



**2018-19 State Budget – 2-Year Delay: NO!**

**\$15 Million for Children's Services Needed Now!**

The New York State Coalition for Children's Behavioral Health and Families Together in New York State can only express dismay over the proposed 2-year delay to the long-awaited expansion of children's behavioral health Medicaid services.

#### ADD FUNDING FOR IMMEDIATE CHILDREN'S SERVICES:

- SKILLBUILDING
- RESPITE
- FAMILY AND YOUTH PEER SUPPORTS
- FLEXIBLE FUNDING
- STAFF RETENTION & TRAINING

Back in 2011, when the Medicaid Redesign Team was launched, the central premise was that New York could rein in costs by investing in better, more creative, preventive health care strategies. For children—unlike every other aspect of Medicaid, it was acknowledged that the children's behavioral health system was under-resourced and had insufficient capacity. *Unlike every other aspect of Redesign, the commitment was for more and new investments.*

After many delays, the expansion was to begin in July 2018. New services would allow providers to treat kids up to age 21 with services designed specifically for children and delivered in their homes and communities. The designation of providers who could offer the services had begun and providers hired workers to be ready.

Now, the proposal is delayed for 2 more years, despite \$7.5 million being earmarked in previous State spending plans and \$10 million in start-up funding being included but not released.

The delay is irresponsible and puts too many children at risk of continuing without access to mental health services. We are asking for your assistance on a temporary response to this unacceptable delay! FTNYS and the Coalition strongly urges that at least \$15 million be included in the budget agreement to support children's services immediately.

We recommend highly effective, low-cost community services that would be similar to the delayed services. These lower-cost services do not require brick and mortar investments and are the ones families report with the highest satisfaction ratings. In addition, an immediate investment into services will prevent providers from having to restructure and reduce their workforce, which is likely now because of the delay. The services can be offered via a pilot program, mirroring the proposed new services, but with state funding and outside the Medicaid cap.

Together, the Children's Behavioral Health Coalition and FTNYS asks that the NYS Legislature:

- **Allow \$15 million built into the fiscal plan to be released to support a temporary pilot of the proposed new children's services outside the Medicaid program.**

**NO DELAY: Children's Services TODAY!**