

Try a Little TENNderCARE

"...Lord have mercy now

All you got to do is take my advice..."

-- Lyric from Otis Redding 1967 hit,
"Try a Little Tenderness"

"Every child in Tennessee deserves to grow up healthy and happy. TENNderCare is the state's commitment to see that our children and teens have the best start at a healthy life."
-- Phil Bredesen, Governor

In 1967, rhythm and blues singer Otis Redding had a hit when he re-worked a slow 1933 Bing Crosby record called "Try a Little Tenderness." Redding went into high gear in mid-song, producing a famous performance that is now in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen has similarly re-worked the dusty name of the state's "EPSDT" program into the more memorable "TENNderCare." Here are some basic Q's and A's.

Q. What is TENNderCare?

Tennessee has announced its official commitment to promoting good health in children and young adults from birth until age 21. This program is called TENNderCare. It matters for anyone who:

- Has a child under 21, or
- Knows someone with a child under 21, or
- Pays taxes on food, services, income, or land.

Q. What's the difference between TennCare and TENNderCare?

TENNderCare is a part of TennCare. "TENNderCare" is now the name for the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment ("EPSDT") program. It helps make sure babies, children, teens, and young adults get comprehensive check-ups and health care services. TENNderCare provides:

- Free check ups
- Dental check up and services
- Medical treatment
- Behavioral health services

The attraction for taxpayers is that spending money for early check-ups produces better future health – and saves money by helping to prevent or provide medical or dental treatment to address serious health problems.

Q. Who is eligible for TENNderCare?

All children and young adults under the age of 21 who are on TennCare. The goal of TENNderCare is to give babies, children, teens, and young adults the best start by getting them the health care they need.

Q. Where are TENNderCare services received?

At each covered person's primary care provider (PCP) and at each Tennessee county health department office. TENNderCare is the full program of check-ups and health care services for children and young adults under 21 who have TennCare.

Q. When should child get a free check-up?

At birth	24 months
2-4 days	3 years
1 month	4 years
2 months	5 years
4 months	6 years
6 months	8 years
9 months	10 years
12 months	11 years
15 months	12 years
18 months	

Sometimes parents are reluctant to make appointments if their kids are not sick. Get in the habit of scheduling "well child" check-ups! Well child check-ups help identify or prevent potential problems before they affect a child's development of quality of life.

Q. When should teenagers get a free check-up?

13 years	17 years
14 years	18 years
15 years	19 years
16 years	20 years

Q. What if I have TennCare and need a ride to the appointment?

Call the Family Assistance Service Center toll-free at 1-866-311-4287.

Q. What if a check-up uncovers a problem?

TennCare will cover the medical or dental services needed to find or treat problems.

Q. Where can I get more information?

Call or visit your local county health department. Ask for the new "TENNderCare Help Card" printed just for your county. It's a cool little tool. Get it – and use it!

by Jim Hawkins, Managing Attorney,
Gallatin office, Legal Aid Society

The Legal Aid Society is a non-profit law firm, not a government agency, and all calls are strictly confidential. If you need more information on this or other common legal problems, please visit our Web site at www.las.org or call 1-800-238-1443.

January 29, 2007