

Texas Children's Mental Health Forum

Policy Priorities to Advance Children's Mental Health in the 82nd Legislative Session

Prevent problems from developing in young children, and when concerns do arise, intervene early by:

- Maximizing federal opportunities to expand home visitation programs
- Supporting the use of standardized developmental screenings for social, emotional, and behavioral concerns in primary care settings

Support the behavioral health of students in school by:

- Limiting counselors time spent on non-counseling duties
- Requiring school-wide implementation of Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS)
- Improving the oversight of educational disciplinary programs

Ensure the front line workforce serving children have appropriate training and technical assistance to support the mental health of children and youth by:

- Providing those who work directly with children across settings with:
 - Training and technical assistance on research-informed practices, including trauma informed care, and on recognizing potential behavioral health issues in children and making appropriate referrals
 - Access to experts in child development and behavioral health for case-based consultations
- Establishing a public-private infrastructure that links higher education and state child-serving agencies to promote children's social and emotional health through:
 - Workforce development through multidisciplinary training and technical assistance
 - Dissemination of information on evidence-based practices
 - Evaluation of promising practices

Expand access to specialized mental health workforce and services to children and youth with mental health concerns by:

- Providing privately insured children with coverage for serious emotional disturbances that interfere with their ability to function successfully at home, school and in the community
- Maintaining reimbursement rates paid to Medicaid and CHIP providers
- Supporting the use of trained family liaisons or partners to assist families in navigating the various systems providing services to their child

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The **Texas Children's Mental Health Forum** brings together a wide range of organizations, public agencies, and youth and families to learn more about the programs, policies, and issues impacting children's mental health in Texas, and to share information, identify concerns, and offer policy recommendations to advance children's mental well-being.

Convened and coordinated by Texans Care For Children and the Texas Health Institute, the Forum meets monthly at the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health in Austin, featuring presentations by key stakeholders and providing opportunities for discussion to help identify concerns related to children's mental health; to facilitate cross-sharing of knowledge and perspectives; and to collaboratively develop recommendations for use by Forum participants interested in informing state policymakers. For more information, please contact Josette Saxton at jsaxton@texanscareforchildren.org.