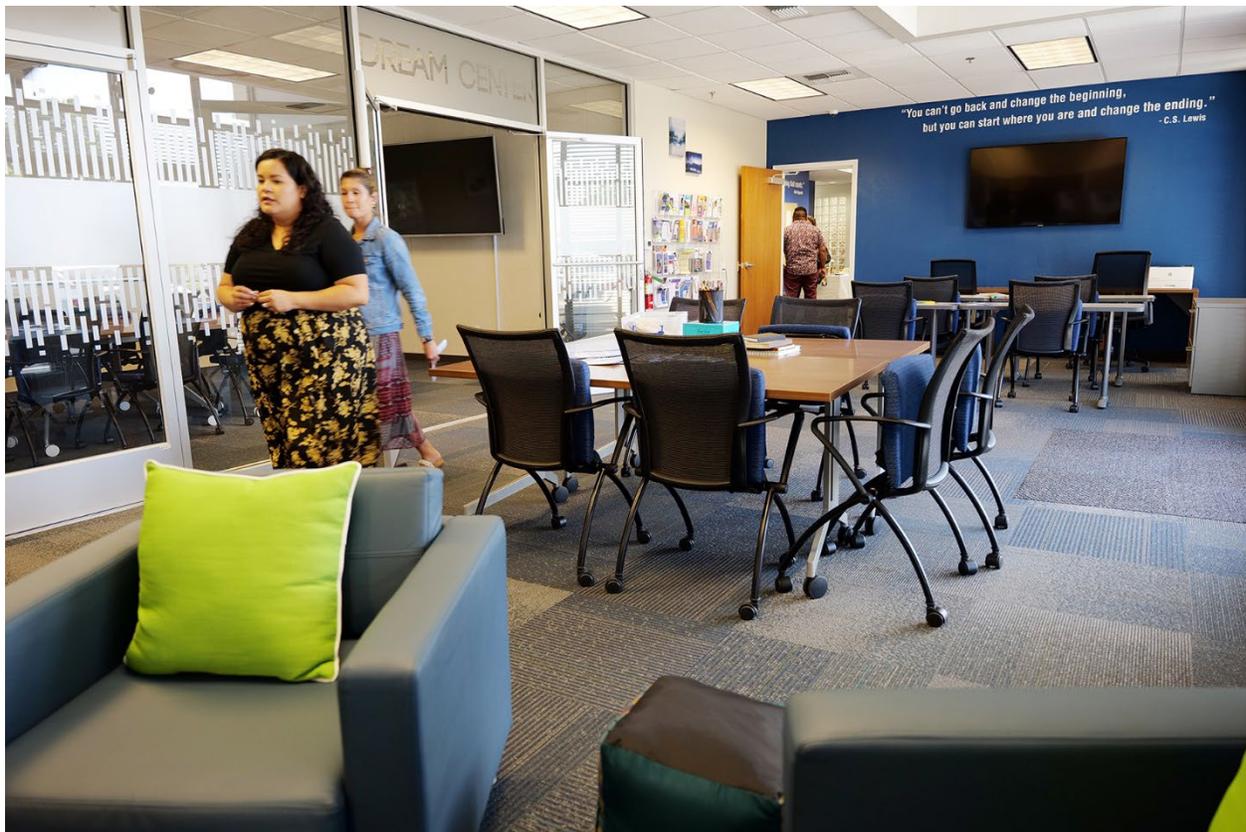


# news galleryweek

May 4, 2022

## Dream Center expands to better serve foster and homeless youth



Last week, TCOE's Foster & Homeless Youth Education Services held an open house to celebrate the expansion of its Visalia-based Dream Center.

The center was expanded to house all of Tulare County Child Welfare Services' Independent Living Program (ILP) staff, which support foster youth in achieving self-sufficiency prior to, and after leaving, the foster care system.

The expanded Dream Center also features space for tutoring, workshops on financial literacy, teen relationships, and support groups. A preschool area was also added to support young parents attending workshops, along with an expanded area for hygiene supplies and clothing items.



While TCOE's Foster & Homeless Youth Education staff support students as they navigate from high school to community college and university, ILP staff assist with AB12 foster youth benefits, Medi-Cal, food stamps, housing, and job searches.

The Dream Center was opened in June 2019 as a place where multiple education and social service agencies could work collaboratively to serve the needs of foster and homeless youth. The center is also home to the Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council.



For more information on the Dream Center, call (559) 303-3622.

Photos above:

~ The expanded Dream Center, which serves foster and homeless youth, features increased areas for tutoring, peer group meetings, a preschool, and an expanded clothing and hygiene supplies area. All members of Child Welfare Services' Independent Living Program now work from the Dream Center.

## Students with special needs compete in athletic events



While Special Olympics was postponed this year, teachers in TCOE's AcCEL Program organized a number of athletic competitions throughout the county for their students with special needs. AcCEL Programs in Tulare and Porterville held separate competitions on Friday with hundreds of students enjoying the warm weather to run, jump, and throw for the gold!

Tulare and Porterville high school athletic teams and ASB clubs were on hand to cheer for the athletes, who were clearly having a great time.

TCOE operates over 75 AcCEL classes located on school campuses throughout the county. Elementary, middle, and high school students, and young adults (ages 18-22) are served by AcCEL.



Photos above:

~ While the annual Special Olympics event was postponed this year, teachers in TCOE's AcCEL classes organized several athletic competitions throughout the county. Students participated in races, long jumps, and throwing events for medals.

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## Early Childhood Education holds family resource fair featuring The Lisa Project



On Saturday, Tulare County Resource & Referral hosted a free Family Engagement Resource Fair at the TCOE Doe Avenue Complex. Hundreds attended to enjoy activities for children, including inflatable games and a train ride. The fair also promoted early learning care and services for Tulare County families. Over 30 community agencies attended to provide information on family services, parent education, mental wellness, affordable housing, and school readiness.

The fair also featured The Lisa Project in 10, a multi-sensory exhibition allowing visitors to hear, see, and experience the reality of child abuse. Through audio headsets, visitors are guided room by room through scenarios depicting abuse from the child's perspective.

The Lisa Project in 10, which is presented by the Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council, is a 10-minute, simplified version of the original exhibition. This allows visitors easy access through the children's rooms, while still experiencing the full impact of The Lisa Project.



The Lisa Project in 10 is available to schools and community organizations this summer and during the 2022-23 school year. While suitable for high school-age students, it also makes an excellent addition to staff development trainings.

To schedule The Lisa Project in 10 at your school or district office, call (559) 735-0456 or email [info@tularecountycapc.org](mailto:info@tularecountycapc.org).

Photos above:

~ While children enjoyed a variety of games at the Family Engagement Resource Fair, adults were able to experience The Lisa Project in 10, a multi-sensory exhibition on child abuse.

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## Around the County

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### Retiree Nancy Bruce honored by Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Last week, Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) held a dinner to celebrate its 20th anniversary of protecting California's heartland, providing innovative outdoor science education, and advocating for statewide land conservancy and stewardship.

SRT's 2022 "Evening Under the Oaks" dinner also celebrated the career of Nancy Bruce, retired lead teacher at TCOE's Circle J-Norris Ranch. Bruce was honored with SRT's annual Alan George Conservation Award - the first woman to win the award.

Bruce was Circle J's lead teacher for 21 years and helped to coordinate the work of the student interns at the UC Merced/SCICON Field Station, which opened in 2019.

Photo above:

~ Nancy Bruce (right) receives the Alan George Conservation Award from Logan Robertson Huecker,

executive director of Sequoia Riverlands Trust. Bruce retired from TCOE last year, having served as the lead teacher at Circle J-Norris Ranch for 21 years.



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Editor: [Robert Herman](#), Communications Director

Contributors: Nayirah Dosu, Marlene Moreno, Jennifer Fisher, Beth Wilshire, Jaime Burnitzki, Tammy McKean, Sarah Hamilton, and Anthony Carrillo. To receive the *News Gallery Week*, sign up [here](#), or contact Jennifer Fisher at [jenniferf@tcoe.org](mailto:jenniferf@tcoe.org) or (559) 733-6172.