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### **Child Mental Health Advocates Respond to FY'22 City Budget Agreement**

“The FY22 New York City budget affirms the importance of expanding access to behavioral health services in the aftermath of the pandemic but also demands greater clarity on how the City plans to ensure that children and families can access essential preventive supports and clinical treatment when they need them.

We applaud Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson on the restoration of the opioid prevention and treatment program, the Court-Involved Youth Initiative and Autism Awareness supports. We also thank the City for the restoration and expansion of Children under Five (CU5), which provides mental health services to young children who have experienced trauma. These are important investments that will help ensure more children have access to life-saving behavioral health services, which were sorely needed prior to COVID-19 and only became more urgently needed in the pandemic’s aftermath.

“With that said, given the lack of specificity on how the City will ensure access to critical behavioral health supports and how public dollars will be spent to address long-standing racial disparities in access to child mental health care, we are deeply concerned. These new resources must be leveraged to respond to the heightened behavioral health needs of youth and families following the life-altering trauma of the pandemic. More targeted investments for children and families are necessary, especially in expanding access to place-based preventive and clinical intervention in pediatric settings, child care, schools and communities. We eagerly await greater detail on how the City’s investments will meet the needs of children and adolescents and we look forward to working with current and future City leaders to ensure all children and adolescents can access the behavioral health care they desperately need.”

#### **ABOUT**

[\*The Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids\*](#) is a statewide coalition of behavioral health providers, advocates, and New York families, joining together to create the public and political will necessary to ensure all children and adolescents in New York receive the high-quality behavioral health services they need.