

Georgia's Crisis in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

THE PROBLEM:

More than 40% of children ages 3-17 have trouble accessing the mental health treatment and counseling they need.

Schools often serve as the primary point of access to behavioral health services and supports.

ALARMING STATS:

2 in 10 children have one or more emotional, behavioral or developmental conditions.

- **Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death** among youth ages 9 to 17.
- Children with ADHD, autism, or developmental delays are **twice as likely to be chronically absent** compared to kids without these conditions.
- **Almost 70% of youth** in Department of Juvenile Justice long-term facilities have a mental health diagnosis severe enough to require ongoing treatment.

WHY WE NEED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Untreated behavioral health illness in children and adolescents can lead to:



Drug and alcohol abuse



Violent or self destructive behavior



Low educational attainment



Much lower rates of employment in adulthood

WHAT WE NEED:

- 1.** All children and adolescents have access to behavioral health services.
- 2.** Schools are equipped to meet the need early and effectively.
- 3.** Georgia has the workforce to help children and adolescents with behavioral health needs.

WHAT NEXT:

We need to fully implement Georgia's Comprehensive three-year System of Care State Plan for child and adolescent health and support the work of Behavioral Health Innovation Commission to develop policy which can improve children's behavioral health outcomes.