

NEWSLETTER

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER



TNSTEP's Katherine Williams leading the "Early Childhood Transition: Should I Stay or Should I Go" training in West, TN.

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www.tnstep.info

Parent Training and Information Services

TNSTEP's vision is to ensure a brighter future for children and youth in Tennessee.

"We are experts at informing and empowering parents of children and youth with disabilities who receive education services."

-Karen Harrison, TNSTEP Executive Director



HELPING PARENTS FIND CONFIDENCE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT

Terry Long brings decades of experience, dedication, and heart to her role on the TNSTEP Board of Directors. First appointed as a state agency representative from the Tennessee Department of Education (2006–2012), she was officially elected to the Board in 2013 and has continued to serve with distinction ever since. Terry currently works as a special education data consultant with two national technical assistance centers, the IDEA Data Center and the Center for the Integration of IDEA Data.

She holds both a B.S. in Elementary and Special Education and an M.Ed. in Special Education from Middle Tennessee State University, and completed doctoral coursework in Special Education at Vanderbilt University. A licensed special education teacher and proud parent of a daughter with Down syndrome, Terry is deeply committed to improving outcomes for all children with disabilities—combining professional expertise with lived experience to guide her service on the Board.

"A LIFELONG ADVOCATE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES."



Terry Long, Left
Board of Directors



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY

THE NEXT STEP IEP PLANNING

Preparing for effective participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings



This free workshop is designed to enable attendees to understand and fully participate in the IEP Team process. You will learn:

- The types of services that can be provided through special education.
- The information on the Individual Education Program (IEP) document and where it goes.
- How to express parent concerns and ensure they are addressed by the IEP team.
- Understand Present Levels of Performance and Measurable Annual Goals.
- Strategies to prepare for effective participation in IEP meetings for their children and youth with disabilities.

For more information and to register contact:
 Chrissy Hood
 931-638-2253
chrissy_h@tndisability.org

Sponsored by:
 Rural Disability Resource Network at
 UT Southern

 **Date**
 Thursday, October 23, 2025

Time
 5:00 - 7:00 PM CT

Where:
 University of Tennessee Southern
 Gault Fine Arts Center
 423 West Madison Street
 Pulaski, TN 38478

Adults only please. Registration required.



tnstep
 trainer
 Joey Ellis
 Director of Youth Services

INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION WORKSHOP

This free workshop is designed for parents, caregivers, and professionals to gain a working knowledge of special education laws including your role in developing an appropriate Individual Education Program (IEP), how to effectively partner with the school team in the process, plus...

- Special Education Eligibility
- Evaluations
- Timelines
- Related Services
- Preparing for an IEP Meeting
- Basic Rights as a Parent

For more information and to register contact:
 Chrissy Hood
 931-638-2253
chrissy_h@tndisability.org

Sponsored by:
 Rural Disability Resource Network at
 UT Southern

 **Date**
 Monday, October 20, 2025

Time
 5:00 - 7:00 PM CT

Where:
 University of Tennessee Southern
 Gault Fine Arts Center
 423 West Madison Street
 Pulaski, TN 38478

Adults only please. Registration required.

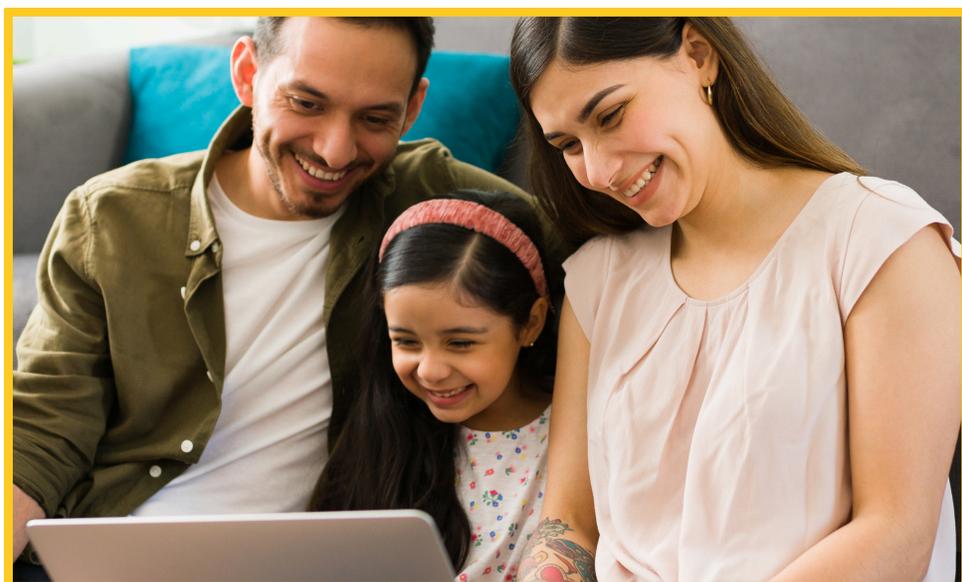


tnstep
 trainer
 Joey Ellis
 Director of Youth Services

STAY INFORMED

Webinars, Videos & Virtual Trainings

LEARN MORE >>



PARTNERSHIPS THAT MATTER

Department of Disability and Aging
Partners with Trevecca Nazarene
University to Launch Academic Behavioral
Learning Program for Teachers



LEARN MORE >>

The Department of Disability and Aging (DDA) has partnered with Trevecca Nazarene University to launch the Academic and Behavioral Learning Certificate (ABLC) Program – a free, 12-week professional development course designed for licensed TN teachers.

This program provides 90 professional development hours and equips educators with tools to create inclusive classrooms and support students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Teachers will explore best practices in co-teaching, understanding IEPs, and strengthening classroom engagement and social-emotional learning.

“By providing free, high-quality training for our teachers, we are enhancing their ability to meet the diverse needs of students and helping to create a more inclusive education system in Tennessee,” said DDA Commissioner Brad Turner.

At TNSTEP, we celebrate this partnership as another step toward a future where every student, regardless of ability, will learn and thrive.

Online Auction

**OCTOBER 25
thru
NOVEMBER 9**

We're excited to announce that **TNSTEP's Online Auction will go live on October 25th!** This special event helps raise funds to support our programs for families of children and youth with disabilities across Tennessee.

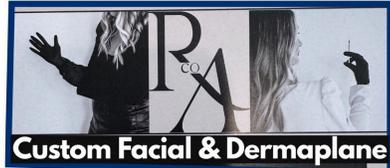
We're currently looking for donated items such as gift cards, services, experiences, or unique products that we can feature in the auction.

If you own a business or know someone who might be willing to donate an item or two, we'd love to hear from you! Every donation helps us continue providing FREE resources, training, and support to families across Tennessee.

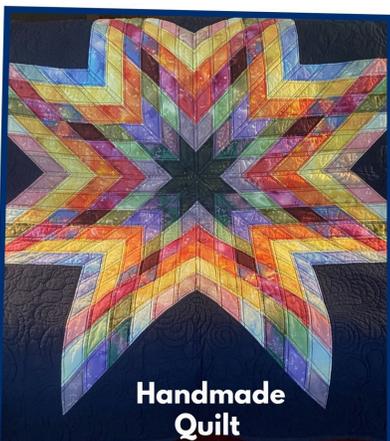
★ **ITEM PREVIEW** ★

The Island in Pigeon Forge Get Away





Custom Facial & Dermaplane



Handmade Quilt

<https://www.32auctions.com/tnstep>

TNSTEP's Online Auction is Coming. Can You Help Us Make It a Success?



**Email:
TNSTEPauction@gmail.com
to donate an item!**



NO PARENT OF A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY SHOULD HAVE TO WALK THIS JOURNEY ALONE.

We believe parents know their children best and CAN BE their child's best advocate. Families who receive TNSTEP services report these results:

- Increased skills to address their children's mental health and behavioral needs;
- Consistent and improved school attendance;
- Increase in functional skills that impact independent living;
- Improved academic achievement that leads to graduation and employment.



Toll-Free: (800) 280-STEP
Español: (800) 975-2919
Telephone: (423) 639-0125
FAX: (423) 636-8217



Physical Address

TNSTEP – GREENEVILLE, TN
113 Austin Street
Greeneville, TN 37745



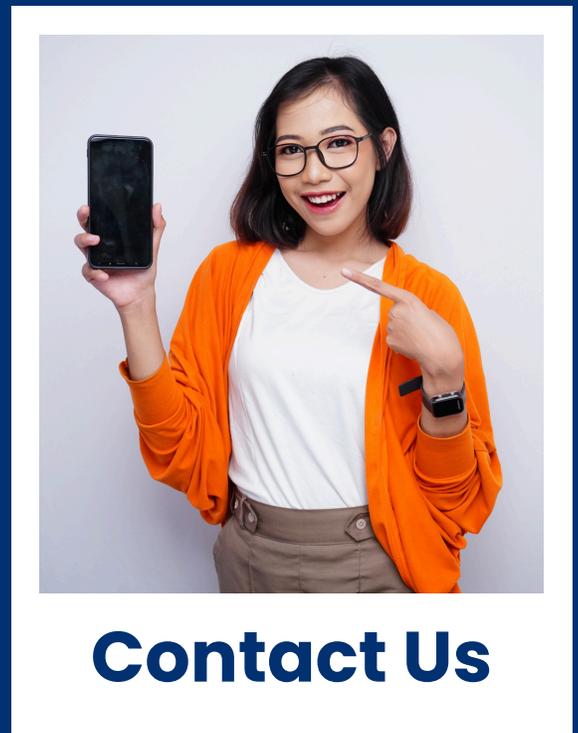
Mailing Address

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Greeneville, TN 37745



TNSTEP – NASHVILLE, TN
955 Woodland Street
Nashville, TN 37206

gethelp@tnstep.info



To receive a printed copy of this newsletter, please send a request to tnstepcomms@gmail.com.

Donate



YOUR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TELLS A PARENT,
"YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK THIS JOURNEY ALONE."