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Child Mental Health Advocates Applaud Lack of Cuts to Services in State Budget, Urge Further Action in Legislative Session To Address Skyrocketing Crisis

Prior to Pandemic, Suicide was the Second Leading Cause of Death for NY Children Age 15-19, Third Leading Cause of Death for Children Age 5-14

NEW YORK – Today, in response to the 2021 state budget, Alice Bufkin, director of policy for child and adolescent health at the Citizens' Committee for Children, issued the following statement on behalf of the [Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids](#):

"We applaud Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie for opposing cuts, especially to public health programs, Medicaid, and local assistance. In addition, the expansion of telehealth services to include peer advocates, as well as the expansion of essential postpartum health and mental health benefits, are important steps towards strengthening the continuum of behavioral health care.

"However, more must be done to address this growing crisis. For the remainder of the legislative session, we urge leaders in Albany to pass measures ensuring telehealth parity and network adequacy, and enabling the Child Health Plus program to cover Children and Family Treatment and Support Services. Additionally, we urge the Office of Mental Health and Office of Addiction Services and Supports to prioritize spending federal stimulus funds on behavioral supports for children and families.

"We look forward to working together in the year ahead to ensure children and families, their schools, and their communities continue to get the investments needed to provide quality services to the youngest in our communities as we try to rebuild and recover from the pandemic."

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ABOUT

[The Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids](#) is a statewide coalition of behavioral health providers, advocates, and New York families, joining together to create the public and political will necessary to ensure all children and adolescents in New York receive the high-quality behavioral health services they need.