



# Juvenile Court

METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE & DAVIDSON COUNTY

Volume 5, Issue 2

April 1, 2016

## FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

### Special points of interest:

Page 1 New FCRB Staff Member — Connie Heard

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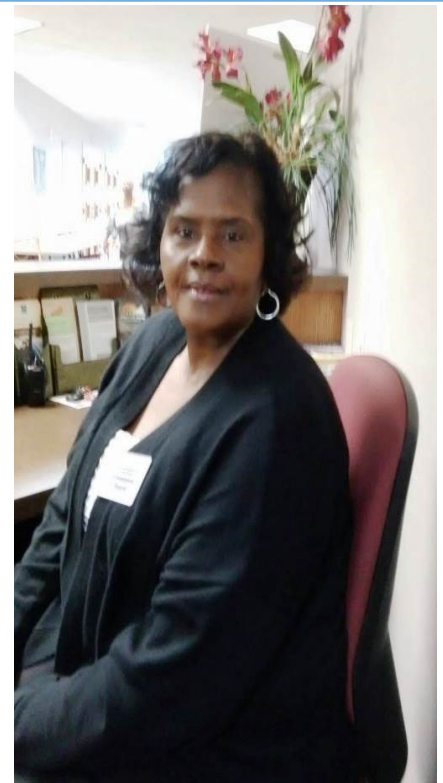
Page 3 FCRB dashboard data & youth attendance data

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### Constance (Connie) Heard

Connie is a native Nashvillian, she is the mother of two wonderful children, Davonte' and Chelsea. She received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Strayer University. She joined the Juvenile Court family in 1999, where she was hired as the front desk receptionist. Connie never meets a stranger, and did her job well at the front desk!! She recently accomplished her dream by getting her degree, and with that being said, all things are possible if you only believe!!

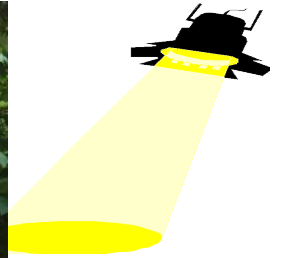


Connie's favorite pastime is baking cakes & making people smile!



## FCRB member spotlight:

Our member spotlight this quarter is on Alissa Shear. She is a member of FCRB #8 and #15. On March 9th, 2016 the FCRB #8 was set to meet at 12:00 noon. On this date the chair and back up chair were not able to be at the board. We reached out to Alissa on this date a few hours before start time and she immediately agreed to chair the meeting. She did a great job that day and was a real professional. Thanks Alissa!



Member Corner



The FCRB Program welcomes the following new members since December of 2015:

Misty Leitsch—#2  
 Kenyatta Lovett—#13 & #15  
 Susan Gish—#2  
 Kendra Woods—#4  
 Susan E. Martin—#2  
 Brittany Bingman—#7  
 Gerald Davis—added second bd. #7  
 Peggy Rosenblatt—#12  
 Therese Plante—#8  
 Katie Goetz—#8  
 June Keel—#8

We would like to thank the following members for their service to the FCRB Program:

We will miss you!

Debra Nilson—#11  
 Katy Valesky—#11  
 Rita Hall—#8  
 Meredith Bortz—#4  
 Susan Spainhour—#6  
 Donna Sumner—#8  
 Carolyn Loudenslager—#6

## Davidson County Trends over the last two years (2014-2015) as reported by the Administrative Office of the Courts, Court Improvement Program:

DATA

DATA

### First for the good news:

- ⇒ The % of children adjudicated delinquent has decreased over the last two years. (from 28% in first quarter of 2014 to 16% in last quarter of 2015).
- ⇒ The % of children reentering custody has decreased during 2015 (from 21% in first quarter 2014 to 16% last quarter 2015) and the time between DCS commitments has gotten longer (6.2 months in first quarter 2014 to 11.2 months in last quarter 2015).

### Now for the Not so Good News:

Both time until TPR petition and TPR being held were steady over the past two years until the last quarter of 2015 when they both increased!

⇒ Time until TPR petition (goal: 15 mts.):

First quarter 2014 = 16.6 mts.

Last quarter 2015 = 17.6 mts.

⇒ Time until TPR complete (goal: 24 mts.):

First quarter 2014 = 30.2 mts.

Last quarter 2015 = 34.8 mts.

So if you see a case where adoption is a goal pressure DCS to file the TPR petition & pressure the Court to hold the hearing ASAP!

### Child/youth presence at FCRBs: (began tracking in August 2015)

August = 86%

January 2016 = 82%

September = 76%

February 2016 = 77%

October = 82%

March 2016 = 74%

November = 84%

December = 72%

\* Please note that the majority of the youth who do not attend is due to factors beyond DCS's control such as being on runaway, in detention, can't miss school or special events, illness, etc.....

# 2016 CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE



Please come and celebrate with Davidson region of TN Department of Children's Services, as we honor youth in foster care who have achieved an important milestone by graduating from college, high school or receiving a GED. This is a special event for them as we focus on their achievements despite all of the obstacles that they have encountered.

The celebration is fun and is the only celebration for most of our youth. The youth will receive gifts (*see below*) from individuals and agencies in the community supporting their accomplishment.

Your presence would be so meaningful to them on this most special day!

**The event will be held on Sunday, May 1, 2016, from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Student Activity Center on the Trevecca University Campus close to downtown Nashville. The address is 333 Murfreesboro Road, Nashville TN 37210.**

FCRB members: If you would like to make a donation (gift) to this cause please contact: Dana Eskridge @ 615-253-3308 or @ [dana.eskridge@tn.gov](mailto:dana.eskridge@tn.gov)

# LGBTI Youth

## LEARNING CORNER

The goal for this population is to strengthen our ability to navigate a youth's physical, emotional, and social safety within the culturally diverse population of the Juvenile Justice system. These youth represent up to 40% of the homeless youth population, 39% are forced to leave their families of origin because of sexual orientation or gender identity and 78% were removed or ran away from their foster placement because of hostility toward sexual orientation or gender identity. 39% of the homeless population report that they are involved in the Juvenile Justice system in some way. These youth are putting all of their energy into *surviving* while most of their straight peers are focused on *growing and thriving*. LGBT youth represent 5-7% of the youth population in the US. TN population is 6,495,978; the under 18 population is 1,494,075; 6% of that is 89,644. These youth face many challenges such as lack of respect and support, harassment and threats, fear of being out or open and many other issues. As professionals, it is our intent to make sure that they are safe within the system, communication is effective, trust is built and we model an "open and affirming" approach within the workplace. Ways we can help? Build trust by asking the right questions, be respectful, be understanding, be supportive, and be an advocate.



Our thanks to Pam Sheffer, Program Director at the Oasis Center for the above information.

Produced and edited by:  
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Reminder: Anyone who wishes to include an article or picture for our newsletter please feel free — just contact me.  
 Thanks!  
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