

Significant Events for Children: 1955 to 2015

1955

The 79th General Assembly passes Public Acts Chapter 149 that creates a permanent commission called the Tennessee Commission on Youth Guidance.

Senator Estes Kefauver initiates the Senate Judiciary Committee's first hearings about deceptive and abusive private adoption practices, leading to the development of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.

In the US Supreme Court decision that became known as "Brown II," the court delegates the task of carrying out school desegregation to district courts with orders that desegregation occur "with all deliberate speed."

1956

Bolstered by the post-WWII "baby boom" and marked declines in infant mortality rates, child population in the United States reaches 57 million—over one third of total population.

New juvenile court law gives The Department of Institutions and Public Welfare responsibility for dependent, neglected, and abandoned children.

The Department of Institutions and Public Welfare (precursor to the Department of Human Services) publishes the state's first child day care center standards and issues the first day care license.

1957

Governor Frank Clement addresses the General Assembly on the subject of integration of Tennessee schools in the wake of Brown v. Board of Education.



A family walks to Buena Vista School on the first day of desegregation in Nashville. Sept. 9, 1957. *The Tennessean*

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1958

Congress creates the Advisory Council on Child Welfare Services. John C. Kidneigh, President of the National Association of Social Workers, is appointed Chair.


The Department of Institutions and Public Welfare (precursor to the Department of Human Services) establishes standards for licensing institutions caring for mentally retarded children.

1960

President Kennedy forms the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime to review, evaluate, and coordinate federal activities and to recommend more effective prevention and treatment methods. The Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Offenses Control Act is passed soon after, creating a 3-year program of federal grants and technical assistance.

1961

Sixth White House Conference on Children and Youth



Golden Anniversary

Tennessee begins pilot project of the Food Stamp Program in Campbell, Claiborne, and Scott Counties



More than 300 children lived at the Church of God Orphanage in Sevierville at any given time in the 1950s. Four sibling residents pose in this 1958 photo. *Knoxville News Sentinel*

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1962

Tennessee Re-Education Center (Cumberland House) opens as a model program for emotionally disturbed children.

Dr. Mildred T. Stahlman founds the nation's first Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Vanderbilt University Hospital.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital opens in Memphis

1963

The Children's Bureau moves to the newly created Welfare Administration, which also includes the Bureau of Family Services, the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and others. This move reflects a growing emphasis on coordination between child welfare services and the Aid to Dependent Children program, administered by the Bureau of Family Services.

Passage of the 1963 Maternal and Child Health and Mental Retardation Planning Amendments authorizing new grants for maternity and infant care and research projects aimed at reducing mental retardation as well as grants for the development of comprehensive state plans with the same goal.

1964

The first state-operated family planning clinic opens in Williamson County.

Passage of the Food Stamp Act makes the Food Stamp program permanent.

Congress passes the Civil Rights Act, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.



A group of youngsters watch a bear in his enclosure during a visit to the Memphis Zoo in 1965. *TN Dept. of Conservation Photograph Collection, Tennessee State Library and Archives*

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1965

Medicare, Medicaid, and Head Start are created as part of President Johnson's "War on Poverty." The Elementary and Secondary Education Act makes federal funds available to support education for low income children.

The Child Abuse Act passes in Tennessee, requiring doctors to report instances of suspected child abuse.

The John F. Kennedy Center is founded at George Peabody College for Teachers as one of the twelve original centers funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development under President Kennedy's 1963 legislation to construct a national network of Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities Research Centers.

The Medical Assistance Act implements Medicaid in Tennessee.

A portion of federal maternal and child health funds are earmarked for family planning.

The United States Supreme Court decision in re Gault holds that juveniles accused of crimes in a delinquency proceeding must be afforded many of the same due process rights as adults.

1967

Congress passes the Bilingual Education Act to offer federal grants for innovative state programs that help students with limited English speaking ability.

1968

The White House Conference on Children focuses on children under 14.

1970

Families enjoy a swimming area on Old Hickory Lake in the late 1960's.
Metro Nashville Archives



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1971

The Tennessee Commission on Youth Guidance changes to Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.

The White House Conference on Youth focuses on a number of issues affecting people ages 14–24, including values, ethics and culture, foreign affairs, race relations, and legal rights and justice.

The Junior League Home for Crippled Children, an acclaimed freestanding hospital with a long history in the community, officially moves into the Vanderbilt Children's Regional Medical Center. The name is changed to the Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt University.

Marian Wright Edelman founds the Children's Defense Fund, a non-profit child advocacy organization.

1973

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth begins publishing a regular newsletter exploring issues of child well-being in Tennessee.

President Nixon proclaims the first National Action for Foster Children Week.

The Selective Service announces the end of the last US military draft.

Congress passes the Rehabilitation Act, the first federal civil rights protection for people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities by any program receiving federal funds.

Congress passes a set of Education Amendments, including Title IX, giving girls equal access to all educational programs that receive federal dollars. The impact on girls' sports opportunities is profound.

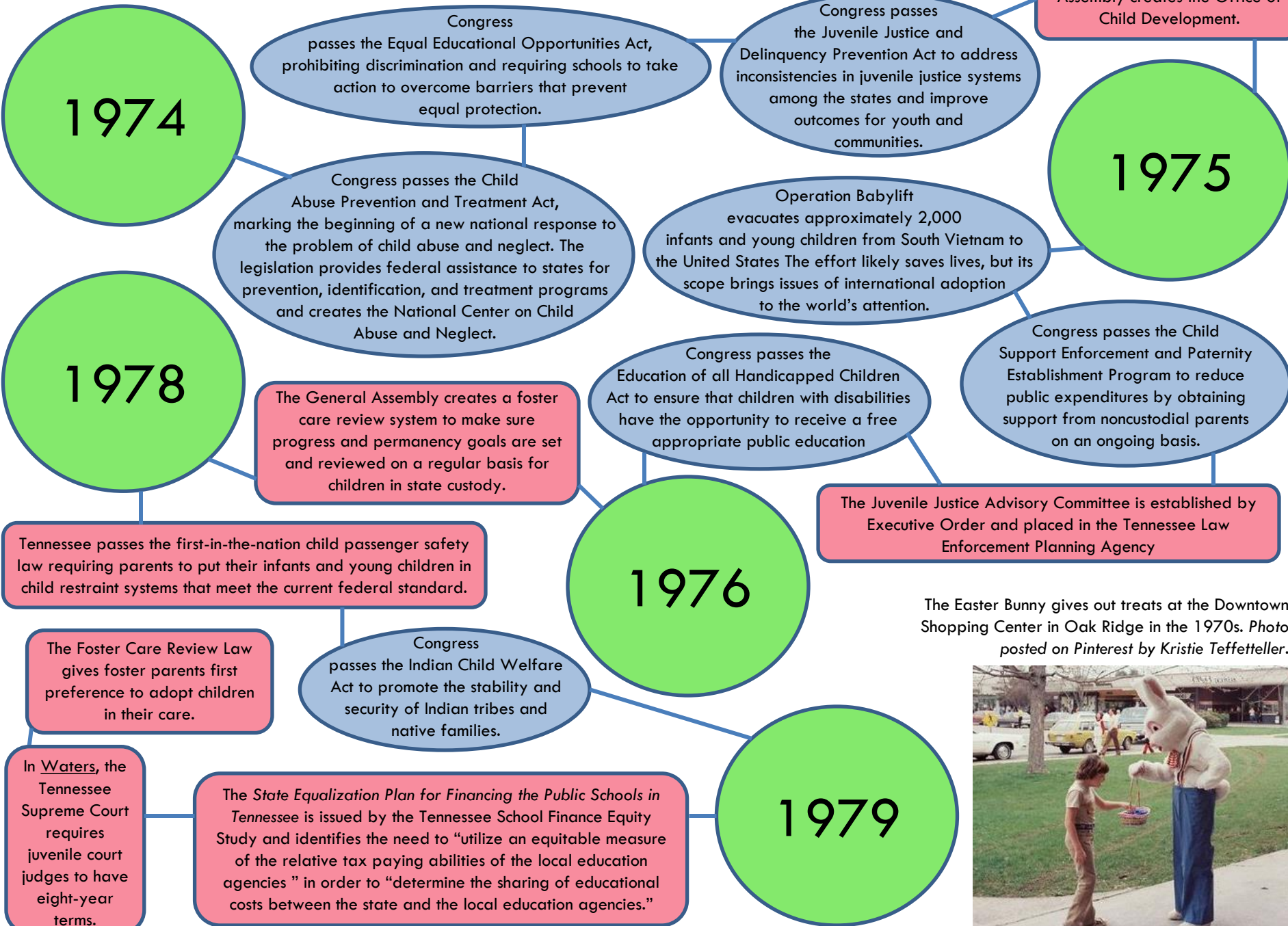
Under court order based on the U.S. Supreme Court's Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education decision, public schools in Tennessee begin busing black and white students to schools that were once divided by race.

1972



Hundreds of children grew up on The Farm in Summertown. Established in 1971, it was often called "America's largest hippie commune." Photo from <https://hippycommune.wordpress.com/>

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The Easter Bunny gives out treats at the Downtown Shopping Center in Oak Ridge in the 1970s. Photo posted on Pinterest by Kristie Teffetteller.



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1980

In *State Ex Rel. Anglin v Mitchell*, the Tennessee Supreme Court requires a juvenile court judge to be licensed to practice law in order to make a disposition that confines a child or deprives a child of liberty.

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth and the Office of Child Development are combined by Public Act into the Tennessee Children's Services Commission.

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act passes, reflecting a new federal emphasis on permanence. It includes federal adoption assistance for children with special needs and requires states to make "reasonable efforts" to prevent foster care placement or to return children home as quickly as possible.

1981

The *National Incidence Study on Child Abuse and Neglect* is published, using uniform definitions for child abuse and child neglect in national data collection for the first time.

1983

The Tennessee Department of Health appoints a Task Force on Children and Youth to study improvement and expansion of services.

1982

The report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk*, calls for sweeping reforms in public education and teacher training.

Tennessee Department Health begins its Healthy Children initiative, a four-year effort to emphasize health care and a healthy lifestyle for all children in Tennessee.

The General Assembly passes legislation requiring juvenile detainees to be kept in juvenile facilities and not in those housing adults.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee is recreated as the Tennessee Juvenile Justice Commission and is transferred by Executive Order to the Tennessee Children's Services Commission

1984

Congress passes the Child Abuse Prevention Federal Challenge Grants Act to encourage states to set up Children's Trust Funds to support child abuse prevention efforts.

Congress passes the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act with the goal of increasing the quality of vocational-technical education in the United States.

The General Assembly appropriates state supplements to improve juvenile court services for each county with a youth services officer.

The first local Tennessee Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) organization opens in Nashville.



Competition is spirited at the Hee Haw International Clogging Championship at Opryland USA in the mid-1980s. *The Tennessean*

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1985

The Child Sexual Abuse Act passes the legislature, naming the issue as a priority to be addressed by the state.

The Friends of Black Children project begins, tasked to provide culturally competent services to children of color in the child welfare system.

State funded Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Protection Program begins.

1986

The Tennessee Children's Services and Juvenile Justice Commissions are combined by Public Act into the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY).

1988

The Department of Correction's Division of Youth Services is abolished, and the Tennessee Department of Youth Development is created, taking all juvenile responsibility and functions.

The General Assembly creates the Select Committee on Children and Youth, to be comprised of nine senators and nine representatives.

Tennessee passes a mandatory seat belt law.

1989

Congress updates the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, renaming it the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, mandating transitional services and adding autism and traumatic brain injury to the eligibility list.

1987

Congress creates the first federal program to support Independent Living services to prepare foster children ages 16 or over for a more successful adulthood.

TCCY organizes the first Children's Advocacy Days.

The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, established under the 1988 amendments to CAPTA, publishes its first report entitled *Child Abuse and Neglect: Critical First Steps in Response to a National Emergency*.

1990

Children reach out to touch and pet sting rays at the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, shortly after it opens in 1992. Photo posted by tenacioustelleroftales.blogspot.com



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1992

The Tennessee Children's Plan is established to reduce the number of children in state care, provide more appropriate services for children who are in care, improve the management of children's services delivery systems, and maximize collection of federal funds for eligible children.

TCCY becomes the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT data partner and grantee in Tennessee.

Congress passes the Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act, making it easier for non-profits to provide services in areas formerly served by school or government sites. The law also authorizes operation of the Summer Food Service Program at non-school sites at times other than the summer in case of emergency school closure.

Congress passes the Multiethnic Placement Act, which prohibits the delay or denial of a child's adoptive placement solely on the basis of the child or adoptive parent's race and requires "diligent efforts" to recruit and retain foster and adoptive families that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the children for whom homes are needed.

Tennessee implements TennCare under a Medicaid waiver for innovative programs, beginning the first state Medicaid program to enroll all recipients in managed care.

The Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Program allows a limited number of states greater flexibility in the use of child welfare funding to test innovative approaches such as subsidized guardianship and kinship permanence.

The legislature passes the Education Improvement Act, establishing the Basic Education Program, a new funding formula for public schools to provide more assistance to poorer districts. It also abolishes the locally-elected superintendent position and creates a system of accountability requiring local schools to meet state standards and goals. A half-cent sales tax increase to support public education funding accompanies the EIA.

1993

President Clinton signs the Improving America's Schools Act, reauthorizing the ESEA, including reforms for Title I, increased funding for bilingual and immigrant education, and provisions for public charter schools, drop-out prevention, and educational technology.

In *Tennessee Small School Systems v. McWherter*, the Tennessee Supreme Court decides that the system of financing public education in Tennessee is unconstitutional. The Court holds that the Tennessee General Assembly must maintain and support a system of free public schools that affords equal educational opportunities to students in small counties as well as large, and rural counties as well as urban.

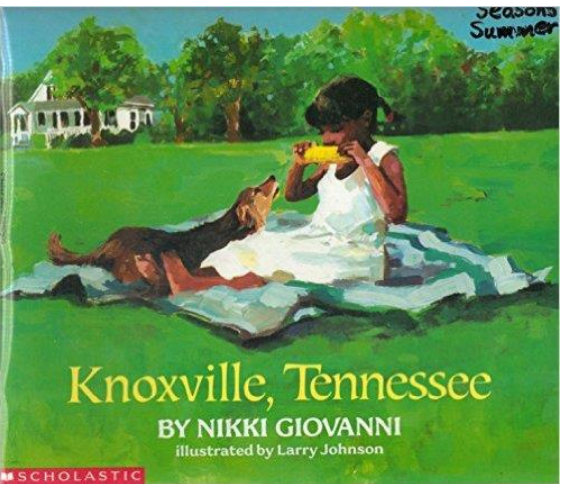
TCCY implements the Children's Program Outcome Review Team (CPORT) to assess services provided to children in state custody and guide system improvements.

Kindergarten becomes a mandatory prerequisite to first grade in Tennessee.

President Clinton Signs The Family Preservation and Support Services Program Act, authorizing funding for services to help preserve, support, and reunify families in crisis.

1994

The Tennessee General Assembly establishes the Special Adoption Task Force to overhaul Tennessee's adoption laws.



Award-winning African American poet Nikki Giovanni publishes a children's book in 1994 of her poem on growing up in *Knoxville, Tennessee*. Illustrations, including the cover pictured, by Larry Johnson.

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1995

The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect issues *A Nation's Shame: Fatal Child Abuse and Neglect in the United States*. The report describes the nature and extent of child abuse and neglect fatalities and offers 26 recommendations, including increased attention to data collection and research, more effective investigation and prosecution efforts, enhanced professional training, establishment of Child Death Review Teams, and more community-based services and primary prevention efforts.

The Cumberland Pediatric Foundation is established, facilitating seamless access to the advanced medical care of the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital to a network of regional pediatric care providers.

Georgia becomes the first state to offer universal preschool to all four-year-olds whose parents choose to enroll them.

TennCare Partners, a carveout for mental health and substance abuse services, began. The newly-created Department of Children's Services shares responsibility with the TennCare Behavioral Health Organizations for the funding and management of behavioral health services for children in custody.

The Department of Children's Services is created to serve the needs of children in state custody or at risk of entering state custody. Children and youth services and personnel from six state agencies are transferred into the new department.

1996

The Tennessee Supreme Court finds for the small schools plaintiffs in Tennessee Small School Systems v. McWherter that exclusion of teachers' salary increases from the equalization formula is of such magnitude that it would substantially impair the objectives of the plan; consequently, the plan must include equalization of teachers' salaries according to the Basic Education Plan formula.

The Community-Based Family Resource and Support (CBFRS) grant system is created, reflecting the belief that public and private child abuse prevention and treatment programs must work together toward common goals. The CBFRS program (now known as Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, or CBCAP) requires state lead agencies to establish statewide networks for family support programs, support a coordinated continuum of preventive services, and maximize funding for those services.

The General Assembly passes Tennessee's welfare reform legislation, Families First, under a waiver from U.S. Health & Human Services.

Congress passes national welfare reform legislation. Among its many provisions are changes to the Summer Food Service Program, including removing expansion as a stated program goal.

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth launches its Ombudsman program to mediate disputes between the Department of Children's Services and families the department serves.

The General Assembly approves a specialty license plate in 1998 with proceeds to provide funding for child abuse prevention services.



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1998

The John B. v Menke consent decree, which requires the state to maintain the health of children enrolled in TennCare by meeting the federal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) standards, is signed in response to a class action lawsuit filed by the Tennessee Justice Center.

The Higher Education Act is amended and reauthorized requiring institutions and states to produce "report cards" about teacher education.

Governor Sundquist signs mental health parity legislation to prevent insurance companies from discriminating in providing treatment for mental illness. This legislation prohibits insurance policies in Tennessee from enforcing lifetime benefit caps or other restrictions for mental illnesses that are not enforced for physical illnesses and surgical procedures.

1999

Vanderbilt's Kennedy Center opens the Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD) to address the needs of the growing population of children on the autism spectrum

A \$12.75 million Children's Mental Health System of Care initiative for children with special needs is begun. The project targets children who are at imminent risk of being placed in state custody, hospitalization with residential placement, and those in need of services which would allow for home care.

The Children's Bureau's National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being is launched, providing nationally representative data on child and family well-being outcomes and seeking to relate those outcomes to families' experience with the child welfare system. Data are drawn from the first-hand reports of children, parents, and other caregivers; reports from caseworkers and teachers; and administrative records.

The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program begins to enhance resources and strengthen state accountability for helping older youth transitioning from foster care to achieve self-sufficiency. This program provides increased funding and flexibility for states and tribes to support young adults in a wide variety of ways, including help with education, employment, financial management, housing and connections to caring adults.

2000

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities partner to found the Tennessee Disability Pathfinder.

The Child Care Reform Bill is signed into law, requiring more mandatory training for day-care workers and random audits for centers that take in more than \$250,000 in subsidies. Additionally, the state must provide day-care center report cards, giving parents the tools to choose appropriate care for their children.

At the recommendation of the Select Committee on Children and Youth, the General Assembly creates a Graduated Driver's License program for young people learning to drive.



The first TRIAD Social Skills Camp marks the beginning of a variety of summer programs for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Photo VU/Neil Brake

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2001

The Brian A. class action lawsuit is settled, resulting in broad-based reform of the state's foster care system and significant new state funding. Tennessee is required to make extensive changes to protect the state's most vulnerable children and provide them with legally required care.

2002

The Children's Bureau launches the AdoptUSKids national photo listing website to feature photographs and biographies of children in the foster care system.

The Tennessee Supreme Court strikes down current funding scheme for establishing teachers' salaries in the ongoing case of Tennessee Small School Systems v. McWherter.

The statewide referendum to permit a lottery to fund education passes with 58% of the vote.

The TennCare dental carveout program begins.

2003

TennCare implements its "stabilization plan" with changes to TennCare eligibility and benefits, but implementation is delayed while the petitioners in four different lawsuits challenge some of the changes in court.

President George W. Bush signs the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which reauthorizes the ESEA of 1965 and replaces the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, mandates high-stakes student testing, holds schools accountable for student achievement levels, and provides penalties for schools that do not make adequate yearly progress toward meeting the goals of NCLB.

The Brian A. class action lawsuit is in court again, with the Department of Children's Services being found to have made little progress toward settlement goals. The parties reach a stipulation requiring DCS to work with a court-appointed panel of five national child welfare experts known as the Technical Assistance Committee (TAC). The TAC is charged with advising on the implementation of the settlement agreement and monitoring DCS performance.

2004

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act includes provisions that are designed to improve program access for all eligible children, maintain high program standards and integrity, and address the problems of childhood overweight and obesity.

The first Family Assistance Service Center begins operations.

Young Grizzlies fans pose at the Memphis Grizzlies House at St. Jude's Children's Hospital in 2004
Photo by Joe Murphy/Getty Images



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2005

Governor Bredesen proposes an alternative plan for modifying TennCare in an attempt to keep children on the program. The new proposal includes eliminating the Uninsured and Uninsurable adult categories and implementing some benefit reductions for adult enrollees. The changes are approved and implemented.

Following recommendations from a Task Force initiated by the Select Committee on Children and Youth, legislation passes authorizing the Department of Children's Services to institute a "multiple response system" for reported child maltreatment to focus on the best interests of the child by assessing circumstances and providing services to preserve families whenever possible and pursuing state custody and prosecution when necessary for child safety.

2007

The Center for Medicaid Services approves the "Standard Spend Down" program, which covers non-pregnant adult Medically Needy persons as a demonstration population under the waiver.

Tennessee's Families First waiver expires and the program becomes Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

2006

Tennessee launches its Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program, using \$25 million in excess lottery dollars in the 2005-06 school year to establish quality pre-kindergarten classrooms through a competitive grant process.

In the cases of Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No 1 and Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education, the U.S. Supreme Court rules 5-4 that race cannot be a factor in assigning students to high schools, thus rejecting integration plans in Seattle and Louisville, and possibly affecting similar plans in school districts around the nation.

An early group of Henry County Pre-K graduates



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2008

At the recommendation of the Select Committee on Children and Youth, the General Assembly creates the Council on Children's Mental Health, to be housed at the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.

At the recommendation of the Select Committee on Children and Youth, The General Assembly tasks the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth with launching the Children's Resource Mapping project to track state, federal and outside expenditures that flow through the state and are spent on Tennessee children.

Congress passes the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, amending the Social Security Act to improve outcomes for children in foster care, connect and support relative caregivers, and offer incentives for adoption.

2009

To respond to the Great Recession, Congress passes the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to provide temporary relief programs for those most affected by the recession and invest in infrastructure, education, health, and renewable energy. The approximate cost of the economic stimulus package is estimated at \$787 billion at the time of passage, later revised to \$831 billion.

The 2008 Farm Bill is enacted through an override of the President's veto. The new law increases the commitment to federal food assistance programs by more than \$10 billion over the next 10 years and changes the name of the federal program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP.

The Select Committee on Children and Youth creates the Youth Transitions Advisory Council to make recommendations to ease the transition of children in state custody to adulthood and independence.

2010

The General Assembly creates the Second Look Commission to analyze cases involving a second or subsequent incident of severe child abuse upon the same child. It is housed at the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.

Congress passes the the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act that allows schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) with high poverty rates to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students under the Community Eligibility Option.

The Common Core State Standards Initiative, a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers, is launched. It is expected that many, perhaps most, states will adopt them.

The Children's Bureau launches its national Youth in Transition Database to track state independent living services for youth.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) is signed into law. Implementation results in multiple changes in Medicaid programs, such as TennCare, including application processes, eligibility criteria, and benefit requirements. Lifetime benefit caps and pre-existing condition exclusions by insurance providers are no longer allowed. Parents may keep a child on their insurance until age 26, including children in state custody staying on Medicaid until age 26.

Le Bonheur On the Move has two mobile medical units that travel to schools throughout Memphis and West Tennessee counties to care for children without a primary care physician. In 2010, with the help of the Children's Health Fund, the mobile unit served 741 children.



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2011

Six grantees are announced for the Children's Bureau's Permanency Innovations Initiative, which will invest \$100 million in individual projects, technical assistance, and site-specific and cross-site evaluation to test innovative approaches and develop knowledge about what works to help foster youth move into permanent homes.

The General Assembly dissolves the Select Committee on Children and Youth and moves the Youth Transitions Advisory Council (YTAC) to the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.

2012

The TCCY Children's Program Outcome Review Team (CPORT) process ends with budget reductions.

The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals upholds the closing of the John B. case. The court finds that the case has served its purpose, and that services for the 750,000 children enrolled in TennCare are now improved to the point where they meet federal requirements.

2013

Governor Haslam announces federal approval of his market-based, Tennessee-specific Insure Tennessee plan to expand Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

The General Assembly launches Governor Haslam's Tennessee Promise initiative, offering two years of tuition-free community or technical college to Tennessee high school graduates. As part of the program, students are provided with a mentor who will support them during the college application process.

2014

2015

Governor Haslam calls the legislature into Special Session to consider his Insure Tennessee plan. The Medicaid expansion plan fails in committee on the second day, ending the Special Session as well as any further attempts to leverage federal Medicaid expansion dollars to help cover Tennessee's uninsured.

Congress passes the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), replacing its unpopular predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). It modifies but does not eliminate provisions relating to the periodic standardized tests given to students. Like the No Child Left Behind Act, ESSA is a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which established the American federal government's expanded role in funding public education.

Tennessee withdraws from Common Core with a law that intends to "implement a process whereby the set of standards known as the Common Core State Standards adopted in 2010 will be reviewed and shall be replaced with new sets of standards adopted to fit the needs of Tennessee students."



Children are all smiles after receiving new shoes through the Knoxville Urban League and Enterprise Rent-A-Car's Shoes for School event in 2013. Photo by SAUL YOUNG/KNOXVILLE NEWS SENTINEL