Children's Champion

October 9, 2019
Tennessee Justice Center

INSURE OUR KIDS UPDATES

Welcome new Insure Our Kids partner, The Healing Trust!

Visit insureourkids.org for more information about the campaign to enroll every eligible but uninsured child in Tennessee. Keep reading to learn why this campaign is more important than ever before.

ICYMI

- **Voices 4 CHOICES** - We are proud to share a new video detailing our work with Tennessee Disability Coalition to organize people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. The video shows how a strong consumer voice has resulted in improvements to Tennessee’s home and community-based services program for this population.
The "Using Your Voice for Change" Webinar highlights the fact that a person’s personal story is their most valuable advocacy tool. Sharing your story also opens you up to finding common bonds and creating meaningful relationships. Family Voices of Tennessee led the discussion on telling stories effectively and how they can be used to talk to your representatives, serve on advisory groups, and more! [Listen to this webinar to learn more.]

- October is Child Health Month!

Governor Lee has proclaimed that October will be Child Health Month in Tennessee. This month is a great time to celebrate and raise awareness
on what the state is doing to promote the health of our children.

Check for Child Health Month events near you!

- **Partnering for Community Health with Martha O’Bryan Center** - King Health fellow Austin Hollimon is working with Martha O’Bryan Center to leverage Medicaid to improve community health, ensuring that the voices of the Cayce community are heard and represented in policymaking. Austin moderated a panel discussion called *Mind Over Matter: Let’s Talk Coping Skills* on September 27th, at the Martha O’Bryan Center. The discussion was centered around helping Cayce residents become their best selves by arming them with resources and coping skills to empower their abilities to heal and grow. The panel included four health care professionals with expertise in the mental health field and two residents of Cayce Place who shared their personal stories on dealing with mental health challenges. Topics covered a range from removing the stigma associated with mental health in today’s society, mental health & substance abuse, learning to advocate for change in policy making, developing peer support groups, and learning mental wellbeing and coping skills. The discussion was informative and gave residents an opportunity to see they are not alone in facing mental health challenges.

- **TJC’s Parent Advocacy Network** - We are looking for parents who would be interested in free leadership development training, including project management, communications and advocacy. Please email Austin Hollimon at aholliom@tnjustice.org.

- **Salute to Excellence** - The Tennessee Justice Center is a finalist for the Diversified Trust New Generations Award, a 2019 Salute to Excellence award from the Center for Nonprofit Management. Thank you CNM for the honor!

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**THE MORE YOU KNOW**

**New census data show 83,000 uninsured children in Tennessee**

A new U.S. Census report confirmed that in 2018, Tennessee saw an alarming increase in the number of people without health insurance. As reported in the *Tennessean*, "about 46,000 more Tennesseans were without health insurance last year, one of the largest increases in the rate of uninsured residents in the nation. Tennessee’s uninsured rate rose 0.6 percent in 2018, the Census report states. Although the percentage may seem small, it tied with Alabama and Arizona for the third-largest rate increase nationwide. Only Idaho and South Dakota had larger increases. The Census Bureau now estimates more than 675,000 Tennesseans — or about one in 10 state residents — have no insurance coverage." It was also reported that nearly 83,000 Tennessee kids had no health insurance in 2018 according to the Census data. This is an increase of about 17% from the previous year. We expect additional state level details in the coming weeks to shed more light on the uninsured population.

It is apparent that cutting at least 220,000 children from TennCare and CoverKids based on missing paperwork, without a proper eligibility determination, contributed to this troubling rise in the uninsured rate. We encourage you all to reach out to your elected officials and ask them to address the systemic issues that caused this coverage loss for children.

**Email Governor Lee and your legislators and ask them to get and keep kids covered!**

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**LOOKING FORWARD**

**Federal updates**
- **Public charge** - The public charge rule change is still on track to go into effect on October 15. The "chilling effect" continues to alarm us. The chilling effect refers to eligible beneficiaries disenrolling from vital programs out of fear of negative consequences or interactions with the government, even if they would not be subject to the test. The rule change is legally complex. **Before making decisions about disenrolling in benefits, families or organizations serving immigrant clients should call TIRRC’s hotline: 615-414-1030.**

- **Proclamation requiring immigrants to prove they can receive health insurance** - President Trump issued a proclamation last week that requires immigrants to prove that they can receive health insurance before they are even issued a visa. The proclamation states that immigrants must be able to show that they will have health insurance within 30 days of entering the country or that they will be able to afford any medical charges.

- **Health Care Repeal Lawsuit** - A ruling is expected any day now in the Texas v. United States case concerning the future of the Affordable Care Act. See below to register for TJC's webinar about what the repeal of the ACA would mean for Tennessee's children.

**State updates**

- **Medicaid block grant proposal**
  - Tennessee is the first state to ask the federal government to convert its current Medicaid program (called TennCare) into a "block grant." This radical change would cap federal funding for TennCare, in exchange for "flexibility" to eliminate accountability around patient safeguards and federal standards around healthcare quality.
  - Comments are the best way to stop this harmful policy. We have until **October 18, 2019** to submit public comments opposing this harmful proposal!

  **TAKE 2 MINUTES TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENT**

- To learn more, you can [click here](https://example.com) to watch a recording of TJC's webinar about the Medicaid block grant proposal or [click here](https://example.com) to view the PowerPoint slides from that webinar.

If you are interested in submitting a comment on behalf of your organization, we created a [template comment and comment guidance for organizations](https://example.com).

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**JOIN US**

**Block grant public hearings**

Give your comments in person!

**Memphis**

- University Center, UC Ballroom A (3rd Floor), 499 University Street, Memphis
- Date: Tuesday, October 15
- Time: 1:30-2:30 PM Central Time
- [RSVP HERE](https://example.com)

**Chattanooga**

- Chattanooga Public Library, Downtown Branch Auditorium, 1001 Broad Street, Chattanooga
- Date: Wednesday, October 16
- Time: 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern Time
- [RSVP HERE](https://example.com)

**Navigating TennCare**
St. Thomas West
October 17, 10AM - 5PM CT
REGISTER HERE.
Cost: $250/attendee
FREE scholarships available*
More details about the training.

*A limited number of scholarships are available to employees of a nonprofit with annual revenues below $5 million or a federally qualified health clinic. Scholarships cover the cost of the training only and excludes meals and parking, if applicable.

To apply for a scholarship please email Thomas Bynum at tbynum@tnjustice.org. Please specify which training you are applying.

You can pay online! When registering, you will be redirected to a PayPal secure webpage for payment processing. Please note, you do NOT need a PayPal account to complete the transaction, just your credit card. Attendees qualifying for a scholarship will be provided a different link to register.

Please join the Tennessee Justice Center at Dentons in DC for drinks after work on October 22, 2019. Come enjoy Tennessee whiskey (and non-Tennessee wine) and learn about exciting justice work happening in Tennessee. Dentons worked alongside us for over 6 years to improve the healthcare system for hundreds of thousands of Tennessee children, donating many millions of dollars in free legal services. We are so grateful for the extraordinary generosity of pro bono partner Dentons for sponsoring a DC reception so we can share our story with friends and partner in DC. Help us spread the word by sharing the invite with anyone who you think needs a little southern inspiration.

RSVP HERE

Advocacy and Career Summit:

Igniting the Next Generation of Healthcare Leaders

October 26th, 2019
9am – 1pm CT
Lunch will be served!

The Summit will feature two panel discussions with doctors, activists, and an advocacy workshop.

Students who attend the Summit will be invited to apply to become TJC Student Ambassadors, who will work on projects in their schools and communities that make a difference.

**RSVP HERE**

**How the Repeal of the Affordable Care Act Would Harm Children**

Webinar
Tuesday, October 29
11 AM CT

How the Repeal of the Affordable Care Act Would Harm Children. Director of Children's Health Kinika Young will discuss how efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act would cause significant harm to children's' coverage under TennCare and CoverKids.

**REGISTER HERE**

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,

[Image]

Kinika Young
Director of Children's Health
Tennessee Justice Center

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Tennessee Justice Center
211 7th Ave N