



An association of resources and advocacy for children, youth and families
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Solutions to Children Boarding SF2546

Children with mental health and related needs are stuck in hospital emergency departments, detention centers and with counties across Minnesota – they are boarding “held for safety and without access to needed treatment” in our safety net systems.

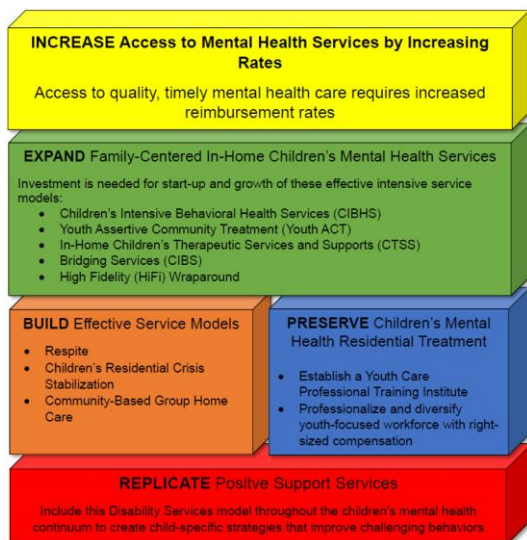
The crisis of boarding children is growing – while solutions go untapped

- A Point In Time survey in June, 2024 of Juvenile Detention Facilities indicated that 20% of children locked in detention were there due to their mental illness
- In 2024 Children’s Minnesota reported over 1,200 occasions of a child boarding, a significant increase over 2023 data
- The same Point in Time indicated underutilization of Children’s Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (57% utilization) and Qualified Residential Treatment Facilities (76% utilization) – a lack of staffing prevented children from accessing treatment

Kids who fall through the cracks into boarding disproportionately are:

- Children who exhibit the symptoms of aggression, self-harm, and running from care
- Older children in their early teen years
- In foster care or are wards of the state and do not have a family advocate
- Have intellectual and developmental disabilities or lower IQ

Children, families and communities bear the consequences – endless media reports and incredible personal accounting has made clear the crisis of boarding and lack of access to needed mental health care is systemic. **Positively, solutions are in reach:**



SF2546 proposes:

- Funding mental health services in all juvenile detention facilities statewide to support the significant needs of children boarding and deliver an integrated mental health response to all children in detention
- Establishing a transition benefit for children that supports access to services and stability in community life

Proposed in tandem with the strategic solutions in SF1561 to address boarding across the children’s service continuum

Leveraging what works we can deliver needed treatment services and support children and families to get better – as they grow, and, for a lifetime.

AspireMN improves the lives of children, youth and families served by member organizations through support for quality service delivery, leadership development and policy advocacy.