TN Department of Children's Services

Family Resource Guide

Dear Fellow Tennesseans,

Tennessee's Department of Children's Services is aware that children and families across the state may need additional support during this unprecedented and challenging time. As always, our priority is ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children by building strong, healthy and empowered families. You can help us achieve this goal by looking out for the children and families in your community. If you identify a family that may need assistance, reach out with a helping hand to link them to important resources found in this guide. By taking care of the children in our communities, together we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Jennifer Nichols

General Support	TN Community Services Help Line - Call 2-1-1 TN Family Resource Centers kidcentral tn Aunt Bertha - Search for free or reduced cost services like medical care, food, job training, and more.
Financial & Other Assistance	DHS Emergency Cash Assistance Families First, the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Food & Nutrition	TN Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) School Meal Location Finder Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Tennessee Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program
Housing	TN Housing Development Agency Programs
Crisis Support	Domestic Violence Helpline: 1-800-356-6767 Tennessee Domestic Violence Help and Programs Prevent Child Abuse Tennessee Children's Advocacy Centers of Tennessee
Substance Abuse	TN Substance Abuse Services If you need a referral to substance use disorder treatment or other resources, call or text the TN RED-LINE: 800-889-9789
Mental Health	If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, call now. Help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 855-CRISIS-1 (855-274-7471) or Text "TN" to 741-741. TN Mental Health Services Mobile Mental Health Crisis Services
Child Care & Education	Free Child Care for Essential Workers Child Care Payment Assistance Resources for Parents of School-Aged Children
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences Roots of Resiliency with Vanderbilt Center of Excellence
Community Support	DCS Resource Linkage Coordinators TN DCS Relative Caregiver Program
COVID-19	Tennessee COVID-19 Resources and Information DCS-Specific Guidance on COVID-19

Do you need to report the abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child or children?

Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline: 877-237-0004

→ **In case of emergency and in life-threatening situations, Call 9-1-1.**

→ Call the Child Abuse Hotline to report knowledge or suspicions of child abuse or neglect in the State of Tennessee.

→ Reports also can be made online on our secure site or by using the MyTN mobile app.

Our trained case managers will guide Hotline callers through a series of questions. Callers do not have to know all the details of the abuse or neglect. The Hotline case managers use the information you provide to determine the severity of the situation and how best to intervene.

Possible Indicators of Abuse and Neglect:

- The child has repeated injuries that are not properly treated or adequately explained.
- The child begins acting in unusual ways ranging from disruptive and aggressive to passive and withdrawn.
- The child acts as a parent toward his or her brothers and sisters or even toward their own parents.
- The child may have disturbed sleep (nightmares, bed wetting, fear of sleeping alone, and needing nightlight).
- The child loses his/her appetite, overeats or may report being hungry.
- There is a sudden drop in school grades or participation in activities.
- The child may act in ways that are developmentally inappropriate, such as sexual behavior that is not normal for his/her age group.
- The child may report abusive or neglectful acts.
- The caregiver appears to be under the influence to the extent they are unable to care for their child.
- There is evidence of illicit substance use in the home (e.g., drug paraphernalia) or other hazards that could lead to child injury/illness (e.g., weapons in reach, extremely unsanitary conditions)

Note: The above signs can indicate something is wrong but do not necessarily indicate abuse or neglect.

Download an information poster with the hotline number you can display in your school, business or church. Spanish version: Information Poster

Mandated Reporter Training:
Every Tennessean over the age of 18 is a mandated reporter, meaning you have a legal obligation to report suspicions or knowledge of child abuse or neglect. A free online training offers the public information on how to report child abuse and neglect in Tennessee. It explains how the process works, plus policies, laws and what reporters can expect.

Access the training