



# CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH IN THE 2023-25 STATE BUDGET

Governor Evers has declared [2023 The Year of Mental Health](#) and has included \$500 million to expand access to mental and behavioral health for children and adults in his 2023-25 state budget. Among the proposed provisions, OCMH identifies the following priorities as especially important to create access to, and sustain provision of, a full array of quality mental health treatment services that Wisconsin's children need. Increasing youth voice and structures to support their decision-making would also increase the effectiveness of multiple state efforts to gather youth input on children's well-being.

## RAISE YOUR VOICE FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH



Advocating for these budget initiatives with legislators is the most immediate and effective action we can take to improve children's mental health in our state.



**SUBMIT A COMMENT** on the budget to the Joint Finance Committee, the designated budget committee for the state legislature.



**ATTEND A HEARING** hosted by the Joint Finance Committee across the state.



**CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS**  
Share with your Assembly Representative and State Senator your support for children's mental health in the state budget.  
[Who Are My Legislators?](#)

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## ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND TREATMENT

- ▶ **Comprehensive School Mental Health Aid**  
Nearly \$118 million General Purpose Revenue (GPR) annually for comprehensive school mental health aid, such as navigators, parent training, and the implementation of best practices and to allow sustainable funding for these mental health services.
- ▶ **School Mental Health Staff Reimbursement**  
\$18 million GPR annually to reimburse schools for certain school staff who assist students with mental health issues, such as counselors, school nurses, and social workers.
- ▶ **Medicaid Behavioral Health Services Rate Increases**  
\$17 million All Funds (AF)\* over the biennium for a Medicaid rate increase for various outpatient mental health and substance use services and child/adolescent day treatment.
- ▶ **Coverage Requirement**  
Increase access to services by mandating that all health insurance plans cover services provided by an individual who has earned, or is working toward, a graduate degree in a mental health field, but has not yet completed the supervised practice hours this to meet licensure requirements.

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## 2 CONTINUUM OF CARE

- ▶ **Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility Grant Program**  
Nearly \$1.8 million GPR Nearly in FY25 for grants to establish a 25-bed psychiatric residential treatment facility to serve children and youths with intensive behavioral health needs. Create a new Medicaid benefit for psychiatric residential treatment facilities.
- ▶ **Youth Crisis Stabilization Facilities Funding**  
Nearly \$1 million GPR in annual, ongoing state support for the three Youth Crisis Stabilization Facilities.
- ▶ **Medicaid Certified Peer Specialists Expansion**  
\$3.7 million AF in FY25 to expand the use of certified peer specialists in the Medicaid program.
- ▶ **Support for Child Care Setting Behavioral Issues**  
\$3.29 million TANF for social emotional training and technical assistance in child care settings with the goal of reducing instances of children being removed from daycare for behavioral issues.
- ▶ **Wisconsin After 3 Program**  
\$1.3 million GPR annually to support youth mental health and substance use prevention. Increase funding to the Boys and Girls Clubs by \$500,000 TANF funding in each year for the Wisconsin After 3 program to improve the literacy skills and math proficiency for low-income children.

## 3 YOUTH VOICE – CROSS AGENCY COLLABORATION

- ▶ Increase youth voices and input on policy issues by developing and providing support for a statewide Youth Wellness Network of youth to advise on systems affecting children's mental health and well-being.
- ▶ Youth for the Network would be recruited largely from youth participating in peer-led school-based programs such as: Sources of Strength, Hope Squad, RedGen, and Providers and Teens Communicating for Health.
- ▶ Provide 1.0 FTE position, \$63,800 GPR in FY24 and \$78,500 GPR in FY25 to OCMH to support carrying this project and ad youth mental health activities.

\*All Funds = State General Purpose Revenue (GPR) Funds, Federal Funds, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Program Revenue Funds.

"We cannot overstate the profound impact that the past few years have had on our kids in many ways—and that includes their mental health... about a third of our kids experience feelings of sadness and hopelessness nearly every day—a 10-percent increase over the last decade. Kids in crisis are often distracted or disengaged in class, might not be able to finish their homework, and won't be able to focus on their studies at home or at school. Improving student mental health can also improve student learning outcomes and school attendance, while reducing bullying, risky behaviors, violence, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and substance misuse."

- GOVERNOR EVERS -

Join us in this effort!  
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