



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Child Behavioral Health Advocates Respond to NYC Executive Budget

COVID-19 Pandemic Worsens Mental Health, Access to Services for Young People

New York, NY -- In response to the New York City Executive Budget released today, the Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids released the following statement:

"For years, New York City and State have been grappling with a child behavioral health crisis, with over 50% of young people unable to access the behavioral health and substance use services they need. The COVID-19 pandemic only further exacerbates these issues, with children isolated from school support systems, cramped in close quarters with family, and experiencing heightened fear, anxiety, and the loss of loved ones. As many healthcare services go online, tele-therapy is being used to reach children and families. These efforts are new for providers and family members and lack of devices, internet access or privacy poses great challenges. At this moment, as children watch the world as they know it crumble before them, it's more important than ever that they have access to quality, timely and affordable behavioral health treatment. Unfortunately, the Executive Budget includes profound cuts to education and youth and summer programming. Engagement of youth in educational, arts, and cultural programming is essential to their wellbeing when they are experiencing heightened insecurity on every front.

"If we fail to act now, recovery long-term will be even more uncertain, with sick children just becoming sick adults. We know the repercussions of this pandemic will be long-lasting; only by providing behavioral health supports now can we help mitigate the long-term impacts of personal loss of family members, economic stresses from job loss, educational gaps, housing or food insecurity, and a myriad of other traumatic experiences arising from and exacerbated by COVID-19. We stand ready to support the Mayor and City Council in seeking the critical resources from our State Legislature, the Governor, and federal delegation necessary to enable the city to respond to this crisis and begin a path towards recovery."

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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. **You can view their platform with additional background information [here](#).**