



# Advocate

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## September Was National Suicide Awareness Month

This newsletter includes information on issues surrounding suicide, especially in Tennessee. TCCY intern Kaila Gilbert provided much of the content of this newsletter.

In This Issue:

- TSPN “Zero Suicides” Taskforce;
- Self-Harm and Non-Fatal Injury;
- Recommendations Following Mountain View Suicides.

## TSPN Combats Suicide with Zero Suicides Initiative Taskforce

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network is currently working to achieve “zero suicides,” a commitment to suicide prevention through the health and behavioral health-care systems. The network, in concert with the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuses Services (TDMHSAS) and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC), is governed by a belief that “suicide can be eliminated in a population under care... by improving service access and quality and through continuous improvement.”

- More information: <http://tspn.org/zero-suicides>

For more information about suicide follow this link:

- [http://tn.gov/finance/ins/pdf/eap\\_partners\\_ee\\_sept\\_pg2.pdf](http://tn.gov/finance/ins/pdf/eap_partners_ee_sept_pg2.pdf).

## Self-Injury Remains on Scene

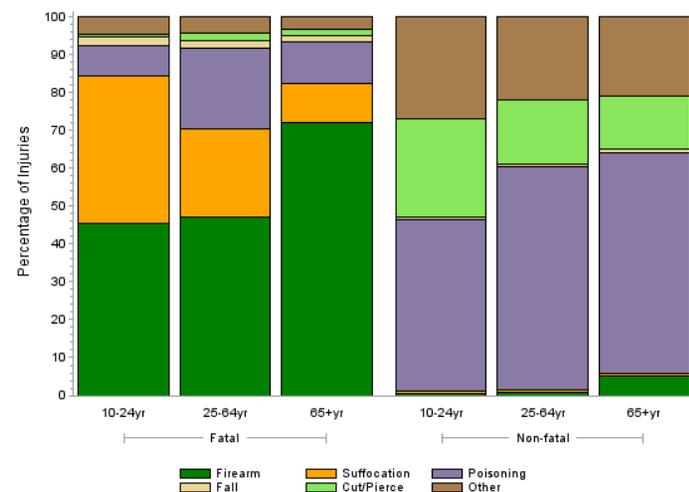
Self-injury, also called self-harm, is the deliberate act of harming one’s own body without intent of suicide. Self-harm tends to be a coping mechanism for frustration, feelings of distress and anger. In the United States, instances of non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) have risen, especially for teens. The 12-17 age group is especially vulnerable, comprising the second largest group to receive hospitalization for non-suicidal self-injury. While males are more likely to report suicide ideation or attempts, females are likely to report instances of self-injury.

Self-harm is often linked to histories of physical abuse and sexual abuse and mental health concerns. A Cambridge study found that many adolescent injurers have a background of mental illness, psychiatric treatment and previous suicide attempts or suicide ideations. When these adolescents were interviewed, many cited reasons such as “to try to get a reaction from someone,” “to get control of a situation” and “to stop bad feelings.” In addition, research continuously discovers a connection between NSSIs and eating disorders, depression, anxiety and personality disorders.

Common methods of self-harm

- Self-poisoning;
- Cutting;
- Friction burning (i.e., with an eraser);
- Picking at skin/reopening wounds;
- Branding.

Signs of any of these may be a red flag for a much deeper concern and should be addressed right away.



More information about intentional self-harm is available at:

- [http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Self-harm-injuries-nonfatal-per-100000\\_1100/Profile/Data](http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Self-harm-injuries-nonfatal-per-100000_1100/Profile/Data)
- <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=1206672&fileId=S003329170700027x>;
- [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/statistics/self\\_harm.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/suicide/statistics/self_harm.html).

# TCCY Provides Recommendations Following Mountain View Suicides

Following the two suicides reported at the Mountain View Youth Development Center, at the request of Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) Commissioner Jim Henry, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, conducted a review and provided a number of recommendations to prevent future incidents. Overall, the Commission encouraged a shift from a correctional to a therapeutic approach to juvenile justice, which research shows to be much more effective for communities, youth and families.

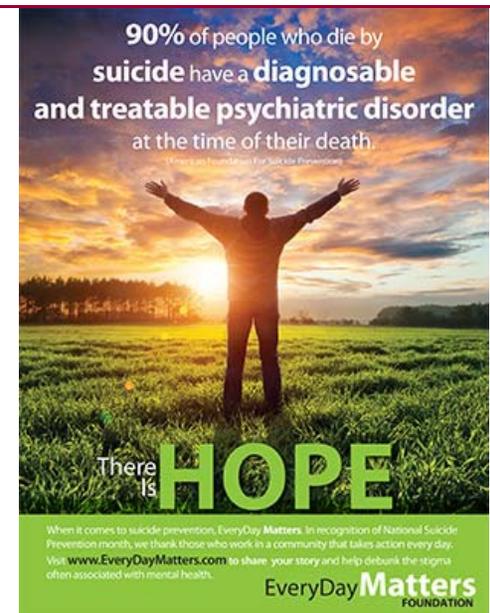
Among the recommendations:

- Including early and regular assessments of youth strengths and needs;
- Raising the ratio of staff to youth;
- Streamlining the health-care process for youth, and
- Using evidence-based training and programs to better prepare staff and students.

DCS Commissioner Henry recently stated his support for a shift towards a more therapeutic approach recommended in the report.

The full report and complete recommendations can be found here:

- <http://www.tn.gov/tccy/jj-MVYDC.pdf>.



## Updates

**About Us.** TCCY Executive Director **Linda O'Neal** is a grandmother. Hank Thomas Flanigen was born Sept. 5. All are doing well.

TCCY welcomes **Kaila Gilbert**, a senior Human and Organizational Development major at Vanderbilt, as its newest intern.

### Mark Your Calendar

**Oct. 7-9, 16<sup>th</sup> National Lifespan Respite Conference, "Get in Tune with Respite,"** Nashville Marriott at Vanderbilt University. Sponsored by ARCH (Access to Respite Care and Health) National Respite Network and Resource Center and Tennessee Respite Coalition. Information and registration available at <http://bit.ly/tccyec5>.

**Oct. 9, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Memphis-Shelby County Children and Youth Council** co-sponsors **"Seeking Justice for All: One Child at a Time,"** The Urban Child Institute, 600 Jefferson Ave., with Juvenile Court Judge Dwight Stokes and TCCY Ombudsman, Dr. Gerald Papica. Contact [Gwendolyn.Wright@tn.gov](mailto:Gwendolyn.Wright@tn.gov) for information.

**Oct. 10, 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Northwest and Southwest Councils on Children and Youth** are hosting **"Seeking Justice for All, One Child at a Time,"** Boling University Center Ballroom, UT-Martin. Pre-registration at <http://bit.ly/tccyec26> required. Training is approved for NASW-TN CEU training, CLE credit for the legal community and CEU training hours from UT-Martin.

**Oct. 14, 3 p.m. EDT/2 p.m. CDT, Webinar: Scaling an Effective Intervention: How to Build Implementation Capacity, Replicate with Fidelity and Produce Consistent Outcomes,** sponsored by PerformWell, a partnership between the Urban Institute and Child Trends. Register at <http://bit.ly/tccyec27>. Lasts one and a half hours.

**Oct 17, 8:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m., Therapeutic Interventions,** 293 Plus Park Blvd, Ste. 201, Nashville CEUs, including information on play, art and animal-assisted therapies. Contact Mental Health America-MT at [www.mhamt.org](http://www.mhamt.org), (615) 269-5355 or [tstarling@mhamt.org](mailto:tstarling@mhamt.org). Early discount ends Oct. 10.

**Oct. 24, 8:30 a.m., Southeast Council on Children and Youth** co-sponsors **"Walk to Beautiful"** event with speaker recording artist Jimmy Wayne on his experience transitioning out of foster care. Contact [Rosalyn.Leavell-Rice@tn.gov](mailto:Rosalyn.Leavell-Rice@tn.gov). Register at <http://bit.ly/tccyec2>.

**Oct. 30, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Council on Children's Mental Health** meeting, TennCare Building, 310 Great Circle Road, Nashville. Contact Dustin Keller at [Dustin.Keller@tn.gov](mailto:Dustin.Keller@tn.gov).

### In the News

WMOT Radio, Murfreesboro, **"Poverty Rate Down, Tennessee still in 'the Bottom Ten.'"** <http://bit.ly/tccyad43>

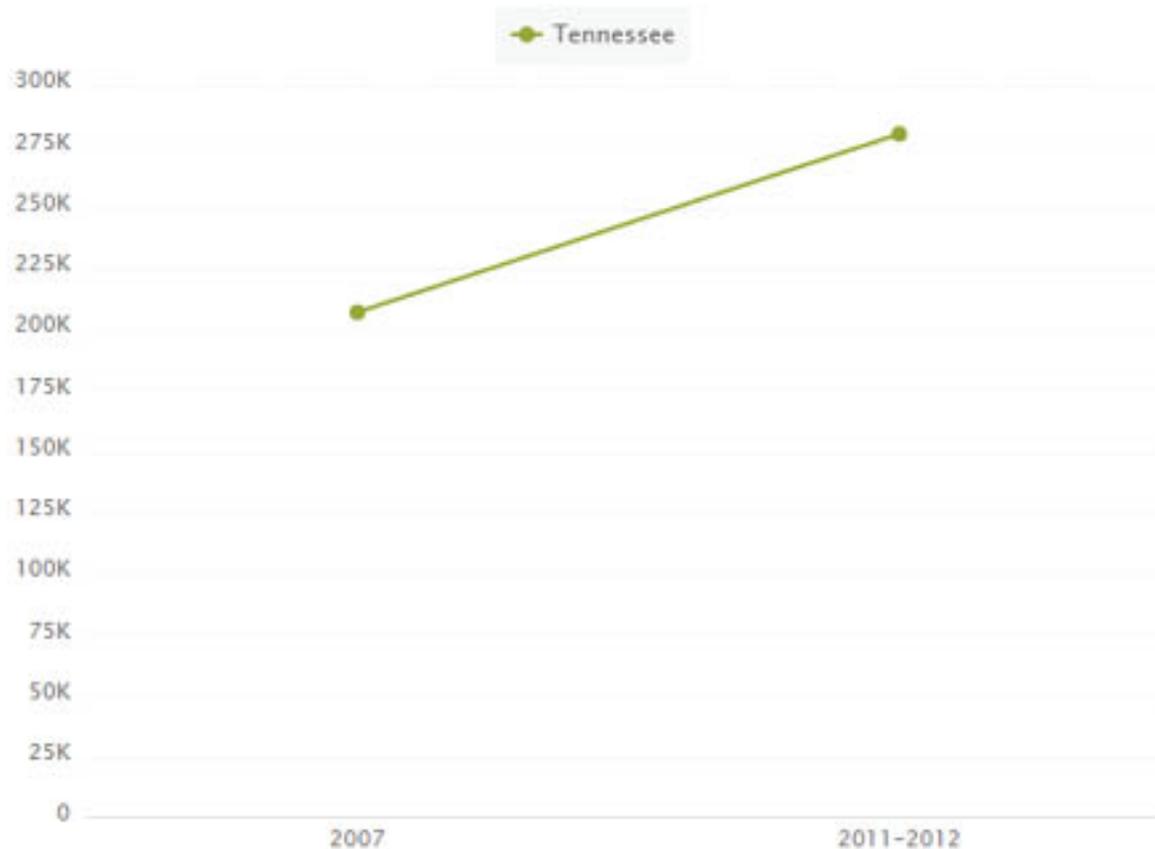
Al Jazeera America, **"What's Behind a Tennessee Detention Center's Mass Juvenile Escape,"** <http://bit.ly/tccyad44>

*The (Boston) Pilot*, **"Despite 50 Years of 'War on Poverty,' Prosperity for Many Seems Elusive,"** <http://bit.ly/tccyad45>

### Research Information

Census releases poverty data: <http://bit.ly/tccyad46>

# Tennessee KIDS COUNT Facts



## CHILDREN WHO HAVE ONE OR MORE EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIORAL, OR DEVELOPMENTAL CONDITIONS (NUMBER)

National KIDS COUNT

KIDS COUNT Data Center. [datacenter.kidscount.org](http://datacenter.kidscount.org)

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