The kids are not all right: The urgent need to expand effective behavioral health services for children and youth

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Children and adolescents in the U.S. are facing a mental health crisis, with rising rates of behavioral health conditions, suicide, and mental health-related emergency visits, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Addressing this crisis requires a dual approach: preventing mental health problems through early intervention and providing accessible, community-based behavioral health services, particularly for vulnerable populations such as low-income and minority children.

Integrating evidence-based mental health interventions into healthcare and education systems, increasing Medicaid and private insurance coverage, and leveraging federal funding can help expand access to treatment. Schools also play a vital role in delivering mental health care, and efforts should focus on building sustainable, equitable systems to support children's mental well-being. Comprehensive and immediate action is essential to safeguard the future health and success of America's youth.

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