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Blind Early Services TN - Newsletter for Caregivers and Providers

Sharing Summer Chances for Connection

We're excited to share a statewide opportunity from our friends at the Tennessee Disability Coalition this summer through their *Parties in the Park* series. It's not often we get to highlight events happening across multiple cities in Tennessee at once, and this series offers a meaningful chance for families and the disability community to come together in welcoming, accessible outdoor spaces.

Parties in the Park are free, family-friendly gatherings held in Nashville, Chattanooga, and Memphis. Each event is designed to support connection and inclusion, with time to enjoy games and activities, explore helpful resource tables, and spend a relaxed summer afternoon with other families. Organizers have also prioritized accessibility at every location, including the availability of an adult-sized changing table and efforts to situate events near accessible transit routes. A limited number of gift cards will be available at the Tennessee Disability Coalition table to help support travel needs, while supplies last.

Families can choose the location that works best for them:

- **Memphis: Saturday, May 30, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CDT, East Parkway Pavilion, Overton Park**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

June 4 (8:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

TN Dept of Health's Family & Youth Conference
at the TN Library & Archives ([Get more info here](#))

June 10 (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM)

Spring Hill Public Library Sensory Storytime
144 Kedron Pkwy, Spring Hill, TN 37174

June 23 (8:30 PM - 10:00 PM)

Sound Good Do Good Concert Benefiting BEST
at The Listening Room ([Get tickets here](#))

August 21

TN Disability Mega-Conference by the Arc TN
in Murfreesboro, TN
Stipend Application for Registration Fee & Hotel

[Register here](#)

- Nashville: Saturday, **June 6**, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. CDT, *Naval Hill Shelter #2, Shelby Bottoms Park*
- Chattanooga: Saturday, **June 13**, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. EDT, *Riverview Park, Hope Inclusive Playground*

RSVP Required. [RSVP here.](#)



A Night of Music for BEST: June 23rd at the Listening Room



Join us for a special night of live music at The Listening Room Cafe in support of Blind Early Services TN (BEST), featuring a lineup built for an unforgettable evening.

The night opens with The Fiddle Sisters, followed by a writers’ round featuring July Moon alongside special songwriter guests. July Moon brings a sound often described as a blend of The Chicks and Fleetwood Mac—rooted in rich harmonies, heartfelt storytelling, and a modern country-folk edge.

All ticket proceeds benefit BEST and the families we serve across Tennessee. Please note there is a \$15 food and beverage minimum per guest at The Listening Room Cafe. It’s a fun, welcoming night out for all ages, with great music and a meaningful cause at the center.

[Buy tickets for \\$20 here!](#)



Long Term Services & Supports (LTSS) Guide

Do you need help with long-term care for yourself or a loved one? TennCare has released two new guides that make it easier to understand your options.

The [LTSS Assistors Guide](#) explains Tennessee’s main programs in simple terms. These programs help older adults, people with disabilities, and kids with complex medical needs. The programs include: CHOICES, ECF CHOICES, Katie Beckett, and 1915(c) waivers.

The [LTSS Financial Rules Guide](#) explains the income and resource limits for each program, so you know what it takes to qualify.

If you have questions, you can call the LTSSDD Help Desk at 1-877-224-0219 or TennCare Connect at 1-855-259-0701.

[LTSS Assistor's Guide here!](#)

[LTSS Financial Rules Guide here!](#)



Middle Tennesseans, how do you get local news?

Local information influences everyday decisions—from school changes to public health updates to emergency response. But it only works if it’s reaching people in ways that are timely and useful.

Press Forward Middle Tennessee is conducting a short survey to better understand how residents access local news, what sources they trust, and where information may be missing. Your input will help guide future investment in local news and community information across our region.

[Take the 8-10 minute survey by clicking here.](#) Available in mutiple languages



Keep Summer Safe with Nashville Dolphins



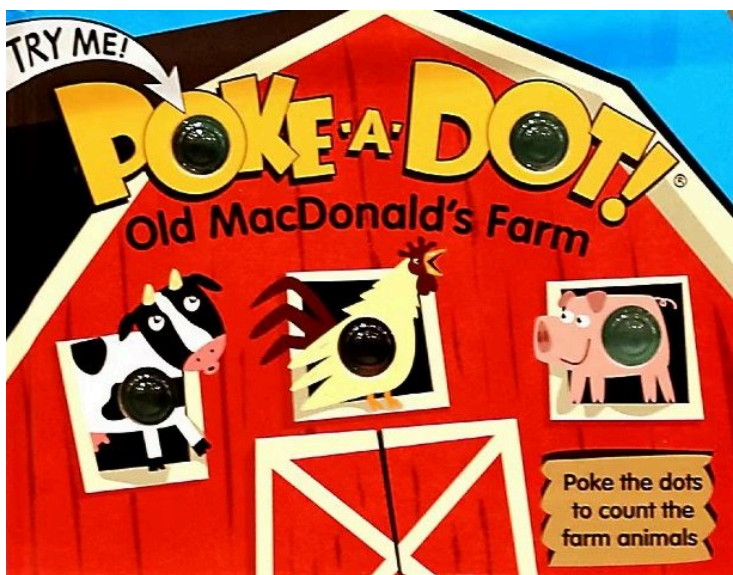
Families with young children who are blind or have disabilities may be interested in learning more about Nashville Dolphins and their free adaptive aquatics programs for individuals with special needs.

Their newest program, *Little Phins*, is designed for children ages 0–3 and helps parents introduce water safety and early swim skills through guided play and exploration. For children over 3, *Future Dolphins* is great for kids with little to no swimming experience, focusing on basic swim skills and water safety.

[Learn More & Apply!](#)



What We're Loving This Month



View the whole series of Poke-A-Dot board books here!

May is Speech-Language-Hearing Month, a time that highlights how early communication and literacy begin long before spoken words. For young children with vision loss, these skills are often supported through touch, sound, and shared interaction with caregivers.

This month, we're loving **Melissa & Doug Poke-a-Dot books**, which make early reading interactive through tactile "pop" buttons that create sound and encourage participation during shared story time.

The popping feature keeps children engaged through touch and sound, helping reinforce cause-and-effect learning while supporting early literacy and communication development. For children who are blind or have low vision, the tactile and auditory feedback adds an additional layer of access to story time, making reading more interactive, engaging, and meaningful.

About Us

BEST ensures that families are empowered and equipped to provide children with blindness or low vision their BEST start.

Links

- The Best Story
- Get Involved
- Donate

Let's be BEST friends



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