MORE YOU KNOW

Tennessee Ranks 36th in Child Well-Being

Nearly 80,000 children in Tennessee were uninsured in 2019 before the pandemic according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2021 KIDS COUNT® Data Book. This report assesses the wellbeing of children in all 50 states on four broad measures: economic well-being, education, health, and family & community.

Tennessee's current overall ranking is 36th. The state ranks even lower in the health category at 39th, which is significantly lower than the ranking a decade ago (16th).

The low pre-pandemic ranking is worrisome and Tennessee must evaluate and improve its current systems to reverse the increasing child uninsured rate, especially among Latino children.
Significant policy changes must be made to improve child well-being in Tennessee post-pandemic and beyond. One step to prevent future coverage losses and an even higher child uninsured rate is making the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) permanent.

Congress has the power to make CHIP permanent through the CARING for Kids Act or the Children's Health Insurance Program Permanency (CHIPP) Act. Families should not have to worry about their children losing insurance coverage.

Please email Marsha Blackburn and other members of congress to tell them that we must make CHIP Permanent!

TAKE ACTION

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Black Health Matters

Black babies in Tennessee are twice as likely to die than white ones. Our state has been failing Black moms and babies for decades. We know that when systems are transformed to meet the needs of the most underserved populations, everyone will be better off. As part of our effort to transform systems and make clear that health care is a racial justice issue, we are committing to the #BlackHealthMatters pledge. Will you join us?

SIGN THE PLEDGE

2020 State Health System Performance
Tennessee's performance is ranked 44th in The Commonwealth Fund's 2020 Scorecard on State Health System Performance. If Tennessee's performance improved to match Hawaii, the top state in the US, 503,463 more adults and children would be insured. If the state improved to match Kentucky, the top ranked state in the southeast, 311,669 more people would need to be insured. View Tennessee's scorecard.

### Ranking Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020 Rank</th>
<th>Change from Baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Ranking</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access and Affordability</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention and Treatment</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidable Hospital Use and Cost</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Lives</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparity</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid Expansion (as of Jan. 2018)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LGBTQ+ Resources

A record-breaking number of anti-trans bills were proposed nationwide this year, and discrimination has continued against LGBTQ+ individuals in health care and beyond. If you are in need of care or support from LGBTQ+ centered organizations, we have curated a list of resources and organizations in our state. We encourage you to share this resource with anyone who may find it useful. View the resources.

### Children's Chat VLOG Series
Our newest vlog discusses the children's mental health crisis in Tennessee and the United States. A variety of factors - from lack of support to the effects of the pandemic - are major detriments to children's mental health. 

Check it out here!

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**Addressing the Childhood Mental Health Crisis**

On July 14, we hosted a webinar with ZERO TO THREE policy center to discuss the importance of addressing mental health during infancy and early childhood. Watch the training here!

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**Recent News**

[Tennesseans need care - expanding Medicaid would do just that | Opinion](#)

[Medicaid Expansion Could Narrow Health Coverage Gaps for Latino Families](#)

[To Keep Their Son Alive, They Sleep in Shifts. And Hope a Nurse Shows Up.](#)

[DCS pushes to disburse $7 million to former foster care children after months-long delay](#)

[Urgent Action Needed to Catch Up on Routine Childhood Vaccinations – Center For Children and Families (georgetown.edu)](#)

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**FEDERAL UPDATES**

**Child Tax Credit Advance Payments Starting Soon**

Starting July 15th, families will receive monthly checks through the Child Tax Credit. It is expected to lift 4.2 million kids above the poverty line. There is no impact on TennCare, CoverKids, SNAP, or TANF eligibility. This benefit is also available to families who don't usually file a tax return!

Families may receive a monthly payment until December 2021. The amount received by each family is based on 2020 tax data, or 2019 tax data if 2020 is not available. The credit is based on the ages and number of children in your household:

- Up to $250 per child between ages 6-17
- Up to $300 per child under 6 years old

This money will be fully refundable for the 2021 tax year (filed in 2022) so families with low or no income will get the max benefit. The second half of the tax credit will come in 2022 when your 2021
The Affordable Care Act Stands Once Again

The Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as "Obamacare", for the third time on June 17, 2021 in California v. Texas where Tennessee had joined Texas and a handful of other states to attempt to take down the ACA. The court ruled 7-2 in favor of keeping the ACA in place!

This is a huge win for all Americans, including the 31 million people who were in immediate danger of losing their health coverage during a deadly pandemic. More than 236,000 Tennesseans receive premium tax credits and cost sharing reductions through the ACA health insurance marketplace.

The ACA protects millions of people due to its policies protecting people with pre-existing conditions and it's requirements that health plans cover certain essential health benefits like hospitalizations and family planning.

This is a wonderful victory, yet more than four million people in Tennessee and 11 other states continue to be uninsured because the states refuse to expand Medicaid.

Tell Governor Lee and your state senators to ACT NOW and take full advantage of the ACA by expanding Medicaid and give over 119,000 Tennesseans the health insurance they need.
Families First/TANF Reserve: TANF Opportunity Act

As of July 1st the TANF (Tennessee’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Opportunity Act has gone into effect. This legislation emerged because the TANF program, also known as Families First, accumulated a surplus of $732 million, which has since climbed to $741 million.

This money from the federal government is meant to help Tennesseans and should not be sitting stagnant in a reserve!

The legislation includes the following changes to the program:

- Increase monthly maximum cash assistance from $277 to $387 per family of three
- Caps reserve at $191 million each year
- $180 million to organizations who will create two-year pilot programs that improve TANF for those pursuing educational opportunities
- $50 million to nonprofits across the state that serve low-income families
- Creates a 21-member TANF Advisory Board

If you work with families who participate in the TANF program and would like to share your insights on the program with other advocates, you’re welcome to join our monthly TANF Stakeholders meeting. Please reply to this email to request meeting details.

P-EBT for Under 6 Approved

The youngest and most vulnerable Tennesseans are finally set to receive P-EBT benefits! The State estimates that about $80 million will be distributed amongst 138,000 eligible children. Families have started to see benefits loaded onto their SNAP cards as of this month! This money is not only a lifesaver for many families with young children, but also will stimulate the Tennessee economy as we come out of the pandemic.

Check out our P-EBT page to learn more!
JOIN US

What a Federal Coverage Gap Fix Would Mean for Tennessee

Thursday, July 29
11:00am - 12:00pm
Free Webinar & Facebook Live

Congress is working on closing the coverage gap in the remaining 12 states, including Tennessee, that still refuse to expand Medicaid. Join us to learn what options are being considered, how expansion states factor into the debate, and what a federal fix would mean for our state.
Back to School: Vaccine Info Session

Wednesday, August 4
11:00am - 12:00pm
Free Webinar

As vaccines are under attack—online, in our state legislature, and in our communities—advocates, providers, and parents are invited to learn timely, reliable information about the COVID vaccines and other routinely recommended jabs, how to discern facts from fiction, and how to join the battle to protect our public health.

All About the Pre-Admission Evaluation for CHOICES

Wednesday, August 11 @ 11am CST
Free Webinar
REGISTER NOW

The “Pre-Admission Evaluation” or “PAE” is a big part of the CHOICES application and TJC’s Independence Team is here to give you a deep dive training on the PAE. This training will be led by our partners over at Elder Law of East
Tennessee. We’ll tell you all about the PAE scoring system and what PAE assessors will be looking for.

WIC 101

Thursday, August 12
11:00am - 12:00pm
Free Webinar

REGISTER

Only 43% of eligible women and children are currently signed up for WIC. As hunger rates continue to climb, WIC can ensure that more moms and young children have enough healthy food to eat. Join us for a discussion about who is eligible, how to apply, and ways to advocate.

Household & Income Counting Workshop

Thursday, August 26
11:00am - 1:00pm
Virtual Workshop
CLE/CEU Approval Pending
During this training, we will identify the TennCare categories, explain the applicable rules and policies, and provide attendees the opportunity to test their knowledge through a series of practice scenarios with increasing difficulty.

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