



2026 DISABILITY DAY ON THE HILL
& DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY

IMPACT REPORT

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In 2026, we embraced

ADVENTURES IN ACCESS

// Life with a disability can be an isolating experience, but Disability Day on the Hill (DDH) reminds us that we don't have to go through our journey alone. DDH is rooted in the strength of the disability community and the power of coming together to advocate, connect, and create change.

Our theme for DDH 2026, Adventures in Access, reflects our ongoing journey toward full inclusion, access to care, and the supports and opportunities that allow us to thrive, not just survive.

During DDH 2026, we focused on empowering Tennesseans with disabilities through advocacy and relationship-building. We invited community members to share their stories and lived experiences with their elected officials. Through these conversations and connections, advocates were able to strengthen their voices and take greater ownership of their individual advocacy journeys.

Together, we continued our mission of creating a society that values, includes, and supports people with disabilities.

VIRTUAL EVENTS INCLUDED:

- **Virtual Advocates Workshop Series** - Details on Page 5
- **Disability Advocacy Day** - Details on Page 12

IN-PERSON EVENTS INCLUDED:

- **TDC Community Party** - Details on Page 7
- **Disability Day on the Hill** - Details on Page 9



SPONSORS MAKE OUR ADVENTURES POSSIBLE

// As the needs of our community change, so does our approach to advocacy, which means Disability Day on the Hill doesn't always look the same year after year. However, one thing that remains true is the support from our sponsors who believe in this work and its impact.

Our sponsors' belief in our mission makes it possible to create accessible, statewide events that bring together people from every corner of Tennessee. Through their financial and resource support, they help ensure that the disability community is seen, heard, and included.

In 2026, their support helped us expand DDH in meaningful ways, including providing resources for advocates and families traveling to Nashville for DDH events and creating spaces for advocates to engage, connect, and grow in their own advocacy journeys.

We are deeply grateful for their partnership and continued support, which allows Disability Day on the Hill to grow and thrive each year.

We encourage you to learn more about our sponsors and what makes their organizations great. **Because of their support, we were able to continue sharing our Adventures in Access across Tennessee.**



2026 GOLD SPONSORS



2026 SILVER SPONSORS



2026 BRONZE SPONSORS



Council on
Developmental Disabilities



2026 SUPPORTING SPONSORS





Strengthening Advocacy Through

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY

// As Disability Day on the Hill continues to grow each year, so does our network of advocates who come together to make their voices heard at the Capitol. This year, to help folks feel prepared and confident for DDH 2026, our Community and Family Engagement Team hosted a 4-week Virtual Advocates Workshop Series.

These workshops provided an opportunity for advocates to gain a better understanding of the legislative process, build confidence when talking with lawmakers, and connect with other advocates who care about disability advocacy.

Throughout the series, the workshops showed advocates what they could expect during DDH events, how to find and contact their legislators, how to track disability-related bills, how to navigate the Cordell Hull State Office Building, and how to create effective leave-behind materials for their meetings with lawmakers.

In addition to these resources, one of the workshops featured a panel of previous DDH participants where folks could hear personal experiences and ask questions.

These workshops not only provided helpful tips for DDH, but also helped advocates feel informed, connected, confident, and ready to take action.

EVENT DETAILS:

DDH 2026 VIRTUAL ADVOCATES WORKSHOP SERIES

NUMBER OF WORKSHOPS: 4

DATES: JANUARY 15, JANUARY 22, FEBRUARY 5, FEBRUARY 12

TIME: 6-7PM CT



ATTENDANCE BREAKDOWN:

TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDEES: 138

ON-DEMAND VIEWS: 65

Gathering together for

ADVENTURES IN COMMUNITY

// The 2026 TDC Community Party was truly out of this world. On the eve of Disability Day on the Hill, the disability community gathered among the planets, the stars, and even the dinosaurs at the Adventure Science Center in Nashville, TN, for our TDC Community Party. This year brought a new venue, new experiences, and even more opportunities for connection.

Throughout the evening, attendees explored exhibits, connected with friends old and new, snapped memories in the photo booth, and met with our gold and silver-level sponsors, whose support helped make the event possible. Around every corner were conversations about advocacy, laughter between friends, and the kind of joy that comes from being surrounded by a community of folks who understand what it means to live in Tennessee with a disability.

While the setting may have included space exhibits and prehistoric creatures, the real stars of the night were our attendees. As the evening came to a close, the Community Party served as a powerful reminder that advocacy is not only built through policy and legislation, but through the relationships and strength we find in one another along the way.

Together, we kicked off DDH 2026 grounded in community, connected by shared experiences, and ready for the advocacy adventures ahead.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT THE COMMUNITY PARTY
NASHVILLE, TN



EVENT DETAILS:

TDC COMMUNITY PARTY

DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2026

ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE: 350+



A woman with glasses and a red shirt is sitting at a wooden table, smiling and writing on a piece of paper. On the table are a smartphone, a coffee cup, and some cards. In the background, other people are standing and talking in a bright room with large windows.

ADVOCATES WRITING LETTERS FOR THEIR LEGISLATORS - NASHVILLE, TN

Disability Day on the Hill was

FULL OF ADVENTURES

// Disability Day on the Hill 2026 marked one of our largest days on the hill to date, bringing more than 475 advocates to the Cordell Hull State Office Building to meet directly with lawmakers.

While DDH typically follows a similar schedule each year, this year's legislative calendar created unique opportunities for connection. With most House committee meetings suspended, many legislators remained in their offices throughout the day, allowing advocates more time to build relationships, share personal stories, and engage in meaningful conversations.

Our DDH Advocacy Workshop, held in the Comptroller's Volunteer Conference Room, offered advocates a dedicated space to write letters, create cards for legislators, and connect with fellow advocates. A new addition to this year's workshops was our DDH Adventure Pins, which encouraged hands-on advocacy through interactive activities and provided participants the opportunity to recognize legislators who champion disability issues.

As the day progressed, the halls of Cordell Hull were filled with advocates who chose to show up, speak out, and make their voices heard. **Our community's presence served as a powerful reminder to the legislature that Tennesseans with disabilities matter.**

EVENT DETAILS:

DISABILITY DAY ON THE HILL

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2026

MEETINGS WITH LEGISLATORS SCHEDULED: OVER 150

ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE: 475+



A LEGISLATOR MEETING WITH A
CONSTITUENT AT DDH - NASHVILLE, TN



LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

This year, the TN Disability Coalition tracked more than 100 bills during the Tennessee General Assembly with the potential to affect Tennesseans with disabilities. Together with our members and partners, we worked to oppose harmful legislation and advocate for policies that support people with disabilities and their families.

Notably, several important disability-related bills championed by Tennessee Disability Coalition members passed this year.

Congratulations to Tennessee Community Organizations (TNCO) on the passage of SB 2167/HB 2411, which adds TennCare representation to the Department of Disability and Aging Statewide Planning and Policy Council. This change seeks to integrate TennCare more fully into the council's structure and mission by adding the director of long-term care services and a managed care organization representative to its membership.

TN Disability Coalition member Michael Collins championed the passage of SB 1843/HB 1644, the Nitrous Oxide Abuse Prevention and Retail Sale Prohibition Act. This new law aims to prevent nitrous oxide abuse, which can cause serious neurological damage, cognitive impairment, and, in severe cases, long-term spinal cord injury.

The disability community also supported HB 2188/SB 2362 to improve services and oversight for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who are in or at risk of state custody. The new law seeks to strengthen collaboration between the Department of Children's Services and the Department of Disability and Aging.

Of course, not every effort resulted in passage. Some excellent bills failed to advance. To read more about this year's legislative session and the progress of our policy priorities, [follow this link to view our Legislative Wrap-Up.](#)

Thank you to our members, partners, and advocates who stayed engaged throughout the session. Your involvement helps shape public policy and improve outcomes for Tennesseans with disabilities.

Lighting Up in Support & Solidarity for

DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY IN TENNESSEE

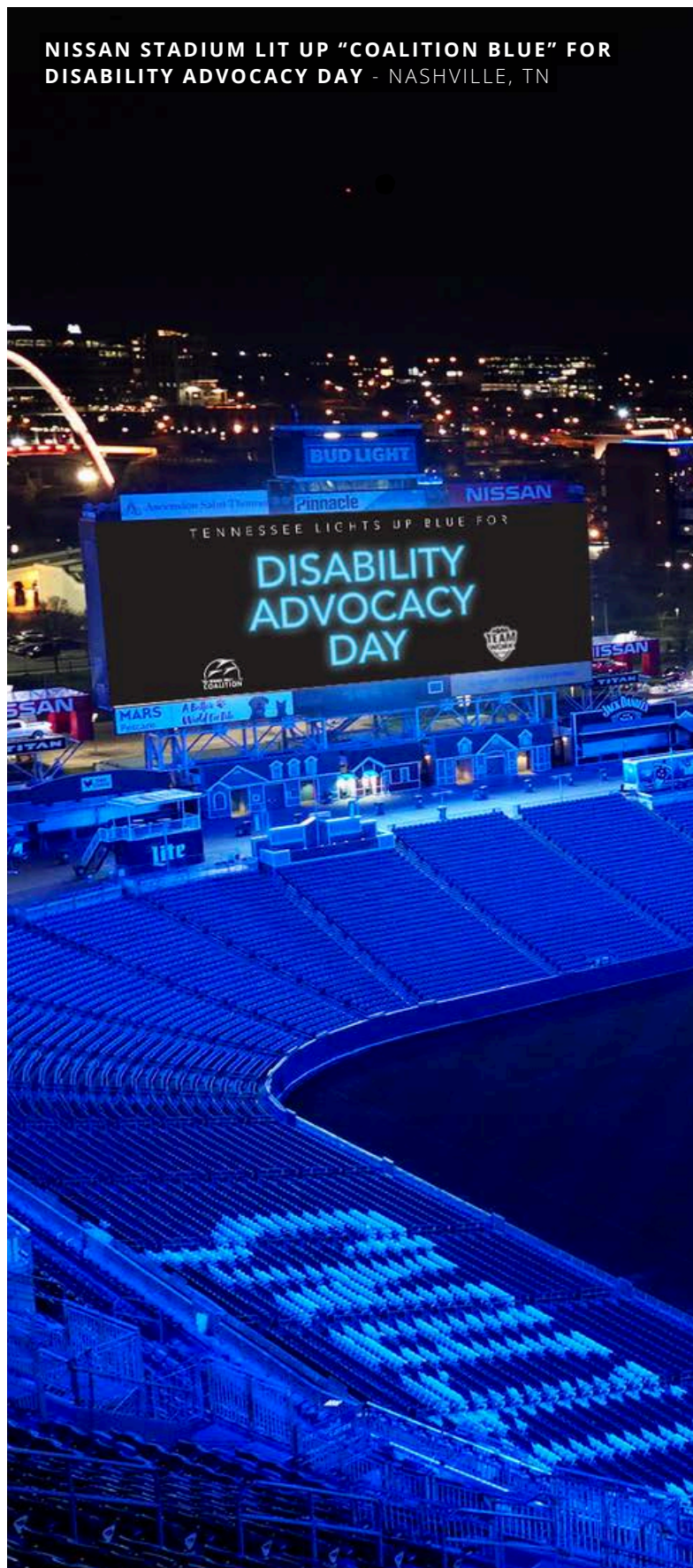
// For the sixth consecutive year, Tennessee recognized March 11th as Disability Advocacy Day, a day dedicated to honoring the achievements and ongoing advocacy efforts of the state's 1.7 million residents with disabilities. Disability Advocacy Day serves as a homage to the strength, resilience, and collective voice of the disability community across our state.

On March 11th, Tennesseans across the state showed up in "Coalition Blue" to celebrate and amplify disability advocacy. Social media lit up with messages of support and recognition, local communities hosted celebrations of their own, and several municipalities issued official Disability Advocacy Day proclamations honoring the advocates and organizations creating change in their communities.

As night fell, more than a dozen landmarks across Tennessee glowed blue in celebration and solidarity with the disability community.

With support from advocates, partners, local communities, and locations across Tennessee, we highlighted the achievements and impact of Tennesseans with disabilities.

NISSAN STADIUM LIT UP "COALITION BLUE" FOR
DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY - NASHVILLE, TN



WEST TN: BASS PRO PYRAMID, MEMPHIS**PARTICIPATING LANDMARKS, WEST TN:**

Bass Pro Pyramid – Memphis
 Carl Perkins Center/City Hall – Jackson
 Eiffel Tower Replica – Paris
 Memphis International Airport – Memphis
 Overton Park Shell – Memphis
 Paris Landing State Park – Buchanan

MIDDLE TN: KOREAN VETERANS MEMORIAL BRIDGE, NASHVILLE**PARTICIPATING LANDMARKS, MIDDLE TN:**

Adventure Science Center, Nashville
 Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park (Amphitheatre), Nashville
 Korean Veterans Memorial Bridge, Nashville
 Nissan Stadium, Nashville
 Tennessee Disability Coalition, Nashville

EAST TN: DOLLYWOOD, PIGEON FORGE**PARTICIPATING LANDMARKS, EAST TN:**

Chattanooga Parks and Outdoors – Chattanooga
 Chattanooga Therapeutic Recreational Parks – Chattanooga
 Dollywood – Pigeon Forge
 Henley Bridge – Knoxville
 Liberty Tower – Chattanooga

Advocating for change by

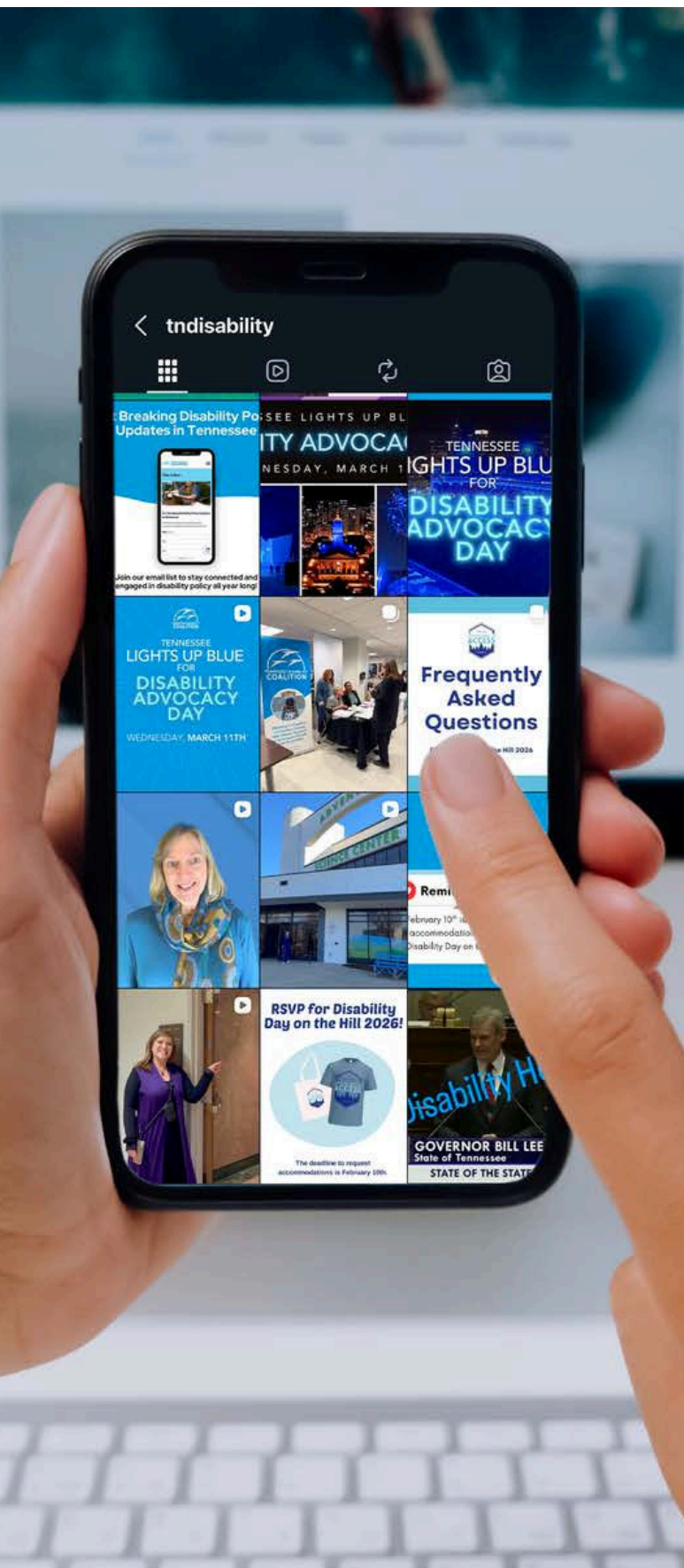
STAYING CONNECTED

// Advocacy and community go hand in hand, and digital tools played an important role in advancing our work throughout the legislative session. While we did not champion legislation of our own this year, we remained actively engaged in the work of our members, partners, and advocates across the state, supporting policy efforts that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

Through social media, blog posts, and policy updates shared with thousands of advocates on our email list, we provided timely information about legislative developments, opportunities to take action, and issues affecting the disability community.

These communications amplified our partners' voices and actions, connected advocates with timely resources, and created more opportunities for individuals to stay informed and engaged in the policymaking process. By sharing information and promoting opportunities for action, we strengthened a network of advocates to enhance disability rights and inclusion.

Maintaining these connections and conversations deepens our understanding of our community's priorities and helps shape our future advocacy and support efforts.



2026 DDH SOCIAL BREAKDOWN:

CROSS-PLATFORM REACH: 67,426

ENGAGEMENT: 8,030

FULL BREAKDOWN AVAILABLE [HERE](#)**2026 DDH EMAIL REACH:**

REACH: 7,056



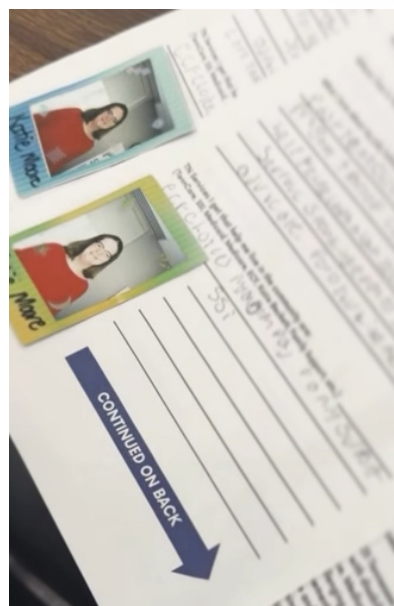
kaylaslostsequins Disability Day on the Hill 2026:

I'm pretty sure I was the only person in all of Cordell Hull wearing rhinestones.

And I plan to keep it that way.

Advocacy doesn't require you to dim or change who you are.

Thank you to the Tennessee Disability Coalition for pushing me outside my comfort zone and into rooms that matter.



littlebluethatreco Loved meeting with @dixie4tn yesterday for Disability Day! Put on by @tndisability. We had a thoughtful conversation about supporting autistic folks, inclusive arts, and making de-escalation training standard for ALL school staff (not just specialists). That kind of investment would build a culture of safety and acceptance school-wide, county-wide, state-wide!

#representationmatters #advocacy #autism

February 26



City of Knoxville - Government
Mar 11 · 🌐

Today is Disability Advocacy Day, an opportunity to recognize the 1.6 million Tennesseans who have a physical or mental disability, their valuable contributions to our communities and the importance of advocating for accessibility and equal rights.

The City of Knoxville's Disability Services Office works tirelessly to provide access and resources to residents facing barriers and make our city a better, more accessible place for everyone. Thank you, Stephanie and Misha! In support, the Henley Bridge will be lighted blue tonight.

[Tennessee Disability Coalition](#)

[#DDH2026](#)

[#DisabilityAdvocacyDayTN](#)



2026 DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY:

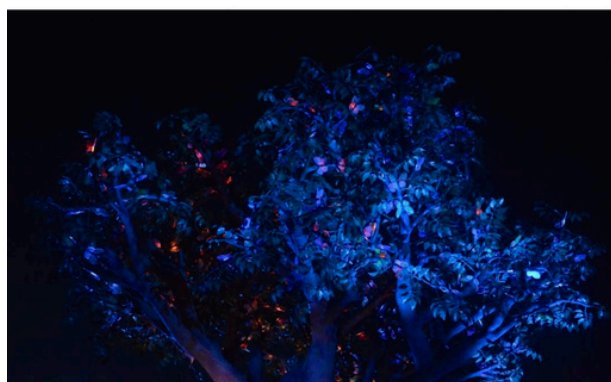
COMMUNITY MEMBER POSTS: 50+

PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS: 17+



Dollywood
Mar 11 · 🌐

Today we recognize [#DisabilityAdvocacyDayTN](#) by honoring the advocacy, resilience and impact of the 1.6 million Tennesseans with disabilities who continue to make a difference across our state. ❤️ [Tennessee Disability Coalition](#)



T.A.R.P. Center fo... is with Tennessee Disab...
Mar 11 · 🌐

Thank you to the City of Paris for lighting the Eiffel Tower up for Disability Advocacy Day!

What is Disability Advocacy Day?

It is a day of celebration dedicated to honoring the hard work and advocacy of the 1.7 million Tennesseans with disabilities who are improving our state laws for the better!

[#DisabilityAdvocacyDayTN](#) and [#AdventuresInAccess](#)



Community Development Center
Mar 11 · 🌐

The CDC lit it up blue for [#DisabilityAdvocacyDay](#) at [@nashvillezoo](#). We are so grateful to [@communityfoundationmidtn](#) to be able to hold this event again, and we're so happy to spend it with some of our favorite building bridges friends. Meaningful inclusion is SO important. More Zoo pictures to come! ❤️ ❤️



ARMS, Inc.
Mar 11 · 🌐

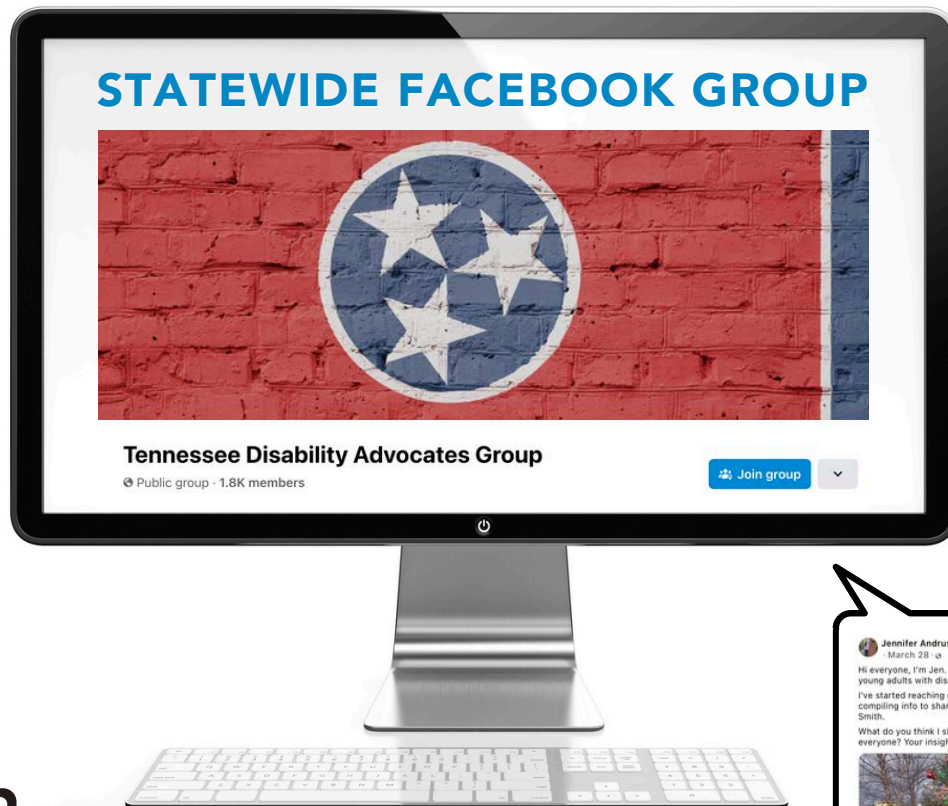
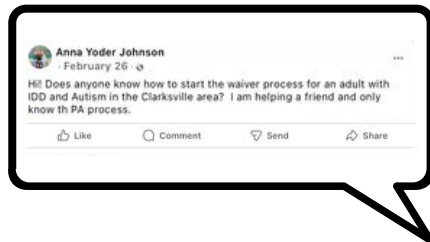
What a great day to celebrate Disability Advocacy Day 2026 in Tennessee. We are at the Memphis Airport where they are launching their Goodmaps app. What a wonderful day for Tennessee. [Tennessee Disability Coalition](#) [Memphis International Airport - MEM](#) [#disabilityadvocacydaytn](#) [#adventuresinaccess](#)



STATEWIDE FACEBOOK GROUP

TOTAL MEMBERS: 1,848

This Facebook group connects Tennesseans with disabilities, families, and allies across the state to share resources, strengthen advocacy, and stay informed on disability policy.





**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP & PARTICIPATION TO
MAKE DDH 2026 & DISABILITY ADVOCACY DAY A SUCCESS!**

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST TO STAY CONNECTED AND ENGAGED
WITH DISABILITY POLICY, UPDATES, AND ALERTS IN TENNESSEE.

// FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT **WWW.TNDISABILITY.ORG** //