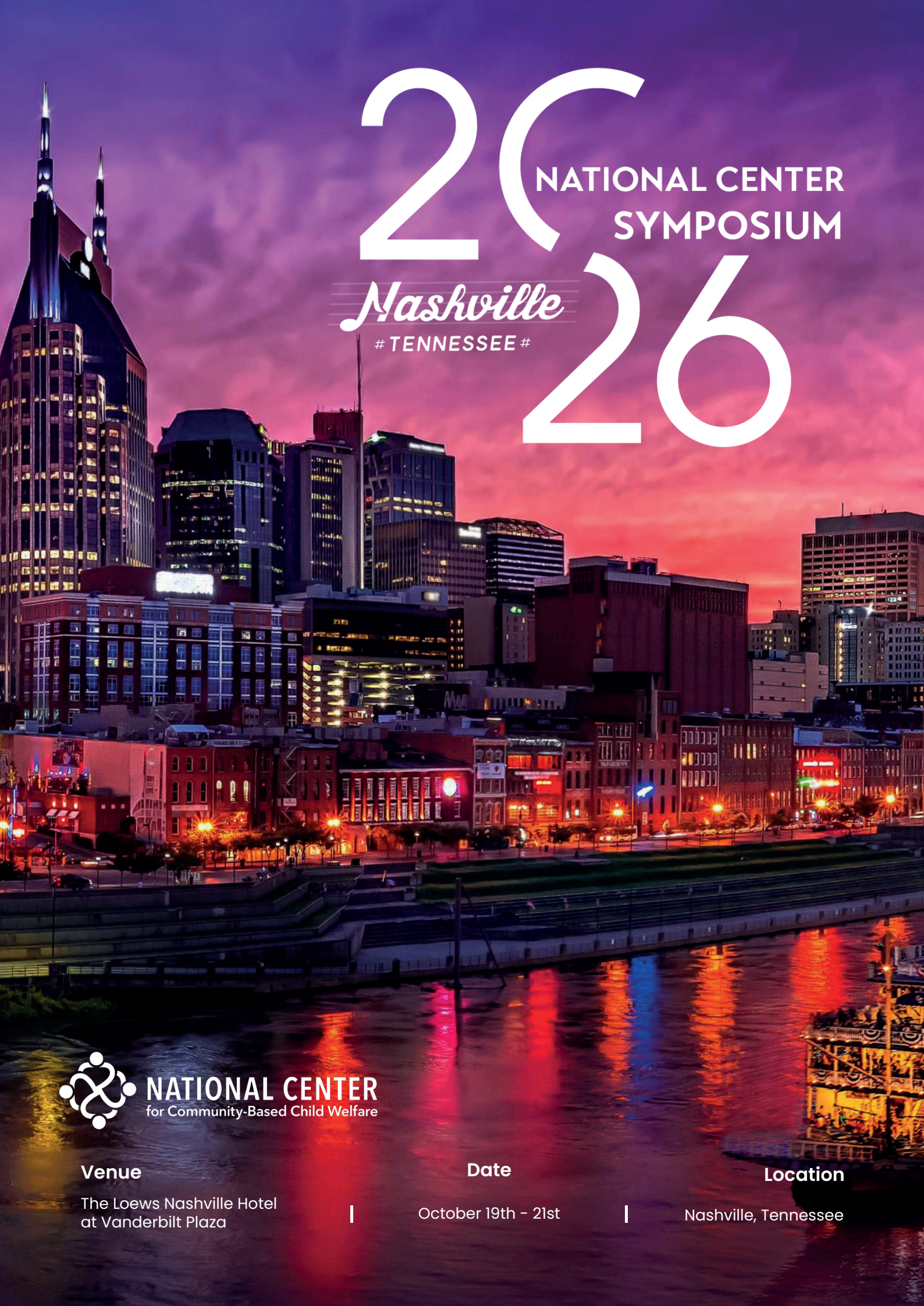


NATIONAL CENTER
for Community-Based Child Welfare

Venue

The Loews Nashville Hotel
at Vanderbilt Plaza

Date

October 19th - 21st

Location

Nashville, Tennessee

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Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park

- **Hours:** Daily, 6:00 AM – 11:00 PM
  Distance: 2.4 miles (~8–10 min drive)
  About: A 19-acre urban park modeled after the National Mall, featuring a giant granite map of Tennessee and views of the State Capitol.

NATIONAL CENTER
for Community-Based Child Welfare

FROM LEADERSHIP

A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

To the following individuals for supporting and organizing the 2026 Community-Based Child Welfare National Symposium.





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thank you!

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New Horizons
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NWF Health Network
Florida | Mike Watkins, CEO

National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP)
Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia | Lila Cavasos, Chief Development Officer

One Hope United
Illinois & Florida | Damon Cates, President/CEO

Pressley Ridge
Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Texas | Susanne Cole, President/CEO

Saint Francis Ministries
Arkansas, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas | William Clark, CEO

SJRC Texas | Belong
Texas | Tara Roussett, CEO

TFI Family of Companies
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Thompson
Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee | Will Jones, CEO

West Michigan Partnership for Children
Michigan | Sonia Noorman, CEO

Our Community Our Kids
Texas | Mike Bryant, CEO

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services
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SAFY (Specialized Alternatives for Families & Youth)
Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Alabama, Colorado, South Carolina | Will Matt, President/CEO

ADVANCING CHILD WELFARE IN TEXAS

2014: Pilots first successful Community-Based Care model in Texas

2019: Becomes the state's first contractor to enter Stage II

2024: Expands to 10 counties as Region 3b becomes Region 3W

2026: Contracts with the state to serve eight counties in Region 3E

Learn more about OCOK at www.ourcommunity-ourkids.org



GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP

Start making an impact today!

Visit our website or contact us directly to learn more about membership opportunities .

Join Our Exclusive Community-Based Care Network!

Joining our network means becoming part of a dedicated community working towards promoting community-based child welfare. Enjoy unparalleled access to resources, professional growth opportunities, and the ability to influence national discussions.

Dues

Membership dues are based on your organization's annual operating budget:

- Budget over $100 million: $16,000 annually
- $50 million – $100 million: $12,000 annually
- $10 million – $50 million: $8,000 annually
- $2 million – $10 million: $4,000 annually
- Under $2 million: $2,000 annually

Dues cycle is July – June and prorated based on quarter company joins the National Center.

Benefits

- Create professional relationships with CBC leaders from across the nation
- Access to members only networking and learning opportunities
- Access to the latest information, trends, data, etc. about community-based care
- Access to savings for the Community-Based Care National Symposium
- Complimentary publications by the National Center
- Participate in National Center initiatives
- Invitation to open board/membership meetings
- Access to consultation and training services
- Access to services from vendors serving non-profits/ child welfare agencies

Exclusive Networking

Join a powerful community of child welfare leaders dedicated to collaboration, innovation, and shared growth.

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- Chad Collins, COO, National Center

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- Paula Fleming, Secretary, National Center



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"Sellers Dorsey's deep expertise in Medicaid consulting has helped our member organizations navigate complex healthcare systems, ensuring better access and quality of care for the children and families we serve. Their commitment to equity aligns perfectly with our vision for transformative child welfare practices."
- Carrie Bolm, Chief Executive Officer, National Center

Silver Professional Partners







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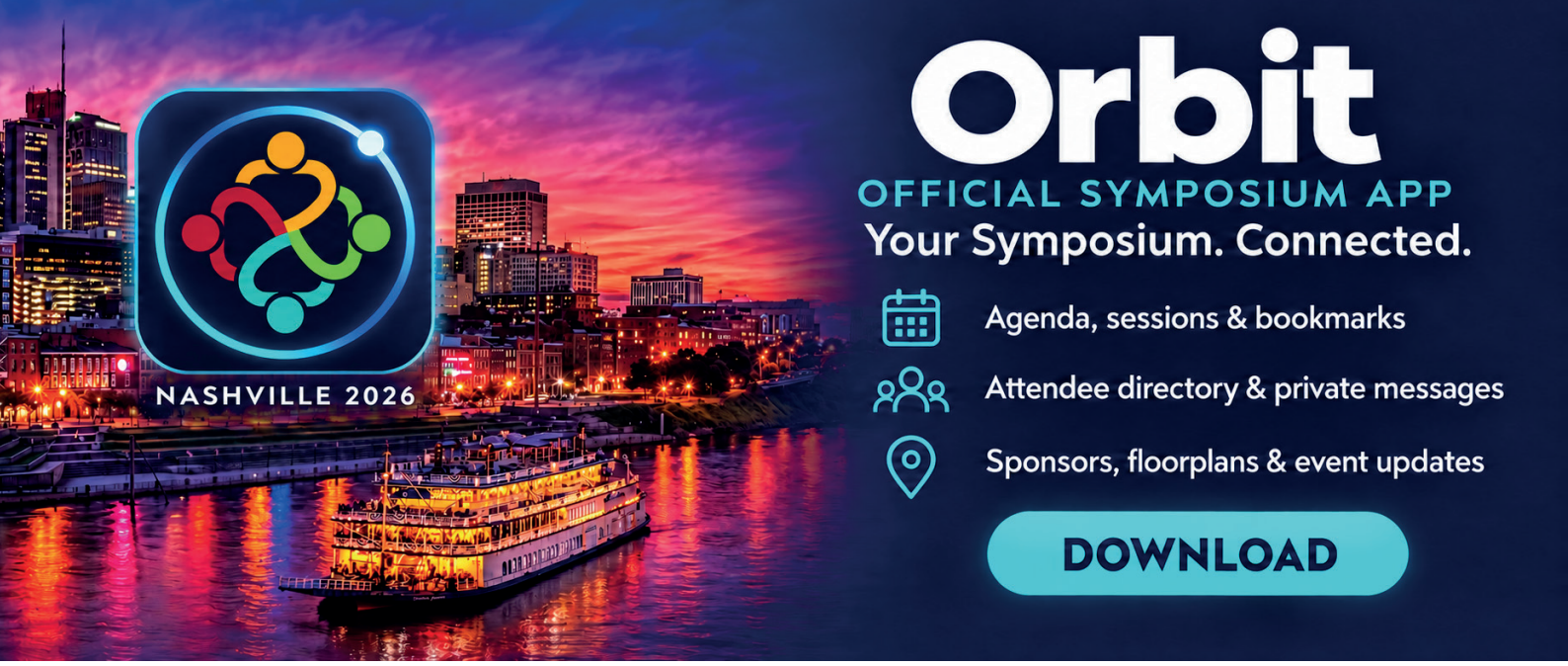
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We are proud to showcase the success of the CBC model. In Southwest Florida, we have successfully reunified more than 8,250 children so far — proof positive that community-based care changes lives for good.

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Children's Network of Southwest Florida, LLC is a community-based care lead agency contracted with the Department of Children and Families.



Schedule at a Glance

October 19 – 21, 2026

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

Day 1 – Welcome & Opening Panel

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM	**Registration/Arrival Buffer** – Symphony Foyer
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	**Board Meeting** – Blackbird A + B
3:00 – 3:30 PM	**Welcome & Opening Remarks** – Symphony Ballroom I-III (TN Commissioner Quin)
3:30 – 5:00 PM	**National Perspectives Panel** – Symphony Ballroom
5:00 – 7:00 PM	🎉 **Networking Reception** – Symphony Foyer

Vanderbilt University Campus & Arboretum

- **Hours:** Grounds accessible 24/7
  Distance: Directly across the street (~3 min walk)
  About: A historic, 330-acre national arboretum with 6,000+ trees, peaceful walking trails, and 19th-century architecture.



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

Day 2 – Full Programming Day

7:30 – 8:30 AM	☕ Continental Breakfast – Symphony Foyer
8:30 – 9:30 AM	**Keynote Speaker** (Ballroom) – Merideth Rose
9:30 – 10:00 AM	**Innovation Showcase #1** (Ballroom) – Michelle Turner (Behavioral Health Care)
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Break / Transition to Breakouts
10:15 – 11:45 AM	**Learning Exchanges Session 1** – 9 breakout rooms
11:45 – 12:15 PM	🍽 Lunch
12:15 – 1:30 PM	**Lunch + Panel Discussion** – Learning Lessons in Sustaining CBC
1:30 – 2:00 PM	**Innovation Showcase #2** (Ballroom) – Laurie Stern and Shawn M. Brown (Stability Saves)
2:00 – 2:15 PM	Break / Transition to Breakouts
2:15 – 3:45 PM	**Learning Exchanges Session 2**
3:45 – 4:00 PM	Break / Transition to Ballroom
4:00 – 4:30 PM	**Innovation Showcase #3** – Jae Hedrick (From Silos to Systems)
4:30 – 5:00 PM	**Innovation Showcase #4** – Forrest Hett (Advancing Value Through Your CBC)
5:00 PM	**Adjourn for the Day**



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

Day 3 – Closing Day

8:00 – 8:30 AM	☕ Continental Breakfast
8:30 – 10:00 AM	**Affinity Group Sessions**
10:00 – 10:15 AM	Break
10:15 – 11:30 AM	**State of the State Updates**
11:30 – 11:45 AM	**Final Remarks & Adjourn**



2026 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Merideth Rose

Day 2 - Ballroom
8:30 – 9:30 AM

Merideth Rose, President & CEO of Cornerstones of Care, and Board Member for National Center for Community-Based Child Welfare, will deliver the 2026 Symposium keynote,

"No One Is Saved Alone

Ubuntu, Community-Based Care, and the People Who Refuse to Let Go."

A National Center member, CEO and nationally recognized child and family well-being leader, Merideth brings more than two decades of experience spanning behavioral health, public service, education, disaster response, and community development. Her leadership is also informed by her lived experience as an adoptee and foster care alum.

Through personal storytelling and the philosophy of Ubuntu— "I am because we are"— Merideth will challenge leaders to think beyond Community-Based Care as a service delivery model and consider its deeper purpose: restoring dignity, strengthening relationships, sharing power, and building the capacity of families and communities.

Her message provides a powerful foundation for the Symposium: our measure of success is not simply building stronger systems but building stronger families and communities that can thrive beyond formal systems of care.

Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum

- **Hours:** Daily, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
  Distance: 2.0 miles (~7–10 min drive)
  About: Nashville's flagship music museum showcasing the history and stars of country music through instrument displays, stage wear, and iconic recordings.



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2026 Symposium Learning Exchange Sessions

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20
Morning: 10:15 - 11:45 AM CST **Afternoon:** 2:15 - 3:45 PM CST

Each topic repeats in both rounds with its designated Subject Matter Expert (SME).
All nine rooms are on the Mezzanine.

#	Session	Room	
1	System Stability	Blackbird Studio A	AM: Terri Balliet PM: Tara Roussett
2	Adequate Funding	Sound Emporium A	AM: David DeStefano PM: Mike Bryant
3	Managed Care Partnerships	Ocean Way	AM: Christy Howard PM: Brittany McAllister
4	AI and Technology	Sound Emporium B	AM: Chip Battoe PM: George Persekian
5	Federal Initiatives	Blackbird Studio B	AM: Carol Self PM: Thea Ramirez
6	Partnership and Advocacy	Southern Ground A	AM: Jay Pruett PM: Lila Cavasos
7	The CBC Brand	Southern Ground B	AM: Jennifer Justice PM: Phil Scarpelli
8	Peer Learning	RCA	AM: Janet Braker PM: Erin Keltner
9	Leadership Development	Tracking Room	AM: Cecilia Haag PM: Melissa Briggs

See the full conversation descriptions on pages 17-19 and the room map on page 25.

Learning Exchange Session Details

1 From System Strain to System Stability: Strategies for Responding to Operational Challenges and Building Long-Term Stability

Community-Based Care is complex work, and even strong systems encounter periods of strain. This interactive roundtable will explore lessons from both successes and setbacks in CBC, with a focus on recognizing challenges early, correcting course, and building the partnerships, accountability, and infrastructure necessary for long-term stability and better outcomes for children and families.

AM: Terri Balliet · Children's Network of Hillsborough County
PM: Tara Roussett · SJRC Texas and Belong

2 Creating an Adequate Funding Approach for Community-Based Care Systems

Sustainable Community-Based Care requires funding that reflects the true cost and complexity of serving children and families. This roundtable will explore how states and CBC organizations can build adequate, equitable, and adaptable funding approaches that support strong provider networks, account for changing needs, appropriately share financial risk, and promote better outcomes.

AM: David DeStefano · Consultant
PM: Mike Bryant · Our Community Our Kids

3 Engaging with MCOs: Building Readiness, Partnerships, and Sustainable Programs

Managed care organizations present new opportunities for child welfare organizations to improve care coordination, expand services, and access new funding partnerships. This roundtable will explore how organizations can prepare to work with MCOs, demonstrate their value, build sustainable partnerships, and navigate the operational and financial requirements of managed care.

AM: Christy Howard · KVC Behavioral Healthcare Missouri, Inc
PM: Brittany McAllister · Sellers Dorsey

4 Exploring AI and Technology Tools to Support Workforce, Practice, and Performance

AI and emerging technologies offer opportunities to reduce administrative burden, support the workforce, strengthen decision-making, and improve performance across Community-Based Care. This roundtable will explore practical applications of AI and predictive analytics, where technology can add the most value, and the safeguards needed to ensure responsible use while keeping human judgment at the center of child welfare practice.

AM: Chip Battoe · Binti
PM: George Persekian · Wipfli

Learning Exchange Session Details

5 Connecting Federal Initiatives to System Transformation: CFSR, CCWIS, and A Home for Every Child

Federal initiatives are creating new opportunities—and expectations—for how child welfare systems use data, technology, partnerships, and continuous improvement to achieve better outcomes. This roundtable will explore how CFSR, CCWIS, and A Home for Every Child connect to the work of Community-Based Care and how CBC organizations can engage with states to turn federal priorities into meaningful system transformation. .

AM: Carol Self · Casey Family Programs
PM: Thea Ramirez · Adoption-Share

6 Collective Power, Shared Purpose: Advancing CBC Through Partnership & Advocacy

CBC organizations have greater influence when they work together around a shared purpose. This roundtable will explore how members can leverage their collective expertise, resources, relationships, data, and voice to strengthen advocacy, expand access to decision-makers, influence policy, and advance Community-Based Care nationally..

AM: Jay Pruett · Arrow Child & Family Ministries
PM: Lila Cavasos · National Youth Advocate Program

7 From Local Systems to National Identity: Building the CBC Brand

Community-Based Care looks different across states, but the core principles and value of the model create an opportunity for a stronger national identity. This roundtable will explore how CBC organizations can build greater awareness and understanding of Community-Based Care through consistent messaging, stronger storytelling, shared language, and greater visibility of the outcomes and innovations happening across the country.

AM: Jennifer Justice · Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
PM: Phil Scarpelli · Family Partnerships of Central Florida

8 Peer Learning as a Strategy for Innovation, Improvement, and Risk Management

CBC organizations across the country are often tackling similar challenges, creating an opportunity to learn from one another rather than solve the same problems independently. This roundtable will explore how stronger peer learning can accelerate innovation, improve performance, identify emerging risks, and help organizations adapt proven approaches to their own systems. .

AM: Janet Braker · Missouri Alliance for Children and Families
PM: Erin Keltner · KVC WV

9

Leadership Development That Lasts: Strategies, Structures and Sustainability

Strong CBC systems require strong leaders at every level. This roundtable will explore how organizations can move beyond one-time leadership training to intentionally identify, develop, and retain the next generation of leaders. Participants will discuss practical approaches for building leadership pipelines, strengthening succession planning, transferring institutional knowledge, and creating a culture where leadership development is embedded in the organization.

AM: Cecilia Haag · Thompson Child & Family Focus
PM: Melissa Briggs · TFI

2026 AFFINITY GROUPS

Wednesday, October 21 · 8:30 - 10:00 AM CST
Six facilitated conversations on the Mezzanine

CEO · Chief Executive Leaders
Ocean Way | Facilitator: *Nadereh Salim*
CBC viability and priorities for chief executives.

COO/CPO · Operations and Program Executives
Blackbird Studio A | Facilitator: *Valerie Holmes*
Youth engagement, peer supports and services for children and youth with high needs.

CFO · Financial and Administrative Executives
Sound Emporium B | Facilitator: *Emily Kliethermes*
Funding approaches, funding streams and their operational impact.

CAO/CIO/CQO · Technology, Data and Quality Executives
Sound Emporium A | Facilitators: *Stacy Peacock, Brandy Tofel*
Emerging technology, AI, data and quality improvement.

CDO/BizDev · Communications, Marketing, Public Policy and Strategy
Blackbird Studio B | Facilitator: *Alice-Lydia Bird*
Public relations, messaging, marketing and public policy strategy.

State/Fed Govt · State and Federal Government Child Welfare Leaders
RCA | Facilitator: *Letty Lozano*
Policy, implementation and collaboration with community-based providers.

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A Great Culture =

The Best Care for Children



Public/private partnerships are critical to serving children and families, and it takes all of us to do it well — state agencies, managed care organizations, and of course, community-based care providers.

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INNOVATION SHOWCASES

Tuesday, October 20 · Symphony Ballroom I-III

When Placement Changes, Care Shouldn't

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM CST

Children in foster care face some of the highest behavioral health needs, yet too many lose access to, or never begin, care because healthcare systems were not designed for placement changes, caregiver transitions, or the realities of child welfare. This session examines what it looks like to build a Medicaid covered, child welfare informed behavioral health model that keeps care connected through virtual services, caregiver support, and care advocacy. Participants will explore how healthcare can become a true partner to children, caregivers, caseworkers, and the child welfare system.

Presenter: Michelle Turner · Here Now Health

Stability Saves: Supporting High-Acuity Youth & Strengthening Systems

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM CST

Thompson presents a continuum of prevention, foster care stabilization and residential treatment built around a common principle: stability follows the youth, not the placement. Learn how workforce strategies, lived experience, evidence-based practices and data can strengthen outcomes, reduce costs and support sustainable care for youth with complex needs.

Presenters: Laurie Stern · Thompson Child & Family Focus;
Shawn M. Brown · Thompson Child & Family Focus

From Silos to Systems: Building a Community Continuum of Care

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM CST

The Gathered Strong Sedgwick County model brings together helping agencies, schools, faith communities, government, businesses and residents to strengthen families and prevent unnecessary child welfare involvement. Jae Hedrick shares practical lessons from building trust, aligning partners and moving from isolated efforts to collective action.

Presenter: Jae Hedrick · Gathered

Advancing Value Through Your CBC

4:30 PM - 5:00 PM CST

Explore how industrial engineering, Lean thinking, real-time reporting and performance management can strengthen Community-Based Care. Examine bottlenecks, workflow, waste and teamwork, with practical approaches for giving staff and leaders better information and delivering greater value to children and families.

Presenter: Forrest Hett · Techam Solutions LLC

2026 GENERAL SESSIONS

National Perspectives: The Forces Shaping the Future of Child Welfare

Monday · 3:30 - 5:00 PM CST · Symphony Ballroom I-III

The panel brings together national experts to explore federal policies, financing strategies, partnerships, and emerging trends shaping the future of child welfare. Panelists will discuss what is changing nationally, what those changes mean for Community-Based Care, and how leaders can prepare for new opportunities and challenges. The conversation will offer perspectives on federal priorities, Medicaid and managed care, organizational transformation, technology and data, and the evolving role of public-private partnerships in improving outcomes for children and families.

Moderator: Will Jones

Panelists: Jennifer Haight, Christine Calpin, Brittany McAllister, Sharon Hicks and Alex Neuhoff

Lessons in Sustaining Community-Based Care

Tuesday · 12:15 - 1:30 PM CST · Symphony Ballroom I-III

Community-Based Care continues to evolve as states and communities learn what it takes to build strong, sustainable systems for children and families. This panel brings together experienced leaders to reflect on lessons learned along the way from building effective state-community partnerships and strengthening provider networks to navigate change and maintaining focus on outcomes. Panelists will share what they have learned about the conditions that help CBC succeed, how their approaches have evolved, and what the next generation of CBC should look like.

Moderator: Wayne Carson
Panelists: Jenn Petion, Tara Roussett, Bill Clark and Sonia Noorman

State of the State Updates

Wednesday · 10:15 - 11:30 AM CST · Symphony Ballroom I-III

Leaders examine Community-Based Care across states, including legal, legislative and contracting issues, relationships and networks.

Moderator: Scott Lundy
Panelists: Susanne Cole, Tabitha Gibson, Matt Hale and Larry Rein



Ryman Auditorium

- **Hours:** Daily, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM for day-time tours; evening concert times vary
- **Distance:** 1.8 miles (~6–8 min drive)
- **About:** The legendary "Mother Church of Country Music," famous for its historic stained-glass windows and storied stage that launched country legends.



12South Shopping & Dining District

- **Hours:** 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
- **Distance:** 2.3 miles (~8–10 min drive)
- **About:** A half-mile neighborhood strip lined with craft coffee shops, local fashion boutiques, patio dining, and colorful murals.



Broadway Honky Tonks

- **Hours:** Daily, 10:00 AM – 3:00 AM
- **Distance:** 1.8 miles (~6–8 min drive)
- **About:** Live music, historic honky-tonks and neon signs fill Lower Broadway with the sound and energy of Music City.

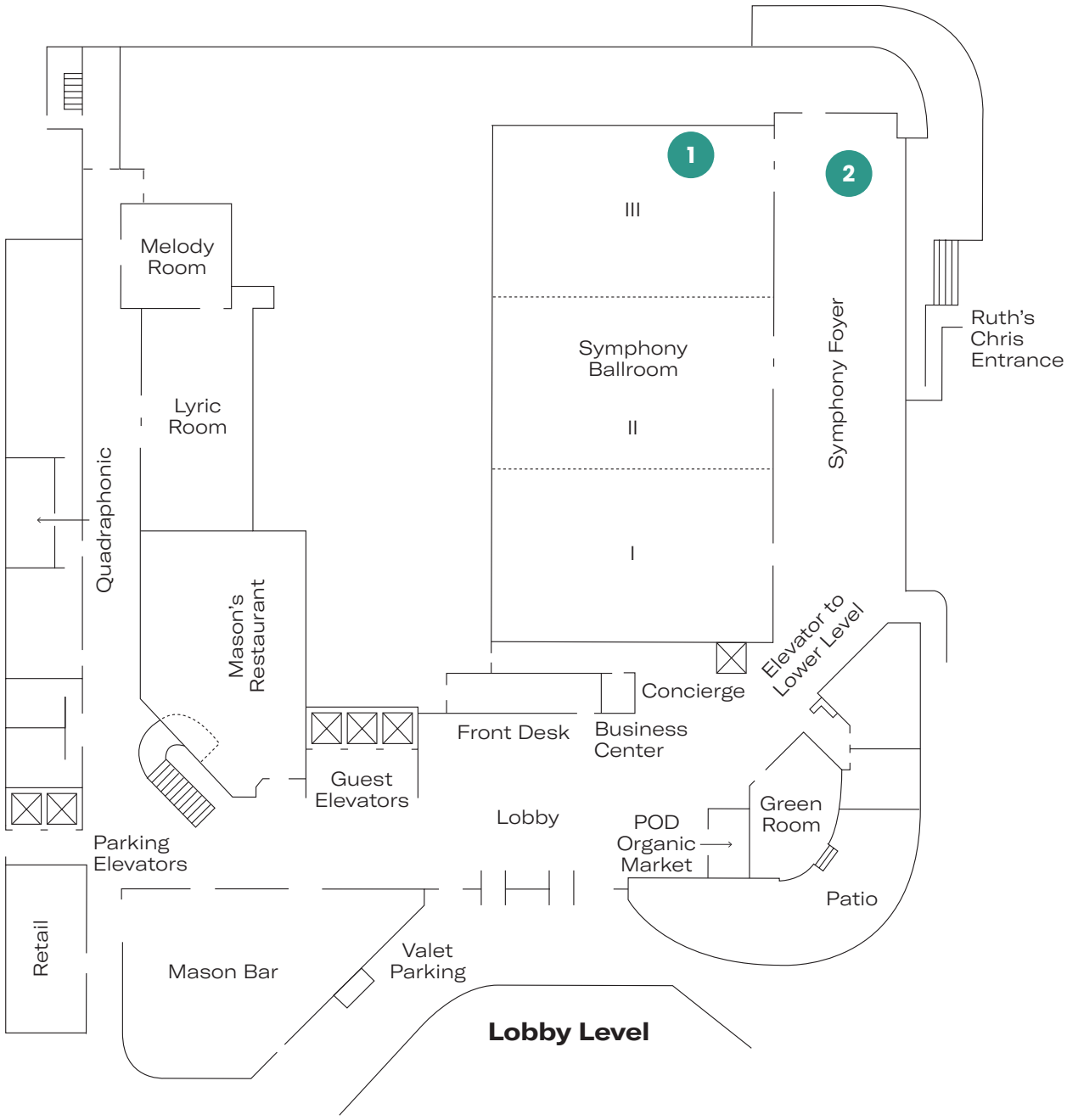
2026 NATIONAL CENTER SYMPOSIUM
Nashville
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START CERTIFICATE

Loews Vanderbilt Hotel · Lobby Level

General sessions: **Symphony Ballroom I–III**
Registration, breakfast and networking reception: **Symphony Foyer**



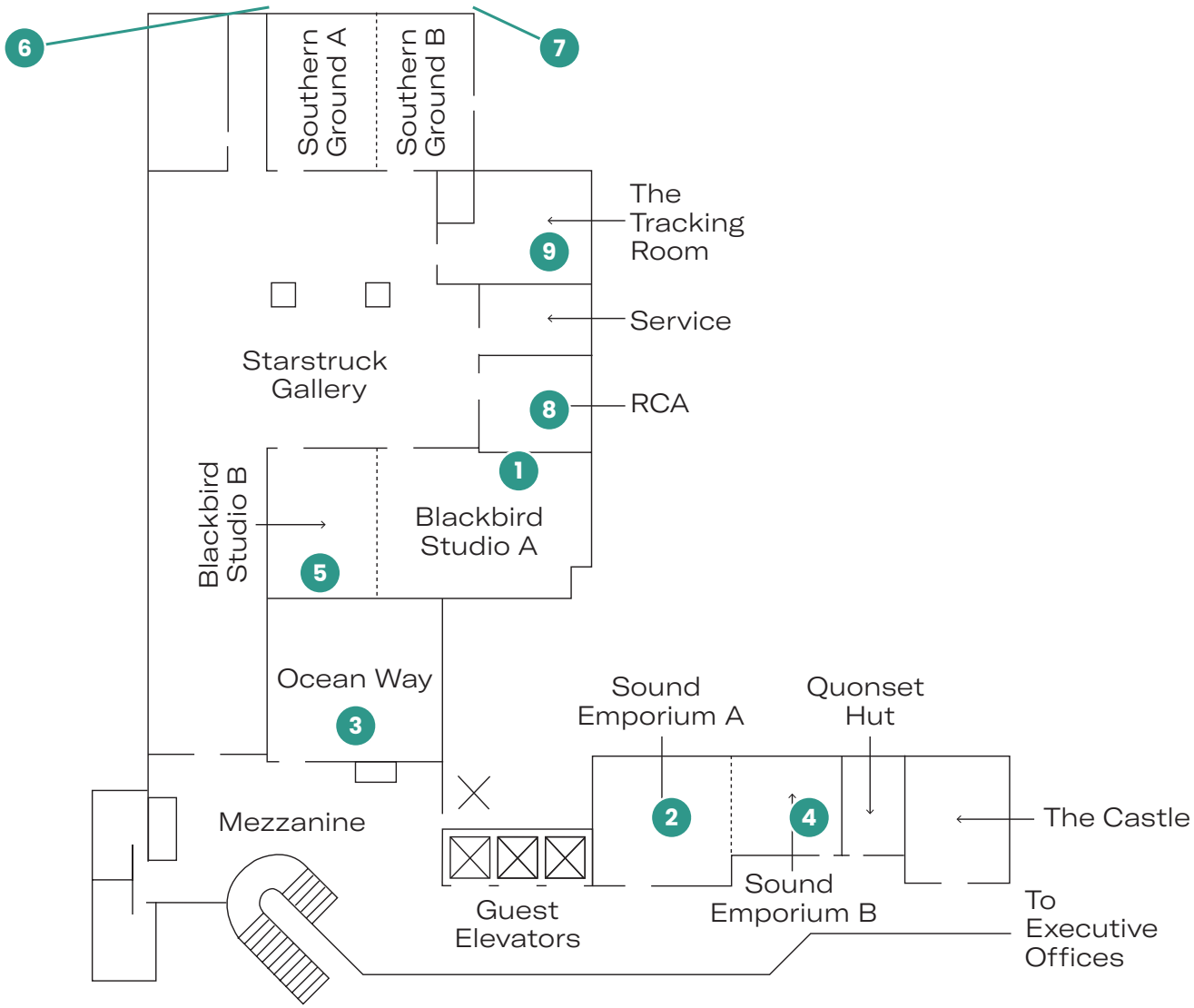
YOUR GENERAL SESSION LOCATIONS

1 Symphony Ballroom **2** Symphony Foyer

Map based on the hotel floorplan. Use the app for any onsite updates.

Loews Vanderbilt Hotel · Mezzanine

Learning Exchanges and Affinity Groups



Mezzanine Level

ROOM DIRECTORY	
01 Blackbird Studio A	06 Southern Ground A
02 Sound Emporium A	07 Southern Ground B
03 Ocean Way	08 RCA
04 Sound Emporium B	09 Tracking Room
05 Blackbird Studio B	

Numbers match the Learning Exchange directory on page 16. Affinity Group assignments are on page 19.

INTRODUCING

Certified Care Coordinator (CCC)



LAUNCHING JANUARY 2027

The National Certification Board for Child Welfare Professionals and Sellers Dorsey are pleased to announce the **Certified Care Coordinator (CCC),** a new national credential recognizing the knowledge and skills needed to coordinate care across health care, behavioral health, and community service systems, with particular attention to children and youth in foster care.

Care coordinators help individuals and families navigate complex systems, overcome barriers, and access needed services. They bring families and providers together to develop individualized care plans, monitor progress, respond to crises, and maintain continuity of care through changes in providers, placements, and life circumstances. The CCC will recognize competence in these essential functions and reinforce a commitment to person-centered, trauma-informed, and ethical practice.

Who is this credential for?

Professionals performing care coordination functions in health plans (including Medicaid managed care plans), child welfare agencies, health and behavioral health organizations, and community service programs.

Applicants may qualify with educational backgrounds ranging from a high school diploma or GED to associate's, bachelor's, and graduate degrees. Eligibility requirements will recognize academic preparation, relevant work experience, and supervised practice.

Three application pathways

Standard: For applicants who meet the required education, training, experience, and supervision standards and pass the certification examination.

Grandparenting: A time-limited launch pathway for eligible experienced practitioners, recognizing competence through verified experience and training. The certification examination is waived.

Provisional: Temporary credential status for applicants who meet initial education and training requirements while completing required experience and supervision. Applicants fulfill the remaining requirements and pass the certification examination to upgrade to full certification.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION BOARD for CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS

LEARN MORE

www.childwelfareprofessional.com

For credential announcements and application information as the January 2027 launch approaches.

Co-sponsored by Sellers Dorsey to strengthen the care coordination workforce serving children, youth, and families.

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realize the opportunity.