



SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES™

Addressing underlying conditions of wellbeing and justice, for all to reach their full potential

Community Connections

A Newsletter of the Shelby County Government's Division of Community Services

Vision Statement

The Shelby County Division of Community Services strives to be a highly organized team and partner, dedicated to promoting a strong community where all people are able to reach their full potential.

Mission Statement

The Division of Community Services promotes ongoing economic security and independence for the people of Shelby County. We do this by promoting, coordinating and delivering services that address the underlying conditions for wellbeing and justice.

Opening Day

Every year, Opening Day marks the beginning of baseball as all Major League teams start the season and a push toward the pennant. While not an avid baseball enthusiast, I do enjoy the fellowship of the fans, the snacks, and singing during the 7th inning stretch. I also can't help but recognize the parallels between baseball and our work life. Just as Opening Day reflects a fresh start and renewed hope for teams, we too have our own "opening days." We had the grand opening of facilities for the Crime Victim & Rape Crisis Center and American Job Center and the upcoming opening of the Youth Assessment Center with similar excitement and energy. As we continue on our path to work towards the goals of the division and the bigger goal of creating sustainable, community-wide reductions in poverty, I want to offer some other tidbits of wisdom that I have gained in between the peanuts and innings:

The worst swing is one that the hitter never takes. I admit, I'm judgmental when the hitter doesn't even try to hit the ball. Sure, you may miss or hit it straight into the hands of the outfield, but I enjoy the effort. The same goes for work. Every one of us gets several opportunities to make something happen each and every day. Regardless of the outcome, nothing great will even be possible if we don't take the chance to SWING THE BAT.

Curveballs will happen, deal with it. No matter how much we prepare, the unexpected will always happen. Technology trends and the needs of our community are constantly shifting. While today's team is awesome, people move on to new opportunities or transition into retirement, and new people will join along the way. How do we roll with it? We can create a culture of adaptability and flexibility to embrace the change ahead.

The most successful teams have the dirtiest uniforms. Everyone has to be willing to get in the game, play their position, and dive for the ball. If you want a winning team, you have to get comfortable with the dirt before the glory.

The best teams have a deep, versatile bullpen. If only one person holds all of the knowledge or skill, at the end of the year, you'll have one MVP on a team that isn't a contender for the World Series. Just know that we have our eye on the TEAM prize and, the cross-trainings and communication across different departments that you may have noticed, will play a vital role.

The game isn't over until it's over. Even when a team finds itself in the bottom of the 9th inning with two outs, just one small hit can keep the game going. There are similar moments where it feels like the odds are stacked against our individuals and families we serve. Remember, all it takes is just a small success to inspire others (and you) to keep on moving.

Send me your additions to this list to Dorcas.Young@shelbycountyttn.gov to share. I'm always looking to add to my sports analogies to impress my husband and annoy my teenager. As always, thanks for being an All Star Team. Let's keep swinging toward the fences!

Sincerely,
Dorcas Young Griffin
Director, Division of Community Services



Inside this Edition

- ◆ Director's Message 1
- ◆ Aging Commission: a True Story 2
- ◆ Memphis CHiLD 3
- ◆ Denim Day and Barbers Wanted 4
- ◆ Responding to Violence with Hope & Action 5
- ◆ Community Services Around the County 6

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No Food, No Power, Credit Stolen: Ms. Smith’s True Comeback Story

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
AGING COMMISSION

To protect her identity, let’s call her Ms. Smith. Ms. Smith was referred to the Aging Commission as she was a victim of financial crime. Her credit card information was stolen and used fraudulently. When Kimberly Meabon of the Aging Commission of the Mid-South met Ms. Smith, she had been without electricity for 2 months and there was no food in her home. Upon initializing the interview, Ms. Meabon found



Ms. Smith to be hungry. Ms. Meabon left briefly after talking and returned, having brought food back with her. The CREVVA programs (Collaborative Response to Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse) was able to assist Ms. Smith and get her utility turned back on and current; provide her with food stock in her home; connect with her family to increase awareness of Ms. Smith’s vulnerability; and assist her in gaining access to other supports and services needed. Ms. Smith is one of the scores of seniors who have been referred to the CREVVA programs since last August who

have been the victim of a crime. CREVVA’s goal is to assist with immediate needs that are a result of a crime and to advocate for additional services needed to reduce the individual’s vulnerability and is one of many programs coming from The Aging Commission of the Mid-South.

The Aging Commission of the Mid-South has always provided comprehensive services but now has new leadership from a familiar face, Kim Daugherty. “I am honored to work with the team at the Mid-South Aging Commission. Staff there are devoted to the persons they support and approach the mission of the organization with great professionalism each day. I want to support them and assist the community in it’s efforts to serve persons who are aging and disabled.” Ms. Daugherty was previously appointed to the Deputy Administrator position in the Behavioral Health Unit before being appointed Executive Director at the Mid-South Aging Commission last month. Ms. Daugherty has been with the Division of Community Services for over three years. Prior to that, she served as the Executive Director of Friends For Life, was Director of Program Operations for the state’s Division of Mental Retardation, and serves on multiple boards and councils including the Homeless Consortium.

*Want a representative from Community Services to come to your event?
Complete this [form](#).*





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Memphis CHiLD: Addressing Legal and Social Issues for Patients



Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris joins president of Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital Meri Armour, and the Memphis CHiLD team for their open house on March 38.

Memphis CHiLD (Children’s Health Law Directive) is a medical-legal partnership that includes The University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, Memphis Area Legal Services, The University of Tennessee Health Science Center and Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. The partnership, a first for this entire region, focuses on identifying the legal and social issues that impact patient health and provides means to address those issues through direct legal services, education and advocacy for children and their families. Since their opening three years ago, they have served more than 400 families.

Memphis CHiLD has a new home in Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital with an on-site Legal Clinic where Memphis Law students have a devoted space to work on cases and referrals, meet with patients/clients, and conduct training sessions. Medical professionals and Le Bonheur residents have access to the clinic as well with direct involvement in the training sessions.

First medical-legal partnership of its kind in this region has already served 400+ families

Call 901.287.6893 for more information about Memphis CHiLD or visit their new home at the Le Bonheur Children’s Research Center at 50 North Dunlap.

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT





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There Is Never an Invitation to Rape



For the past 20 years, Peace Over Violence has run its Denim Day campaign on a Wednesday in April in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

The campaign began after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court where a rape conviction was overturned because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans she must have helped the person who raped her remove her jeans, thereby implying consent. The following day, the women in the Italian Parliament came to work wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim.

Peace Over Violence developed the Denim Day campaign in response to this case and the activism surrounding it. Since then, wearing jeans on Denim Day has become a symbol of protest against erroneous and destructive attitudes about sexual harassment, abuse, assault and rape. In this sexual violence prevention and education campaign community members, elected officials, businesses and students are asked to make a social statement with their fashion by wearing jeans on this day as a visible means of protest against the misconceptions that surround sexual violence.



County Commissioners wear denim to support survivors during Sexual Assault Awareness month.

Cutting Edge: Barbers and Barbershops Wanted

The Shop Talk Project is a unique and practical mentoring experience for justice involved youth. Working with the Shelby County Government Division of Community Services and the Juvenile Detention Center, the goal of the Shop Talk Project is to create a safe space for justice involved youth to talk about their concerns, discuss interests and culture, while engaging in impactful conversation with barbers from the community. The Shop Talk will take place at



Juvenile Detention while the youth receive a hair cut by a licensed barber. The hope is to partner with barbershops in the local community and establish a monthly schedule. Community Services and the Youth Assessment Resource Center is seeking barbershops and individual barbers who are looking for a unique way to serve and impact their community, specifically through engaging with youth. This experience will provide a positive connection to the youth and encourage more community partners to find innovative ways to serve. For more information, contact Jessica.Trippe@ShelbyCountyTN.gov .

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
CRIME VICTIM &
RAPE CRISIS CENTER





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Responding to Violence with Hope & Action

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
CRIME VICTIMS &
RAPE CRISIS CENTER

Flying above Civic Center Plaza, the Children’s Memorial Flag was raised April 10 to **remember the children who died as a result of abuse or neglect**. Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center joined the Memphis Child Advocacy Center and community leaders to bring awareness to this heart breaking issue during National Child Abuse Prevention month.



Shelby County has the highest number of domestic violence reports, child abuse reports, and domestic violence assaults and homicides in the state and the impact is human, social, and financial. Firearm injuries to children has doubled in recent studies — Le Bonheur reported twice as many firearm injuries as any other children’s trauma center in the United States. Dr. Regan Williams, Medical Director of Trauma at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital, says that “violence does not just affect a certain population, it affects all of us. And because of that, it is all of our jobs to help decrease it.”

Prevention is key. On April 6, a large group of community partners joined forces to discuss the physical, emotional, and monetary cost of violence in our community and ways to work together to find solutions during “Action for Hope and Healing: Responses to Community Violence” — a summit hosted by Community Partners for a Safer Memphis.

At the summit, organizations working to help survivors heal and to prevent the cycle of violence shared what they’re doing and how others can help. Sandy Bromley, Director of Shelby County Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center, joined Dr. Williams, Renee Wilson-Simmons from the ACE Awareness Foundation and Doug McGowen from the City of Memphis, among many others to speak about this important issue.

Community leaders from Memphis Child Advocacy Center, Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital, Crime Victims & Rape Crisis Center, and many other vital partners convened at the summit on April 6.



Have an idea for the May Newsletter? Email your submissions to Janet Lo at Janet.Lo@shelbycountyttn.gov by May 15.





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Community Services comes to your home plate



The best way for residents to learn about Community Services and access programs is to be in touch with someone from our incredible team. Join us for an upcoming event all around Shelby County.

University Place Town Hall at University Place
April 30, 5:30pm

What's Happening in Community Services with Director Dorcas Young Griffin at Trezevant PAC
May 1, 7:15pm

Find us online:

www.shelbycountyttn.gov/Community-Services



Right: Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, CVRCC Administrator Sandy Bromley, and Community Services Director Dorcas Young Griffin cut the ribbon of the new facilities for victims of crime.

Operation Stand Down Mid-South at the Pipkin Building May 18, 9am—3pm

Remote Area Medical Free Health Clinic
at Maxine Smith STEAM Academy, May 4, 6am—6pm, DCS presence midday

Methodist South Health Fair in Whitehaven
May 4, 8am—2pm

Senior Expo at the Agricenter
May 7, 9am—2pm

Hiring Event at American Job Center on 155 Angelus Street
May 16, 9am—1pm, Atlantic Truck
May 23, 9am—1pm, Jesco

Ready to Learn Fair at the Cash Saver Southgate Store, May 11, 9am—3pm

Opening Doors Housing Choice Fair at the Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library
May 29, 10am—2pm



DIVISION SPOTLIGHT:
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT &
OUTREACH

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