

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH
TESTIMONY TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMISSION

June 7, 2013

Traverse City, MI.

My name is Gail Lanphear. I am the State Board chair of the Association for Children's Mental Health. Thank you so much for this opportunity to share the concerns of thousands of families in Michigan who have children with mental health challenges. The Association is pleased that The Snyder Administration has established The Mental Health and Wellness Commission in order to learn more about barriers to the delivery of critically needed mental health services for children and families.

The family voice of ACMH has identified the following barriers to ensuring timely, adequate mental health services and supports to children and their families.

1. THE INADEQUACY OF EARLY INTERVENTION MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS ACROSS THE STATE.
2. CUTS TO THE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH GENERAL FUNDS THAT CAN BE USED FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH MILD TO MODERATE MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS; DISORDERS THAT CAN ESCALATE TO THE LEVEL OF SEVERE DISORDERS WITHOUT PROPER TREATMENT.
3. THE LACK OF A COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION OF EVERY CHILD/YOUTH, INCLUDING THOSE WHO ENTER THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM.
4. THE DEARTH OF JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVERSION PROGRAMS.
5. THE INADEQUACY OF FUNDING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES.(only Medicaid insurance covers community based services)
6. THE LACK OF MENTAL HEALTH INSURANCE PARITY.
7. THE STIGMA IN COMMUNITIES REGARDING MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS.

8. THE FAILURE TO INCLUDE FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE PLANNING, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share ideas and concerns.