



BY AMANDA EISENBERG AND SHANNON YOUNG

## QUICK FIX

— **Anxiety and depression** are becoming more common among New Yorkers (Michelle Obama’s comment that she has low-grade depression may resonate with a lot of people). So advocates are calling on the state and federal government to invest in mental health resources.

— **Institutional anti-Blackness**, including police violence, is also exacerbating mental health conditions. A comprehensive stimulus could help address some of these issues.

— **Northwell Health** is using virtual reality in its professional development program to show — not tell — its employees how institutional racism and microaggressions can impact staff and patients of color.

## POLICY AND POLITICS

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AID — POLITICO’s Shannon Young:** With more New Yorkers reporting issues with anxiety and depression amid the coronavirus pandemic, advocates are calling on state and federal officials to invest in behavioral health programs, particularly those that serve children. A Citizens’ Committee for Children and Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids [report released Friday found that New York](#) faced a children’s behavioral health crisis even before Covid-19 ravaged the state. But that crisis has only gotten worse as children face new trauma tied to economic and housing insecurity, disruption in mental health care — including services provided at schools — and loss of loved ones due to the coronavirus. And the “harms of institutional anti-Blackness

and police violence that children are grappling with” have further compounded those issues, the report noted.

... **Advocates behind the report** are urging Congress to “pass comprehensive stimulus legislation to help struggling families.” New York, they added, “must continue to protect and invest in the children’s behavioral health infrastructure,” resist proposed cuts like the proposed 1.5 percent rate cut to children’s Home and Community Based Services, make telehealth flexibilities permanent and support the behavioral health needs of students.