth in the Department of Children's Services' East Tennessee, Knox and Smoky Mountain regions. The Project NOW program enrolled 18 new youth, assisted 45 youth to complete financial literacy classes and 40 open IDA accounts during the current year. Project Now is developing more community partnerships in the Knoxville area. Their newest partners include YMCA Knoxville, Tenants Choice Property Management, Knox Auto Parts, Tennessee School of Beauty and Smoky Mountain Financial, among others.

Recommendations

The YTAC 2012 report contains a number of recommendations. The YTAC report listed recommendations on issues that include protecting youth from identity fraud; educational issues, including higher education; services and supports; legal services; and staff training. The recommendations range from fairly simple to implement to those that require cooperation among agencies.

The full list of recommendation is in the Youth Transitions Advisory Council 2012 Report (<http://www.tn.gov/tccy/yt-ar-12.pdf>).

KIDS COUNT Policy Report Documents Rise in Youth Unemployment

Perhaps the hardest job at any time and any age is looking for work. It is more difficult if you are young and have limited education and no work experience, and even more difficult if you are a member of a minority group. Add to that a lack of knowledge and understanding of job-seeking and interviewing skills, and the task is even harder.

Employment of youth ages 16 to 24 is at its lowest point in 50 years, according to a policy report released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation's

KIDS COUNT project in December 2012, [*Youth and Work, Restoring Teen and Young Adult Connections to Opportunity*](#). The economic downturn has forced adolescents and young adults to compete for entry-level jobs now held by more experienced, older workers as many displaced workers now hold positions that have historically been "starter" jobs for youth.

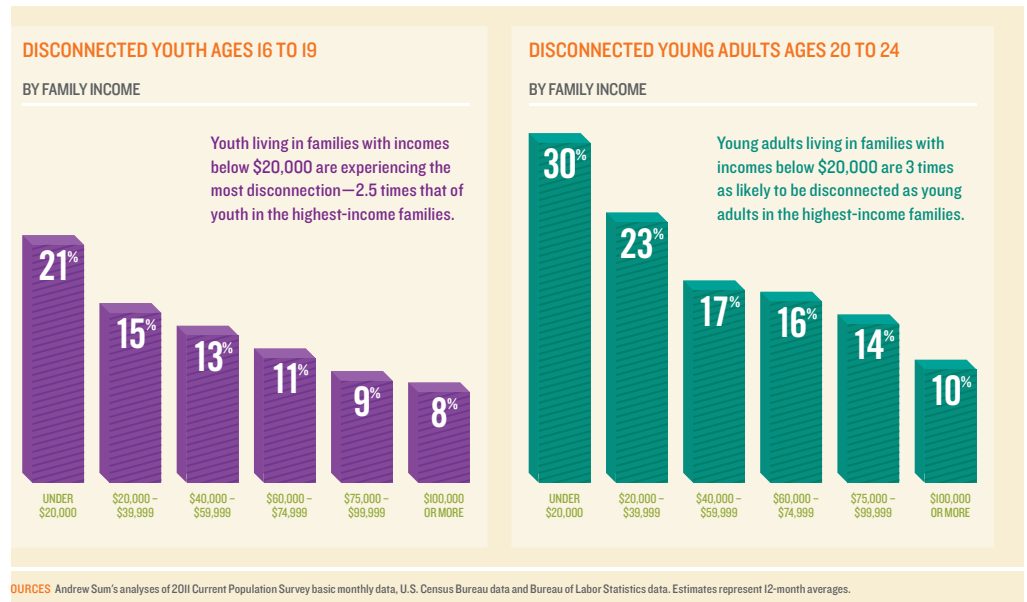
Youth without jobs lose the ability to support themselves, but they lose more. As a Congressional Research Service report said, "Being employed has important fiscal, psychological, physiological, societal, and even spiritual benefits" (Youth Transitioning From Foster Care: Background, Federal Programs, and Issues for Congress, 2008) People who work are happier, and communities with high employment are safer. Work links people to others, including others from different backgrounds. The ability to contribute to society creates a sense of self-worth.

Fewer than one in four Tennessee youth ages 16 to 19 were working in 2011, when only nine other states had a smaller percentage of youth in this age group employed. For members of minority groups, the national percentage of 16-to-19-year old youth employed dropped by about half between 2000 and 2011.

Only 60 percent of Tennesseans ages 20 to 24 were employed in 2011. Nationally 4.3 million young adults (20 to 24) were not in school or working. Of these, one in five was a parent.

This high percentage of disconnected youth raises concerns for the future. Youth shut out of the labor market for long periods in the early part of their careers must struggle for work thereafter. Projections are that taxpayers will bear a burden of \$1.56 trillion as a result of the failure of youth ages 16 to 24 to find work during the recent economic downturn.

"Preparing young people for successful employment requires a collaborative commitment on the part of families, schools, businesses and community organizations," said Linda O'Neal, executive director of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth. "We need to work together to provide youth with opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for them to become productive employees."



In Tennessee in 2011, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development reports serving 7,788 youth through Workforce Investment Areas. Nearly three-fourths of these youth successfully achieved employment or enrollment in post secondary education. Programs across the state include, for example, an in-school program administered by Dyersburg State Community College that uses at-risk youth as tutors, reinforcing the tutor's academic skills and providing individualized instruction for other students.


However, federally supported youth employment programs nationally only have enough funds to serve one percent of the youth needing their help, according to the report.

The report calls on businesses, governments, philanthropies and communities to come together to create opportunities to put young people back on track in a dynamic, advancing economy to ensure their success and to build a stronger workforce for the future.

Recommendations in the report include:

- **A national youth employment strategy** developed by policymakers that streamlines systems and makes financial aid, funding and other support services more accessible and flexible; encourages more businesses to hire young people; and focuses on results, not process;
- **Aligning resources** within communities and among public and private funders to create collaborative efforts to support youth;
- **Exploring new ways to create jobs** through social enterprises such as Goodwill and microenterprises, with the support of public and private investors;
- **Employer-sponsored earn-and-learn programs** that foster the talent and skills that businesses require — and develop the types of employees they need.

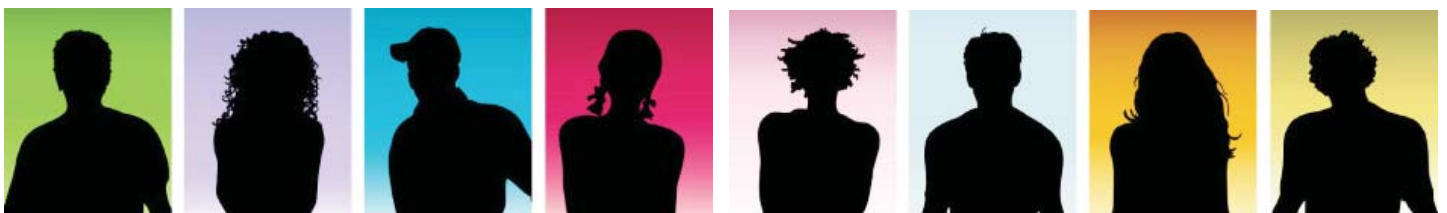
The KIDS COUNT project has been ranking states on child well-being for over 20 years. It has recently expanded its publication schedule with Data Briefs and Policy Reports. KIDS COUNT is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation (www.aecf.org), the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to disadvantaged children.

Additional information on disconnected youth and young adults is available in the KIDS COUNT Data Center, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being, including Tennessee specific information compiled by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth. The Data Center allows users to create rankings, maps and graphs for use in publications, grant applications and on websites, and to view real-time information on mobile devices. 

KIDS COUNT Data Available Online

Throughout the year, the Annie E. Casey Foundation releases targeted data and policy reports in addition to its annual KIDS COUNT National Data Book ranking states on child well-being. Child well-being data compiled by the national KIDS COUNT program and TCCY as the Tennessee affiliate is available at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org>. Users may generate maps, charts and tables from the information on the site.

All TCCY publications are available on the agency website at www.tn.gov/tccy/pubs.shtml.



TCCY

Regional Councils

Northeast Tennessee Council

Diane Wise
1233 Southwest Ave., Ext.
Johnson City, TN 37604
(423) 979-4585
Diane.Wise@tn.gov

East Tennessee Council

Lindsey Cody
531 Henley St., 7th Floor
Knoxville, TN 37902
(865) 594-6658
Lindsey.Cody@tn.gov

Southeast Tennessee Council

Rosalyn Leavell-Rice
540 McCallie Ave., Suite 643
Chattanooga, TN 37402
(423) 634-6210
Rosalyn.Leavell-Rice@tn.gov

Upper Cumberland Council

John Rust
Upper Cumberland
1100 England Drive
Cookeville, TN 38501
(931) 646-0955
John.Rust@tn.gov

Mid-Cumberland Council

April Swoner
601 Mainstream Drive
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
(615) 532-1579
April.Swoner@tn.gov

South Central Tennessee Council (Vacant)

Contact: Richard Kennedy
601 Mainstream Drive
Nashville, TN 37243-0800
(615) 532-1570
Richard.Kennedy@tn.gov

Northwest Tennessee Council

Dana Cobb
P. O. Box 586
Huntingdon, TN 38344
(731) 986-4243
Dana.Cobb@tn.gov

Southwest Tennessee Council

Rodger Jowers
225 Dr. Martin Luther King
Drive, Suite 440, Box 13
Jackson, TN 38301-6984
(731) 423-6545
Rodger.Jowers@tn.gov

Memphis/Shelby Council

Gwendolyn Wright
170 N. Main St., 9th Floor
Memphis, TN 38103
(901) 543-7657
Gwendolyn.Wright@tn.gov

Youth with Disabilities Face Barriers to Employment

One group of youth facing a particularly steep path to employment is youth with disabilities. Despite decades of improvements in services to people with disabilities, job opportunities continue to lag. Data reported by KIDS COUNT in Tennessee indicated that around 11 percent of Tennessee students received special education services and may face future difficulties in the job market.

The legislation improving education for special needs students, now reauthorized as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), was first passed in 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990. In the 15 years prior to 2010, the percentage of youth with disabilities earning higher education degrees went up 20 percent, but the percentage of working-age (ages 16-64) people with disabilities who were employed remained at less than one-third from 1980 to 2010. On the other hand, workers with disabilities were more likely to be self employed (11 percent) than other workers (7 percent).

According to the Senate report from which these figures are taken, "There is not evidence that employment outcomes for people with disabilities as a whole have improved since 1990" (Unfinished Business: Making Employment of People with Disabilities a National Priority, 2012).

Even if they are employed, earnings of people with disabilities lag. In 2010 about one-third of workers with disabilities worked part-time, compared to one-fifth of other workers. The median earnings for workers with disabilities are two-thirds of those of other workers.

The goals of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act were a) equality of opportunity, b) full participation, c) independent living and d) economic self-sufficiency. Only when workers with disabilities are able to earn a living by their work will these goals be met.


In Tennessee, the Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) has a Transition School to Work program focused on the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to eligible high school students with disabilities who are interested in employment after leaving high school. The goal is a smooth, seamless transition from high school to post-high school employment. All vocational rehabilitation-eligible students receive counseling and guidance from a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Examples of other transition services that lead to employment might include vocational assessment, assistive technology evaluation, post-secondary training and/or job placement. For more information about this program and referral to a district office, call (615) 313-4891.

Other states have created policies to engage youth in internships, part-time work, volunteer work and community service work as a transition to work. Ideally, programs will provide youth with disabilities with opportunities to explore work and develop specific workplace skills and support in competitive integrated employment settings. Participants will be expected to work when they have left school. In Washington State, King County reported increasing the number of youth employed two years after leaving school from 6 percent to 56 percent.

Responding to an understanding that entering (or re-entering) the workforce is difficult, the Tennessee Disability Coalition’s program, Benefits to Work, helps people review their situation and the potential impact of work, establish goals, learn about choices and make a career plan. Services are available to youth beginning at age 14 who are receiving Social Security benefits. More information is available at http://tndisability.org/coalition_programs/benefits_work, or by calling Benefits To Work at 615-383-9442 or toll free 888-839-5333.

The Tennessee Council on Developmental Disability conducts Youth Readiness training aimed at high school students with disabilities; the trainings encourage students to think about next steps after high school: working, post-secondary education or training programs, or living independently. By the end of FY 2013, one-day trainings will have served approximately 125 students at six high schools in West and East Tennessee. For more information about the trainings, contact Ned Solomon at ned.solomon@tn.gov or by phone at 615-532-6556.


In 2010, President Obama signed an executive order directing the executive branch of the federal government to hire an additional 100,000 federal workers with disabilities by 2015. However, in the first two years of the program, only 20,000 had been hired. Other efforts were proposed rules to require federal contractors to hire people with disabilities and promoting tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire more people with disabilities.

Advocates hope youth in school today will find a more receptive business community as they grow up and enter the workforce. 

Youth in Foster Care with Disabilities

Much research finds youth with disabilities are represented in child welfare and foster care to greater degree than in the general population, with youth with disabilities being 1.7 to 3.4 times more likely to be maltreated. Additional research has found that youth with disabilities aging out of foster care face worse outcomes in employment rates, educational attainment and more difficulty paying bills. Some research suggests children with disabilities are more likely to be maltreated; other experts believe the trauma of abuse contributes to more emotional disabilities. More research, better data reporting and a consistent definition of disability is needed to provide more information on youth in foster care with disabilities.

Youth Villages (see page 4) serves children with emotional disabilities and developmental delays. A 2008 report from the National Council on Disabilities commended Monroe Harding’s Youth Connections (see also page 4), and the report’s recommendation included:

- Improving training for foster care parents and increase recruitment of individuals willing to foster youth with disabilities;
- Strengthening secondary and postsecondary educational supports for these youth to improve access and success;
- Improving access to individualized, comprehensive transition services for youth with disabilities aging out of foster care;
- Strategically increasing collaboration among the education, juvenile justice, child welfare, labor, judicial, and health and mental health systems;
- Improving training of youth professionals across systems. 

Children in State Custody in FY 2010-11	
Child has mental health diagnosis or issues	60%
Child has severe mental health diagnosis	14%
Child has specific learning disabilities	17%
Child has ADD/ADHD	24%
Child has had a psychiatric hospitalization	15%

Source: CPORT/Quality Service Review

Numbers Matter

Children's Advocacy Days 2013

Presentations by First Lady Crissy Haslam and Jim Henry, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, and reports from state agencies highlighted "Numbers Matter," the 25th Annual Children's Advocacy Days. Children's Advocacy Days is an annual event organized by TCCY with the help of its child advocacy partners. A dozen organizations participated in the planning process. TCCY thanks its financial sponsors, including Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association, Camelot (and its staff), Omni Visions and Tennessee Voices for Children.


The Jim Pryor Child Advocacy Award, the Youth Excellence Award and Making KIDS COUNT Media awards were presented during the event. These awards are presented annually by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth at its Children's Advocacy Days.

The **Jim Pryor Child Advocacy Award** was presented to **Judge Betty Adams Green**, who recently retired after 15 years as Davidson County Juvenile Court judge. She has worked with at-risk children and their families for nearly 40 years. She served as a youth care worker, a teacher in a youth development center, an assistant district attorney and as vice-president of a private child serving organization. As the first commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Youth Development, she led the agency when it was split from the Department of Correction, a major first step in its evolution to the merger with child welfare and related services into the Department of Children's Services. Green served as president of the American Correctional Association, and has the distinction of being the only person to serve as both the executive director and the president of the Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Drake Dudley, a Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry student received the **Youth Excellence Award**. As a senior at Memphis Melrose High School, he was involved with drugs and a gang and was charged with aggravated robbery. His probation counselor recognized his potential and, as a result, he was not transferred to adult court. After he fulfilled his obligations to the court, he returned to high school, completed college at Tennessee State University and entered dental school. At Meharry, he played an integral role in the founding of Project Dream, a non-profit organization that mentors youth interested in careers in the medical and dental fields, and also provides services to the homeless.

The small market **Making KIDS COUNT Media Award** was given to **Kim Swindell Wood**, editor of the **Sparta Expositor**. Wood was honored for the extraordinary way the newspaper informs its readers of the impact of state and national policies regarding children and for its ongoing coverage of the KIDS COUNT data publications.

Lucas L. Johnson II was awarded the large market **Making KIDS COUNT Media Award** for his ongoing coverage of KIDS COUNT data, legislation and policy related to children, which has resulted, through the power of his employment by the **Associated Press' Tennessee Bureau**, in the spread of information about Tennessee's efforts nationally and internationally.

Robby Novak, Brad Montague and the YouTube channel, SoulPancake, were also honored with **Making KIDS COUNT Media Awards** for the **Kid President** videos, which feature the high energy, optimistic Novak, or "Kid President," who urges, "Less complaining, more dancing" and exhorts viewers to "create something to make the world more awesome." Kid President's Pep Talk is available at <http://bit.ly/10lwvfH>.



Green



Dudley



Wood



Johnson



Kid President

Children's Advocacy Days 2013

In Pictures



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY DAYS

Numbers Matter!

Additional Resources

- American Bar Association Commission on Youth at Risk. (2011) *Charting a better future for transitioning foster youth*. Washington, DC: Author (<http://bit.ly/104wpBR>).
- Courtney, M. (2006). Youth aging out of foster care. *Network on Transitions from Foster Care Policy Brief*, 19 (<http://bit.ly/XLzc6s>).
- Courtney, M. E., Dworsky, A, Brown, A., Cary, C., Love, K. & Vorhie. V. *Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 26*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (<http://bit.ly/11i6okN>)
- Dworsky, A. & Havlicek, J. (2009). *Review of state policies and programs to support young people transitioning out of foster care*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (<http://bit.ly/11mhfMj>).
- Fernandes, A. L. (2008). *Youth transitioning from foster care: Background, federal programs, and issues for Congress*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service (<http://bit.ly/Z9nmUJ>).
- Foster Care Alumni of America. Facts about foster care. Fact Sheet. (<http://bit.ly/15ElgyL>)
- Hill, K.M. (2012). The prevalence of youth with disabilities among older youth in out-of-home placement: An analysis of state administrative data. *Child Welfare*, (91), 4.
- U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (2012). *Unfinished business: Making employment of people with disabilities a national priority*. Washington, DC: Author. (<http://1.usa.gov/13mGVZg>).