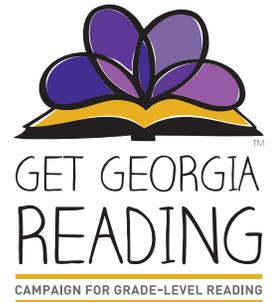




CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Every day, children across Georgia cope with mental health issues brought on by circumstances beyond their control. These issues affect a child's ability to reach developmental and emotional milestones, demonstrate healthy social skills, and solve problems.



1 in 5 children ages 3 to 17 has a diagnosable mental health disorder.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [2013]



Up to **14.2%** of children under age 5 experience social-emotional problems that negatively impact their functioning, development, and school readiness.

Public Health Reports [2006]



4 out of 5 children ages 5 to 13 with emotional and behavioral disorders have significant language deficits.

Journal of the Council for Exceptional Children [2014]; Journal of Abnormal Psychology [2013]



Children are being **expelled from child care** at a rate 3X that of grades K-12. Access to mental health consultation is linked to significantly lower rates of expulsion in child care.

Journal of Child and Family Studies [2008]

A positive **school climate** is associated with students' increased self-esteem, positive behavioral adjustment, and fewer depressive symptoms and psychiatric problems.



Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education [2017]



Quality child care is associated with **reduced risk of behavior problems** among 1- to 5-year-old children of mothers with maternal depression.

Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry [2017]; JAMA Psychiatry [2013]

Compared to their counterparts, children placed in foster care are:

- 6X** more likely to exhibit behavior problems
- 3X** more likely to have hearing and vision problems
- 2X** more likely to suffer from language impairment

Pediatrics [2016]



Children with untreated mental health problems miss as many as **22** days of school each year.

Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study [2004]



Children who are **visually impaired** are at significantly higher risk of developing mental health problems than their sighted peers.

Journal of Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology [2016]



In the earliest years, **mental health disorders** often result from problems in the child's primary attachment relationship.

Zero to Three [2012]



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When we uncover underlying factors that affect a child's ability to read, we increase our opportunities to improve outcomes. Here are just some of the ways that we can all address those factors.



Increase awareness and understanding of the relationship between language and behavior, and provide language screening for all children with emotional and behavioral disorders.



Provide screenings and refer for assessments and appropriate interventions for vision, hearing, and language impairments for all children in foster care and those involved with juvenile justice.



Support implementation of infant and early childhood mental health consultation. This evidence-based approach improves children's social skills and emotional functioning; strengthens parent-child relationships; reduces disruptive behaviors, suspensions, and expulsions; and reduces teacher stress and turnover.



Continue to invest in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports to improve the learning climate in schools and child care centers.



Continue to invest in Quality Rated, Georgia's three-star rating system that supports child care providers in raising the quality of care they offer and provides families with helpful information in selecting quality child care.



Implement a method to follow up on children who may need vision correction or other vision services.



Provide training in Child-Parent Psychotherapy for providers working in child welfare. This evidence-based intervention for children birth to 6 addresses exposure to trauma and strengthens the caregiver-child relationship as a vehicle for restoring and protecting the child's mental health.



Support the sustainability of Youth Mental Health First Aid training and expand the approach to support needs of early childhood and elementary school-age children. This helps school staff and other adults understand mental health issues in children, making it more likely that they will help a young person in emotional distress or crisis.



Support the continuation and expansion of the Georgia Apex Project to provide access to mental health services and support in schools and expand the approach to include child care centers.