



TENNESSEE ALLIANCE
FOR DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN
Rescue. Defend. Shelter. Support.

Tennessee Alliance for Drug Endangered Children Newsletter

MISSION

Increase training and on-going educational opportunities regarding issues faced by drug endangered children and their families. This includes prevention, recognition, response, intervention, and follow up for the public and private sectors responsible for the care of children.

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Issue 2

July 2011

From the Desk of
Vice-Chair Major Nathan Honeycutt . . .



The Truth About Bath Salts & Plant Food

Early this year, Dr. Sullivan Smith, Director of Emergency Medicine at Cookeville Regional Medical Center, began to notice several patients being treated in the emergency room with symptoms of a familiar but strangely unusual drug overdose. Some of these patients were extremely ill; some exhibited very bizarre behavior; others required transfer to intensive care. Dr. Smith also noticed that similar cases were being reported in other communities in Tennessee.

He determined that the substance causing these illnesses was **mephedrone**, which is being sold openly in several locations as either plant food or bath salts, labeled "not for human consumption." Obviously, that label was being ignored. The substance, though very dangerous, was technically not illegal to sell or possess.

Dr. Smith, who also serves as the Medical Officer for the Cookeville Police Department's Special Operations Group, reviewed his findings with me and we determined to utilize the resources of the Cookeville Drug Enforcement Unit to identify the outlets for this illegal substance in our community.

We quickly learned that the substance, packaged in such forms as Molly's Plant Food, Rave-On Bath Salts, Purple Monkey Plant Food and others was being sold at several convenience stores and smoke shops and on the internet.

Our resources are already inundated with combating methamphetamine, prescription drug diversion, cocaine, and marijuana, and now this . . . Dr. Smith began to spearhead an effort to have these substances declared illegal statewide and to ban not just the substance but also the derivatives. Meanwhile, without existing legislation to allow

criminal prosecution, law enforcement turned to the community for help.

- Our first mission was to "get the word out", utilizing all of our media contacts.
- We dedicated an entire meeting of the Putnam County Local Emergency Planning Committee to educating their members, who in turn, were able to spread the warning on a very large scale.
- Brandon Smith, Public Safety Officer for Putnam County EMS, reached out to our community by posting educational and safety warning material on <http://www.mysafercommunity.com>.
- The Cookeville Police Department Drug Unit hand delivered letters to merchants asking them to voluntarily remove these dangerous substances from their stores. We mentioned that a listing of our effort and its results would be reported to the media. Many of them complied.

Thanks to the hard work of so many citizens, we maximized public awareness quickly. And, these substances are now illegal to distribute (see Legislative Update on Page 3 of this Newsletter). The problem has not been totally solved, but we are certain that some lives have been saved.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that in the minds of many citizens, a perception still exists that 'drug endangered children' translates into 'meth lab kids'. It is our responsibility to, every day, educate and remind everyone that any child that is impacted, directly or indirectly, by any exposure to drug abuse, commerce or manufacture is a drug-endangered child.

Major Nathan Honeycutt currently serves as Vice Chair of the TADEC. Major Honeycutt has been a law enforcement officer at the Cookeville Police Department for 34 years.

Article was written in consultation with TADEC Board Member Dr. Sullivan Smith, Director of Emergency Services, Cookeville Regional Medical Center.

HENRY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RESPONSE TO DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

Henry County Sheriff Monte Belew and the Henry County Sheriff's Office are proud partners of the Tennessee Alliance for Drug Endangered Children Program.

The Henry County Sheriff's Office takes an aggressive stance against the criminal element and relentlessly investigates drug endangered

children exposure cases in drug homes.

This is accomplished by educating our community through drug awareness programs, apprehension and rehabilitation of drug offenders, and the defending and rescuing of our innocent children in "at risk" drug homes within our community.

Sheriff Belew says, "Our children are our future."

The Henry County Sheriff's Office is . . .

Dedicated to Service,
Committed to Protect, and
Devoted to Partnership

The Tennessee Alliance for Drug Endangered Children recognizes Henry County Sheriff Monte Belew for displaying the Tennessee Alliance for Drug Endangered Children logo on the Henry County Sheriff's Office response vehicles.



Article from *The Tennessean* by Brandon Gee on 1 July 2011 **Mother Found Guilty in Toddler's Overdose Death Gets Life Sentence**

A Davidson County jury convicted a Nashville mother of killing her 16-month-old daughter by giving her prescription drugs in 2008.

Jurors deliberated for about three hours Thursday before convicting Jennifer Elizabeth Hannah, 33, of felony first-degree murder, four counts of aggravated child neglect and two counts of giving a controlled substance to a minor.

The murder conviction netted an automatic life sentence and Hannah was taken into custody. She cried as the verdict was read.

Earlier in the day, the mother testified that she did not know who gave her daughter, Ava Hannah, the fatal combination of drugs.

Prosecutors say the evidence shows not only that she did it, but that it could not have been anyone else.

"If I had killed my daughter, God strike me down, I would have killed myself," Hannah told the jury. "I wouldn't have been able to live with myself."

While she was able to emphatically, if erratically, deny the allegations against her,

she also opened herself to cross-examination by Assistant District Attorney General Brian Holmgren, who pressed her on her changing story over the past three years and forced her to acknowledge that she was addicted to medications and used multiple surnames with doctors to get prescriptions.

Michael Hannah found his daughter lifeless in her playpen at the family's South Nashville home on the afternoon of June 27, 2008, after being away from the home most of the day.

The only other person in the home that day was Jennifer Hannah's older daughter and Ava's half-sister, Ana Buchanan.

"We know from the timeline that Mrs. Hannah is the only one who could give these drugs to Ava," the prosecutor said during closing arguments.

An autopsy revealed Ava died of an acute overdose of the potent painkiller oxycodone and the anxiety medication Xanax.

Oxycodone was found in the sippy cup of milk Jennifer Hannah prepared for Ava on the day of her death. Prescription bottles for

both drugs belonging to both Michael and Jennifer Hannah were found in their home.

Defense attorney Patrick McNally was not able to limit his client to answer his direct questions, and Jennifer Hannah provided a wandering testimony—at one point she addressed members of Michael Hannah's family in the audience and apologized for things that were said over the course of the trial.

Her defense was largely focused on raising suspicions about Michael Hannah and his own involvement with drugs. Michael Hannah committed suicide in September 2009.

After the trial, Michael Hannah's father, Tommy Hannah, said the jury made the right decision. "I don't take pleasure in this. I'm just glad justice was done," Tommy Hannah said.

After the verdict, the prosecutor said he was not surprised the mother testified because she had tried to talk her way out of it before. "The family has gone through a lot so we're glad to see (the jury) put an end to it," Holmgren said.

2011 TENNESSEE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE Bills Which Impact Drugs and Children

Public Chapter 274: Creates a Class A misdemeanor offense for the production, manufacture, distribution or possession of additional synthetic cannabinoids.

Public Chapter 169: Creates a Class A misdemeanor for producing, manufacturing, selling or offering to sell any product containing six listed synthetic derivatives or analogues of the Schedule I controlled substance methcathinone.

Public Chapter 292: Changes many aspects of the meth laws including reducing from 20 grams to 15 grams the amount of an immediate precursor it takes to establish prima facie evidence of intent to promote the manufacture of meth. It also expands the offense of aggravated child abuse to include exposure to the manufacture of meth.

Public Chapter 309: Grants venue for prosecution of persons charged with promotion of meth manufacturing through purchase of meth products used to produce meth to any county in which an item was purchased if violations occurred in more than one county.

Public Chapter 221: Persons convicted of felony drug offenses after July 1, 2011, may be denied food stamp assistance.

UPCOMING TRAINING/CONFERENCES

10th Annual National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children Conference

September 14-15, 2011

Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center

Washington, DC Area



This three-day event provides training on the latest research and best practice for Drug Endangered Children efforts at the community, state, and federal level. The conference will include topics related to child welfare, environmental health, medical, prevention, the judiciary and drug courts, substance abuse and mental health.

8th Annual Tennessee Connecting for Children's Justice Conference

November 21-22, 2011
Location TBA



The annual conference provides interdisciplinary education to support professional excellence in the field of child maltreatment by offering diverse beginner, intermediate and advanced workshops with special concentrated tracks for law enforcement, attorneys, medical personnel, CAC staff, therapists, prevention, case managers, and more. **Do not miss this excellent opportunity to network with professionals from across the state and increase your knowledge on recent research affecting child welfare.**

Tennessee Alliance
For Drug Endangered
Children Website
www.tadec.org

We welcome your suggestions for future issues and topics for the *TADEC Newsletter*. Please provide suggestions/changes/additions to the Board and Newsletter Committee by emailing debbie.maberry@13thdtf.com.

Helpful Websites

www.tadec.org

www.nationaldec.org

www.cadcat.org

www.methfreetn.org

www.rid-meth.org

Drug Endangered Children . . . Are those children who suffer physical or psychological harm or neglect resulting from exposure to illegal drugs or persons under the influence of illegal drugs or exposure to dangerous environments where drugs are being manufactured or chemicals used to make drugs are accessible. The drug endangered children in Tennessee are part of a very large population of children whose lives have been seriously and negatively impacted by dangerous drugs.

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One Vacant Position