



Support HB18-1094:

Children & Youth Mental Health Treatment Act

Rep. Herod & Rep. Wist | Sen. Martinez Humenik & Sen. Moreno

Background on the Children and Youth Mental Health Treatment Act

- Colorado families whose child is experiencing a mental health crisis may consider giving up parental rights to child welfare to get access to mental health treatment for their child, even though no child abuse or neglect has taken place.
- Colorado families with private health insurance usually find their policies cover only limited residential and community-based mental health treatment services for children.
- It is important that families with children struggling with complex mental health challenges have access to intensive home and community-based services, as well as residential treatment.
- In 1999, the legislature established the Child Mental Health Treatment Act ("the Act"), administered by the Office of Behavioral Health within the Colorado Department of Human Services. In 2009, the legislature expanded the program to include access to community-based programs like day treatment.
- The program has been effective. Eighty-seven percent of children who receive services through the Act do not show up in the Trails database maintained by the Colorado Department of Human Services, meaning they do not enter the child welfare or juvenile justice systems which contributes to cost-savings for the state and the counties.
- In the last year, 99 Colorado children received mental health services and supports through this program.
- Due to the demand and the lack of available funding in this fiscal year, a waitlist was established for this program.

Funding for the Children & Youth Mental Health Treatment Act

- \$1.3 million is needed to fully implement HB 1094.
- We are seeking \$650,000 from each chamber's set-aside funds.
- These funds are needed to address the waitlist due to caseload growth and the severity of children's needs.
- Adequately funding this program can facilitate longer term cost-avoidance for the state and counties. Currently, 80 percent of children served under the Act receive community-based mental health treatment at a daily rate of \$48.55. Conversely, it costs about \$200 per day for room and board only when a child enters the child welfare system and requires residential facility placement.

Keep families together and ensure timely access to mental health services.

Please support \$650,000 in each chamber's set-aside funds for House Bill 1094 implementation in the Long Bill.

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Supporters:

Mental Health Colorado
Children's Hospital Colorado
Colorado Coalition of Adoptive Families
Colorado Children's Campaign
Colorado Hospital Association
Colorado Psychiatric Society
Denver Health
Disability Law Colorado
Federation of Families
Fostering Colorado
Healthier Colorado
Kempe Foundation
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