

Supporting Early Childhood Mental Health

Early Childhood Interagency Collaboration: DMH Line Item #5042-5000

The Department of Mental Health and the Department of Early Education and Care are working collaboratively to better meet the behavioral health needs of young children. Resources are requested to support the inter-agency implementation of infant and early childhood mental health care and supports.

| FY19 GAA | FY20 Ask | FY20 Governor | FY20 Conference | FY20 GAA |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| \$125,000 | \$125,000 | Not included | No earmark; adequate resources | No earmark; adequate resources |

Pilot Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Centers of Excellence: DMH Line Item #5042-5000

Building on a platform of existing community based expertise in delivery of clinical care for infants and toddlers, IECMH Centers of Excellence are envisioned to be based in 5 organizations across the Commonwealth. In addition to delivering a full range of IECMH care, these programs will serve as community hubs for collaboration among local clinicians, pediatricians, early education and care providers, family resource center staff, and other stakeholders, working with them to develop and implement regional strategies for improving quality and access to IECMH care.

| FY19 GAA | FY20 Ask | FY20 Governor | FY20 Conference | FY20 GAA |
|----------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| N/A | \$250,000 for 5 pilots | Not included | Not Included | Not Included |

Meeting the needs of youth with behavioral health conditions

Return to School "Bridge" Programs: DPH Line Item #4590-0250

The focus of Bridge programs is to ensure that youth who have been out of school for psychiatric or other hospitalizations can successfully transition back to school. Many districts already have these innovative programs, which provide emotional and academic support to students who have missed 5 or more days of school due to a mental health crisis, hospitalization, or serious medical problem. 50% of US high school students with serious mental illness drop out of school. Bridge programs are changing that script for Massachusetts youth with a short-term intervention that reduces drop-out rates to 8%.

| FY19 GAA | FY20 Ask | FY20 Governor | FY20 Conference | FY20 GAA |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| \$250,000 | \$250,000 | Not included | Included at \$350,000 | Included at \$350,000 |

Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids: DCF Line Item #4800-0200

FRCs were created to meet the needs of families with children who face significant challenges, and are at risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system if there is no intervention. FRCs can connect these families to services that will lead to success. At the heart of Chapter 240 is a commitment to provide assistance to families with children who are at an elevated risk of truancy and/or have significant unmet mental health needs. Because behavioral health is a major driver of educational success, resources in the FRC line should be allocated to build capacity for educational advocacy for students whose unmet behavioral health needs have negatively impacted their school attendance.

MHAP for Kids is a highly sought after service initially piloted in the Lowell and Lynn Family Resource Centers (FRCs) that is meeting that need. MHAP for Kids improves the mental health of youth who have been diverted from juvenile court or are already court-involved and have unmet mental health needs by providing these children with a legal advocate trained in removing barriers to treatment. MHAP for Kids attorneys aim to divert children from possible or further court involvement, help children thrive in school, reduce family conflict, and minimize costly emergency room treatment. The program is supported through a combination of public and private funds, and it is designed to be replicable in other FRCs. MHAP for Kids currently provides a specially trained staff attorney in 4 Family Resource Centers (FRCs) serving Suffolk, Essex, Middlesex and Bristol counties and up to 320 children annually.

| FY19 GAA | FY20 Ask | FY20 Governor | FY20 Conference | FY20 GAA |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| \$15.05M total; \$50,000 earmark | \$21.05M; \$587,000 earmark | \$15M + \$2.7M carryover; No earmark | \$16.5M total; Included at \$500,000 | \$16.5M total; Included at \$500,000 |

Sustaining funding for foundational programs

The Children’s Mental Health Campaign (CMHC) has advocated for these priorities for several years. We appreciate the legislature’s ongoing, consistent funding of these important programs, and urge you to support ongoing sustainability

| Priority | FY 2019 GAA | FY20 Governor | FY20 Conference | FY20 GAA |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mass Child Psychiatry Access Project (5042-5000) | \$3,875,000 earmark | Language, no earmark | \$3,875,000 earmark | \$3,875,000 earmark |
| School-based substance use verbal screening (4590-0250) | \$700,000 (planned decrease) | No earmark; adequate resources | No earmark; adequate resources | No earmark; adequate resources |
| Early Ed and Care Mental Health Consultation (3000-6075) | \$2.5M | \$2.5M | \$2.5M | \$2.5M |

Additional priorities:

- Protect funding for child and adolescent behavioral health services and programs under DMH
- \$2M for Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Trust Fund (House allocated \$200,000)