



TDHS CHILD CARE SERVICES NEWS BRIEF

Welcoming Child Care Services Director: Tasha Owens-Green

Tasha Owens-Green is the new Child Care Services Director for the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS). Ms. Owens-Green previously served as the Child Care and Development Fund Coordinator for the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Child Development and Early Education. She holds a Masters of Arts in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Owens-Green saw the growing need to support the emotional and mental health for both children and families and went to back to college to pursue

a degree in Marriage and Family Therapy with a focus on child -play therapy. She now holds a Masters of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy. Ms. Owens-Green has over thirty years of experience and served in a number of capacities in the field of early care and education. Ms. Owens-Green owned and operated both a family child care home and child care center. She served as a Child Care Quality Improvement Program Manager in the North Carolina Child Care Resource and Referral system. She also worked closely with Child

Care Providers as an Instructor in the Early Childhood Education Department in the North Carolina Community College System and served on national committees focused on improving the quality of early care and education.

Ms. Owens-Green is dedicated and passionate and has devoted her life to improving quality early care and education services for children and families.

Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives

Regular handwashing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. It's quick, it's simple, and it can keep us all from getting sick. Handwashing is a win for everyone, except the germs!

Soap and water or hand sanitizer? While both methods help to reduce the number of microbes found on your hands, using sanitizer does not eliminate all types of germs. Additionally, hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy. It is best to wash your

hands with soap and water but if the option is not available, the proper use of hand sanitizer serves as an alternative. In order for handwashing to be effective in eliminating germs, child care providers must learn and teach children how to wash their hands properly. Here are a few important tips to follow:

- Use liquid soap
- Use warm running water
- Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds
- Use disposable single-use towels
- Use hand sanitizers sparingly- baby wipes can be used for



- infants' and toddlers' hands when there is no soap and water available
- Wash infants and toddlers hands too

Child Care Certificate Program

The Child Care Certificate Program (CCCP) partners with TDHS clients to provide financial assistance for child care costs as well as supporting parents in finding and receiving quality child care. If a parent is eligible for one of the programs offered within CCCP, any type of child care can be used by the parents (both regulated and unregulated child care). However, the chosen provider must be enrolled in the certificate payment program. Providers who wish to enroll in the Child Care Certificate Program should contact their local TDHS office for additional details. Providers

participating in the CCCP are eligible to accept children receiving certificates in multiple assistance programs offered by TDHS, such as Families First and Smart Steps. The CCCP also partners with providers participating in the certificate program with support and technical assistance. In addition, providers enrolled in the certificate payment program who also earn a 1, 2 or 3 Star Quality Rating on their license and participate in the quality care program receive a bonus as part of the certificate program. Payment rates are established by TDHS and

agreed to by the provider. Some assistance programs require a co-payment, here are the child care assistance programs at a glance:

- ◆ Families First Child Care Assistance
- ◆ Transitional Child Care Assistance
- ◆ At Risk Child Only
- ◆ Teen Parent Child Care Assistance (TPACC)
- ◆ Smart Steps Child Care Payment

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Are you a
licensed child
care provider?

Child Care Licensing Program

Child and Adult Care Licensing is the regulatory body that licenses and monitors child care and adult care facilities across Tennessee to ensure compliance. The overarching goal is to ensure the health and safety of the child and adults in care. There are four categories of child care facilities: Family Day Home, Group Home, Center, and Drop-in Child Care. All children must be under 18 years old to receive child care services. The adult facility minimum age is 18 years old.

Who does the Child Care Licensing Program partner with for training and enrichment?

We partner with the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA), Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), Child Care Certificate Program and Child Care Assessment to offer the best tools, training and information to our child care providers. The Child and Adult Care Licensing team support our providers in using the best practice method in caring for young children

and vulnerable adults. It is important that our providers and partners know that we strive to aide in the best possible customer service and also to provide you with the tools you need to succeed.

It is imperative that our providers receive the best resources, training and most current information from our field staff in order to provide each child a quality child care experience and to prepare them for future success in the classroom.

“It is imperative that our providers receive the best resources, training and most current information from our field staff.”



A smile from a child is packaged
sunshine and rainbows!

Child Care Assessment Program

Child Care Assessment provides a detailed, objective, formal report to childcare educators/professionals. We assess agencies that have children enrolled from ages 0-12 years of old by using the Environment Rating Scales®. The assessment unit also provides clarification to child care professionals by way of follow-up calls or by scheduling informal notes meetings. This customer focused approach allows us to assist child care

educators/professionals with their specific questions and better assists them to improve the quality of care within their agency. To align with the TDHS mission statement, our main purpose is to improve the quality of child care within the state of Tennessee. Our efforts are meaningful and we work zealously in providing this feedback to all partners and child care professionals. Although assessors enjoy observing the care and interactions between

child care professionals and children, they must focus on the care, safety, and supervision children are experiencing as the top priority.



“Play is the highest form of research” -Albert Einstein

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Child Care Assistance Programs

Families First Child Care Assistance.

Parents participating in the Families First program who need child care to complete the work activities in their personal responsibility plan can receive financial assistance with the cost of child care. Families First parents do not pay a parent co-pay in this program. Eligibility is based on Families First income guidelines.

Transitional Child Care Assistance.

Working parents on the Families First program whose case is closed are provided with 18 months of transitional child care assistance to help them transition off the program. There is a work activity requirement for each parent in order to be eligible for this program. Parents must pay a co-pay fee based on a sliding income scale.

At Risk Child Only.

Children who are receiving Families First and are being cared for by someone other than their parent(s) may be eligible for this child care assistance. Caretakers must pay a co-pay fee based on a sliding income scale.

Teen Parent Child Care Assistance (TPACC).

This program is for eligible high school or middle school parents. These young parents must stay in school in order to receive child care assistance. Parents must pay a co-pay fee based on a sliding income scale. For information, contact the Child Care Resource and Referral Center at 1-866-827-3372.

Smart Steps Child Care Payment Assistance.

Must be employed no less than 30 hours per week, or be enrolled and attending a post-secondary education program full-time, or a combination of both. Must have a child between ages six (6) weeks old through five (5) years old. Household gross income must be below the 85th percentile of the State Median Income (SMI) for Tennessee.



“It is a happy talent to know how to play.”

“Eligibility of most child care assistance programs are based on Families First income guidelines.”