

# Fall

@TBCH

**GOD "TIPS THE SCALES"  
IN A WORLD OUT OF BALANCE.**

TENNESSEECHILDREN.ORG





# A NOTE FROM *Greg*

Justice – “the maintenance or administration of what is reasonable, correct, lawful or deserved” (Merriam-Webster). “Justice” was the most searched for word on Merriam-Webster’s website earning it “Word of the Year” honors in 2018. We continue to be concerned about racial justice, social justice and criminal justice. In the name of justice, our nation has a Department of Justice and our President appoints Supreme Court Justices. Cries for justice will never go away.

Proverbs 16:11 says, “A just balance and scales belong to the Lord; all the weights of the bag are His concern.” Simply put, the Lord is just and He expects His people to act justly as well. “What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

Are you aware that the Lord is particularly interested in justice for those who cannot take care of themselves? Repeatedly God says to show particular care for the widow, the orphan and the alien. These are three groups of people in Biblical times whom God said not to take advantage of by failing to secure justice on their behalf. You can find these references in the Psalms, in Job, in Isaiah and in Jeremiah. Allow me to quote one reference from Deuteronomy: “He (God) executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing” (10:18).

Our calling at TBCH is to welcome children in hard places with the love of Christ. We want to secure justice on their behalf by meeting their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. TBCH ministers to children and their families by meeting them where they are and by providing what they need to direct them toward a better future. Thank you for helping us do this by praying for our children and our staff, by serving in our ministry, and by giving of your financial resources so that we might continue to secure justice on the behalf of children.

Defending the Defenseless,



*Bro. Greg*

Bro. Greg, President/Treasurer



# TENNESSEE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

## RESIDENTIAL CARE

Christian houseparents serving in family-style homes on three campuses across the state, providing safety and biblical guidance so children can thrive.

## FOSTER CARE

Training and support for Christian foster parents through The George Shinn Foster Care Program, providing certified foster homes for children across TN.

## FAMILY CARE

Working with churches and other organizations to create a network of local resources, changing the trajectory of families for the better.

**1-800-624-8591**

[www.tennesseechildren.org](http://www.tennesseechildren.org)

[office@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:office@tennesseechildren.org)

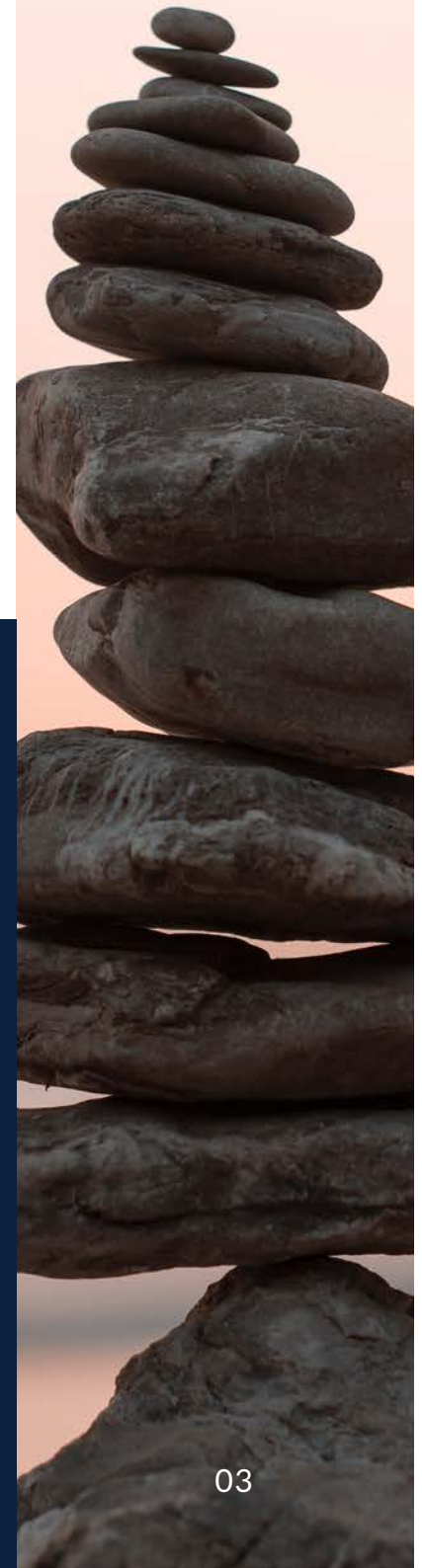
P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024



## In this issue

*Balance is a valuable skill for children, and not just for riding a skateboard or a bicycle. They need to know how to weigh consequences, make decisions, and act with a sense of justice toward themselves and others. This can be difficult for children who have been treated unjustly or judged by those who don't fully understand their circumstances. TBCH exists to minister to these children with compassion and empathy, which we hope you'll see in these stories and pictures. When the Lord uses His people to model justice, mercy, love, and hope for children in hard places, He is "tipping the scales" in their favor.*

*A just balance and scales belong to the Lord; All the weights of the bag are His concern. (Proverbs 16:11)*





# Remote Schooling



Along with parents all over the nation, the staff at our three Residential Care campuses found themselves facing the daunting task of “here at school” instead of “back to school.” At the end of a normal summer break, resident children at our campuses would attend established schools in the communities around our campuses, but has anything been normal this year?

The school districts in the three regions each had different options and requirements, so our campuses had to adapt and make decisions on a local level. As the school year loomed ever closer, our staff, volunteers, and even the kids joined in to create learning spaces and plans that fit their needs. Some changes are permanent to semi-permanent, some have been temporary while waiting for in-person classes to resume, and all would likely impress even seasoned educators.



## Ranch at Millington

At The Ranch at Millington, the multi-use meeting room adjoining the commissary was recommissioned as a one-room schoolhouse. This fits their situation well since the boys at The Ranch are all middle and high school students.



## Brentwood Campus

The Brentwood campus needed short-term space for a wider age range, so they put their efforts into re-designing an unused home on campus. Six and one-half rooms of The Malone Home became classrooms for elementary, middle, and high school students. At the writing of this article, all the residents at Brentwood have returned to in-person classes.



## Chattanooga Campus

The landmark stained-glass chapel at the Chattanooga campus was transformed into an impressive and social distance-friendly elementary schoolhouse, complete with activity areas, desk space for classroom monitors, and individual cubicles with dry-erase board walls.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, TBCH was also able to equip each student with a laptop and resources necessary for successful remote learning. And thanks to the prayers, diligence, and creativity of staff and volunteers, “back to school” for the children has been a learning experience in more ways than one.





# SUPPORTERS MAKE SURE KIDS ARE

# Well-Supplied

Friends in need are friends indeed, and friends of TBCH continue to prove it despite the reported trends. An unsurprising Gallup poll published in May indicated donations and volunteering for charitable organizations is trending down ([news.gallup.com](https://news.gallup.com)), but this news has not kept some of our supporters from finding ways to provide for the kids at TBCH. Churches, organizations, and individuals have continued to bring necessary items from school supplies to food for our commissaries.

Non-financial donations are an important part of our ministry to children and help us better steward other monetary gifts. Last year "gifts in kind" were valued at more than \$238,000.00.



Other support was provided through a gracious relationship with **Tennessee Alliance for Kids**. TAK is a non-profit organization that “bridges the gap between the foster care system and the community.” Fran Maynard, who serves as Director of Development and Engagement for TAK, came by the State Office in Brentwood with a trunkful of “TAK PAKS” for our foster families, filled with emergency and comfort items for kids coming into their homes. Older kids get these items in a backpack and families caring for infants receive them in diaper bags.

These are just a few examples of donations given by our friends, helping our children have what they need to thrive while in the care of TBCH.



## ALLIANCE FOR KIDS

PROVIDING **FOSTERLOVE**  
FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Tennessee Alliance for Kids bridges the gap between the foster care system and the community, providing **FOSTERLOVE** to meet the critical, tangible needs of children at risk of coming into foster care, those in care, and those aging out.

### WHAT IS **FOSTERLOVE?**

When social workers identify the critical needs of children, TAK meets those needs through these tangible **FOSTERLOVE** items:

**BAGS:** TAK PAKS, diaper bags, backpacks

**BEDDING:** mattresses, beds/bunk beds, pack 'n plays, cribs, linens

**FOOD:** snacks, bottled water, gift cards for meals, baby bottles

**CLOTHING:** attire for all ages, undergarments, socks, shoes, uniforms

**PERSONAL HYGIENE:** toiletries, feminine products, diapers, wipes, lice kits

**SAFETY:** car seats, baby gates, strollers, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors

**COMFORT:** blankets, stuffed animals, toys

### WHY **FOSTERLOVE?**

TAK is the leading provider of essential, critical items for children with foster care experiences. TAK serves the Department of Children's Services and Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes by enabling them to:

Supply basic necessities that children coming into foster care need

Keep children out of foster care and in safe homes

Provide support to Extension of Foster Care youth that are pursuing secondary education after they age out of care



**615.730.3771 | [FOSTERLOVE@TNALLIANCEFORKIDS.ORG](mailto:FOSTERLOVE@TNALLIANCEFORKIDS.ORG)**



[TNALLIANCEFORKIDS.ORG](https://www.tnallianceforkids.org)





# Pray. Serve. Give.

**You are my hiding place;  
you will protect me from  
trouble and surround me  
with songs of deliverance.  
(Psalm 32:7)**

If the children in our care were placed on one side of a scale, what measure would be the balance of their value? We are so grateful for the many ways you support the children at TBCH. When you faithfully pray, serve, and give to this ministry, you show that these kids matter and that they have value beyond measure.



## ➞ PRAY

We believe God hears and answers our prayers! Pray for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the children at TBCH, and the resources to meet those needs.

## ➞ SERVE

We are still taking precautions for the health and safety of our children and staff. Serve our children by calling ahead to schedule the delivery of meals, food, and supplies to our campuses. You can also contact us about how to help foster families.

## ➞ GIVE

As a totally donor-supported ministry, TBCH does not receive any government funding. We are always grateful for your faithful and generous financial gifts. Give online at [tennesseechildren.org](https://tennesseechildren.org) and consider becoming a monthly donor.

Contact us for volunteer opportunities, and donate today online at [TENNESSEECHILDREN.ORG](https://tennesseechildren.org), by phone at 1-800-624-8591, or by mail to P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024.





## BRENTWOOD ROTARY CLUB'S

### *Faithful Generosity*

TBCH would like to extend our gratitude for the faithful friendship, support, and generous donation from the Brentwood Rotary Club Charitable Foundation. Larry Kain recently stopped by the Brentwood campus office to represent that organization with their greetings and a check. Like many organizations, TBCH included, the Rotary Club has had to reschedule and change plans for fundraising events recently, so we are especially appreciative of their efforts which help us continue welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ!

# ESSENTIAL FEDERAL, STATE, AND CITY WORKERS, WE SALUTE YOU!

Federal, state, and city government employees working in our communities have been and continue to be ESSENTIAL to us. THANK YOU for helping Tennessee's children in hard places with a payroll deduction gift. Your support helps TBCH care for them through these important charitable campaigns:

**Combined Federal Campaign (CFC#66838)**  
**Tennessee Employees Charitable Campaign (TECC# IN031)**

Not a government employee? You can still help TBCH by sharing this opportunity with government employees you know! You can also support TBCH through United Way payroll deduction gifts. TBCH is not a United Way partner agency, so write in "Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes (7150)" to make sure your gift supports the children in our care.





Chrissy with her housedad and a fellow resident



# Past & Present

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Current and former residents share about campus experiences

Chrissy is a current resident at one of our Residential Care campuses. From a swing near the firepit (a favorite place to go when she's aggravated or needs some time alone) she tells a little about her experience at TBCH:

"I've seen multiple funny things here. One was me getting stuck in the mud with the golf cart—it was crazy. I like sports, I like working, and I like having fun and building things sometimes. Me being here has changed my life completely in good ways. I had to get used to it at first but after that it was fun and changed me.

"I learned how to build a back porch, I've helped put a roof on,

and how to sand. I've also learned how to be a better person and take on the responsibilities that I have. One of them is I'm able to trust again and let people into my life. People come to me when they have problems. Sometimes I help them through it because I know I can go to them if I'm having troubles.

"Some good things about living here are how much people care, and for me, just having a roof over my head and a bed to sleep in. I want to give a shout-out to everybody that's helped me and who have come out to campus to help here. I want to thank you for it and we're grateful to have y'all here."



# Past & Present (Continued)

Tim Depoe has been gone from The Ranch for several years now. Sitting down over coffee, he reminisces about his experiences taking the horses on trail rides, playing street hockey, avoiding snapping turtles while fishing in the pond, and learning to hunt at Ames Plantation. Now he is married, works as an industrial maintenance technician, and serves as a volunteer firefighter.

"I got my start in the welding program at The Ranch. The houseparents took time to show the guys different things, saying you're going to need this when you have your own family and your own house. Miss Anita Caradine actually helped me find a school for it, and I went to trade school at Tennessee College of Applied Technology. Houseparents have so much emotion and they care so much. I have not met a houseparent who doesn't care and genuinely want to be there.

"The Ranch really enlightens you to the different trauma people can experience and you don't know it by glancing at them.

"But once you get to know that person you begin to understand why they behave a certain way. It can definitely change your mind set about how you approach certain things and how you can help.

"The Tennessee Baptist Children's home took in a young boy, who had experienced great loss in his life. They gave him a home at The Ranch. They gave him love, acceptance, accountability, structure, and discipline to shape his mind. They gave him proper nutrition and hard work to shape his body. What they didn't know is they helped shape his whole future. That boy grew into a man, got married, works a trade and is a firefighter.

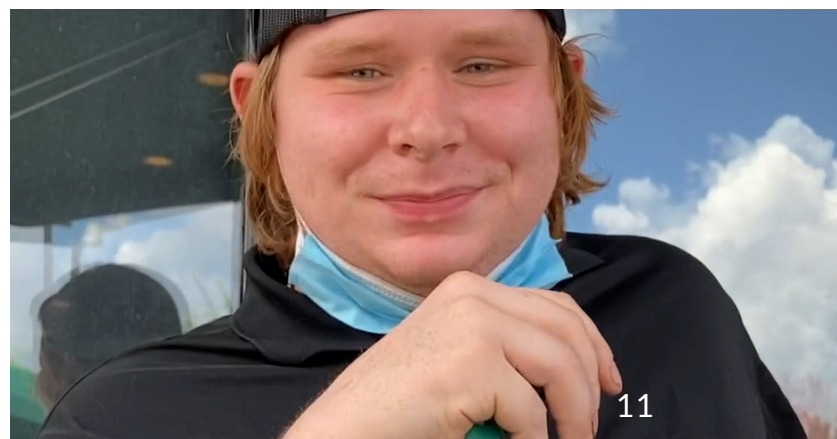
"That young man appreciates what the TBCH did for him. He will forever be thankful for the opportunity at a great life and the great start that was handed to him. The only question he has now is just how far he can succeed. If you ask how I know that man, it is because I am him. I am thankful for the work y'all did and continue to do."



Tim and his wife, Hannah



Tim in the welding shop 2014





Min-Tom Home and children, Mrs. Deakins is to the left

## "WHEN DID TBCH DESEGREGATE?"

The answer to this straightforward question is more than just trivia or a segue into a discussion on current events. It is one snapshot in an album full of significant events in the history of TBCH and its transformation through a turbulent time in U.S. history. It's also a reflection of faith, how our past is connected to our present, and how charity is connected to justice.

When TBCH staffers share that we have been welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ for more than 129 years, we must acknowledge that not all children could find a home here in 1891. At that time in Tennessee there were no licensed orphanages for Black children, despite the growing need of the generations immediately following the Civil War.

That changed with the faithful efforts of Mrs. C. M. Deakins, who was serving as superintendent of the Department of Negro Missions for the Hamilton County Baptist Association in 1943. That year she rented and furnished an apartment to provide a home for six orphaned Black children and a housemother. By 1951, she had taken out a personal loan and raised enough support to build the Min-Tom Orphans' Home on 30 acres of land in Chattanooga, and named it after Rev. Thomas and Minnie Smith, her parents. This became Tennessee's first licensed orphanage for Black children, and a

year later the Hamilton County Baptist Association took over its administration and the care of the 21 children there.

In 1953, Min-Tom Orphans' Home was destroyed by an early-morning fire. Today, it is difficult to imagine the social climate in which this tragedy took place. Newspapers reported that no fire trucks were sent to the scene and no cause of the fire was determined. Despite this, miraculously none of the 21 children were injured. Within a year, responsibility for the rebuilt home and the children was transferred to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

This happened at roughly the same time as TBCH campuses were opened in Memphis and Chattanooga, and expansion projects were in progress across the state. America was also being shaped by the Civil Rights Movement.

No simple summary can adequately paint a picture of the times, but in 1957, three years after the US Supreme Court declared school segregation laws unconstitutional, Nashville public schools began a 12-year desegregation plan. This was hastened midway when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, banning the denial of services based on race, religion, or national origin in places of public accommodation.

For many private institutions, faithful decisions about justice and equity were met with negative public perception and socially accepted bigotry.

Clearing the hurdle of "separate but equal" in order to cross the finish line of desegregation was a challenge, but TBCH Superintendent Dr. James Gregg gave God glory as he wrote in a 1967 newsletter, "The Tennessee Baptist Convention is the only State Convention in the Southern Baptist Convention which operates a Children's Home for Negro children."

In 1970, TBCH board members took the official step of publicly recognizing compliance with the Civil Rights Act, but a more significant stride for TBCH took another three years. In the summer of 1973, two boys were welcomed to the former Memphis campus, the first Black resident children to live at a desegregated TBCH campus.

By the mid-1980's the Min-Tom home and land was sold, and the proceeds were used to build a new namesake enlarging the Chattanooga campus. Today, the TBCH resident census closely represents the ethnic diversity of our state population, and reflects the faithful commitment of our staff to welcome each child with the love of Christ, which should always be absent of discrimination based on the color of that child's skin.

Current events are proving almost daily that solutions to conflicts regarding justice and race are tenuous and elusive. For TBCH however, the faith and actions of Mrs. Deakins, past leaders, and current staff and trustees show a pattern of dedication to healing racial division, and living out the mandate of the Lord to "...do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).



## OPERATION STRENGTH HELPS FOSTER CARE WITH

# Big Gift of Supplies

The efforts of one local organization in Middle Tennessee are bringing help to foster families and hope to foster children in that region, including those in The George Shinn Foster Care Program of TBCH.

According to the organization's Facebook page (@operationstrengthwilco), the purpose of Operation Strength is "to benefit kids and teens in the Williamson County, TN, foster/adoption system...to strengthen them with supplies, resources, knowledge, confidence, and kindness."

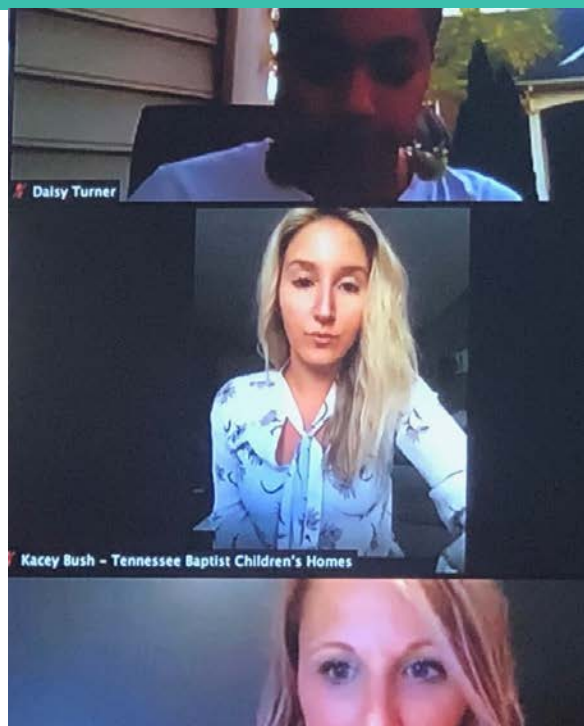
And a recent post also adds, "On average, there are approximately 7,500 children in foster care and around 350 children in full guardianship (available for adoption) in Tennessee who don't have an identified adoptive home. Approximately 1,000 children age out of care in Tennessee every year. We hope to make these kids' transition a little easier by donating duffel bags, clothes, toys, and books to our local foster organizations!"

On the receiving end of their efforts, TBCH case managers and Foster Care Program staff have been able to put these gifts directly into the hands of several foster families and the children in their care, matching the items to specific needs. These families and children are grateful for the gifts, and TBCH is glad to have a new partner supporting them.



## WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH FOSTER CARE?

Visit [tennesseechildren.org](http://tennesseechildren.org) for more info.



## ONLINE WITH TENNESSEE KIDS BELONG

Prospective foster parents recently got a chance to have a "virtual visit" with active foster parents, DCS, and other foster care experts, and Kacey Bush participated on behalf of TBCH. Kacey serves as the Regional Supervisor for our The George Shinn Foster Care Program in East Tennessee.

The online panel discussion is a Facebook event hosted by Tennessee Kids Belong, and gives people getting ready to take the plunge into foster care a chance to interact with experts in the field. TKB was founded in 2016 as a state-wide organization focused on supporting the foster care efforts of public and private organizations, and TBCH is proud to take part in their work helping people make such an important decision.

# MAKING ROOM FOR

# Generosity

Ten dollars a month for a morning coffee routine is a bargain for the daily commuter but may be a tougher financial decision for a retiree on a fixed budget. When you make a personal choice to be generous, that ten dollars may be a matter of faith.

*A donor recently made that choice, and in faith decided to become a monthly supporter of TBCH. What makes her story unique is that the inspiration to give coincided with a diagnosis of cancer and an expensive round of treatment. An early side effect of treatment was a change in the way things tasted, and she specifically noticed her favorite coconut-flavored water tasted funny to her now. Suddenly her grocery budget was freed up by—you guessed it—about ten dollars. When she made her first gift to TBCH, she pointed out a bit of wisdom gleaned from her circumstances; that is, sometimes making room for generosity involves a little “rearrangement” in life.*

*As we approach the end of 2020 and enter the traditional “charitable giving” season, what can you rearrange in your life to make room for your generosity? Helping the children at TBCH with a monthly gift could be as simple as skipping a restaurant meal, a subscription, or some coconut water for a donation instead.*

Contact us for volunteer opportunities, and donate today online:

TENNESSEECHILDREN.ORG

1-800-624-8591

P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024.





# Welcome TO NEW AND RETURNING STAFF



## DANNY AND TESS BROWN

Danny and Tess are returning to The Ranch at Millington, reprising their role as houseparents from 17 years past. Tess has spent the last five years working with children at Tipton Rosemark Academy, and Danny is recently retired from the insurance industry. "We are blessed to be back."



## DYLAN THOMAS

Dylan calls The Ranch at Millington home and has since he lived here as a resident. Now he's returning in a professional capacity as Ranch Assistant. Dylan is an Army veteran, and he and his wife Abbi served as houseparents at a boys' ranch in Michigan. They have four children. "With my position I hope God opens doors for me to show the young men that you can accomplish goals in life regardless of your past. If you are faithful and lean on the Lord, He will open doors and lead you down the right path. We look forward to what God has for our family and future here with TBCH, and serving God and the young people we cross paths with here."



## MATT AND AMY MAURER

Matt and Amy have answered the call as houseparents at the Brentwood campus, after serving for 17 years at a children's home in Gadsden, AL. They have three children, two recently married, and their youngest a nursing student at Jacksonville State University. They are also excited to have a first grandchild on the way! They enjoy hiking, fishing, and camping, and will need that kind of energy to keep up with a houseful of resident boys. "We love it here at TBCH so far... Keep us in your prayers!"



## SARAH EPPS

Sarah joins us as a Campus Ministry Assistant at The Ranch at Millington, and she's no stranger to the campus. As the daughter of Jeff and Lisa Epps, Sarah grew up calling The Ranch home. Among the many hats she'll wear in this position, one is helping make sure the on-campus "distance learning location" runs as smoothly as possible.



## BAILEY DEMPSEY

Bailey is our newest Foster Care Case Manager in West Tennessee. She grew up in Memphis and attended Freed-Hardeman University and is currently working on her graduate degree in social work with a specialization in trauma at UT Knoxville. Her connection with TBCH began with an internship working with Rachel McLean. "I am so blessed to work back in Memphis with our Shelby County foster families. I am excited to see how the Lord works for these families and the kiddos that are placed with them!"



## Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

*Welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ*

**1-800-624-8591**

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