

Mental Health of New Hampshire's Children and Their Families
Program Year 2012**GOAL: "To improve the mental health of New Hampshire's children and their families"**

One in five New Hampshire children between ages five and nineteen have a diagnosable mental health disorder. That's an estimated 56,000 kids. Mental health disorders are more common than childhood asthma or obesity, yet most children in need of care do not receive it. A number of national reports have described the mental health delivery system as fragmented and in disarray. Access to mental health care is inhibited by workforce shortages, stigma surrounding mental illnesses, discriminatory insurance coverage, and limited state capacity to deliver care that works. Untreated mental health issues can lead to school failure, incarceration, substance abuse, economic insecurity, and unnecessary disability.

**Investment to date:** \$4,633,469**Number of grants to date:** 79**Theme Outcomes**

- Mental health care for children and their families is integrated, co-located and/or coordinated within a system of care
- Children and their families' mental health care is of high quality and utilizes research-based interventions
- The capacity to advocate for children and their families' mental health is strengthened

Theme Strategies

- Create sustainable systems that promote professional development, inter-disciplinary education and practice
- Increase collaboration and improve communication among providers within a system of care
- Involve community-based partners in creating coordinated systems of care
- Involve families and youth as full partners in improving the mental health care of children and their families
- Advocate to improve policies at all levels
- Improve communication and public education efforts to increase awareness of and action on issues important to children and their families' mental health
- Conduct applied research and collect data that improves policy and enhances the delivery of care
- Develop, pilot, and disseminate innovative service delivery models and/or replicate or expand on proven models

Progress:

Over the past year, Endowment investments have accomplished the following:

- Drafted a framework for enhancing the professional development of staff working in NH's community mental health centers (CMHCs) that includes core competencies necessary to deliver high quality children's mental health services.
- Two projects to develop and implement wraparound services continue. National research suggests that wraparound is a promising model. These projects give the Foundation and its partners the opportunity to examine the efficacy of this approach in NH based on two different models: one a community agency-led effort and the other a state-run program.
- Continue to support the ability of mental health providers to implement research-based interventions. Support for a video conferencing project has trained 400 providers in three evidence-based treatments for children who have experienced trauma and are struggling with related mental health disorders. Implementation of the RENEW Project in NH, an evidence-based program to support transition-age youth has been expanded to include 6 CMHCs in this program year.
- Worked with DHHS to successfully submit a proposal to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration to plan a system of care for children's mental health services. The \$300,000 grant will enable DHHS to convene stakeholders for a one year process to create a statewide comprehensive strategic plan for the children's behavioral health systems, to receive needed technical assistance, and to generate an advocacy base in support of the plan.
- Convened more than 50 key children's behavioral health stakeholders to form a new coalition, the Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative. The Collaborative has been working to develop an action-oriented state plan for children's behavioral health which will be completed in 2012.

Current Funding Interests:

In the coming year, the Endowment is particularly interested in projects that:

- Strengthen advocacy capacity including building the organizational capacity of children's mental health advocacy organizations and public policy with priority given to efforts to implement the strategic plan.
- Enhance the capacity of the workforce by building sustainable workforce systems—systems to provide professional development for mental health professionals on research-based interventions, to establish baseline competencies or standards, and to improve access, quality and outcomes in children's mental health services.
- Enhance the capacity of the children's mental health delivery systems to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care. This includes strengthening the provision of interpretation services, promoting a bi-cultural workforce, and adapting evidence-based or promising practices for culturally diverse populations.
- Build the capacity of ancillary systems to connect their clients to mental health services particularly vulnerable and often traumatized children who are served through child advocacy centers, domestic violence crisis centers, housing and homeless services, and refugee resettlement agencies.
- Enhance the ability of primary care providers to address the mental health needs of their patients. The Foundation hopes to support systemic changes which would promote an enhanced role for pediatric primary care providers in the screening and referral of children with mental health services needs. This includes policy changes to support integrated care, as well as academic detailing and consultation systems to support evidence based prescribing.

The Program Director for the Mental Health of NH's Children and Their Families theme is Kim Firth at kfirth@endowmentforhealth.org or (603) 228-2448, Endowment for Health, 14 South St., Concord, NH 03301.