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Born Drug-Free Tennessee Recap

by Karen Pershing, Executive Director, Metropolitan Drug Commission

The recent pain management clinic raids in Knoxville and Lenoir City have yet again brought to light the path of death and destruction they not only create, but leave behind. Many people ask, how in the world can these clinics open and operate in the state of Tennessee?

Although we have made some great strides in creating guidelines and establishing a certificate process for pain management clinics, there are individuals who know how to check the right boxes and operate what appears to be a legitimate storefront. There is always a struggle between making changes to tighten up through laws and regulations and balancing the need for patients who truly suffer from non-malignant chronic pain to have access to the specialized care they need and deserve.

The Knox County Prescription Drug Task Force conducted a study over a six month period from May-November of 2014 to evaluate our current pain management clinic requirements and those of other states near Tennessee. As part of this process, the group also looked at indicators that helped demonstrate the effectiveness of other states policies. Although this took several months, the task force members felt very strongly that the final product would make the biggest difference in changing the landscape of pain management clinics in Tennessee.

In January, HB 1157 and SB 1266 were filed in the General Assembly. The House bills sponsor is Representative Bob Ramsey from Blount County and the Senate sponsor is Senator Ken Yager from Roane County. Both of these legislators have sponsored and fought for prescription drug abuse prevention bills previously and are well-versed in the extent of the problem. Representative Bill Dunn has served on the task force since its inception in August of 2013 and also helps tremendously in getting the bill sponsors and garnering support among his peers

HB 1157/SB 1266 raises the requirements for pain management clinic owners and medical directors. Currently in the state of Tennessee, anyone can open a pain management clinic. Our recent pill mill bust had an owner who relocated from Florida in 2011, when they cracked down on their pill mills and has no medical background or training. This bill would require that at least one of the owners has to have a medical license in the state of Tennessee. If clinics do not operate within the guidelines established by the Tennessee Department of Health, it provides leverage to have medical licensure tied to compliance. Currently in our state, the only requirement for a Medical Director of a clinic is that they are an MD licensed in the state with an unrestricted license. In other words, any physician, of any specialty is qualified to run a clinic.

After pulling all the medical directors names off the certification listing with the Tennessee Department of Health, it was incredible to look up the current medical directors and see that we have pediatricians, obstetricians, plastic surgeons, family practice, internal medicine, and rheumatology to name a few. There are also medical directors out there running very high quality pain management clinics and hold a sub-specialty in pain management and/or have obtain certification from pain management credentialing boards. If individuals in chronic pain deserve to know that they are receiving treatment from someone who is well-trained in the specialty area. Right now, a person could walk into a pain management clinic and have no idea that their physician had no additional training in pain medicine.

Tennessee needs to elevate the specialty of pain medicine to that of other specialty areas, such as cardiology, orthopedics, obstetrics, endocrinology, etc.... By changing the requirements of medical directors we improve clinical quality and reduce the likelihood of "pill mill" clinics setting up shop in our state.

Get Involved with MDC

We want you as a member of our drug-free coalition! Check out the important dates for upcoming Coalition meetings. Make your voice heard and help us decide what projects to work on in 2015. For more information, contact Aly Taylor at 588-5550 ext. 105.

To submit an article, announcement or suggestion to the Metropolitan Drug Commission's ALERT newsletter, please contact Deborah Huddleston at (865) 588-5550 or dhuddleston@metrodrug.org.

COMMIT TO GIVE

You can help us improve the lives of at-risk teens in Knoxville in one of three ways:

1. Mail: Please make checks payable to "Metropolitan Drug Commission."
2. Phone: Call (865) 588-5550 and ask for Holly Fuquay.
3. Online: Click the "Donate" button on the right sidebar at www.metrodrug.org.

** Please note, all gifts are tax-deductable**



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Help us save trees (and money) by subscribing to our email newsletter. To sign up, simply enter your name and email address into our online registration form, located on the right hand sidebar at www.metrodrug.org. You will get the same great information you currently receive in our printed publication.

Don't forget to check out our



Read about the latest abuse trends and perspectives from the MDC staff every week. Posts are released each Tuesday. Head on over to metrodrug.org/blog and check us out! We are now accepting guest bloggers! If you are interested in submitting a guest blog, please contact Deborah Huddleston at 588-5550 ext. 103.

Help us grow our social media family

Check us out on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to get the latest in drug prevention news and MDC happenings. Let us know what you want to hear about! If you already follow us, invite your friends to do the same.





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The bill states that the Medical Director for a pain management clinic must be American Board of Medical Specialties credentialed with a subspecialty certification in pain management and/or can apply for diplomat status through the American Board of Pain Management by July 1, 2016. This will allow those physicians who are in pain management for the right reason to do additional training and take certification examinations and to reduce an immediate shortage of providers. The effective date of the bill itself would be July 1, 2015. The ownership requirements would go into effect at that time.

At the time this article was written, the bill has passed the Senate Health and Welfare Committee and is on the calendar to be heard on the House Health sub-committee. The goal is to change the landscape of pain management clinics and allow only those who want to offer quality clinical services to operate. The practice of pain management should be multi-disciplinary and not simply place individuals on powerful narcotics. Other options should be explored to identify the source of the pain and to identify both lifestyle and interventional changes that may help alleviate pain. For some patients, opiate therapy may be most appropriate, but patients should be monitored closely to reduce the possibility of addiction and overdose. Many individuals who have chronic pain have made statements that they feel they are treated like addicts when they go to a pain management clinic due to the rigor of monitoring and testing being conducted. If individuals are educated on quality clinical care, there would be a greater acceptance and understanding that they are being safely monitored to keep them as functional and healthy as possible.

Let's finally take a stand in our state and say that we no longer tolerate clinics who are simply after huge profits without regard to patient safety. By elevating our standards, we can send a clear message to those who are devastating the lives of many Tennesseans that Tennessee no longer welcomes you.



Smoke Free Knoxville Kick Butts Day

On Sunday, March 22, Youth Health Board students, along with pharmacy students from South College and Smoke-Free Knoxville volunteers, held an event to stand up against tobacco. This was held to recognize Kick Butts Day, which is observed on March 18. This is a national day of activism that empowers young people to stand out and speak up against tobacco.

Members of the Youth Health Board creatively displayed some of the ways the tobacco industry has deceived the public through marketing and advertising.

The Youth Health Board display included "Big Tobacco's Dirty Laundry." The teens had t-shirts on clotheslines with tricks and lies the tobacco industry has told throughout history. They also had an exhibit showing household items that contain ingredients also found in cigarettes. In addition, youth provided free carbon monoxide screenings and educational information on tobacco.

Thanks to the Youth Health Board for standing up and supporting tobacco prevention!

DRUG-FREE COMMUNITY COALITION

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

DATE: MAY 26

TIME: 12:00PM-1:30

**Knox County Health Dept
140 Dameron Ave
Community Room**

We want **YOU**...to join us in support of our mission to reduce youth use and adult abuse of alcohol and other drugs in Knoxville.

Here is an opportunity to receive info about the coalition, network with community leaders and become an active Member.

METROPOLITAN DRUG COMMISSION

RSVP
Aly Taylor
865-588-5550 X 105

STRENGTHENS FAMILIES. PROTECTS LIVES.

SADD Update

New SADD Chapters



With prom and graduation season quickly approaching, SADD students are focusing their energy on ensuring that their classmates make safe decisions. Prom and graduation are both very exciting events, and call for much deserved celebration. SADD members remind and encourage their friends to avoid drugs, alcohol or risky decisions. We want students to make wonderful memories without regret.

The mission and energy of Students Against Destructive Decisions continues to have a magnetic pull on Knox County's high school students and faculty. West High School and Powell High School have both agreed to join the SADD family by starting chapters in their schools. Tennessee was recently selected by SADD national to be a participant in the new safe driving pilot program. This gives SADD chapters the materials necessary to change students' view on safe driving. We look forward to having both West and Powell High SADD chapters leading the way to a safer tomorrow through positive peer influence.

If you are interested in starting a SADD chapter in your school and empowering your students to be positive role models let MDC help you! For more information, please contact Caleb Yokley at 865-588-5550 x 101.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April

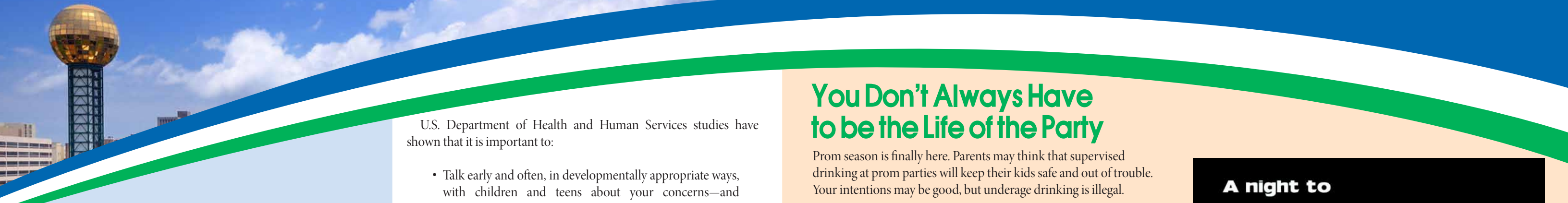
- Alcohol Awareness month
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
- **April 6-10:** Public Health Week
- **April 10-11:** Belew Drugs Pharmacy Medication Take Back Event 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **April 28:** Coalition Meeting 12:00-1:30 at Knox County Health Department

June

- **June 1:** National Cancer Survivor's day
- Men's Health Month
- National Safety Month
- AIDS Awareness Month

May

- Mental Health Month
- National Physical Fitness and sports month
- Law Enforcement Appreciation Month
- Teen Pregnancy prevention month
- **May 4-10:** Children's Mental Health Week
- **May 11-17:** National Alcohol and other drug-related birth defects awareness week
- **May 16:** Medication Take Back Event at Walgreens (8950 Kingston Pk) 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
- **May 26:** Coalition Membership Drive 12:00-1:30 at Knox County Health Department



For the Health of it: Early Education on Alcoholism and Addiction

In a society that continually promotes alcohol and drug use at every level -- even here in Knoxville, Tennessee -- the need to provide education on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse and its effect on children has never been greater. The Metropolitan Drug Commission believes education on this critical threat to the health of our community needs to begin as early as possible. Educated children and youth, whose parents have established clear boundaries, are much more resistant to these dangers and better able to make healthy choices about substance use.

Alcohol and drug use tends to begin in mid-to-late adolescence, and the earlier the age at which someone starts drinking the greater the risk that he or she will develop alcohol-related problems later in life. A delay in drinking until the age of 21 greatly reduces the risk of developing alcohol-related problems. Various factors can contribute to underage drinking, from experimentation, a desire for social acceptance, and while the national percentage of teenagers who drink alcohol is slowly declining, numbers are still quite high. Nearly 30 percent of adolescents report drinking by 8th grade, and 54 percent report being drunk at least once by 12th grade.

Drinking alcohol undoubtedly is part of our culture, and conversations between parents and children about its risks are imperative. Parents' changing role in their maturity can make talking about alcohol a challenge and parents may have trouble setting concrete family rules for alcohol use. Research shows parents are the biggest influence in preventing and reducing adolescent risky behaviors and helping our youth lead healthy lives.

Youth who learn about the dangers of alcohol and drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use these substances than ones who don't learn about such dangers. Parents influence whether and when adolescents begin drinking. Family rules about adolescent drinking and parental attitudes are important.

So, what can parents do to help minimize the likelihood that their adolescent will choose to drink?

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services studies have shown that it is important to:

- Talk early and often, in developmentally appropriate ways, with children and teens about your concerns—and theirs—regarding alcohol. Adolescents who know their parents' opinions about youth drinking are more likely to fall in line with their expectations.
- Establish rules early on, and be consistent in setting expectations and enforcement of violations. Adolescents do feel that parents should have a say in decisions about drinking, and they maintain this deference to parental authority as long as they perceive the message to be legitimate.
- Work with other parents to monitor where kids are gathering and what they are doing. Being involved in the lives of adolescents is key to keeping them safe.

An adolescent's peers drinking behaviors also influences his or her choice about alcohol use. Another powerful influence is the media: movies and television that depict alcohol use, music that includes lyrics about alcohol use, and advertisements.

Reducing underage drinking is critical to assuring a healthy future for youth and requires a cooperative effort from parents, schools, community organizations, business leaders, government agencies, the entertainment industry, alcohol manufacturers/retailers and young people themselves.

"We must continue our efforts to help our next generation avoid the many problems that alcohol abuse and alcoholism can bring to their lives," said Karen Pershing, Executive Director of MDC.

For more information about Alcohol Awareness Month, please visit www.ncadd.org.



You Don't Always Have to be the Life of the Party

Prom season is finally here. Parents may think that supervised drinking at prom parties will keep their kids safe and out of trouble. Your intentions may be good, but underage drinking is illegal.

While it may seem harmless, providing alcohol to a minor is a class A misdemeanor with serious legal consequences. In all 50 states, the minimum drinking age is 21. In Tennessee, parents can spend up to 11 months and 29 days in jail for providing alcohol to a minor.

Tennessee's social host liability law states it is illegal for a parent or guardian to knowingly allow an underage person to buy or possess alcohol. Social host liability is a legal term meaning the adult can be held legally responsible if they provide alcohol to a minor. Other possible consequences include community service, loss of license and fines up to \$2,500.

Parents often believe that allowing teens to drink at home is safer because they can control the amount of alcohol being consumed. Parents may also think that if they model responsible, moderate drinking to their teen, their child will mimic that behavior when parents are not present.

However, teens that drink with their parents are more likely to drink when they are outside the home and vice-versa. They also tend to consume more alcoholic beverages on average than peers who do not drink with their parents.

Safe Party Tips

You can protect your children by following these guidelines when hosting teen parties:

- Host safe, alcohol-free activities and events for youth
- Refuse to supply alcohol to children or allow drinking in your home or on your property
- Be at home when your teenager has a party
- Make sure your teenager's friends do not bring alcohol into your home
- Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events
- Report underage drinking

If your teen is heading to a post-graduation or prom party, find out where they are going and who they will be with. Call the hosting parents and share your rules and expectations. Make sure adult supervision will be available to ensure the party remains alcohol-free.

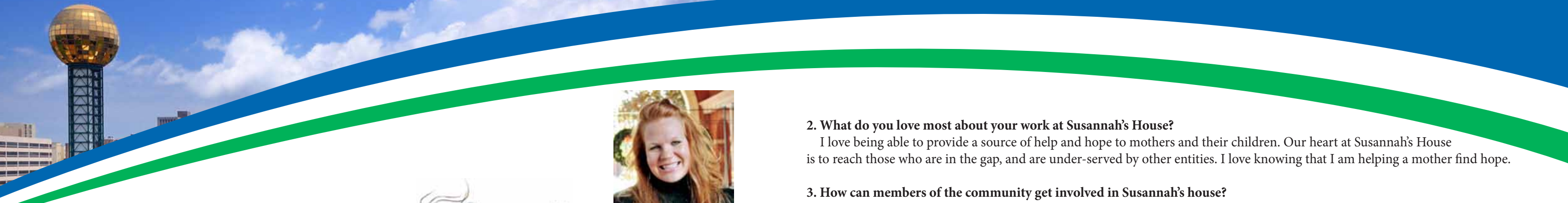


Message to Teens

In the age of social networking and text messaging, photos are uploaded in seconds and videos are streamed live for the entire world to see. It is important to ask yourself, "If pictures of this party pop up on Facebook, will I be humiliated?" If the answer is yes, chances are this is a decision you will soon regret. Just one drink can lower your inhibitions, and in our world of digital connectedness, dangerous and embarrassing activities may be photographed, uploaded, texted about and shared with friends. These images now serve as a permanent reminder of a night you would probably rather forget.

Parents, protect yourself and your kids.

You don't always have to be the life of the party- Be a Parent. Not a peer.



Coalition Spotlight: Sarah Jones Susannah's House



I began working in the social work field with the Department of Children's Services (DCS) in 2008. During my seven years with DCS I gained valuable experience working with not only the Juvenile Court System, but also with many different cultures, along with an array of recovery centers for adults and adolescents across the state. I began my career at DCS as a front line staff (Family Service Worker) and worked my way up to supervising multiple foster care case managers, and over 100 children in foster care, as a Team Leader with DCS. While working with children and families in foster care, I developed a strong passion for working with women dealing with addiction, as well as infants born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). In September 2014, I began working as the Director of Community Support & Services at Susannah's House, in an effort to provide a loving, non-judgmental place where mothers can find hope and healing from addictive issues and life's hurts, habits and hang ups.

I first became involved with the coalition as a representative from the Department of Children's Services. After meeting with Karen Pershing, and learning more about the coalition, I knew immediately I wanted to become more involved. I would love to see the community's culture shift toward a health and wellness model, in which everyone in the community knows, sees, and lives out their role in preventing the problems associated with substance abuse and addiction.

1. Tell us a bit about Susannah's House and what you offer?

Susannah's House is an alcohol and drug treatment program for mothers in recovery. We are a faith-based organization sponsored by Cokesbury United Methodist Church that exists to serve the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of mothers and their children. We provide a nurturing and therapeutic environment for mothers and their children to achieve sobriety, enhance mother and child relationships, and build better life skills while promoting spiritual growth. We believe destructive cycles can be broken and want to serve women who have the desire and commitment to change. The staff members at Susannah's House are educated, licensed and trained to work with mothers in recovery as well as their children (ages 6 weeks to 11 years). That's right...CHILDCARE is lovingly provided while mothers are in our day treatment program! There are volunteers and interns at Susannah's House as well who are trained to lead groups, be mentors to the mothers, and provide support services to the staff members. Women who choose to participate in the program at Susannah's House will be able to receive multiple services on site as well as assistance receiving services off site. There are a number of groups and services that are offered at Susannah's House to support mothers and their children, described in more detail below:

- **Physical:** Susannah's House strives to meet the physical needs of the mothers and their children by providing referrals to appropriate agencies for housing. Susannah's House members also have the option to earn points for participating in activities to use in the Susannah's House store to purchase baby, infant, and child items, school supplies, clothes and hygiene products.
- **Spiritual:** Susannah's House provides opportunities for members to attend Bible study classes on site. There is a prayer ministry team that supports Susannah's House staff, volunteers, and mothers on an on-going basis and is available to support the members as well.
- **Emotional and Mental:** Staff licensed in the mental health field are available to provide on-going individual therapy to members at Susannah's House.
- **Financial:** Susannah's House offers a variety of supports for mothers seeking to manage their financial well-being. Budgeting classes, assistance with creating resumes, interviewing skills and job skills are also offered.
- **Social:** Susannah's House offers an opportunity for members to connect with other mothers in a similar situation and build a healthy support system in recovery, spiritual, educational, and fun classes. Each mother may request to be assigned a trained mentor for additional weekly support.

2. What do you love most about your work at Susannah's House?

I love being able to provide a source of help and hope to mothers and their children. Our heart at Susannah's House is to reach those who are in the gap, and are under-served by other entities. I love knowing that I am helping a mother find hope.

3. How can members of the community get involved in Susannah's house?

We have so many opportunities for members of the community to get involved at Susannah's House! We have multiple volunteer opportunities for individuals and/or groups. We need regular financial donations and volunteers! Donations can be made to Susannah's House by visiting <http://www.cokesbury.tv/> and clicking on the GIVE button. Volunteer jobs are available for Office Help (data entry, filing, answering phones), Fundraising and/or Development Activities, Maintenance, Landscaping/Gardening, GED Tutoring, Exercise Instructor, Children's Activities, and other Special Events.

4. How can people get in touch with you to learn more about your services?

I can be reached by:
email at info@susannahshouse.org
Office phone 865-200-4759
Fax number 865-315-7044
You may also visit our website at www.susannahshouse.org for more information!

Born Drug-Free Tennessee Recap

On February 9, 2015, a press conference was held at East Tennessee Children's Hospital to unveil Born Drug-Free Tennessee (BDFTN). Partners from across the region and state were in attendance for this monumental day.

The East Tennessee Regional Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Task Force started BDFTN as a way to raise awareness, educate and help pregnant women who are using to drugs the help they need as soon as possible.

Karen Pershing, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Drug Commission, says nearly half of drug-dependent babies born in the state are from East Tennessee. She says bringing the problem out in the open is the key to prevention. "I'm just thrilled! We've been working on this probably two to three years. It's so exciting to finally see it all come together and have so much community support."

During the month of February, BDFTN radio and television public service announcements hit the airwaves, along with billboards. Media partners for this campaign included: Kim Hansard with Star 102.1, Robin Wilhoit with WBIR Channel 10 and Lamar Advertising. We would like to thank these partners for giving their time and effort to help us with this important campaign.

The Borndrugfreetn.com website had over 40,000 hits in the month of February. Over half of the visitors went to the "Get Help" section of the website.

BDFTN also partnered with the Star 102.1 Radiothon benefiting East Tennessee Children's Hospital. With this partnership, BDFTN was the phone bank sponsor. Karen Pershing, Executive Director of MDC, Carla Saunders, nurse at ETCH and a mother of a NAS baby had a live interview with Marc and Kim about the NAS epidemic in our region.

The East Tennessee Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Task Force would like to express special thanks to "Born Drug Free Florida" for the development and design of these campaign materials. Another special thanks for Appalachia HIDTA for providing the initial funding for this campaign.

We look forward to seeing how this message spread across our region and the state of Tennessee. If you would like to donate to this campaign, please visit www.borndrugfreetn.com.

To continue following the BDFTN campaign, please follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

