



2024-2025 Executive Budget Proposals

Topic: Children and Youth Mental Health

In her 2024-2025 executive budget proposal, Governor Hochul continues many of the commitments she made last year to the needs of children and families. The significant rate increases made possible by the infusion of federal funding are maintained, including the 25% increase for CFTSS and HCBS and the more than 15% increase for Residential Treatment Facilities (RTF). In addition, there are new funds added for a 1.5% COLA (\$31 million in OMH) and for minimum wage increases (\$2.9 million).

With this said, it appears that a significant portion of the new infant and child mental health spending is not within the traditional mental health delivery system but in the primary care sector and in the Department of Health Budget.

Within the Office of Mental Health appropriations, there is \$25.95 million in new spending on the following children's services. There is also \$8M in new Medicaid spending for DoH initiatives identified by a * in the list (directly below):

- \$5 million for Hi Fidelity Wrap, for a total of **\$10** million available this year. This comes at a time when the Medicaid care coordination program is under fire and the CANS evaluations are reducing the number of children with SED who are being deemed eligible for Home and Community Based Services. *The question is: will this funding be enough to meet the acute care needs of an increasing number of children and youth with significant challenges?*
- \$13.4 million to support expanding community, non-residential services, including Healthy Steps
- \$6.7 million to support the expansion of the Home-Based Community Intervention Program
- \$852,000 to shore up the services provided at certain Children's Community Residences (2 grants per OMH region)
- *\$4 million (state share) in Medicaid funding to expand Youth ACT
- *\$4 million (state share) in Medicaid funding to expand and provide a 25% rate enhancement for the Partial Hospital program

The Governor promises to continue awards of start-up grants for school based mental health clinics, but there is no new appropriation for that expansion. The state will rely on the previously released funds.

Other child and family investments, outside the OMH budget include:

- \$6.1 million for a 5% rate increase for Early Intervention Services
- \$500,000 for a rate modifier for rural and underserved community Early Intervention (EI) providers
- \$7.6 million to increase reimbursement for children's mental health services provided in integrated settings (physical health settings)
- \$7.8 million to continuously cover children birth - 6 years of age under Medicaid, if an application to the federal government is approved