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Advocates Applaud Children’s Behavioral Health Investments in Senate and Assembly One House Budget Resolutions

NEW YORK, NY – In response to the release of the One House Budget Bills, Citizens’ Committee for Children Executive Director Jennifer March issued the following statement on behalf of the Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids:

The Campaign for Healthy Minds, Healthy Kids thanks Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie for their continuous leadership and prioritizing the children’s mental health crisis.

The Senate and Assembly one-house resolutions build on important Executive Budget proposals that support children’s behavioral health, including critical behavioral health rate enhancements. We strongly support the Assembly one house budget proposals that extend the APG rates until 2027, provide CHP benefit expansion with a guarantee to follow the APG rate, and the inclusion of dyadic services as part of the Medicaid postpartum expansion. We also applaud both one house bills for repealing the Medicaid Global Cap and enhancing transparency and reporting requirements for DOH on managed care plans. While the Assembly proposes a one-year 11% COLA for Human Services providers, the Senate advances a 5.4% COLA for two years. We strongly support an 11% COLA and urge state leaders to ensure that any COLA commitments are made permanent and are inclusive of the children’s behavioral health workforce.

However, we urge the Senate and Assembly to prioritize the following items during final budget negotiations: continue rates at enhanced levels to prevent the 10/1/22 rate cliff for CFTSS services, provide funding for an expansion of Family Support Services, create a state income tax credit for direct care workers in OMH, OPWDD and OASAS programs, and ensures human services bonuses are available to community-based providers, without administrative barriers. We also urge the Senate and Assembly to negotiate a budget that includes a procurement process that holds health plans accountable and ensures parity in telehealth. Finally, the State must commit to reforming rate setting methodologies to help ensure rates are sufficient to support sorely needed capacity for prevention, clinical care in communities and schools, and acute services.
We look forward to working with Governor Hochul and the State Legislature to create the continuum of behavioral health care services that children and families need to overcome compounding trauma resulting from the pandemic. There is robust evidence that preventive and clinical interventions work for children and families and can transform lives; the state's commitment to invest in them now is of critical importance.

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**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.