



Budget Priority

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN OF NEW YORK

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EXTEND & BASELINE FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM

As highlighted in recent advisories by the U.S. Surgeon General, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and others, the country is grappling with a national youth mental health crisis spurred in part by the pandemic. **Schools play a crucial role in connecting young people struggling with mental health challenges with the services they need: past research has found that students are more likely to seek support for mental health issues at school than in community-based settings and that school-based services can help reduce racial disparities in access to care.**

The Mental Health Continuum—an innovative cross-agency partnership between the NYC Department of Education (DOE), the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H)—is one promising solution. The model, which was recently highlighted in the [Mayor's Mental Health Plan](#), is an integrated system of targeted, intensive supports for students with significant mental health needs at 50 high-needs schools. It includes:

- » School partnerships with H+H mental health clinics;
- » Expedited access to evaluation and mental healthcare for students in need;
- » Mobile response teams to respond to students in crisis;
- » A hotline to advise school staff with mental health inquiries;
- » Training for school staff in Collaborative Problem Solving to build their capacity to better address student behavior; and
- » Culturally responsive family engagement.

The City allocated \$5 million for the Mental Health Continuum in both FY 2022 and FY 2023, but the FY 2024 Executive Budget does not include any funding to extend this initiative—despite the fact that the City has already hired dedicated clinicians as well as an Associate Director for the program, and students have already begun receiving critically-needed mental health services.

The City should extend and baseline \$5 million (DOE: \$787K, H+H: \$3.74M, DOHMH: \$472K) for the Mental Health Continuum in the FY 2024 budget.

Funding for the Mental Health Continuum will expire in June 2023—just as the initiative is getting off the ground—unless it is extended in the FY 2024 budget. At a time when we have a youth mental health crisis, it is vital to sustain this model so that students can continue to receive the timely support and mental healthcare they need to be successful in the classroom.

ESTIMATED CHILD IN CRISIS INTERVENTION RATE BY POLICE PRECINCT (2021–22 SCHOOL YEAR)

During the 2021–22 school year, the NYPD intervened in 2,386 incidents involving students in emotional distress sent to the hospital for psychological evaluation — roughly one intervention for every 445 students enrolled in City schools. Map shading indicates the number of interventions reported in each precinct, relative to the total enrollment of schools located in the precinct.

- One intervention for every 120–249 students
- One intervention for every 250–499 students
- One intervention for every 500–749 students
- One intervention for every 750–999 students
- One intervention for every 1,000–2,500 students
- One intervention for every 6,300 students

City Council district boundaries overlaid in white.

Staten Island not shown to scale.

