Mothers have a special place in TJC’s heart. Since we started this journey, we have looked up to the moms who fight every day for their children, not just on Mother's Day. We have a daily visual reminder of the sacrifices mothers make and the bravery they show, as photos of families, spanning decades, cover a bright purple wall in our office.

Last week, we hosted our annual TJC Hall of Fame Luncheon where we honored our 2019 Mothers of the Year. We encourage you to read more about their stories.

ICYMI

- In last month's newsletter, we wrote about our opposition to House Bill 0836/Senate Bill 1304, which would allow private licensed child-placing agencies to discriminate on the basis of religious or moral convictions or policies. We can now happily report that the bill was not voted on in the state Senate, although it could still resurface next session. We are very thankful for the strong voice of Juvenile Court Judge Sheila Calloway opposing the bill in a Tennessean op-ed, as well as our partners, Tennessee Voices for Children and Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee, who signed on to a letter opposing the bill to the Senate Judiciary Committee members.

- CMS finally released national Medicaid and CHIP enrollment data for 2018, well past the usual April 1 deadline. As expected from what we've seen in Tennessee, the drop in enrollment is dramatic. At least 720,000 fewer children had health insurance through Medicaid and CHIP. In conjunction with the increases in uninsured children for the first time in a decade, this continues to be an alarming issue. If you know a child who
has lost health insurance, please call 1-844-478-KIDS (5437) or visit insureourkids.org for more information.

THE MORE YOU KNOW

The Katie Beckett waiver program bill passed and is headed to Gov. Lee's desk! This victory was made possible by the hard work of the Tennessee Disability Coalition and the many parent advocates who took time out of their day and stepped out of their comfort zones to advocate fiercely for their children. We are also thankful for the lawmakers who championed the bill throughout the process.

The Katie Beckett waiver will help families of children with severe health care needs who don't qualify for TennCare because of the parents' income or assets get the support that they need. The bill asked TennCare to design a program for these families. Once they hammer out the details, they will submit the waiver to CMS for approval. Due to this process, the program is slated to begin in 2020 at the earliest.

If you think you might qualify, please call your DIDD Regional Office at:

- West Tennessee Regional Office: (866) 372-5709
- Middle Tennessee Regional Office: (800) 654-4839
- East Tennessee Regional Office: (888) 531-9876

Watch Jessica Fox, TJC Mother of the Year and brave advocate for the Katie Beckett waiver program, share the story of her beautiful family.

LOOKING FORWARD

Federal updates

- The Department of Justice officially filed a brief in the Texas v. US case, the case brought by a group of Republican states, including Tennessee, that would invalidate the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The federal government agrees with the lower court's decision that the ACA should be eliminated. Read more about the case here.

State updates

- Unfortunately, the bill to cut Medicaid through a block grant passed the legislature. Pending Gov. Lee's signature, TennCare will submit a waiver proposal to CMS. The Trump administration has signaled, starting in 2017 through the ACA repeal efforts, that they would like to block grant Medicaid because it will, over time, cut the federal funding for the program. The
inflexibility of a lump sum of money and the elimination of consumer protections and program integrity requirements will ultimately leave the state with less money to fund the program. The "benefit" to both state and federal government is ultimately less beneficiaries, less services covered, or lower payment rates to providers. A Medicaid block grant will harm every person in our state, impacting services like neonatal intensive care units, burn units, substance use disorder treatment services, and nursing home care. We will continue to monitor the waiver's progress, as it is both unprecedented and potentially illegal.

JOIN US

Happy Hour with TJC in Memphis
June 4
The Home of Justice Janice Holder
5:30 PM-7:00 PM CT
RSVP HERE

Attention West Tennesseans! You are invited to a happy hour reception celebrating our incredible clients in Memphis and beyond. Come enjoy drinks and gain insight into our work at this fun, free, celebratory gathering. We will provide appetizers, laughs, and an opportunity to mingle with TJC staff and other Memphis attorneys. We will also be honoring our West Tennessee Mothers of the Year. Hosted by Justice Janice Holder. Dress: Just be You, but please no spiked heels/stilettos.

7th Annual NALS Silent Auction and TN Bar Association Reception
June 14
Location TBD
5:30 PM-7:00 PM CT
RSVP HERE

Are you excited about giving back to the community and winning something for yourself? Please join us for the 7th Annual NALS After Hours Silent Auction. 100% of the proceeds will be donated to the Tennessee Justice Center.

We hope you’ll also consider donating auction items! Items that have gone for large amounts in past years include art, a week in a vacation home, services like photography, handmade pottery, and gift certificates. Do you have something to donate? Do you have a business you frequent that would you be willing to ask for donations?

If you are interested in sponsoring the event, donating an item, or volunteering, please contact Dranda Whaley at dwhaley@tnjustice.org.

As a reminder, the Tennessee Justice Center also helps with:

1. Enrollment onto TennCare and CoverKids
2. Service Issues
3. Redetermination Issues

If you ever encounter anyone who is having trouble getting health insurance or getting health services, please call TJC: (615) 255-0331.

If there is any information you would like us to share on your behalf, including events and resources, please reply to this email.

Sincerely,
Kinika Young
Director of Children's Health
Tennessee Justice Center

Tennessee Justice Center
211 7th Ave N
Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37219
United States

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