



**Youth Transitions Advisory Council**  
**Thursday August 11, 2022**  
**1:00 PM – 3:30 PM CST**  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**

Melissa McGee  
 Rob Burke  
 Steve Petty  
 Cory Bradfield  
 Richard Kennedy  
 Carlos Hawkins  
 Heather Tribble

Courtney Matthews  
 Christy Morris  
 Dave Aguzzi  
 Ben Turner  
 Troy Jenkins  
 Eric Moore

Virtual Attendees – currently unavailable

<p><b>Welcome /Announcements</b></p>	<p><i>Richard Kennedy, Executive Director, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY)</i></p> <p>Kennedy welcomed all into the meeting and provided logistics information for those in-person attendance and other virtual directions.</p>
<p><b>YV LifeSet</b></p>	<p><i>Heather Tribble and Carlos Hawkins</i> <i>YV LifeSet</i></p> <p>Tribble began with information on YV LifeSet. She was the former person in this position but has moved to take over territory in Kentucky. This will be the last time Tribble is joining this meeting as she passes this work to Hawkins. LifeSet works with young adults ages 17-22 who have had interaction with the foster care system and help them with their identified goals. YV uses youth driven goals, as long as it is legal. Currently serving 1400 young adults and are now doing monthly case management for extension foster care, and they have opportunity to participate in LifeSet. Currently 111 are participating in both. LifeSet offers various options for participants, including celebrations for graduation. The program has over 100 students who will be entering or continuing college this fall. Also offer YV Scholar, where the student can continue in the program for every year they remain in school, also receive a stipend and have to do 20 hours of community service per</p>

	<p>semester. They also must work part time and submit a monthly budget to ensure good financial decisions. Currently 121 scholars across company, with 77 in Tennessee.</p> <p>Tribble turned it over to Maggie Renshaw and oversees the pandemic relief grant for the past year or so. The grant is a partnership with DCS, beginning in July 2021 and ends September 2022. This grant provides financial assistance to young adults previously in foster care in Tennessee through the form of vendor payment – rent, utilities, transportation, childcare and medical cost. Have served or are serving a total of 1310 young adults so far. Heather will be the Middle Tennessee LifeSet Services representative going forward.</p> <p>Tribble returned to introduce a gentleman who has received services to tell us about his participation. Brandon shared a little about his experience and identified the most important thing professionals can do is listen to the young adults they are working with.</p> <p>Kennedy thanked Tribble, Renshaw and Brandon for sharing today.</p>
<p><b>Department of Children’s Services, Office of Independent Living Update</b></p>	<p><i>Courtney Matthews, Director</i>  <i>Dave Aguzzi, Assistant Director</i>  <i>Ginger Harris, Youth Engagement</i></p> <p>Kennedy introduced Matthews, Aguzzi and Harris. Matthews provided update on an overview of the Office of Independent Living. The Foster Youth Liaison Program was the result of legislation passed to begin in the Fall of 2022. This program is to start as a pilot of five colleges to support young people on college campuses who have experienced foster care. DCS is on track to be at more than five schools when this program kicks off. The Liaison on campus will serve as a point of contact for former foster youth for support services. Matthews reports that many foster children will begin their college experience in community colleges. She also shared the schools participating in the program at present. She also thanked YV for their partnership in addressing needs during the pandemic, including distribution of pandemic aid. Matthews shared “really big news” about extension of foster care – historically, students have had to be in school to be eligible for foster care. However, we know that some young people coming out of foster care need to be able to work and make money to establish themselves and survive and thrive. DCS will now be expanding EFC eligibility to include the two work related criteria, beginning in January 2023.</p>

	<p>Aguzzi then shared data on Extension of Foster Care over FY22. Total active at then end of FY22 was 266 youth/young adults, down from 508 at end of FY21. Significant decrease, but pandemic rules ended September 2021 which resulted in discharge of large number of participants because they did not meet normal criteria. However, this FY22 number is lower than usual. Traditional average has been around 300 at one time. DCS is hearing that the young people are wanting to work and do other things instead of going to college. The upcoming expansion will definitely help this issue and allow young adults to take advantage of services that haven't been able to before.</p> <p>Aguzzi then spoke about the National Youth in Transition Database. DCS is finishing up the 19-year-old cohort in September and will begin a new baseline cohort afterwards. This came about from money from the Federal government to support young people. As part of that effort, tracking was required to begin in 2010, including feedback from the young adults. This feedback allows a voice for the young adults and the state child welfare agencies, improving communication and collaboration. It also facilitates continued contact with young people in its service.</p> <p>Matthews returned to speak on Youth Engagement through IL. This includes Independent Living Camps that happened over the summer, as well as the next camp to be held in October. They also oversee a Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC) and continue to recruit participants.</p>
<p><b>Update from Resource Centers</b></p>	<p><i>Christie Morris, Project Now!</i></p> <p>Morris shared information about Project Now! Stating they are having a good number of referrals at present. She shared about the programs run there – Sister Saving Sister and a financial planning course. She visits those young adults in residential and transitional living facilities. She also offers self-help classes during the week.</p> <p><i>Cheryl Paris, River City</i></p> <p>Paris was joined by Stepanie Athalone, program specialist. She shared about the July event, first annual college tour. Eleven youth attended the event, with six going to college in fall, two rising seniors, one junior and two freshman. She reports the tour as a huge success with the students gaining inspiration.</p> <p><i>Chaney Cruze, Youth Connections</i></p>

	<p>Cruze shared pictures from recent Youth Summit where Monroe Harding met with students for one week in June and one week in July, to introduce all of their programs to involved youth. Participants got to participate in aspects of all programs to become more acquainted with each. The last day of the summit they invited ten employers to come and interview participants, with some offering positions on the spot. They also did a back to school event, as well as an Opportunity Passport participant get his first apartment after a few months of homelessness. They also have added a new position to help young adults with identified needs to what community resources can meet those needs.</p> <p><i>Tiffany Turnage, SMA Dream Seekers</i></p> <p>Turnage reports that they can now work with young adults from age 14-30 now with a new program. They continue to host financial classes and sexual/health education classes. Classes are still held virtually to continue respecting current health conditions. They have seen an increase in number of young people using their social lounge, laundry services. SMA has set a goal to help young people through voter registration process for those 18 and older. They partnered with a local agency to host events and increase education on this initiative. They are hosting the back to school/voter registration event on August 20<sup>th</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Update</b></p>	<p><i>Krystal Fortney, Healthy Transitions Project Director, TDMHSAS</i></p> <p>Fortney reminded all about various programs across state and provided an update on those – First Episode Psychosis Initiative (OntrackTN), Healthy Transitions, Clinical High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P), Certified Young Adult Peer Support Specialist (CYAPSS) and young adult leadership opportunities, statewide and local councils.</p> <p>OntrackTN has nine sites, with three having recently been added. The CHR-P funding ends in September, but new funding was awarded and will initiate in September as well. Healthy Transitions has programs in Davidson and Greene counties. She reviewed qualifications for CYAPSS certification. Currently there are nine CYAPSS statewide.</p> <p>She also shared about upcoming conferences and academies. She their Instagram page for more details.</p>

**Others Business**

*Kendra Thomas – TDH*

Thomas oversees work at TDH on Emergency Preparedness Initiatives. One initiative is the “emergency alert” decals designed for children and youth with special healthcare needs and alert first responders of this need. Originally had 11,000 decals printed and are now out. Have had over 400 families connect with them for these decals.

The second initiative is “emergency alert toolkits” to assist in addressing when emergency situations occur. TDH provides resource cards in toolkits to provide numbers, as well as first aid kits, masks, hand sanitizers. Were funded for 11,000 of these as well, with 5500 already distributed.

Thomas introduced Mary Kate Brown of Family Voices of Tennessee, which serves families with chronic illnesses, disabilities and special healthcare needs. They do this in one way through the Youth Advisory Council, in partnership with TDH. The YAC is very youth led and youth centered.

*Announcements –*

Matthews – Related to EFC population and housing resources for that group. Here in Middle TN and East TN, DCS has supervised independent living programs. Middle – Monroe Harding, Clarksville and Omni. East – Chambliss, Partnership, Freewill, and others. For a number of years, we did not have any in West. Exciting news that now there is an option opening with Omni in Memphis in the near future, with Jackson also on the horizon. There were partnerships with THDA to get these up and running.

Moore – Regional Director for Omni with IL Program. Reports Memphis house will be for male population, Jackson will be for female population. Open house in Memphis next Wednesday. Hope to have another house in each location open by the end of the year.