



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 8, 2014

**Contact:
KQ Communications
(901) 761-9286**

Memphis Announced as Site of New Parenting Place Concept

Mayors, Tennessee First Lady Among Ex Officio Members of New Task Force

MEMPHIS, Tenn.— Local leaders have announced the Greater Memphis community as the future site of two pilot “parenting places” that will focus on providing parents and caregivers with preemptive access to professional support to prevent or reduce challenges to their young children’s emotional and behavioral health.

Tennessee First Lady Crissy Haslam, Memphis Mayor AC Wharton, Jr., Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell, Jr. will serve as ex officio members of the new ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Center Task Force of Shelby County. They join a team of 40 local leaders dedicated to raising community awareness about the costly and harmful outcomes of toxic stress that affect many if not most families during the course of a child’s development, and can undermine all forms of health.

Over the next year, the ACE Center Task Force will roll out a two-pronged approach to addressing the effects of toxic stress on the community: a county-wide ACE survey will be administered this summer, followed by the January 2015 launch of two pilot parenting places open to families seeking state-of-the-art, welcoming and preventive approaches to reducing challenges to their children’s emotional and behavioral health. The parenting places will be open to all families, regardless of income.

The effort is made possible through the partnership of Porter-Leath, which will administrate the parenting places, and Baptist Memorial Hospital for Women and Knowledge Quest, which will serve as hosts to the first two locations.

Members of the ACE Center Task Force of Shelby County include:

Barbara Holden Nixon*
Chair
Early Childhood Consultant

Gwendolyn Price*
Parenting Place Director
Porter-Leath

Cynthia Allen
Co-Chair
System Community Involvement Manager
Baptist Memorial Health Care

Sandra Allen
Director
Center for Children & Parents
LeBonheur Children's Hospital

Cardell Orrin
Co-Chair
Memphis City Director, Stand for Children

Belinda Anderson
Community Leader

Director Toney Armstrong
Memphis Police Department

MORE

Nancy Bogatin
Retired Advertising Executive
Mayor's Advisory Council on Education

Rachel Lundeen
Chief of Staff
Office of the First Lady
Representing TN First Lady Crissy Haslam

Sonji Branch
Principal
Solutions Plus Consulting Services

Yvonne Madlock
Director
Shelby County Health Department

Ruby Bright
Executive Director
Women's Foundation for Greater Memphis

Karen Matthews
President and CEO
Delta Health Alliance

Rev. Margaret Burnett
Associate Pastor Outreach Ministry
Idlewild Presbyterian Church

Keenan McCloy
Director of Libraries
Memphis Public Library & Information Center

Stephen Bush
Chief Public Defender
Law Offices of Shelby County
Public Defender

Michelle Miller
Family Stability Program Coordinator
Knowledge Quest

Chief Bill Cash
Shelby County Sheriff's Office

Amy Moritz
Director
Center for Transforming Communities

Kelli H. Davis
Director of Grief &
Trauma Resolution Therapy
Lakeside Behavioral Health Hospital

Jenny Nevels*
Executive Director
Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation

Marlon Foster*
Executive Director
Knowledge Quest

Maureen O'Connor
Director of Public Policy
Administrative Director of Trauma
LeBonheur Children's Hospital

Lucia Gilliland
Community Leader

Chris Peck*
Associate Director
Pyramid Peak Foundation

Willeen Hasting
CEO
Memphis Health Center

Owen P. Phillips
Professor OB-GYN/
Dean of Students Affairs
UT College of Medicine

Doug Imig*
Professor
University of Memphis

Barbara Prescott
Executive Director
People First Partnership

Sean Lee*
President
Porter-Leath

Courtney Robertson*
Special Assistant to Executive Director
Knowledge Quest

MORE

Douglas Scarboro
Executive Director
Memphis City Mayor's Office
of Talent and Human Capital
Representing City Mayor AC Wharton, Jr

Antony Sheehan
President
Church Health Center

Tish Towns
Sr. Vice President
Advocacy and External Relations
Regional One Health

Anita Vaughn*
CEO and Administrator
Baptist Memorial Hospital for Women

Keisha M. Walker
Administrator
Office of Early Childhood & Youth
Shelby County Government
*Representing Shelby County Mayor Mark
Luttrell, Jr.*

Marilyn Robinson
Senior Vice President
Marketing & Government Relations
Saint Francis Hospital

Ellen Rolfes*
Consultant

Mike Warr*
Executive Vice President
for Development and New Business
Porter-Leath

Robin Waters
Teacher
Achievement School District

General Amy Weirich
District Attorney General
Shelby County

Paula Wilkinson
Director/CONCERN
Baptist Memorial Health Care

Linda Williams
President & CEO
RISE Foundation

Gwendolyn Wright
Regional Coordinator
Tennessee Commission
on Children & Youth

*Executive Committee member

The Shelby County pilot project is based on the work of international speaker Robin Karr-Morse, author of “Scared Sick: The Role of Childhood Trauma in Adult Disease” and “Ghosts from the Nursery,” and founder of the Parenting Institute based in Portland, Oregon. She will serve as a consultant for the Memphis pilot program, along with Vincent J. Felitti, MD, international speaker and co-investigator of the original Adverse Childhood Experiences Study.

“Essentially what the centers are designed to do is make information, guidance, support and problem solving available to parents early in the appearance of issues, before they become a problem,” says Karr-Morse.

Memphis has long-experienced high levels of ill health, obesity and violence. Emerging research in brain science, genetics and the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study indicate that the most effective time to intervene in these problems is at the earliest point of detection of challenges by the family.

MORE

“All of us who are parents have challenges; it comes with the territory,” Karr-Morse says. “What makes the difference is the availability of support – how soon we get it, the quality of the answers we get, and how quickly we can put that information to work to build health and interrupt destructive patterns. When it comes to raising children, we’re all vulnerable, so it helps to have a trusted confidant—a trusted relationship that one can access easily and consistently.”

###

ABOUT THE ACE CENTER TASK FORCE

The ACE Center Task Force of Shelby County is a team of local leaders dedicated to raising community awareness of the costly and harmful outcomes of toxic stress arising from adverse childhood experiences. It strives to provide all Shelby County families preemptive access to professional support to reduce challenges to their children’s emotional and behavioral health at the earliest possible point in their development. Our two-pronged approach is rooted in the latest science of neurobiology and genetics, and is unique due to its focus on how family dynamics impact children’s health. Learn more at www.porterleath.org