## Connecticut Children's Mental Health Forum 2010 A Call to Action

Child Mental Health must be a Top Priority of the Next Administration

Child mental health, an issue that has the potential to affect every family in Connecticut, is influenced by family life, school problems, bullying, financial hardship, physical health, substance abuse, exposure to trauma and violence, among others.

About 75% of children who require mental health services go untreated.

One in 14 Connecticut high school students attempted suicide in 2008, and about one in four have struggled with symptoms of depression.

The Children's Committee of the Keep the Promise Coalition has identified the following areas that require urgent action:

- 1. Broaden coverage of mental health and substance abuse treatments for children who are privately insured.
- 2. Improve access to school-based mental health and substance abuse services.
- 3. Enhance the linkage between the child mental health system and primary care providers.
- 4. Strengthen supports for young adults in transition from DCF to DMHAS.
- 5. Provide appropriate levels of care in Connecticut for children with serious and chronic mental health and substance abuse problems.

We, the undersigned, call on the next governor of Connecticut to work with our Coalition to draft a comprehensive plan, within the first 100 days of office, aimed at improving the state's child mental health system.

National Alliance on Mental Illness of Connecticut (NAMI-CT) Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP)

State of Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate

Connecticut Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics FAVOR, a Statewide Family Advocacy Organization

Connecticut Voices for Children

National Association of Social Workers of Connecticut (NASW-CT)

Connecticut Community Providers Association (CCPA) Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents (CAFAP)

Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance (CTJJA)

Center for Children's Advocacy

Families United for Children's Mental Health

Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut (CHDI)

Connecticut Association of School Based Health Centers

African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities

(AFCAMP)

Connecticut Association of Nonprofits

True Colors - Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services

Connecticut Psychological Association

Connecticut Psychiatric Society

Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Committee

Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA)

Hispanic Health Council

State of Connecticut Office of the Healthcare Advocate