

The CDC Corner

ANNUAL INSERVICE

The Community Development Center Annual Inservice was a blast! Once a year, our staff gather together as a whole to attend annual training, catch up, and fellowship with one another. This year we soaked up the early November sun at the beautiful Henry Horton State Park. We are looking forward to enjoying yet another wonderful year at the CDC!



MISSION

Providing supports and services to children, families and individuals with disabilities while addressing the health and well-being of all persons in the communities in which we serve.



HOLIDAYS

- Feb. 4 World Cancer Day
- Feb. 10 Int'l. Epilepsy Day
- Feb. 28 Rare Disease Day
- Mar. 18 Nat'l Trisomy 18 Awareness Day
- Mar. 21 World Down Syndrome Day
- Mar. 25 Nat'l Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day
- Apr. 2 World Autism Awareness Day
- Apr. 7 World Health Day
- Apr. 11 World Parkinson's Day

ENABLING TECHNOLOGY SUCCESS STORY

Enabling Technology is defined as equipment and/or methodologies that, alone or in combination with associated technologies, provide the means to support individuals' increased independence in their homes, communities, and/or workplaces. The ISC program has utilized this amazing technology with some of their individuals recently. For example one of our ISC's Debby Halverson has an individual that has sensory issues and was recommended a sensory pet for her home. She will also be getting an Alexa device in order to play music throughout her home whenever she wants.

Another client is looking into getting a microwave that can be activated by the Alexa, smart bulbs for all of the lights in her home along with a doorbell camera that can be seen on her phone or smart tablet device. These are just a few of the amazing pieces of technology that the Enabling Tech program can provide for individuals who may need help with promoting independence or self determination. To learn more about Enabling Technology, please visit www.tn.gov/disability-and-aging.

Local Happenings

Bedford County:

Bell Buckle Daffodil Day | 10am - 4pm on Saturday, March 15th
at the Bell Buckle Banquet Hall, 27 Railroad Square, Bell Buckle, TN 37020



Coffee County:

Piping on the Green | 8am on Saturday, April 5th
at the South Jackson Performing Arts Center, 404 South Jackson Street, Tullahoma, TN 37388

Davidson County:

Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival | 9:30am - 5pm on Saturday, April 12th
at Nashville Public Square Park, Nashville, TN 37201



Franklin County:

Dechard Potato Festival | 10am - 6pm on Saturday, April 5th
at 200 East Main Street, Dechard, TN 37324

Giles County:

Heart Month Breakfast hosted by First National Bank | 7am - 9:30am on Friday, February 7th
at Giles Heritage Theatre, 206 South 1st Street, Pulaski, TN 38478

Hickman County:

Music City Uke Fest | Thursday, April 17th - Saturday, April 19th
at the The Hideaway Farm, 9347 Old Highway 46, Bon Aqua, TN 37025

Lawrence County:

Springtime Merry Market | Friday, March 28th - Saturday, March 29th
at Rotary Park, 927 North Military Avenue, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Lewis County:

Preschool Story Time | 10am - 10:30am on Tuesdays
at Lewis County Public Library, 15 Kyle Avenue, Hohenwald, TN 38462



Lincoln County:

Slawburger Festival | 9:30am - 6pm on Saturday, April 19th
at Historic Fayetteville Downtown Square, Fayetteville, TN 37334

Marshall County:

Youth Bowling Day | 11am - 1pm on Saturday, February 1st
at Funtime Bowl, 804 Commerce Street, Lewisburg, TN 37091



Maury County:

Mule Day Parade | Thursday, April 3rd - Sunday, April 6th
at 1018 Maury County Park Drive, Columbia, TN 38401

Moore County:

Daddy Daughter Dance | 6pm on Saturday, February 22nd
at Lynchburg Elementary School, 276 Mechanic Street North, Lynchburg, TN 37352

Rutherford County:

Oreo Festival | 10am - 2pm on Saturday, March 1st
at 6790 John Bragg Highway, Murfreesboro, TN 37127



Williamson County:

Kite Festival | 5pm - 10pm on Sunday, March 2nd
at Franklin Recreation Center Soccer Fields, 1120 Hillsboro Road, Franklin, Tennessee 37064

CDC Building Bridges Program

Exciting Grant Announcement!

The Community Development Center is thrilled to share that we have been awarded a \$30,000 Community Impact Grant from the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee (CFMT). This generous support allows us to enhance our initiatives in Positive Mental Health & Quality of Life and make a more significant impact in our community.

We would like to acknowledge the Robert K and Anne H Zelle Fund for Health of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, the Mary Elizabeth "Molly" English Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, and the Martha Jean Dorris Helping Hand Fund of the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee.

The unrestricted nature of this grant provides us with the flexibility to direct resources where they are most needed, enabling us to continue our mission of providing supports and services to children, families and individuals with disabilities while addressing the health and well-being of all persons in the communities in which we serve. We are grateful for CFMT's recognition of our work and their belief in our ability to drive positive change.

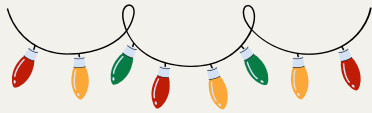
"Receiving this grant allows us to continue providing supports and services to children, families and individuals with disabilities while addressing the health and well-being of all persons in the communities in which we serve, and we are grateful for the support that acknowledges the importance of our work," said Anita Teague, Executive Director of the Community Development Center. "The flexibility of this grant enables us to allocate resources where they are most needed, enhancing our ability to serve the community effectively."

CFMT's reimagined grantmaking strategy focuses on making larger, more impactful grants to fewer organizations, which reflects a commitment to fostering long-term investments in the community. We are proud to be among the approximately 150 nonprofit partners supported by this initiative in 2024.

Stay tuned for updates on how this grant will help us serve our community more effectively! Together with CFMT, we are building a more thriving and inclusive community.

Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee strives to build a more thriving and inclusive community – today and for generations to come – by transforming thoughtful generosity into positive change. Please visit www.CFMT.org for more information.

Early Intervention



The annual Breakfast with Santa fundraiser was held on December 7th . Children were able to talk with Santa, have breakfast with their family, play games, and enjoy a variety of entertainment. Proceeds from the event support the Lincoln County Child Development Center and Children’s Center for Autism.

A Christmas Party was held for the children served by the Child Development Center in Bedford County.

The party was held at Fairlane Church of Christ.

Santa arrived with gifts for the children which were provided by clubs from local schools. The Shelbyville Public Library also contributed to the event.



A special thank you to the Dusty Elam Foundation for once again sponsoring a Christmas party for the children served by the Child Development Center in Coffee, Franklin and Moore Counties. Santa arrived with presents for all the children. There was also a delicious meal served.



The Children's Center for Autism

~ Profile of a Child ~

Ashley, a 3 year old child, started the program in August. She has had intense behavior including headbanging, biting, aggression, elopement, and tantrums. She had no mode of communication, nor any social skills. Her behaviors dramatically decreased when an AAC device was implemented to increase communication. The CCA program coordinated with the Family Support Program to help the family gain access to a communication device.

Since starting ABA services she has started talking, and is able to attend in group settings. Additionally, her school has requested that she attends 4 days per week in the morning, while she continues to attend the CCA program in the afternoon. Everyone is so proud of Ashley's progress, and cannot wait to see how else she grows.

Our kiddos had a great time practicing their "trick-or-treat"ing skills this fall!



The amazing CCA staff at our agency-wide in-service gathering this fall!



Would you like to help out our program?
We could use extra sensory materials including rice, noodles, beans, etc. for our sensory bins!

Looking to help support the CCA program?

Here is a list of possible donation items that CCA uses on a daily basis to help support our kids:

Laminating Paper - Velcro - Multi Colored Construction Paper - Glue - Washable Paint - Sensory Bin items like: dry rice, dry beans, dry pasta, playdoh, cornstarch, bubble wrap, sand, colorful fish rocks, etc.

Independent Support Coordination/TN Strong Families

Getting to Know: Amanda Plahuta

Describe your dream vacation.

My dream vacation would be going to Ireland and get to witness the fields, parks and country side.

*What is your favorite part of working at the CDC so far?

The positivity that overwhelms the entire agency. Everyone is genuine, caring, kind and considerate. The work life balance is not just wall art, everyone embodies and backs it up!

If you could be a superhero, what would your superpower be?

I would like to have super speed!

What is your favorite food?

Chocolate—that's food right??

What made you want to work at CDC?

I really wanted a better work/life balance that could sustain life for me and my children..

Do you have any fun hobbies?

Hobbies for me and my boys are seasonal. We are getting ready for our favorite winter hobby. Every year we have a Harry Potter movie marathon with wizardly snacks included because I have a Harry Potter cookbook for the occasion!

Favorite TV shows and or movies?

Harry Potter and all of the Madea movies!

The CDC's Newest Independent Support Coordinator!



Family Support

Meet the Newest Member of the Family Support Local Council!



It's been almost a year since Desiree Davis joined the Family Support Local Council, but she still considers herself a newbie to the world of boards and councils. "This is my first time, doing anything like this," she said before quickly adding that she was very excited to have this opportunity. "Ten years ago I would have been totally lost without the CDC." Desiree is referring to her daughter Tanner's birth ten years ago. Tanner has Down syndrome and was born with a hole in her heart, feeding, and developmental concerns. "We were very fortunate to have the CDC and the families (associated with the Agency) to lean on and learn from," she said. Tanner received developmental services at and with the CDC through the Tennessee Early Intervention System until Tanner turned three. She continues to receive services through the Family Support Program. Desiree, Tanner, and her older sister Savannah live in Bedford County. When Tanner was receiving weekly services, the three were regulars at the CDC. The girls have grown up before the staff's eyes, and it's hard to believe they are now ten and sixteen! Desiree is excited to continue her position on the Family Support Local Council for as long as she is needed, and she takes her role very seriously. "We make decisions that greatly impact families trying to navigate this world of caring and providing for our loved ones with disabilities. And I am happy to do all that I can, that the Family Support Program can do, to make things a little easier and less stressful."

Community & Employment Services

The Community and Employment Services team went to the Enabling Technology Summit together to learn more about technology and programs that could enhance their clients' journey toward independence. The team learned about accessible restrooms, off-road wheelchair reservations, and accessibility signage being installed in state parks across the state of Tennessee. The Community and Employment Services Coordinator, Kelli, has been busy spending time at home after welcoming a new little joy to her family. The team misses her dearly and is looking forward to her return!

The Community and Employment Services team has been volunteering with the Building Bridges events and providing outreach by encouraging the people they serve to participate. The team is continuing to provide Pre-ETS services in Coffee, Bedford, Lincoln, Giles, Lawrence, Marshall, and Hickman counties and are continuing to expand services to other schools. The Community and Employment Services Team currently serves 21 members in MAPS with more members expected to come in.



Senior Equipment Loan

Accessible Ramp

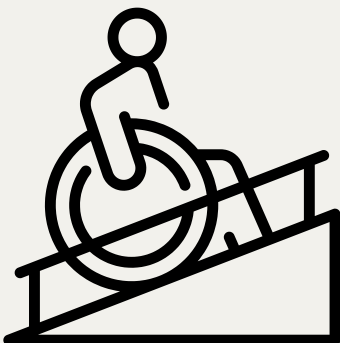
While handicap ramps are meant for those with disabilities, the fact is that we've all benefited from the availability of an ADA walkway. Chances are you've chosen a ramp over stairs when carrying groceries, navigating with luggage, or pushing a stroller. Accessible ramps also tend to be safer, especially in less-than-ideal weather conditions. For example, ramps often use ADA flooring that makes them less slippery, especially in wet weather.

The bottom line is that having a wheelchair ramp makes life much easier and more convenient for everyone. The elderly, those using scooters, or even people who want to walk hand-in-hand benefit from the existence of a ramp.

There are also set guidelines that must be followed, including:

- 1:12 ramp slope (8-degree slope)
- Handrails on both sides of the ramp
- Minimum width of 36 inches (48 inches in some states)
- Flat, unobstructed area at the top and bottom

Source: ADA Solutions



Toilet Seat with Aluminum Legs

...is a free-standing bathroom safety frame that you can put around your existing toilet. The frame gives you the support to lift yourself up or lower yourself down onto the toilet. This can be very useful as a temporary safety measure after an injury or take with you during a weekend away, as this toilet aid is foldable.

Raised toilet seats are a practical toilet aid for elderly who struggle with reduced mobility and strength. These toilet solutions help by increasing the height of your standard toilet seat thereby reducing the efforts and sometimes the pain associated with using the toilet.



Source: Better Care Market



ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE

Helping Tennesseans with disabilities maintain independence and quality of life

Administered by the Tennessee Department of Treasury, ABLE TN is a savings program designed to help Tennesseans with disabilities set aside money to pay for future qualified expenses. These accounts provide the opportunity to save and invest with tax-free earnings to help participants maintain independence and quality of life.

WHY ABLE TN?

SAVE ABOVE YOUR RESOURCE LIMIT

An ABLE TN account allows you to save above your resource limit without impacting eligibility for federal benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid.

There is no impact on federal means-tested benefits as long as your ABLE TN account balance is less than \$100,000. Funds in excess of \$100,000 will be treated as a resource.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

Tennessee residents who have been diagnosed with a qualifying disability on or before age 26 may qualify by meeting one of the following:

The individual:

- Is eligible to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
- Is eligible to receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).
- Has been diagnosed by a qualified physician as having a physical or mental disability resulting in marked and severe functional limitations that is expected to last no less than 12 months.
- Has an impairment found on the Social Security Administrations List of Compassionate Allowances.

ABLE Assist, our interactive guide on AbleTN.gov, can help you determine if you or someone you care for may be eligible for an ABLE account.



CONTRIBUTIONS

Anyone can contribute, as long as total contributions do not exceed the annual contribution limit of \$19,000. You can even invite friends and family to help you celebrate special milestones with gift contributions to your account using Ugift®.

MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT

Our online portal allows you to manage your account when and where it is convenient for you. From your phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop, you will be able to view your account and make contributions and withdrawals.

QUALIFIED EXPENSES

A qualified expense is one that is related to the individual's disability. Categories of qualified disability expenses include:



HOUSING



ASSISTIVE
TECHNOLOGY



HEALTH,
PREVENTION,
& WELLNESS



EDUCATION

A full list of qualified disability expense categories provided under federal and state law can be found at ABLETN.gov

CONTACT US

For more information, call a Client Service Representative at **855-922-5386** Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Central Time.



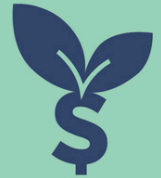
Accounts can be
opened online



with as little
as \$25



in just 10
minutes



and earnings
grow tax-free

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01/2025

Before investing, carefully consider the Program's investment objectives, risks, fees and expenses. This information and more may be found in the official statement available online at ABLETN.gov or by contacting us at 855-922-5386. The Program closed to non-Tennessee residents on February 23, 2018. Qualified ABLE Programs offered by other states may offer tax or other state benefits to taxpayers or residents of those states that are not available with regard to ABLE TN.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Technology First SHIFT
December 16, 2024

Technology First SHIFT announced last week that Community Development Center earned their Technology First Accreditation.

Organizations earning SHIFT's highest level of recognition complete comprehensive education requirements and undergo a rigorous evaluation process. SHIFT Accredited organizations demonstrate their ability to help people with live as independently as possible through the successful adoption of technology.

About SHIFT SHIFT is an online education and accreditation platform that is advancing and standardizing Technology First best practices and programming. State agencies and provider organizations utilize the term "Technology First" to describe an approach to services that embrace the application of technology as the first consideration in support planning. This means people needing long-term support services can live their most independent, productive lives possible with the support of trained staff paired with modern benefits of technology.

About Community Development Center

Community Development Center's mission is providing supports and services to children, families and individuals with disabilities while addressing the health and well-being of all persons in the communities in which they serve. They focus on providing services to individuals of all ages and their families, beginning with young children with developmental delays and reaching all the way to the senior years by providing support coordination for adults with disabilities. Programs include support for families with disabilities, behavior therapy services to children with autism, and employment services. These services complement the mission and expand capabilities to change lives.

Purpose of SHIFT Accreditation

With a person-centered approach to technology solutions, we are all working toward the same goal – to help people live the lives they want to live. SHIFT partners with organizations during the accreditation process – serving as a guide and resource for the successful adoption, implementation and sustainability of technology. With sound systems and processes in place, we know that technology is highly effective in helping people increase independence and achieve outcomes.

It is no surprise that organizations continue to struggle with a diminishing workforce and significant budget limitations. In order for organizations to continue providing quality services, they must adapt to these challenging circumstances. By adopting innovative approaches and developing alternate service models - like those offered by technology - organizations are better prepared to face these challenges successfully.



Welcome to the Team!

Tyler Nicholson
Kayla Leitzinger
Jacey Jackson

Independent Support Coordination
Early Intervention
Bedford CCA

November 21
January 6
January 6

Staff Spotlight

Learn all about Independent Support Coordinator, Jennifer Rutka!



- 1. What is one of your favorites aspects of your job?**
Getting to see & talk to the people I support on a regular basis!
- 2. Who inspires you and why?** *My family inspires me! I'm very proud of them. We are all very hard working and strong willed individuals who like being successful in life.*
- 3. If you could go back to your first day at the Community Development Center and tell yourself one thing, what would it be and why?** *What: To remember to pace myself and take it all in stride. Why: this position has a lot of processes, procedures, timeframes, deadlines, tracking etc. so I need to allow myself some grace and time to learn it all as I go.*

4. Describe your dream vacation! *My dream vacation would probably be Italy or Greece where I can enjoy some of my favorite foods and cuisine! I just need great FOOD in my Dream Vacation!*

5. How did you get started in this career field? What drew you to your current role?

I started out in this field in 1998 working as a Job Developer/Job Coach with the I/DD population. A coworker mentioned the job posting for Job Developers at several of the local organizations so I applied and that was the start of my career. I loved it so much I never left the field after that. I went on to do many different jobs in the field which I enjoyed throughout the years as I moved around finding my way through life. I had the fortunate experience of getting employed at an ISC agency in the Midwest where I stayed for 23 years in different roles & moving my way up the organizational ladder. After 23 years, I decided it was time for a change and warmer weather and moved to Tennessee in July 2023.



| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Monica Robinson | February 8 |
| Daryl Graham | February 24 |
| Morgan Luna | March 8 |
| Stephanie Sherron | March 13 |
| Kaylee Dile | March 14 |
| Sue Long | March 30 |
| Tayhana Alexander | March 31 |

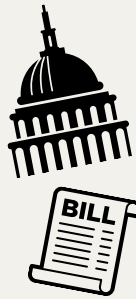
Read All About It! ^{NEW!}

Disability Day on the Hill

Join us on Wednesday, March 13th from 9am-2pm! This in-person event will take place at the Cordell Hull Building in downtown Nashville. Use the following link to find out more:

<https://www.tndisability.org/ddh#:~:text=Disability%20Day%20on%20the%20Day,2025%20at%209am%2D2pm%20CST.&text=Disability%20Day%20on%20the%20Hill%20will%20be%20at%20the%20Cordell,Boxed%20lunches%20will%20be%20provided.>

P.S. If you plan on attending, please send photos of the event to catherine.emerson@cdctn.org. Thank you!



Contact Us

Children's Center for Autism: (931) 684-2293
Early Intervention: (931) 684-9203
Community & Employment Services: (931) 684-4269
Family Support: (931) 684-7673
Independent Support Coordination: (931) 680-0094
Main Office: (931) 684-8681

HAPPY
Anniversary
DAY

February

Rachel Rudolf Children's Center for Autism 9 years

March

Martha Baker Ind. Support Coordination

Lindsay Rose Bedford CCA 6 years

Janeth Quevedo Community & 4 years

Employment Services 1 year

Haley Anthony Marshall CCA 3 years

Teresa Winnette Early Intervention 28 years

April

Sarah Martin Community & 1 year

Employment Services

Jayne Fuller Ind. Support Coordination 1 year

Amanda McCall Administration 19 years

Daryl Graham Administration 3 years

Sheri Vaughn Ind. Support Coordination 15 years

Sara Musgrove Administration 2 years

Jennifer Rutka Ind. Support Coordination 1 year

Britney McConnell Early Intervention 13 years

Heather Brown Ind. Support Coordination 18 years



Community Rewards
Program



<https://www.instagram.com/communitydevelopmentcenter/>



<https://www.facebook.com/CommunityDevelopmentCenter>



<http://www.cdctn.org>



<http://givingmatters.civicore.org>



Community Development
Center Foundation



United Way of
South Central Tennessee