



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

Hello everyone!

I wanted to begin this edition of the *Update* with a personal note. As we start a new year, it's a perfect time to recognize and celebrate the new opportunities that are in front of us. This Saturday (January 19), Tennessee's 50th governor will take the oath of office and begin his time as our state's executive leader. I am humbled by the fact that Governor-elect Bill Lee has included me on his team, and I'm truly excited to work with him, his administration, and the new leadership and new lawmakers in 111th Tennessee General Assembly to continue the progress we have made.

My thanks goes to each of you receiving this newsletter for your partnership, your friendship, and your passion for serving the Tennesseans we touch.

Many blessings,

Marie

Governor Haslam offers encouraging words during final visit to Central Office



Gov. Bill Haslam has made a point to visit state offices during his administration, and we wanted to make his final visit to Central Office extra special. Executive Assistant Kris Jernighan literally rolled out the red carpet for Gov. Haslam at the entrance to the Commissioner's Suite. Divisions prepared posters, photo collages, and signs to say thank you and to highlight achievements. "One of the biggest misconceptions is that state workers do not work hard and that they don't care," Gov. Haslam said. "I hope you have a sense of the difference you all make."

"We have an almost sacred obligation to provide the best services we can offer to the most vulnerable citizens. . . . I have a high degree of confidence in this Department," Gov. Haslam added. "Keep going."

We will, Governor. Thank you for taking the time to visit during your final week in office and for everything you and your administration have done to further mental health and substance abuse services in the state of Tennessee and beyond.

To see more photos of Governor Haslam's visit, stay tuned to our [facebook page](#).



*"I hope you have a sense of the difference you all make."
Governor Haslam*

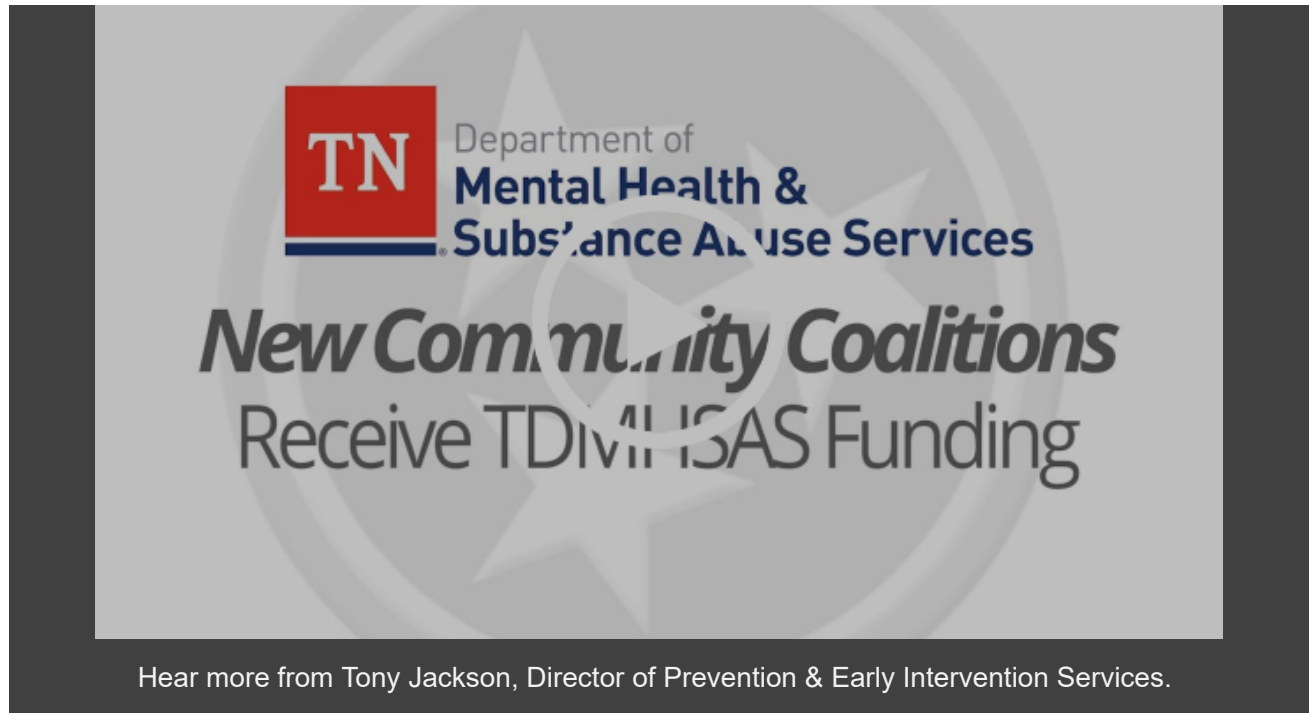
TDMHSAS funds five new coalitions

NASHVILLE—The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) is adding five new community anti-drug coalitions to its statewide network. Coalitions provide information, coordinate resources, and conduct education events with the goal of preventing addiction in their communities.

“Our coalitions are amazing groups of energized people who make a positive impact in their communities. They’re uniquely positioned to identify the resources that are

available, sense the needs of their communities, and react appropriately,” said Marie Williams, TDMHSAS Commissioner.

Governor Haslam’s TN Together program is providing the new funding for community anti-drug coalitions in Carroll, Claiborne, Cumberland, Loudon, and Maury counties. The addition raises the total number of TDMHSAS-funded coalitions to 46. Based on the population in the covered areas, more than 75% of Tennesseans have a coalition in their county.



News coverage links:

[Jackson Sun](#)

[WBIR-TV Knoxville](#)

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

Find a community anti-drug coalition [near you with the listing at this link.](#)

Services for children, youth, young adults expand as System of Care Across Tennessee partners with DCS in Lawrenceburg

NASHVILLE—The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) is expanding its System of Care Across Tennessee (SOCAT) program into a new, rural area of the state with a new partnership with the

Department of Children's Services (DCS). The addition of a SOCAT site in Lawrenceburg will add eight new counties to the program bringing the total counties reached to 88.

SOCAT services are designed to reduce out-of-home placements for children, youth, and young adults experiencing emotional or behavioral concerns that affect their daily lives. Participants in the program are at the top five percent of families who have received multiple services and supports but are still experiencing significant difficulties. The program has a record of exceptional success preventing out-of-home placements for 95% of participant families.



Read the press release in its entirety in the [State of Tennessee newsroom](#).

To learn more about SOCAT including eligibility and referral information, events, resources and trainings, [visit socacrosstn.org](http://visit.socacrosstn.org)

SOCAT Training & Technical Assistance Center is open, providing resources, training



The System of Care of Tennessee (SOCAT) Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) is now open! The TTAC promotes [system of care values and principles](#) through

providing quality resources, training, and consultation to youth and young adults with behavioral health needs, their families, and those who serve them.

The TTAC is committed to providing quality technical assistance in a variety of forms, depending on need, including:

- **Training** – provided by a content expert from the TA Network to a group of individuals who would like to increase their knowledge about a specific topic
- **Consultation** – provided by a content expert from the TA Network to a group of individuals or organizations/agencies who would like one-on-one, targeted support around a specific need or problem (e.g. implementing trauma-informed care)
- **Resources and Materials** – an extensive compilation of behavioral health resources, accessible for free on our website or by request.

Get involved with our Training and Technical Assistance Center:

- [Request a training or consultation on a certain topic](#)
- [View upcoming trainings and events](#)
- [Access resources](#)
- [Apply to become a content expert for our TTAC](#)
- [Learn about peer support](#)

If you have questions or want to learn more, email us at SOC.TAcenter@tn.gov or visit our website at www.SOCacrossTN.org.

Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute names three areas of the hospital after esteemed former staff, leadership

Joe Carobene, Melanie Hampton, and Marthagem Whitlock honored



On Friday, December 7, the TDMHSAS family gathered at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute to name two areas of the hospital for a pair of long-serving employees. Joe Carobene and Melanie Hampton were honored for their decades of service to the state of Tennessee and Tennesseans living with mental illness. The MTMHI Administrative Suite was named for Joe Carobene, and the Treatment Mall was named for Melanie Hampton. At a surprise reception honoring Carobene and Hampton, several people shared their memories including former commissioners Virginia Trotter Betts and Evelyn Robertson as well as former acting commissioner Ben Dishman.



Marthagem Whitlock's 42 years of service and dedication to forensic mental health evaluation and treatment services provided by TDMHSAS were honored with a special dedication. At the quarterly Planning and Policy Council meeting on December 13, Commissioner Marie Williams presented a plaque to Whitlock. The Forensic Evaluation Unit at MTMHI's Forensic Services Program will be named in her honor. Pictured above are MTMHI CEO Joyce Kovacs and Commissioner Williams making the presentation to Marthagem.

TDMHSAS wins three state Information Technology awards; ECR project, IT leaders take center stage

NASHVILLE—The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) received three of the six annual awards given by the Information Technology Professionals Association at its 2018 ceremony. The awards honored a statewide project, an update to an innovative contracting tool, and an individual whose contributions are unmatched.



TDMHSAS was recognized as the winner in the following categories:

- **IT and Business Collaboration** – The TDMHSAS team including dozens of employees at the four Regional Mental Health Institutes was honored for successfully implementing Electronic Clinical Records at the hospitals.
- **Improving State Operations** – The department’s latest release of its in-house developed Budget, Contracts, and Monitoring System was honored

for integrating several complex interfaces.

- **Individual Excellence** – Gina Young, Application Architect (pictured above with Deputy Commissioner Bo Turner)

“We have a wonderful team of information technology professionals who support the department’s work, and I’m proud to see their work honored,” said Marie Williams, TDMHSAS Commissioner. “The incredible collaboration that it took to pull off the Electronic Clinical Record project is truly amazing. From our IT staff to our physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and social workers across all four hospitals, they really came together to bring the vision of a customer-focused record system to life.”

“Gina Young is an outstanding application architect. Her extensive experience and knowledge about database and application design, combined with her sharp analysis and critical thinking skills, make her a great asset to the entire IT team and the department,” said Richard Zhu, Executive IT Director, state of TN Strategic Technology Solutions.

In addition the three overall wins, the TDMHSAS team was also honored with the following recognitions:

- **Electronic Clinical Records:** 2nd place Innovation Award, 3rd place Citizen Impact Award, 3rd place Improving State Operations Award
- **Gina Young:** 2nd place Improving State Operations Award
- **Chris Loftis:** 2nd place Individual Excellence Award



IT Director Richard Zhu and Deputy Commissioner Matt Yancey present the award for Improving State Operations to the BCMS Team: Gina Young, Carrie Kissner, Mohammed Osman, and Adeel Mohammed.



Members of the ECR team on stage to receive the IT and Business Collaboration award.

Central Office honors Service Award

winners at annual holiday luncheon

Central Office celebrated its annual Service Awards and holiday luncheon Friday, December 14. Thanks to all Central Office Service Award recipients for their dedication and hard work. Thanks also to the leadership team and to the decorating committee who made this year's celebration festive and extra special. Service Award recipients at our Regional Mental Health Institutes will be honored in early 2019.



Diane Langdon, 35 years



Rob Cotterman, 35 years



Sue Hunt, 30 years



Debbie Wynn, 30 years



James Ladd, 30 years



Melissa Sparks, 25 years



Gwen Hamer, 25 years



Cindy Tyler, 20 years

Additional Central Office employees celebrating service milestones include: Xinqing Deng (5), Neru Gobin (5), Ben Yarbrough (5), Leandra Mitchell (5), Kathy Haley (10), Bob Payne (10), Doug Scanlan (10), Quinn Simpson (10), Melvin Smith (10), John Gerdes (25), and Robert Wright (35).

Liz Ledbetter, administrative leader in Recovery Courts, retires this month



Elizabeth (Liz) Ledbetter is retiring this month after working for TDMHSAS in several capacities, most recently as Recovery Court Program Administrator in the Division of Substance Abuse Services.

Liz first came to TDMHSAS as a Mental Health Program Specialist in 1995 and was responsible for overseeing and providing technical assistance to programs serving adults with mental health and substance abuse disorders across the state. Her accomplishments included the development, implementation, and oversight of the statewide criminal justice behavioral health liaison projects and the Tennessee Mental Health and Criminal Justice Training Program.

In May 2009, she began working as a Program Manager in the Office of Criminal Justice Programs, Department of Finance and Administration, where she provided primary programmatic support for federal grants under Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Programs and Byrne JAG programs, in addition to state-funded drug court

programs.

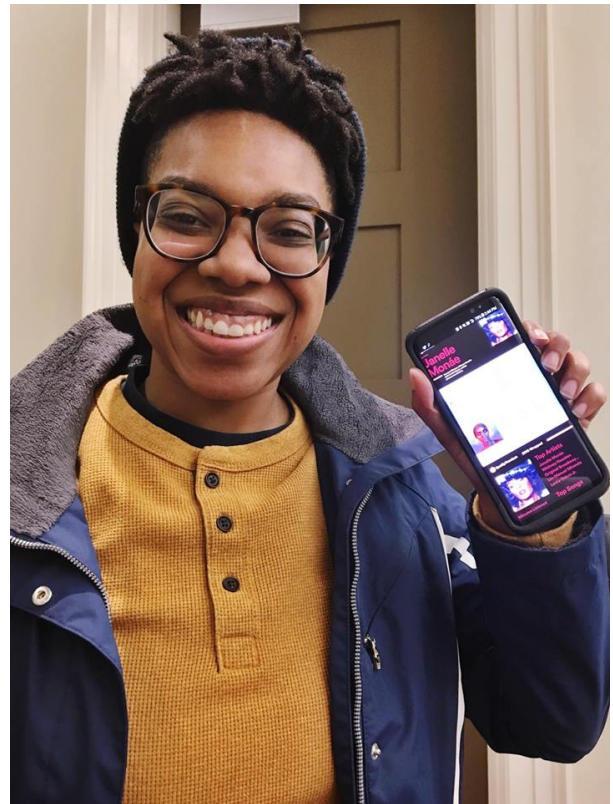
Liz returned to the Department in January 2013 having accepted the Recovery Court Program Administrator position. She has been instrumental in working with the Recovery Court Programs providing access to quality training events and ensuring programs are operating in compliance with the national standards and best practices. She has also assisted in the planning and implementation of new recovery court programs. Liz's service to the state was recognized with the Governor's Excellence in Service Award in the fall of 2016.

Please help us to say thanks to Liz for her contributions and hard work.

Young Adult Leadership Council members learn new skills, connect with peers monthly

Submitted by Jules Wilson, TDMHSAS Youth & Young Adult Coordinator

Despite being a cold and rainy Saturday, the December meeting of the Statewide Young Adult Leadership Council was a success. The topic of the meeting was the art of presenting oneself. The Young Adult Leadership Council (YALC) had identified the topic as one of interest after seeing Dr. Monty Burks present "Young and Professional: We are a work in progress!" at the System of Care Across Tennessee Conference last fall. During the presentation, Monty asked YALC facilitator Crystal to stand up and introduce herself in front of the entire room of conference attendees. It was both terrifying and empowering, and the council recognized how important it was to work on the skill of presentation.



The main activity during the December meeting was an adult version of Show and Tell. Some members dug through bags or ran to their cars to grab items they happened to have with them, and others chose from a selection of objects. After some time to prepare, the YALC took turns presenting their object to the other participants. We soon learned how seemingly insignificant items – keychains with the names of different

cities, a stress ball made out of a hard and squishy material, a coffee mug painted like a Mexican sugar skull, a stuffed plush unicorn, and a rubber duck dressed up as Rosie the Riveter, among others – could prompt incredible conversation. Each person shared what the object meant to them or perhaps what it symbolized. One participant even improvised an entire fictional life story.

“I thought the activity was great,” said Jordan Scruggs (pictured). “Because it gave each young adult a moment to connect with all of us in a succinct way through their own words about themselves.” Each young adult who participated succeeded in their task with a confident glow about them. The group took time to highlight the strengths of each presentation, and it was as if the self-esteem of the entire room seemed to rise.

Giving presentations is “a skill that not a lot of people get taught when they’re growing up. Usually [when they do study presentations] it’s temporarily about a school project. So turning it and making it about mini speeches and presentations about themselves was great practice,” concluded Jordan.

In all, the Young Adult Leadership Council is about practice – practicing new leadership skills without fear of judgement or criticism, practicing the art of meeting new people after isolating, and practicing sharing their stories of lived experience. Seeing the look of true understanding on their peers’ faces is an added bonus. It is a space to experiment with being brave and authentic, to feel respected and valued, and to gain a better understanding of the power they have in a world where youth and young adults can feel so small.

If you or a young adult you know are interested in joining the YALC, please join the council at its next meeting Saturday, February 2, 2019, beginning at noon, at the Nashville Goodwill Career Center (937 Herman Street, [Google Maps Link](#)). Follow the TDMHSAS and [TN Healthy Transitions facebook pages](#) for more information.

Dr. Drimer-Kagan joins Middle TN Mental Health Institute as full-time psychiatrist

Please help us welcome Dr. Taly Drimer-Kagan who joined the full-time psychiatry staff at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute in December. She is board certified through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology with specialties in Psychiatry and Geriatric Psychiatry.

Dr. Drimer-Kagan was first granted Associate membership of MTMHI’s medical staff with MOD privileges in November 2016. She will assume responsibilities of patient care

on MTMHI's extended treatment program.

Previously, she served as Medical Director of the geriatrics unit at Tri-Star Skyline - Madison and has worked in several hospitals in Texas, North Carolina, and overseas. She has also served as a research clinician at Banner Alzheimer's Center in Phoenix and was a Chief Fellow of Geriatric Psychiatry at Duke University.



New Program Manager joins Office of Children, Young Adults, and Families



Please help us welcome **Kayla Mumphrey** who has joined our Office of Children, Young Adults, and Families as Program Manager. In this role, Kayla will oversee a variety of programs including Project B.A.S.I.C, School-Based Behavioral Health Liaisons, Planned Respite, as well as other prevention and early intervention programming.

Prior to joining TDMHSAS, Kayla served as a Program Specialist with the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities where she fostered positive working relationships with agencies, stakeholders, and clients. She provided technical assistance to ensure services and supports were person-centered and productive for the well-being of those served. Kayla has also served in a variety of direct service positions focused on children, youth, and families. She was a therapist with Health Connect America and was promoted to a Senior Counselor with Youth Villages. Kayla also has experience as a Lead Child Protective Investigator with Florida Department of Children and Families. She has a master's degree in Clinical Psychology and a post-graduate certificate in Applied Behavioral Analysis.

Western Mental Health Institute, nurse practitioners welcome the VA, Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network



Western Mental Health Institute held a combined celebration to honor veterans and also recognized its advanced practice nurses during National Nurse Practitioners week. At the request of WMHI nurse practitioners, the hospital hosted members of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network and the Veterans Administration who presented on suicide prevention and intervention among our veterans. "It was pleasure to have them to present the information to us to help us in better educating the community," said CEO Roger Pursley.



WMHI Nurse Practitioners (left to right): Elaine Kirk, PPN; Beth Henson, FPN/DNP; Paulette Carothers, FPN; Ashley Jowers, PPN/DNP; Belinda Douglas, PPN; and Keesha Reid, PPN/DNP.

MTMHI Safety Officer Salyers receives continued education in fire safety



Ted Salyers was among the 272 State of TN Certified fire inspectors, building inspectors, and other professionals from across the state in attendance at the Tennessee Fire Safety Inspectors Association training conference held in November in Murfreesboro. Conference attendees participated in a variety of classes designed to enhance their knowledge and skills related to fire code enforcement. Salyers (pictured above right) is a Tennessee Certified Fire Inspector and a Certified Fire Protection Specialist and has been the Facilities Safety Officer 3 for Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute since June 2007. On the left is Gary Farley, Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Commerce and Insurance/TN State Fire Marshal's Office.

Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute patients, staff enjoy plants, gifts donated by Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club



Submitted by Susan Feltman, MBMHI

Eve Soltau was born and raised on Lookout Mountain in Alabama. She moved to Chattanooga to attend Covenant College where she continued to develop her life long love of the beautiful mountain surrounding the college. She earned degrees in Psychology and Secondary Education and worked as a Regional Director of Admissions for Covenant. Her internship, while a student, was at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute, and ever since, she has had a special place in her heart for the facility.

Eve joined Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club nearly 25 years ago as a young mother because she was impressed with the club's service projects. Her favorite project to be involved in over the years has been at Moccasin Bend. She has liked nothing better than digging in the dirt, planting in the inner courtyard, and seeing patients walk by and exclaim over the pops of spring color. She believes we are put on this earth to love others, serve, and impact culture. She is excited about the MBMHI garden therapy program and the newly-planted beds. Many years ago, the then volunteer director, Tina Nance, asked the club to never stop coming and helping at Moccasin Bend. As long as the club remains in existence, they intend to do just that.

Thank you, Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club!



Congratulations to our Crisis Services Outstanding Employee: Monica Carney



Congratulations to LMSW Monica Carney, Alliance Behavioral Health, for being named Crisis Services Outstanding Employee for last quarter, and thanks to her colleague Anna for the nomination.

Submitted by Anna Larouche, Alliance Behavioral Health

Compassion is a necessary tool in the mental healthcare field. Compassion for our patients, compassion for their families, and compassion for our coworkers, too. Without compassion, patients risk being further marginalized by the very professionals who seek to help them during their most vulnerable moments.

I have been lucky enough to work with Monica Carney, who embodies the ideal of compassion in every aspect of her work in crisis services. One of her greatest strengths is her uncanny ability to snatch fragments of connection to build rapport, even with some of the most anxious or frustrated of patients, meeting the patient exactly at where they are. Her compassion and empathy enables her to bridge the gaps between patients and families, finding answers that prioritize the patient's health and safety while satisfying the concerns of loved ones.

She seeks out what each patient is needing and why they need it, using that compassion and rapport to de-escalate them, if needed. I have watched Monica open

avenues – avenues I did not know were accessible – by the quality of her care alone. On top of her skill as a clinician, Monica finds time to be a thoughtful coworker and dedicated member of a multi-disciplinary team. She is a beacon of positivity in the workplace. She is always willing to staff a case, offer feedback, or provide her clinical input if a Certificate of Need is requested. She dedicates extra effort and time to both her patients and her coworkers and makes the work environment better for it.

Why does Monica work in crisis? "When our patients are filled with desperation, my colleagues and I are equipped to help them at a moment's notice. Helping is intrinsic. I have been a Crisis Specialist for over five years and this field is where I unquestionably belong. I am both humbled and honored to have received this award."

Monica obtained her master's degree in Social Work and her bachelor's degree in Psychology at The University of Memphis. She earned her associate's degree in Business Management at STCC in Memphis. She resides with her husband and their pet felines. In addition to helping others, her passions are music, nature, and rescuing animals.

To nominate someone for this honor, [visit our website.](#)

TN Recovery Navigator Monica Tucker receives high honor at Northeast State



Congratulations to Monica Tucker who was named Outstanding Student of the Year at Northeast State Community College. Monica is a TN Certified Peer Recovery Specialist and a TN Recovery Navigator working in East Tennessee with Frontier Health. She helps individuals struggling with substance abuse, connecting them with treatment, bridging the gap between addiction and recovery. She graduated in December with associate degrees in social work and sociology. Way to go, Monica!

Thanks to everyone sharing our posts, Facebook community grows to 3,000+

The TDMHSAS Facebook page passed a huge milestone in the month of December. We received our 3,000th like! We work hard to make sure our Facebook feed is filled with content that's relevant to our audience, uplifting and interactive, and focused on pathways to recovery. You can find (and like!) [our Facebook page at this link.](#) If you

already like our page, you can invite your friends to join the fun by navigating to the right side of the page under “Community” and click the “Invite Friends” button. Thanks for your support!



Declaration for Mental Health Treatment is published in Spanish, posted online

The Office of Consumer Affairs & Peer Recovery Services is excited to announce that the Declaration for Mental Health Treatment is now available in Spanish. A Declaration for Mental Health Treatment or DMHT allows people receiving services to plan ahead; it may also assist service providers in giving appropriate treatment.

An individual may make a DMHT if she/he is 16 years old or an emancipated minor and has the capacity to make informed mental health treatment decisions.

Learn more and [download the Spanish or English versions on our website.](#)



Mark your calendars: TDMHSAS Planning & Policy Council reconvenes in 2019!

Upcoming Regional Planning & Policy Council Meetings

Region VI	Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2019	1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. CST	Pathways 238 Summar Drive Jackson, TN 38301
-----------	--------------------------	---------------------------	---

Region III	Thursday, Jan. 17, 2019	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. EST	AIM Center 472 W. MLK Blvd. Chattanooga, TN 37402
Region VII	Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. CST	Lowenstein House East 6590 Kirby Center Cove, Suite 103 Memphis, TN 38115
Region I	Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2019	10 a.m. - 12 p.m. EST	Frontier Health Corp. Offices 1167 Spratlin Park Drive Gray, TN 37615
Region IV	Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2019	11 a.m. - 1 p.m. CST	TAADAS 1321 Murfreesboro Pike, Suite 130 Nashville, TN 37217
Region V	Thursday, Feb. 7, 2019	9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. CST	TAADAS 1321 Murfreesboro Pike, Suite 130 Nashville, TN 37217
Region II	Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. EST	Helen Ross McNabb Center, Training Room 201 West Springdale Ave. Knoxville, TN 37917

Meeting dates are subject to change. For more information on the TDMHSAS Planning & Policy Council and for a complete list of scheduled meetings, [please visit our website.](#)

**Office of Crisis Services & Suicide
Prevention publishes FY2018 infographic
with number of Tennesseans served**

Crisis Services

For People Experiencing A Behavioral Health Crisis



Available
24 hours a day
855-274-7471

STATEWIDE CRISIS PHONE CALLS



THE RIGHT TREATMENT AT THE RIGHT TIME IN THE RIGHT PLACE



WHEN POSSIBLE, CRISIS SERVICES PROVIDES MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND REFERRALS TO RECEIVE TREATMENT IN THE COMMUNITY.

Crisis Walk-In Centers



23% OF FACE-TO-FACE ASSESSMENTS OCCURRED AT WALK-IN CENTERS

Mobile CRISIS TEAMS



In the event of a
MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY:

Call 855-CRISIS-1

***855-274-7471**

For confidential help
from a caring crisis professional
in your area, available
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This is a free call.

You can also text TN to 741741.

To learn more about Crisis Services in the State of Tennessee, [visit our website.](#)



For questions about substance abuse treatment,
Call the Tennessee REDLINE
800-889-9789

*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 connect with us on social media!*



Find us on
Facebook



Follow us on Facebook



Website