



March 13, 2024

Dear Chair Wiklund and Health and Human Services Committee Members,

I am writing to urge you to increase investments in Medicaid mental health rates for community-based care. At FamilyWise, we have seen firsthand the deep need for mental health services in families we serve across all of our programs. Inadequate rates are contributing to a provider shortage. The result is that families are experiencing long waitlists for critical services, often when they are in crisis.

Our Family Specialists now spend more time supporting each family than they did two years ago, in large part due to the disproportionately high needs that families have (particularly in mental health), compared to the community-based services available.

When children and families do have access to timely early intervention mental health services, they can feel supported in talking through what's happening in their life, what the struggles are, what to do, and how to look at their struggles in a new light. They can address challenges and turn them into strengths.

All families deserve access to mental health supports. An increase in investment in Medicaid mental health rates for community-based care can make access to healing treatment possible so that children and families can gain stability and achieve their goals.

Sincerely,

Ann Gaasch,
Chief Executive Officer

