## **Building Blocks for Children's Mental Health**

Children's mental health needs<sup>1</sup> are going unmet, due to a lack of mental health services. Children are waiting for months to access needed treatment and families are too often forced to rely on hospital emergency departments as their front door to care. This crisis is not new and it's getting worse. It is harming children and families, debilitating our emergency systems and needs immediate attention.

The solution is to build the mental health system children and families need to live their best lives. The following Building Blocks outline the investments and infrastructure required to solve the current crisis and provide treatment to our children.

# INCREASE Access to Mental Health Services by Increasing Rates

Access to quality, timely mental health care requires increased reimbursement rates

## **EXPAND** Family-Centered In-Home Children's Mental Health Services

Investment is needed for start-up and growth of these effective intensive service models:

- Children's Intensive Behavioral Health Services (CIBHS)
- Youth Assertive Community Treatment (Youth ACT)
- In-Home Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports (CTSS)
- Bridging Services (CIBS)
- High Fidelity (HiFi) Wraparound

#### **BUILD** Effective Service Models

- Respite
- Children's Residential Crisis Stabilization
- Community-Based Group Home Care

## PRESERVE Children's Mental Health Residential Treatment

- Establish a Youth Care Professional Training Institute
- Professionalize and diversify youth-focused workforce with rightsized compensation

## **REPLICATE** Positve Support Services

Include this Disability Services model throughout the children's mental health continuum to create child-specific strategies that improve challenging behaviors

#### **Contacts:**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In this document, "mental health" is inclusive of behavioral health needs for children who may have a variety of presenting diagnoses.

## Proposal 2024

Strategy – Building Block	Policies Supporting	Estimated Costs
Increase access to mental health care by increasing rates	Update rates structure to reflect rate study projections and recommendations relating to Medicaid inpatient & outpatient mental health services.	SF5084 (Wiklund) Mental Health Rates proposal – fiscal note TBD
Expand Family-Centered In- Home Mental Health Services	Build teams statewide to implement intensive models that support families to care for children at home.  One-time infrastructure investments to hire, train and launch teams statewide.	\$10M in FY25
Build effective models	Respite Increase current respite grant with enhanced flexibility and Licensing/recruitment/enhanced funding	\$4M in FY25 increase with additional flexibilities for distributing to families to the existing grant distributed to counties \$1M in FY25 to recruit, license and compensate new respite family providers
	Community-Based Group Care	\$2M in FY25
	MA Benefit for Children's Residential Crisis Stabilization	\$204,000 in FY25
Preserve Children's MH Residential Treatment	Youth Care Professional Training Institute	\$1.5M in FY25 \$950,000 in FY26
	Professionalize and diversity our youth-focused professionals	PLANNING for 2025 (not included in bill)
Replicate Positive Support Services	Using this disability services model, to integrate child-specific strategies to address challenging behaviors	PLANNING for 2025 (not included in bill)

#### **Sustain what works:**

- Mobile Transition Grants \$2.5M in FY25
- School-Linked Behavioral Health \$2.5M in FY26 and \$2.5M in FY27

#### **Contacts:**