



NEWS RELEASE

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Pritzker Administration Announces \$10M in Grants to Strengthen Mental Health Services in Schools

Youth Agencies Invited to Apply for Funding from American Rescue Plan Act Intended to Aid Post-COVID-19 Mental Health Services for Young People

CHICAGO – Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced the State of Illinois is accepting grant applications from schools and agencies that support child and adolescent health for a share of \$10 million in federal funding intended to strengthen mental health services for students across Illinois. The funding from the CDC’s COVID-19 Public Health Workforce Supplemental Funding program is being offered to help schools and local agencies improve student care in areas such as workforce enhancements, developing frameworks to prevent adverse childhood experiences, interventions to assist children suffering from trauma, and training for medical and school staff to expand adolescent mental health resources.

“The last few years have been challenging for all of us and this is especially true for our children,” **Governor Pritzker said**. “With these new dedicated resources, Illinois will better identify children and young adults who are suffering through mental health challenges and ensure they receive treatment and therapies that work while also addressing disparities in access to mental health treatment.”

“We applaud the Biden Administration and CDC for supporting efforts to address the critical issue of children’s mental health at a time when these services are needed across the nation,” **said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra**. “Data shows that more than a third of high school students in the country reported poor mental health during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Our goal with this funding is to implement and enhance programs in schools and community agencies that focus on addressing the mental and physical health of school age children. Every child in Illinois deserves the support necessary for long-term development and success.”

The funding is authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and the application process is being administered by IDPH’s Office of Women’s Health & Family Services. Following are the two program areas in which funds will be allocated:

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- **\$6.9 million for Enhancing Post-Covid Recovery Efforts for School Based Health Needs:** Up to \$500,000 per school district or qualifying school affiliated organization to expand workforces, purchase mental health training materials and deploy programs and resources to enhance student mental health. (Up to 25 grants expected.)
- **\$3 million for Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Post-COVID-19:** To identify mental health issues within school populations and provide education, resources, care coordination, and or training that helps to develop frameworks to prevent adverse childhood experiences and improve mental health outcomes for children and youth in a post-pandemic world. (Up to 15 grants expected.)

IDPH will be accepting applications from school districts and agencies that support adolescent mental health through September 8. Grant applications will be handled through IDPH's [Electronic Grants Administration & Management System \(EGrAMS\)](#) system.

The opportunity to apply for ARPA funded grants follows the state of Illinois' announcement last fall of the Illinois Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Expansion program. The \$2.5 million federally funded program is a partnership involving the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), the Department of Human Services (DHS) plus the University of Illinois Chicago's (UIC) DocAssist Program and the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP).

The program is supporting improved mental health services through a range of pediatric primary care providers, including pediatricians, family medicine physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants.

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