

Children's Services Committee

Location: **Microsoft Teams meeting**
Join on your computer or mobile app

Date: Tuesday, 5/2/2023
Time: 1:00 P.M. CST/2:00 P.M. EDT

Staff Present: Cory Bradfield, Kylie Graves, Jeni Davis, Craig Hargrow, Richard Kennedy, Melissa McGee, Steve Petty, Therese Sipes

Staff Absent: Rob Burke

Commission Members: Amy Jones, Committee Chair, Randy Butler, Ella Britt, Kelly Drummond, Steven Neely, Honorable Judge Rob Philyaw, Commission Chair

Commission Members Absent Glenda Terry, Rob Mortensen, Charmaine Kromer

Guests: None

1) **Call to Order – Amy Jones, Chair**

After ascertaining there was a quorum, Jones called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2) **Approval of October Children's Services Minutes (ACTION)**

Jones asked for a motion to approve the Children's Services minutes from the February 2023 Committee Meeting.

Butler moved to approve the minutes from February 2023.

Drummond seconded. Unanimously Approved.

3) **Staff Updates**

Resilient Tennessee Collaborative- Melissa McGee

TCCY continues partnering with state agencies and statewide organizations serving Tennessee's children and youth to educate, promote and support healthy child development environments and systems.

TCCY coordinates meetings of the RTC Coordinating Team as direction support for Resilient Tennessee Collaborative. The Coordinating Team recently identified persons to invite to join this leadership group and McGee will be sending out invites to those persons.

The Coordinating team provided feedback and suggestions on the upcoming RTC Summit, on May 10th, and updates from participants.

RTC Summit – May 10th -McGee provided an update on the RTC Summit. The Summit will be held on May 10th in Nashville at Trevecca Nazarene University's Boone Convocation Center. It will be an in-person event bringing together providers, leaders, advocates, educators, peers, family members, government, and other disciplines working with children and families from across the state for networking, conversation and system infrastructure building. Speakers include Dr. Christina Bethell, Dr. Robert Sege, Dr. Altha Stewart, Jesse Kohler, Lizzy Schlichting, April Scott, Kimberly Ladd and Melissa Roberts. The event is supported by TCCY, DCS and Centerstone and is free to attend.

RTC Networking Meeting – February 22nd – RTC held a quarterly networking meeting on February 22nd, both in-person and virtual options were made available. Attendees heard presentations from Tennessee's Department of Education and their new Project RAISE grant, STRONG ACC, Urban Child Institute, and Bright Start TN.

Community

McGee and TCCY Intern Kate Keese have been diligently planning the upcoming RTC Summit and sharing information with the network and communities.

2023 Meeting Dates for the RTC:

SUMMIT – May 10th

August 23rd

November 8th

In March, McGee provided presentations for the Southeast Council on Children and Youth's Lunch and Learn, Brighter Futures and the National Council for State Legislatures. She also attended the Forum on Children and Families with Aspen Institute's Ascend group in Washington, DC, and will attend the Mississippi ACEs Awareness Symposium in Jackson, Mississippi, in April. She was invited to become an official member of the Children's Joint Task Force and presented with that group to the

House of Representatives' Children and Families Subcommittee in March. She continues to support other TCCY staff and endeavors in her daily work.

Youth Transitions Advisory Council – Cory Bradfield

The Youth Transitions Advisory Council met March 23rd at the William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower and virtually via Microsoft Teams. Approximately 25-30 people attended in-person and virtually.

The meeting was somewhat abbreviated and featured updates from regular YTAC presenters: the Office of Independent Living Services within the Department of Children's Services; Youth Villages' LifeSet program; the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; and the EFC Resource Centers including River City Youth Collective, Youth Connections, and South Memphis Alliance Dream Seekers.

The meeting also featured an update from TCCY Executive Director Richard Kennedy, and a request from YTAC Director Cory Bradfield that the council make requests or recommendations for future presentations and other content of interest to the council.

The next meeting of YTAC is scheduled for June 22nd and will be a joint meeting with the Council on Children's Mental Health.

Bradfield has joined a team led by the Court Improvement Project (CIP) within the Administrative Office of the Courts and has been serving since the beginning of February. The team is charged with evaluating the Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) and identifying measures to prioritize when it comes to collecting, retaining, and sharing data in order to improve performance.

Bradfield is in conversations with YTAC participants and Director of Statewide Partnerships to consider ways that YTAC could improve participant engagement, including more active participation in YTAC quarterly meetings.

Council on Children's Mental Health (CCMH) – Cory Bradfield

The first quarterly meeting of the Council on Children's Mental Health was held both in person at the State Library and Archives and virtually via Microsoft Teams on February 23rd from 10 am – 2 pm. Approximately 40-50 were in attendance in-person and virtually.

The meeting began with introductory remarks from TCCY Executive Director Richard Kennedy and Deputy Commissioner at the TN Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) Deputy Commissioner Rob Cotterman. The meeting featured three extended presentations: a legislative update from TCCY Policy Specialist Kylie Graves; an agency update and overview of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health from Hunter Hancock of the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee (AIMHiTN); and an overview with data from TDMHSAS' Keri Virgo, Director of the Division of Mental Health Services and the Office of Children, Young Adults, and Families. The next meeting of CCMH will be held on June 22nd and will be a joint meeting with the Youth Transitions Advisory Council.

Along with the Executive Director and the Director of Statewide Partnerships, the CCMH Director is conducting outreach to the relevant appointing authorities to ensure that membership of the council is consistent with the requirements in the statute that authorizes the council.

The CCMH Director participates in community and statewide meetings supporting children's mental health in Tennessee, including the Infant and Early Childhood Financing Policy State Team, where he serves, along with the Director of the Young Child Wellness Council, as co-chair of the Policy Action Team. Bradfield continues to serve on the Child Care Board of Review.

Home Visiting Leadership Alliance (HVLA) – Steve Petty for Rob Burke

Home Visiting Leadership Alliance (HVLA) hosted a hybrid meeting on 2/9/23. The meeting was held at the Lentz Public Health Center with 23 attending in person and 36 attending virtually, for a total of 59 attendees. Updates and presentations were provided in the first half of the meeting by the Department of Health, Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, and AIMHiTN. In these presentations, discussions were held about how to host HVLA moving forward, Kylie Graves presented the State of the Child Report, and AIMHiTN shared information about a launch for a consultation warmline as well as the Prepared Emergency Emotional Response Toolkit for home visitors coming soon. The Department of Health grantors have decided to move forward with alternating fully in-person and virtual HVLA meetings. The meeting scheduled for 5/11/23 will be the final hybrid meeting, according to the plan established by our partners at the Department of Health.

In addition, the Healthy Families TN Advisory Board met and there was discussion about home visiting programs across the state using common language as well as having a

new member orientation for newcomers to HVLA/ Healthy Families Advisory Board. An action team for each will be created.

In addition to the Common Language and New Member Orientation Action Teams discussed above, attendees also agreed to create a Workforce Development/ Recruitment Action Team. Attendees selected an Action Team in which they would like to participate, and Rob shared that he was hopeful that each Action Team would have standing monthly meetings, appoint a Chair and co-Chair, and prepare to report out at each HVLA meeting.

The next meeting will on 5/11/23, which will be held in a hybrid model at Lentz Public Health Center.

Rob Burke, the Director of HVLA, continues to attend and serve as TCCY's liaison to the Resilient TN Leadership Academy. Rob and the Program Director at DOH continue to meet bi-monthly to plan and execute the work of the HVLA. Rob is an active member of a national community of practice for home visiting programs facilitated by Start Early and also completed the Parent Learning Series training facilitated by Start Early. Rob is also continuing to serve as the co-chair of the TN IECMH Financing and Policy Team, Action Team 4.

One of the goals of the HVLA contract is to develop, coordinate, and convene monthly COPs for supervisors of evidenced-based home visiting programs to support and train staff in leadership skill and development. Partnering with TDH, the Director of HVLA has hosted COP meetings since January and has brought in experts in the field of self-care, time management, and conflict management. Additionally, all COPs have been scheduled throughout the remainder of the year with experts from important topics scheduled to present.

Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council- Steve Petty for Rob Burke

Tennessee Young Child Wellness Council (TNYCWC) took place on 3/9/23 at the Nashville Metro West Police Precinct with 35 attending in person, 32 attending virtually, and 32 attending at a Watch Party in the Northeast, for a total of 99 attendees. Updates and presentations were provided in the first half of the meeting by the Department of Health (DOH), Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, and Tennessee Early Connect Project. Attendees were led to play a game in which data from several sources were used to highlight some of the issues young children are facing across the state and discuss how the TNYCWC could address some of the challenges. This conversation then led into a discussion about developing action teams such as data, policy,

communication, and workforce development. The next meeting will be held on 6/15/23, which will be held in a hybrid model at West Precinct Police Station.

The Steering Committee continues to meet virtually on the first Thursday of the month and the following was discussed:

1/5/23:

- a. Feedback was provided from the TNYCWC meeting on 12/14/22. The team discussed opportunities to increase engagement from attendees, especially those attending virtually.
- b. YCWC Steering Committee Guiding Document was finalized.

2/2/23:

- c. Preparation for the TNYCWC meeting scheduled for 3/9/23. This included discussions about how to best integrate various data-filled documents as well as Action Teams.
- d. The team discussed getting back to a “pre-Covid model”.

3/2/23:

- a. Final preparations for the TNYCWC meeting scheduled for 3/9/23.
- b. A discussion was held about which Action Teams we would ask to fill at the meeting.
- c. It was shared that a National Symposium for Early Childhood State Advisory Councils was being planned, with Tennessee initiating and hosting the event.

The Director of TNYCWC continues to attend and serve as TCCY’s liaison to the Resilient TN Leadership Academy. The Director of TNYCWC and Program Director at DOH continue to meet bi-monthly to plan and execute the work of the YCWC. The Director of TNYCWC has attended various webinars facilitated by providers across the country to learn of practices from other states and to bring these ideas to the TNYCWC to determine if there needs to be a shift in Tennessee’s practices. These include those hosted by Strong Pregnancies and Strong Starts, the Maternal Child Health Series, facilitated by Mission Capital, AIMHiTN’s Stories from the Field, and Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board (CANPB).

Second Look Commission – Kylie Graves

The Second Look Commission Meeting met on February 14th and April 11th. Members reviewed the eight death cases from FY22. During the open portion of the February meeting members heard presentation from the Dr. Stephen Patrick at Vanderbilt regarding Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome and the Firefly program at Vanderbilt. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth has received the draft Cost of Abuse

report and is working with the Boyd Center for Economic Research on a few minor edits prior to presenting the report to the SLC.

Preliminary Findings from the February meeting include:

In one case, a foster home was initially approved for two placements yet had six. Members noted concern for why this exception was made and why policy was not followed.

Members noted opportunity for more in-depth evaluation of foster homes when allegations of abuse or inappropriate discipline arise.

Investigators were unable to get a preliminary autopsy finding in one case. If law enforcement had known smothering could have been a potential cause of death, they may have approached the investigation differently.

Members noted the challenges that come when the investigating officer changes, when there is not a preliminary or final autopsy available.

Opportunity for better communication from medical examiner's office as autopsy results are pending.

Members noted smaller counties often don't attend autopsies, making communication critical.

In one case, it appears that the former foster mother of the alleged perpetrator may have babysat the child shortly before the child's death. It does not appear that the former foster mother was contacted as a part of the investigation.

A child presented to a pediatrician's office once for being difficult to arouse or potential sedation and once for bruising on their ear. Both situations are concerning for abuse, but do not appear to have been reported.

Members noted that although a cause of death was found to be undetermined, pediatricians treating the child's injuries reiterated that the level of injury could be caused by an adult falling but would not be possible by a child of that size falling.

4) **Additional Items or Comments**

Executive Director Kennedy expressed appreciation to Commission Members for their support during the Legislative session. Executive Director also expressed appreciation to staff supporting the Children's Services Commission for performing the 'collaboration' function of the Commissions work. Kennedy also invited Commission members to attend the Resilient Tennessee Collaborative Summit May 10. Kennedy also said upcoming Commission meeting would be focused on planning for the future with a facilitator from the Center for Non-Profit Management.

Chair Jones also expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts during the Legislative session.

Kennedy informed members that Sherry Isom, TCCY Budget Director had accepted a position with the Tennessee Public Directors Conference. Brian Jefferies has been offered and accepted the TCCY Budget Director position. He is the former Deputy Director of the Tennessee District Attorney Generals Conference. He will begin work for TCCY in June.

5) **Motion to Adjourn**

Jones asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Butler moved to adjourn the meeting. Britt seconded. Unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.