



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZACHARY PARKER
COUNCILMEMBER, WARD 5

COMMITTEE MEMBER
Facilities and Family Services
Health
Hospital and Health Equity
Housing
Transportation and the Environment

March 28, 2024

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today, I am introducing the Child Behavioral Health Services Dashboard Act of 2024. Please find enclosed a signed copy of the legislation, which is co-introduced by Councilmembers Charles Allen, Anita Bonds, Matthew Frumin, Vincent C. Gray, and Robert C. White, Jr.

District children and their families are facing enormous pressures today, which manifest themselves in countless ways. Among the most alarming statistics are the high rates of truancy and absenteeism in District public schools. One facet of this problem is that many District children and families face delays finding behavioral health services to which they are referred. Most providers have their own website, where they regularly post information, updates, and resources, but those websites contain information for a variety of stakeholders, may not be easy for families and youth to navigate, and also may not reliably display whether they have capacity to provide services.

The Child Behavioral Health Services Dashboard Act of 2024 addresses this shortcoming by requiring the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services to create a publicly available dashboard of behavioral health services in the District to ensure a system of care for children, youth, and their families. Other jurisdictions, including Philadelphia and Baltimore, have established centralized dashboards where this information is available in a single location to accelerate and simplify the process of finding services for children.¹ This bill complements the Showing Up for Students Amendment Act of 2024, which will result in the referral of more children and families to the Department of Human Services.

¹See Healthy Minds Philly, <https://healthymindsphilly.org/>; Behavioral Health System Baltimore, <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/>.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Council and the Executive to improve access to child behavioral health services in the District. Please contact my Deputy Chief of Staff, Conor Shaw, at cshaw@dccouncil.gov if you have any questions about this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zachary Parker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "Z".

Zachary Parker
Ward 5 Councilmember

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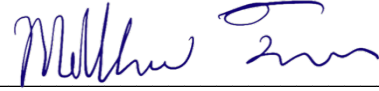
2
3 Councilmember Charles Allen



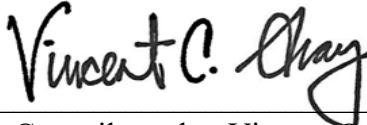
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5 Councilmember Zachary Parker

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8 Councilmember Anita Bonds

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10 Councilmember Matthew Frumin

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13 Councilmember Vincent C. Gray

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15 Councilmember Robert C. White, Jr.

16 A BILL

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18 _____
19 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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25 To require the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services to create a publicly available
26 dashboard of behavioral health services in the District to ensure a system of care for
27 children, youth, and their families.

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29 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may
30 be cited as the “Child Behavioral Health Services Dashboard Act of 2024”.

31 Sec. 2. Definitions.

32 For the purposes of this act:

33 (1) The term “behavioral health” means a person’s overall social, emotional, and
34 psychological well-being and development.

35 (2) The term “behavioral health treatment services” means stand-alone and co-
36 occurring, integrated treatment services for substance abuse and mental health disorders that are

37 designed to promote a person’s behavioral health.

38 (3) The term “behavioral health screening” means a brief process designed to
39 identify youth who are at risk of having behavioral health disorders that warrant immediate
40 attention, or intervention, or to identify the need for further assessment with a more
41 comprehensive examination.

42 (4) The term “behavioral health prevention and early intervention services” means
43 services that aim to intervene during pregnancy and the early periods in childhood development,
44 focusing on infants, toddlers, young children, and their families and are intended to address the
45 key drivers that cause children and youth to require crisis intervention services.

46 (5) The term “managed care organization” means an organization of physicians
47 and allied health professionals organized to and capable of providing systematic and
48 comprehensive medical care and treatment of injured employees which is designated by the
49 Mayor to provide such care and treatment.

50 (5) “System of care for children, youth, and their families” means a community
51 support system for children or youth with mental health problems and their families, which is
52 developed through collaboration in the administration, financing, resource allocation, training,
53 and delivery of services across all appropriate public systems.

54 Sec. 3. By September 30, 2025, the Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services shall
55 create a publicly available, online directory that reports on the currently available behavioral
56 health screening, behavioral health prevention and early intervention services, and behavioral
57 health treatment services in the District to ensure a system of care for children, youth, and their
58 families. The website shall be updated regularly to include:

59 (a) The real-time status of:

60 (1) The number of beds available for behavioral health inpatient treatment
61 services in the District; and

62 (2) The estimated wait time and capacity by provider and/or organization for
63 behavioral health screening, prevention and early intervention, or treatment services in the
64 District;

65 (b) A calendar of behavioral health events offered by District government agencies and
66 community based organizations;

67 (c) A directory of available behavioral health screening, prevention and early
68 intervention, or treatment services in the District, contact information and relevant links, that
69 allows users to filter available providers by key features, including:

- 70 (1) The age of population served;
- 71 (2) The services provided;
- 72 (3) The types of therapy offered;
- 73 (4) The languages spoken by the provider;
- 74 (5) The ethnicity of the provider;
- 75 (6) Whether the service is LGBTQIA+ friendly;
- 76 (7) The gender of the provider;
- 77 (8) The types of insurance accepted;
- 78 (9) The zip code where the services are provided; and
- 79 (10) The availability of telehealth.

80 (d) Links to behavioral health resources currently offered by:

- 81 (1) The Department of Health;
- 82 (2) The Department of Behavioral Health;

- 83 (3) The Department of Human Services; and
84 (4) Managed Care Organizations contracted by the District.

85 Sec. 4. The Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services shall consult with the following
86 entities to inform the website creation and support continued implementation of the website:

- 87 (1) The Office of Chief Technology Officer;
88 (2) The Child and Family Services Agency;
89 (3) The Department of Health;
90 (4) The Department of Behavioral Health;
91 (5) The Department of Health Care Finance;
92 (6) At least one Managed Care Organizations;
93 (7) The D.C. Primary Care Association;
94 (8) The D.C. Behavioral Health Association;
95 (9) The D.C. Hospital Association;
96 (10) An individual or entity with expertise in health information systems; and
97 (11) Community members and advocates with current or past experience
98 navigating health services in the District.

99 Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.

100 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
101 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
102 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

103 Sec. 5. Effective date.

104 This act shall take effect after approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
105 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as

106 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
107 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
108 Columbia Register.