



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**PRESS RELEASE:**

**Children's Mental Health Campaign Responds to the Release of  
the Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform**

**Boston** - This morning, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services released the much-anticipated *Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform: Ensuring the right treatment when and where people need it*, laying out the design and implementation of a robust behavioral health treatment system. The Children's Mental Health Campaign applauds Governor Baker for his leadership and Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) Secretary Marylou Sudders for spearheading this critical work. The Roadmap sets the stage for a multi-year effort to increase access to behavioral health treatment, and once fully implemented, the behavioral health system will be better equipped to connect children and their families with appropriate treatment.

This is an unprecedented moment where the need for behavioral health services has never been more apparent. The COVID 19 pandemic has laid bare long-standing gaps in the behavioral health system. The Roadmap provides a timely plan to inform the creation of a more comprehensive and accessible behavioral health system. The Campaign is pleased to see the following recommendations included, which have been long-standing priorities for the Children's Mental Health Campaign:

- An overarching focus on addressing deep-rooted inequities in access to behavioral health services
- The creation of behavioral health urgent care to prevent behavioral health needs from becoming crises, thereby avoiding unnecessary use of the emergency department
- A welcome and long overdue "no reject policy" to ensure that individuals are not turned away from services for which they are eligible
- Modernization of the state's screening and assessment tool for children with behavioral health needs
- Standards to ensure that children and families are able to access services when and where they need them

Behavioral health services must be specifically designed to meet the unique needs of children, adolescents, and families. Creating and sustaining provider networks designed for children require specialized training, capabilities, and services that are different from those of adult providers. In the weeks and months ahead, the Children's Mental Health Campaign is committed to working with the Administration to ensure that the system of care outlined in the Roadmap responds to the needs of children and adolescents.

**THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN** is a large statewide network that advocates for policy, systems, and practice solutions, and shared responsibility among government and institutions to ensure that all children in Massachusetts have access to resources to prevent, diagnose, and treat behavioral health issues in a timely, effective, and compassionate way. The CMHC Executive Committee consists of six highly reputable partner organizations: The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Boston Children's Hospital, the Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Health Care For All, Health Law Advocates, and the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health. The CMHC network includes more than 200 organizations across Massachusetts.