

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF TENNESSEE  
AT NASHVILLE**

**AMENDED ORDER AND SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER  
ESTABLISHING STATEWIDE COMMISSION ON  
FOSTER CARE**

**FILED**

June 26, 1996

**Cecil Crowson, Jr.  
Appellate Court Clerk**

The order entered May 30, 1996, establishing the Statewide Commission on Foster Care is hereby vacated, and the following order is hereby published.

In 1993, as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, Congress authorized federal funding for grants to state court systems to assist them in performing their roles in the continuum of care provided to children and families at risk. The purpose of the program, which is administered through the Administrative Office of the Courts of the Tennessee Supreme Court, is to evaluate how state courts function with respect to cases involving allegations of abuse and neglect and to make improvements.

The Tennessee Supreme Court recognizes the importance of this program and is committed to this state to improve the judicial administration of cases involving abuse, neglect, foster care, and adoption by the courts. The aim of the Court is to achieve a court system in Tennessee that is uniform in its high quality of administration of cases involving allegations of abuse and neglect, and, ultimately, to assist more children alleged to be abused or neglected in achieving permanent homes consistent with their best interests, in an efficient and timely manner.

As part of the Tennessee Supreme Court's State Court Improvement Program overseeing foster care, the Statewide Commission on Foster Care is hereby established to assist the Court in the supervision of the assessment phase

of the program, assist in developing a plan of action for improvements, and ensure that the Tennessee Court Improvement Program reflects the needs, concerns and interests of courts and related personnel throughout Tennessee. The Commission will assist the Tennessee Supreme Court and its Administrative Office of the Courts in the study of how cases involving allegations of abuse and neglect are being treated by the courts and related personnel throughout the state, including identification of the extent to which the courts are meeting requirements under state and federal law. The results of this assessment will provide a basis for the Commission to assist the Court and its Administrative Office in developing a plan of action for improving the courts' administration of these cases.

Responsibilities of the Commission will include attendance at three annual in-state meetings. The Commission will meet periodically to discuss the progress of the Court Improvement Program, as well as to develop ideas directed toward the implementation of improvements. Specifically, the Commission will discuss the review process for children who are in state custody and how well that process contributes to the dual goals of ensuring that reasonable efforts are made to preserve families and that children find permanent homes. The Commission will also study and develop guidelines for foster care review boards.

The Supreme Court is pleased to appoint Betty Adams, Esquire as Chair of the Statewide Commission on Court Improvement. The organizational meeting will be at the call of the Chair. The Court is pleased to appoint the following members:

**Betty Adams, Director of Juvenile Justice**  
Children's Comprehensive Services  
Murfreesboro

**Joan Archer, Executive Director**  
Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges  
Nashville

**Honorable Suzanne Bailey, Judge**  
Hamilton County Juvenile Court  
Chattanooga

**Susan L. Brooks, Assistant Professor**  
Vanderbilt University School of Law  
Nashville

**Honorable Carol J. Chumney, State Representative**  
General Assembly of Tennessee  
Memphis

**Gail Yvette Crawford, Director**  
Foster Care - Tennessee Department of Health  
Nashville

**Karen P. Dennis, Director**  
Memphis Area Legal Services  
Memphis

**Rebecca E. Domina, Foster Parent**  
Knoxville

**Cindy Durham, President**  
Tennessee Court Appointed Special Advocate Association  
Gallatin

**Kathy England, Director**  
Tennessee Task Force on Domestic Violence  
Nashville

**Joyce Evans, Director**  
Juvenile Court, City of Bristol  
Bristol

**Dr. Bill Kenner, Child Psychiatrist**  
Nashville

**Honorable David Loughry, Judge**  
Rutherford County General Sessions and Juvenile Court  
Murfreesboro

**Nancy Menke, Assistant to the Governor**  
Governor's Office  
Nashville

**Honorable Rex Henry Ogle, Judge**  
Circuit Court, Fourth Judicial District  
Sevierville

**Linda O'Neal, Executive Director**  
Tennessee Commission On Children and Youth Services  
Nashville

**Barry Pelazzari, Court Clerk**  
Anderson County Circuit Court  
Clinton

**Honorable Andrew Shookhoff, Judge**  
Davidson County Juvenile Court  
Nashville

**Honorable Kenneth Turner, Judge**

Shelby County Juvenile Court Judge  
Memphis

**Mary Walker, Referee**  
Davidson County Juvenile Court  
Nashville

**Romelia Wallace, Executive Director**  
18th Avenue Family Enrichment Center  
Nashville

**Trudy Weatherford, Co-Chairperson**  
Advisory Committee on Family Preservation and Family Support Services  
Tennessee Department of Human Services  
Nashville

**Honorable Paul Wohlford, Judge**  
Sullivan County Juvenile Court  
Bristol

The Court is pleased to appoint Justice Penny J. White to serve as its liaison to the Commission. Ms. Suzanne Keith, Deputy Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, is appointed to serve as liaison for the Commission. A foster child will also be appointed by the Chair as a full member of this Commission.

(Entered nunc pro tunc  
for May 30, 1996.)

FOR THE COURT:

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ADOLPHO A. BIRCH, JR., Chief Justice