

# Crisis in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

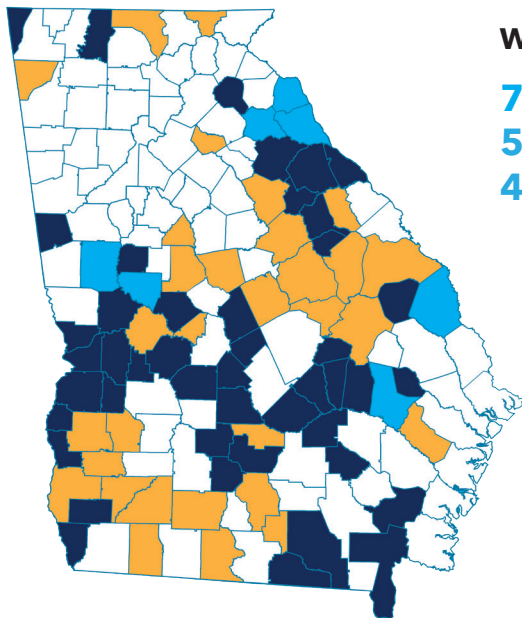
Many children and youth face behavioral health challenges. Nationally, 2 in 10 children have one or more emotional, behavioral, or developmental conditions.<sup>1</sup> Undiagnosed, untreated, or inadequately treated conditions can result in poor immediate and lifelong outcomes, including significant impact to a child's education. Children with Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), autism, or developmental delays are **twice as likely to be chronically absent** compared to kids without these conditions.<sup>2</sup>

## Youth Behavioral Health in Georgia

### Georgia Kids in Crisis

- In Georgia, **suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death** among youth ages 10-17.<sup>10</sup>
- **45%** of children ages 3-17 struggle to or are not able to access needed mental health treatment and counseling.<sup>11</sup>
- **Approximately 70% of youth** in Department of Juvenile Justice long-term facilities have a mental health diagnosis severe enough to require ongoing treatment.<sup>12</sup>

### Accessing Behavioral Health Services in Georgia



When looking at Georgia's counties:<sup>3</sup>

**78** do not have a licensed psychologist




**53** do not have a licensed social worker

**45** do not have a licensed psychologist **OR** a licensed social worker

- Counties without a licensed psychologist
- Counties without a licensed social worker
- Counties without both

### The Role of Schools

Schools often serve as the primary point of access to behavioral health services and supports.

	What We Have:	What We Need:
 <b>Social Workers</b> <sup>5, 6, 7</sup>	1 for every <b>2,043</b> students	1 for every <b>250</b> students
 <b>School Psychologists</b> <sup>8, 9</sup>	1 for every <b>2,269</b> students	1 for every <b>500</b> students
 <b>School Nurses</b> <sup>4</sup>	1 for every <b>1,017</b> students	1 for every <b>750</b> students

## WHY WE NEED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Untreated behavioral health illness in children and adolescents can lead to:<sup>13 14</sup>



Drug and alcohol abuse



Violent or self destructive behavior



Low educational attainment



Lower rates of employment in adulthood

### Recommendations

- Sustain and expand support for the Georgia Apex Program to continue advances in school-based mental health.
- Ensure full implementation of the Behavioral Health Care Workforce Database and develop strategies to address identified provider shortages and diversify the workforce.
- Allocate more funding to strengthen crisis support and intervention services, including continued implementation of 988 and mobile crisis services for children and adolescents.

## WHAT NEXT?

We need to fully implement Georgia's comprehensive three-year System of Care State Plan for child and adolescent health and support the work of Behavioral Health Innovation and Reform Commission to develop policy which can improve children's behavioral health outcomes.

## Sources for Georgia's Crisis in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health

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