



Legislative Priorities 2021

1. Support the Value of Lived Experience in Legislative and Policy Making:

- Bring children, youth and families into the deliberations about legislation and public policies as a means of increasing the value of the services and improving the outcomes.
- Use the current mechanisms such as System of Care Collaboratives and Consumer and Family Advisory Committees (CFACs) as a springboard for meaningful interaction between payers, LME/MCOs and PHPs, and consumers.
 - Require in the PHP contracts to use State CFAC, local CFACs and NC Collaborative for Children, Youth and Families and local collaboratives in an advisory capacity.
- Formally include youth and young family representation in State CFAC and local CFACs.

2. Address the Impact of COVID-19 in Communities:

[Data](#) is showing that mental health needs have increased since the pandemic due to social isolation, job loss and food insecurity. The pandemic is also suspected to be the cause of increased domestic violence and incidents of child maltreatment.

- Reinstate single stream funding for critical behavioral health and IDD services.
- Promote cross system integration of agency programs to improve health disparities across the state for the most vulnerable populations.

3. Promote Access to Health Care Coverage and Parity in Mental Health Services:

- Support the recommendations of the NC Council on Health Care Coverage to:
 - Ensure parity in coverage of mental health services
 - Increase access to health care coverage and to health care services
- Close the health insurance gap by enacting Medicaid Expansion for coverage and services to 500,000 individuals including 150,000 individuals with opioid addiction and other behavioral health needs. *Cost neutral to North Carolina with*

For more information contact:

Stacy Justiss at sjustiss.mhta@outlook.com

Joanne Scaturro at joanne2653@aol.com

the federal government paying 90 percent of the costs, makes better use of state funds already being spent for uninsured health care.

4. Support Funding to Adequately Serve Youth Benefitting from the Raise the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction

The General Assembly was wise to raise the age of the juvenile jurisdiction. This gives our state an opportunity to provide young adults treatment and support services that may put them on a path to independence and productivity.

Legislation should support all aspects of the Juvenile Justice system to be able to locate, recommend, refer to, and support appropriate services to be provided in the least restrictive appropriate environment to meet the treatment or rehabilitation/habilitation needs of the juvenile, and the protection of the public. This aligns with the recommendations of the Child Well-Being Transformation Council and the intent of the Families First Prevention and Services Act.

5. Support a Coordinated, Seamless System of Care (SOC) for Children, Youth and Families

Including children and their families in case planning is related to better outcomes in keeping children safe in their homes and stabilizing their placements (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2005)

- Support recommendations made by the Child Well-Being Transformation Council
- Ensure sufficient funding to comply with the Leandro decision, including: access to effective educators; access to effective school leaders; adequate and equitable school funding and other resources; and adequate accountability and assessment systems.
- Increase provider rates for the direct care workforce in community settings. Sufficient funding will ensure increased satisfaction at work and lower turnover of staff, quality of services for children and youth and more stability of the providers serving children, youth and their families.

Resources:

[NC Collaborative for Children, Youth and Families](#)

NC Child, [NC Initiative for Young Children's Social-Emotional Health](#)

[School-based Mental Health Initiative](#)

[Child Well-Being Transformation Council](#)

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