



**20
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ANNUAL REPORT

Tennessee Chapter

INCORPORATED IN TENNESSEE

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Our Mission

The Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is committed to being a leading voice, advocate and authority for the physical, mental and social welfare of infants, children and adolescents, as well as the pediatricians who care for them.



A letter from our leaders...

The announcement of the FDA emergency authorization of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (in December 2020) resulted in the momentous vaccine availability for adults in early 2021. Later came the approval for adolescents, and then those ages 5 – 11. While these were encouraging milestones, the second year of the pandemic also brought a host of challenges for children and families as well as pediatricians.

As we look forward to a brighter 2022, it's helpful to pause & consider our many achievements over the past year. The Chapter remained more relevant than ever as we voiced our strong support for vaccines and various aspects of public health as so many of its basic tenants were under attack. This annual report highlights all the incredible advocacy work, educational support and initiatives the chapter tackled in 2021. Some of these include:

- Addressing vaccine hesitancy for both COVID and routine childhood vaccinations to the TN legislature and parents
- Providing important vaccine educational opportunities and updates for physicians and their practices
- Advocating for masking in schools lead to national AAP and TNAAP filing three amicus briefs citing violation of children with special health care needs. This was a first for TNAAP and we were thrilled the courts agreed!
- Working with payers to get pediatricians issues with claims, improper payments and denials handled quickly
- Remaining visible in the media by distributing press releases and op-eds to media outlets across the state, and conducting numerous interviews with both local and national media affiliates
- Engaging our new committees to help issue statements on juvenile justice reform and important immigrant resources for pediatricians
- Offering high quality education (mostly conducted virtually again this year) through our ongoing education initiatives as well as our two annual conferences focusing on both clinical topics and practice management

Despite the tumultuous year with many challenges, the Chapter's membership, financial position and voice remain strong. In its second year, the TNAAP endowment fund, established to create a legacy for future pediatricians, finished the year with a balance of just over \$27,000!

We hope you felt our support throughout the year. Toasting to what will hopefully be a wonderful 2022!



Anna Morad, MD, FAAP
TNAAP President, 2020-2021



Ruth E. Allen
TNAAP Executive Director



Anna Morad, MD getting her first
COVID vaccine December 21, 2020.



Advocacy continues to be reported as our number one member benefit.

TNAAP's advocacy efforts at the state and federal level required taking on new and unforeseen challenges in 2021! We spoke out about the need to protect public health and the importance of COVID and routine Childhood Vaccines amidst an unprecedented time.

We worked with the Governor's office, TennCare and other policy-makers around COVID related policies, monitored hundreds of bills, and had many successes despite the challenges.

With all the legal battles around vaccines and masking in schools, TNAAP and AAP also availed ourselves to the judicial branch by joining in on three amicus briefs which address masking in schools in the three grand regions of the state.

Each Year when I get my renewal notice for @AmericanAcadPeds and @TNChapter dues, I breathe deep and just do it because I know they advocate in ways I can't. Never have I been more proud to call myself an AAP member. Their voice on behalf of kids has been tireless.

- David Johnson, MD via Twitter

Financial Advocacy for Pediatricians and their Practices!

Federal Financial Relief for Providers



TNAAP actively worked with National AAP to help achieve:

- New Provider Relief Fund distribution including a one-time Medicaid/CHIP bonus to account for limited resources for pediatricians in 2020
- More than \$700M in Provider Relief Fund distributions to pediatricians and other pediatric providers (excluding hospitals); including approximately \$17M to TN providers
- \$39M in American Rescue Plan relief funds distributed to pediatricians and other providers who care for children in rural areas, including \$2.5M to TN providers



Payer Advocacy

TNAAP's Pediatric Council

TNAAP takes on issues with payers regularly. In 2021 chapter leadership attended 8 meetings with payers to represent TN pediatricians and sent numerous emails to address provider concerns. TNAAP tackles:



2021 Successes include:

- Payment for the new PPE CPT code 99072
- Payment for 99211 in the context of a COVID-19 symptom and exposure assessment and specimen collection
- Halting improper claim denials for 96110
- Halting improper remits where contractual write-offs were put to patient liability.
- Clarifying transition of CoverKids (Tennessee's CHIP program) to be managed by the Medicaid health plans



Convincing payers to remove inappropriate edits and claims denials



Addressing inappropriate prior authorization requirements



Advocating for coverage of certain services and CPT codes



Halting payer audits and recoupments

Members are encouraged to submit payer-related issues to janet.sutton@tnaap.org.

State Legislative Advocacy

TNAAP monitored hundreds of bills and lobbied for and against numerous pieces of legislation. The following list highlights just some examples of legislation we actively lobbied, many of which included providing legislative testimony at various committee hearings.



SUPPORTED

Key funding priorities in state budget including:

- \$5.5M for additional Graduate Medical Education spots
- \$250M in a Mental Health Trust Fund to fund mental health programs in schools through interest earned in the trust
- 12-month postpartum coverage extension for new mothers in the TennCare program

OPPOSED

- More than 15 bills designed to increase vaccine hesitancy and limit access to the COVID vaccine
- Bills limiting access to general-affirming care for transgender youth
- Bills that would allow both nurse practitioners and physicians assistants to practice independently



TNAAP hosted a virtual day on the hill March 23, 2021.

Over 70 members attended the event and met with over 12 legislators during the day!

Pictured Left: Pediatricians meeting with Rep. Curcio (Dickson).



Advocacy within the Judicial Branch

In addition to advocating for universal school mask policies in Nashville, TNAAP has also been advocating for children in federal courts. This year, along with National AAP, **TNAAP has filed amicus briefs in 3 cases in Federal District Courts** to challenge an executive order that prohibits schools from requiring universal masking. **This strategy has been successful with all 3 federal courts** siding with plaintiffs that the rights of children with disabilities to attend school safely under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) are violated with these orders. The rulings have been appealed to the US Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit and TNAAP and AAP National have filed an amicus brief in that case as well.

Advocacy for Children and Families



Sent multiple letters to Governor Lee regarding COVID policies including:

- Support for **Masking in Schools**
- Support for **State-wide Mask Mandates**

Signed onto national letters regarding:

- Strengthening the **Vaccines for Children Program Act of 2021**
- Urging **CHIP to become permanent**

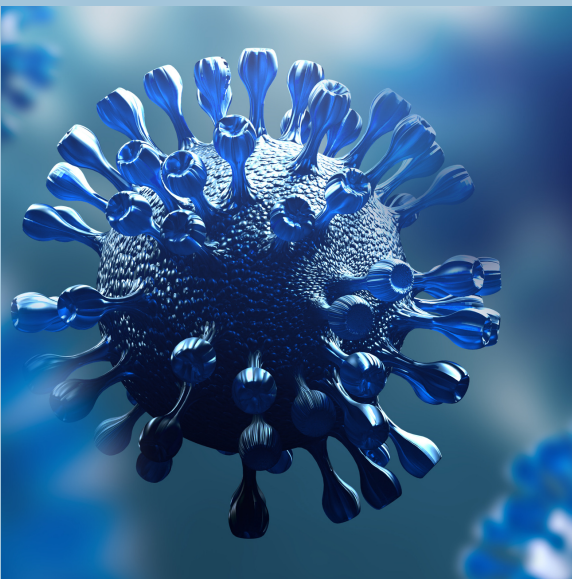
Supported the **"American Families Plan"** providing direct support for families related to child care and family leave and extending tax cuts for families.

Hosted meetings with:

- representative of **White House COVID Response Team** around Tennessee's COVID response
- **Governor Lee** to discuss vaccine efficacy and masking in schools



Supporting Pediatricians During the COVID-19 Pandemic



The pandemic continues to bring many unexpected challenges and needs for the pediatric community. TNAAP has adapted and sought to be a reliable resource and support network for Pediatricians.



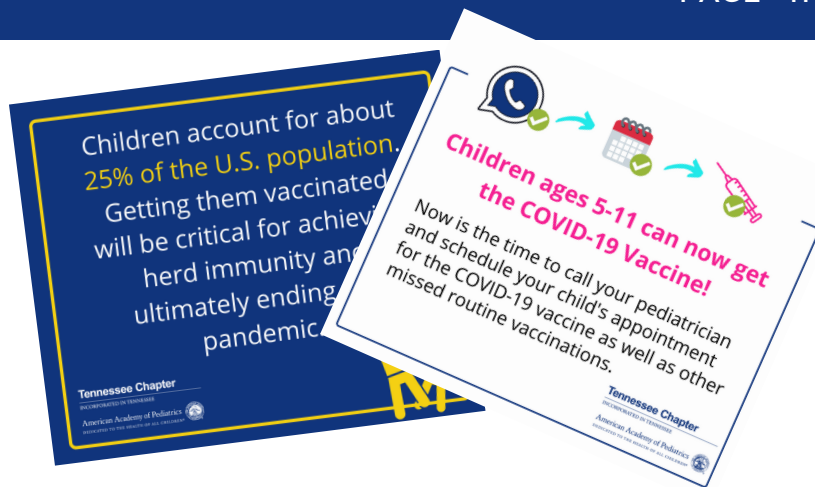
Vaccine Education & Awareness

TNAAP hosted a vaccine education webinar series. Topics included:

- Vaccine Hesitancy
- Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine for Youth
- VFC Recruitment
- What we know about COVID-19 Vaccines for Children

COVID-19 Vaccine Supply

TNAAP had multiple meetings with the TN Department of Health urging the availability of smaller lots of vaccine for distribution to pediatric practices.



"COVID-19 Vaccine" Social Media Campaign

TNAAP created Tennessee specific resources to help promote vaccine safety and reduce vaccine hesitancy. This tool kit included a variety of social media graphics for practices to use.



Real Time COVID-Related Communications

We met weekly with national AAP, TNAAP leadership and staff to discuss pandemic related issues and support needs. We distributed COVID specific "eblasts" and associated resources as needed to membership.

During our 2021 COVID communication cycle we sent 38 eblasts with 27,515 opens and 11,304 clicks!

We also hosted two town halls with membership to relay important information and host discussion on specific topics.

TNAAP continues to support pediatricians in countless ways in our effort to improve the health and well-being of children in Tennessee. The leaders at TNAAP have provided frequent, timely, reliable and accurate information during this pandemic. This has had a profound impact on my ability to counsel families through this challenging time. Thank-you all!!

--Amy Evans, MD, Sewanee Pediatrics



TNAAP Advocating in the Media!

Op-Ed Submissions

TNAAP leadership submitted numerous Op-Eds through out the year including:

- Tennessean – Stay up to Date on Routine Childhood Immunizations
- The Hill – It Doesn't Have to be This Way – COVID-19 is Now Vaccine-Preventable
- MedPage - Pausing Vaccine Outreach to Kids was Ill-Advised
- The Hill – What Happened to Southern Hospitality? Be a Good Neighbor: Get Vaccinated and Mask Up
- Tennessean - How the Juvenile Justice System can Protect our Children from the Negative Impact of Aces

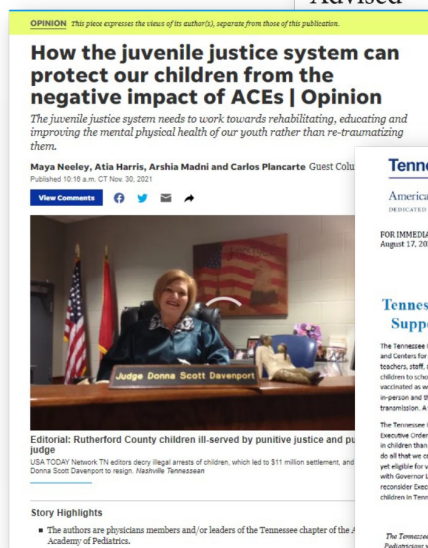
Media Interviews

The news media continues to turn to TNAAP for expert opinions on the pandemic. In 2021, Drs. Morad, Yaun, Butler, Dentz and other TNAAP leadership conducted more than 25 interviews with news outlets from across the state and even some national stations, such as CNN and NBC's Today Show.

Press Releases

TNAAP Distributed press releases

- 8/4 TNAAP Supports Covid-19 Immunizations For Those Eligible And Indoor Masking For All
- 7/13 TNAAP Endorses Immunizations and Public Health - Speaks out on Firing of Dr. Fiscus
- 8/13 TNAAP Condemns Violent Words / Aggressive Actions Aimed At Medical Professionals
- 8/17 TNAAP Tennessee Pediatricians Stand by Guidelines and Support Universal Masking of ALL



Providing Timely, Relevant & Quality Education

EPSDT and Coding trainings reached **509 practices** and **868 providers and staff**.

Behavioral Health in Pediatrics (BEHIP) hosted **11 office-based trainings** with **324 providers and staff**, hosted **12 virtual learning** collaborative sessions with **193 participants**.

TNAAP's three Quality Improvement Projects offering MOC Part IV engaged **28 physicians**, who serve **43,794 patients**.



Screening Tools and Referral Training (START) trained **1396 participants** through **26 trainings** in developmental screening across the state.

184 physicians obtained CME for BEHIP on-line learning modules.



“

Janet Sutton has been amazing at educating myself as well as meeting with our physicians to keep us abreast on current coding guidelines and has also been an advocate to help resolve payment issues. This is a great resource provided by TNAAP.

-- Debbie Clifford - Columbia Pediatric Clinic

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TNAAP Training has Measurable Success!



SCREENING TOOLS AND REFERRAL TRAINING

What are START Participants Saying?

- 99% reported as a result of this training, they and/or their practice will be implementing screening tools.
- 62% reported they were not familiar with Tennessee's Part C program prior to the training.
- 94% agreed that as a result of this training their knowledge of the Part C program has improved.

What are BeHiP Participants Saying?

- 91% reported that they will be able to: recognize trauma, apply trauma-competent care, increase collaboration with the child welfare system and community based behavioral health providers, and manage psychopharmacology.
- "BeHiP has given our practice a greater knowledge of how to maneuver through the DCS foster care system and who to contact when we need help. I also feel more confident in psychopharmacology." Dr. Tom Mitoraj, MD

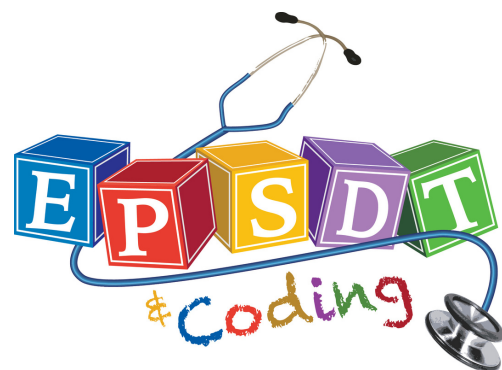


What are PHiIT Participant Saying?

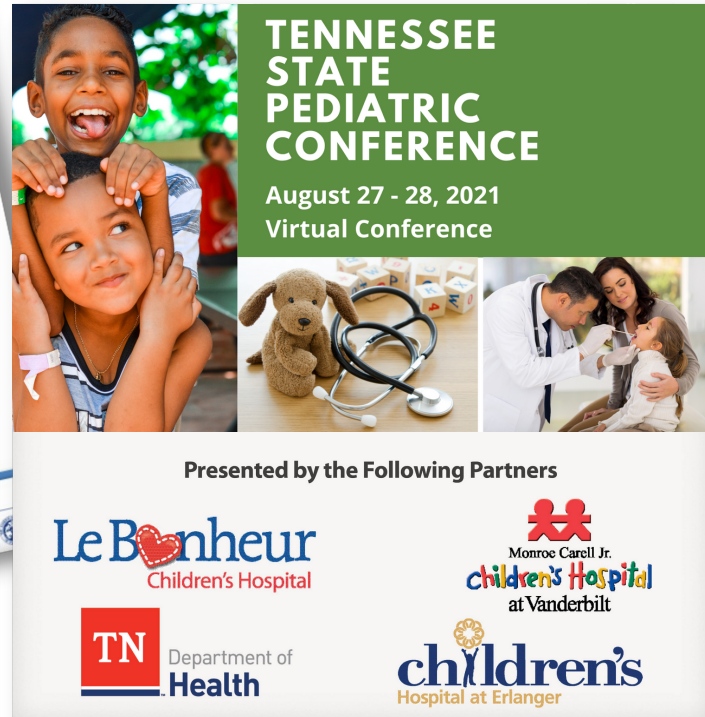
- Participating Well Child Program practices had a 13.3% increase in well child visits.
- Four practices increased well visits over 20%

What are EPSDT & Coding Participants Saying?

- 98% of EPSDT and Coding Training participants report having a greater knowledge of the EPSDT program and coding for well visits.
- "I am so thankful for the TNAAP resources. I appreciate the coding resources as well as the on line resources. Thank you!" Amy Vehec, MD, Brentwood Pediatrics



Continuing Education for the Whole Practice!



2021 conferences offered participants continuing education on a variety of topics including:

- Increasing Revenue & Reducing Expenses
- Social Determinants of Health
- Increasing Practice Visits
- Preparing for Disasters
- Telehealth
- Managing SSRIs in Teens
- Integrative Medicine
- and more!

Through Training Programs and Conferences, In 2021 TNAAP Offered:

9 CEUs Credits,
75 MOC Part IV Credits,
5 MOC Part II Credits, &
35 CME Credits.

**Most of this was available
FREE to members!**

Chapter Financial Results

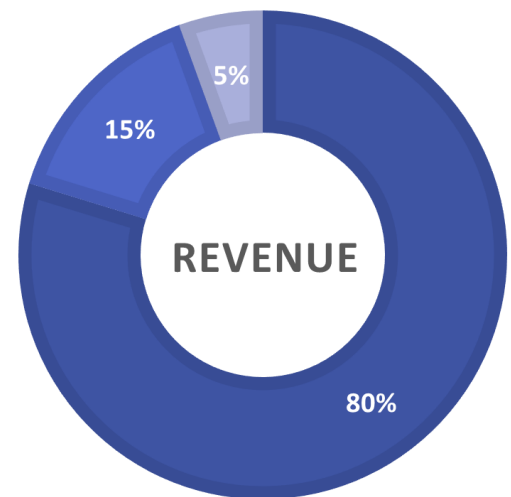
Year Ended June 30, 2021

The chapter finished the fiscal year ended 6/30/21 with a \$63,797 increase to net assets and a total reserves balance of \$457,056. The chapter continued providing important educational programs funded by over \$667,000 in grants.

The chapter's endowment fund continued to grow during 2021 ending the year with a balance of more than \$27,000. Contributions to the endowment will support the chapter's mission over the long-term.

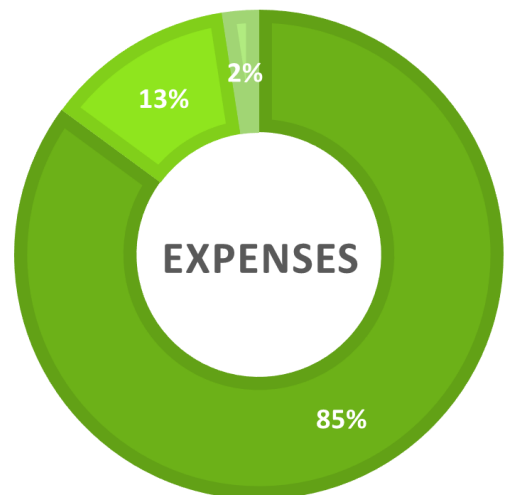
REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Grants	\$ 676,106	80%
Membership Dues	124,955	15%
Sponsorships & Other Income	46,878	5%
Total Revenue	\$ 847,939	



EXPENSES

Program Services	\$ 667,093	85%
Management & General	97,914	13%
Fundraising	19,135	2%
Total Expenses	\$ 784,142	
Change in Net Assets	\$ 63,797	



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets	\$ 714,967
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	\$ 257,911
Net Assets	457,056
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 714,967

ENDOWMENT FUND

Balance as of June 30, 2021	\$ 24,911
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TNAAP Donor Report

Creating a Legacy for Future Pediatricians: TNAAP's New Endowment Fund

This endowment will help fulfill TNAAP's mission by supporting its long-term educational, advocacy and quality improvement programs. The fund was established in 2020 by Stuart T. Weinberg, MD. Contributions to the endowment also support the chapter over the long-term by increasing future annual distributions for tomorrow's pediatricians.

Endowment Contributors to date:

Ruth Allen
Blake Bergeron, MD
Suzanne Berman, MD*
Becky Brumley
Hunter Butler, MD*
Miranda Butler, MD*

Barbara Dentz, MD*
Gayatri Jaishankar, MD
Elisha McCoy, MD
Anna Morad, MD*
Dorothy Sinard, MD*

Carlenda Smith, MD
Lindsey Wargo, MD
Stuart Weinberg, MD*
Toni Whitaker, MD
Jason Yaun, MD

The Tennessee Chapter of the AAP Endowment fund received its first annual distribution in 2021! This initial \$400 dispersal will be used to fund a two-part (free) Media Training Opportunity for TNAAP Members during 2022. Sessions will feature a national expert and Tennessee media personalities to address message development, on-camera presentation, and interviewing skills to help succeed in delivering key messages in various media formats. This brings an exciting opportunity to expand our voice across the state on issues supporting children and families.

2021 General Fund Donors

Suzanne Berman, MD*	Anna Morad, MD
Becky Brumley	Carlenda Smith, MD
Hunter Butler, MD	The Jane and Richard
Barbara Dentz, MD	Eskind and Family
John Hill, MD	Foundation
Joani Jack, MD	



*Major Donor - \$1,000 or more

We Thrive Because of You!

Year two of the COVID-19 pandemic brought many more unexpected challenges for the medical community. We appreciate your continued faith in us to provide you support during these difficult times!

At the end of 2021, we were up 6.69% in total membership and 4.86% in paid memberships! Your **support, guidance and dedication** to Tennessee's children help make our work possible! We could not be prouder of the pediatric community in TN who rose to the occasion again and again despite the extraordinary challenges of year two of the pandemic.



TNAAP Staff

Ruth Allen, Executive Director
Janet Sutton, EPSDT and Coding Program Manager
Susan Rollyson, START Program Manager
Elaine Riley, BeHiP Program Manager
Becky Brumley, PHiT Program Manager and Quality Coach
Melissa Koffman, Finance Manager
Casey Lamarr, Marketing and Communications Director

2021 TNAAP Board of Directors

Anna Morad, MD - President
Jason Yaun, MD - Vice President
Carlenda Smith, MD - Secretary
Karen Schetzina, MD Membership Chair
Deanna Bell MD, Nominating
Chair/Immediate Past President

Fellows-at-Large

Suzanne Berman, MD (East)
Paty Carasusan, MD (West)
Elizabeth Copenhaver, MD (Middle)
Gayatri Jaishankar, MD (East)
Debo Odulana, MD (West)
Lindsey Wargo, MD (Middle)

Thank
you