



Pediatric Mental Health Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2025

Building Capacity and Confidence for Pediatric Mental Healthcare Together

Welcome to our first pediatric mental health newsletter. As we continue our momentum around pediatric mental health in 2025, we will be issuing bi-monthly updates on our work and pediatric mental health care work in the state as it relates to pediatricians.






ICAAP Mental Health Resources

- [Pediatric Mental Health Resources & Guidance](#)
- [On-Demand Pediatric Mental Health Webinars](#)
- [Youth Suicide Prevention Resources](#)



Earn CME & Develop Your Skills

Please join us for these upcoming ICAAP webinars related to pediatric mental health! Click [here](#) to register for any of the events below.

-  **March 12 at 12pm**
How Pediatricians Can Help Reduce Firearm Suicides
MOC part II credit is available.
-  **March 20 at 8am**
Trauma-Informed Care: Creating a Safe Space Within Your Practice
-  **March 28 at 12pm**
Supporting Pediatric Mental Health in Illinois
-  **April 2 at 12pm**
Chicago ECHO Series: Childhood Adversity & Trauma (first session)
[Download Flyer](#)
-  **April 17 at 8am**
Resilience Through Connection: Leveraging Community Partnerships to Mitigate ACEs





**ILLINOIS
DocAssist**

Consultation and resources
for pediatric and perinatal
mental health

Consultation line: **866-986-2778**
Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Free Pediatric Mental Healthcare Consultation and Resources

Any Illinois health care or school-based clinician can access free expert psychiatric advice and referral resources to address the mental health needs of their pediatric and perinatal patients. It's like having a knowledgeable and trusted colleague to turn to for guidance throughout your workday.

Learn more about Illinois DocAssist [here](#).

DocAssist Open Office Hours

Clinical Pearls, Conversations and Consultation

Join an Illinois DocAssist psychiatric consultant for a series of free virtual open office hours. Learn about a pediatric mental health topic and get your questions answered.

Learn more and register [here](#).



Upcoming Webinars

FOR **Parents & Caregivers**

Community Conversations Webinar Series: Teen Depression

A virtual webinar from the
National Institute of Mental Health

February 19, 2025 | 12:00–1:00 pm ET

Depression can affect teenagers and adults differently. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is funding and conducting research to learn more about depression in teens, how it affects the brain, and how to treat it effectively. This webinar is designed for parents, caregivers, and educators who want to understand more about and address the needs of teens with depression.

FOR **Youth Ages 14-24**

Virtual Youth Forum: Beyond the Likes — Social Media, Mental Health & You

March 1st & 8th, 2025 | 10:00 am–2:30 pm CST

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health invites young people (ages 14–24) from diverse backgrounds to explore how social media impacts mental health through fun, meaningful conversations. During this two-day event attendees will learn tips for managing their social media feeds, understand how it affects mental health, and build confidence to have open discussions with peers, parents, and others in the community.

Sign up [here](#) to receive updates, including the registration link! We look forward to working together to ensure youth voices are at the forefront of this critical conversation.

Calling All

Pediatricians, Family Physicians, and Clinicians Providing Pediatric Mental Health Care and Services

**Save the Date for Our In-Person
Pediatric Mental Health Conference!**

May 15, 2025

Location: The I-Hotel and Conference Center, 1900 S 1st St, Champaign, IL 61820

Join the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics and Illinois DocAssist for:

- ✓ Pediatric mental health care subject matter expertise
- ✓ Interactive and engaging learning sessions
- ✓ Guidance on screening, diagnosis, and treatment
- ✓ New information on referral resources and consulting methods available statewide in Illinois
- ✓ Professional networking & collaboration

Mark Your Calendar Today

Be sure to save the date for this one-of-a-kind conference dedicated to improving capacity and confidence in pediatric mental health care.

More details to come!





Upcoming Projects



Current and Desired Behavioral Health Resources for Children in Illinois Emergency Departments

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Cindy Durr, DO

Glennon Care, Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital

Kendall Arslanian, PhD and Jennifer Monti, PhD

American Academy of Pediatrics

Stephanie Atella, MPH, CHES

Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Ashley Foster, MD

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Emergency department (ED) visits by children for mental and behavioral health concerns have risen substantially over the last decade, with increased frequency and duration of boarding of children awaiting inpatient psychiatric admission. Despite this, not much is known about current and desired behavioral health resources for children across US EDs. Of 3,554 EDs that completed the 2021 National Pediatric Readiness Project (NPRP) assessment, 73% reported having pediatric behavioral health-related policies, but the content and nature of these policies was not specified. The likelihood of having behavioral health policies was lower in rural and remote EDs and higher in EDs with both a nurse and physician pediatric emergency care coordinator (PECC). Recent expansion of Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program (PMHCA) funding to EDs in some states provides a critical opportunity to allocate new resources toward improving pediatric emergency behavioral health care.

Hypothesis: Current resources to care for children presenting to Illinois EDs with behavioral health concerns will vary by ED characteristics. Desired resources will span the domains of processes, personnel, supplies, and knowledge.

Methods: We will conduct a survey of nurse PECCs and nurse managers in Illinois EDs to understand current and desired resources to care for children with behavioral health concerns. Survey content areas will include ED characteristics; behavioral health policies and procedures; triage, screening, assessment, disposition, and boarding of pediatric patients with behavioral health concerns; availability of telemental health services; and desired resources to improve care. Desired resources will encompass 4 domains: processes (e.g., sample policies and pathways), personnel (e.g., appointment of PECCs), supplies (e.g., activity kits, firearm storage devices), and knowledge (e.g., webinars, learning communities).

To develop the survey, existing items were reviewed from the US NPRP assessment, the Canadian ED readiness survey, the PMHCA needs assessment, and the American Academy of Pediatrics Improving Mental Health Processes, Workflows, and Responses (IMPWR) collaborative environmental scan. Relevant items were adapted when available; otherwise new items were developed. Feedback on the survey draft was solicited from the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians, the Illinois Emergency Nurses Association, the Illinois College of Emergency Physicians, and the Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network. Following incorporation of feedback, the survey was pilot tested by 34 nurse PECCs and nurse managers in states other than Illinois, and the survey was further refined. The survey will be distributed via Qualtrics in spring 2025 through listservs of nurse PECCs and nurse managers maintained by the Illinois Emergency Medical Services for Children program. As incentives for participation, survey respondents will be provided a gift card and a curated list of resources to improve ED behavioral health care for children. Findings will be used to inform development and dissemination of resources to improve ED care for children with behavioral health concerns in Illinois. This assessment could inform future efforts to understand and improve emergency care for children with behavioral health concerns across the country.



Mental Health Peer Advisors

A team of pediatric health care clinicians from throughout the state have joined ICAAP's Mental Health Peer Advisors to help establish communities of learning and practice around mental health care delivery in the pediatric primary care space. This group has begun training and discussions, and we look forward to providing more resources soon.

If you are still interested in joining this group, please email Lauren at lbarnfield@illinoisap.com.



A Quality Improvement Project and MOC Part 4 Opportunity in Pediatric Anxiety

With the support of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Dr. Rachel K. Levin, ICAAP will be launching project around treating pediatric anxiety in the primary care setting.

Registration will start in March, and sessions will likely take place on Thursdays, beginning in May. Stay tuned!

This project will have a quality improvement (QI) component*. Practices must provide primary care to patients in Illinois, complete monthly de-identified retrospective chart reviews, and complete monthly PDSA (plan Do, Study Act) cycles.

**Maintenance of Certification Part IV credit and CME credit is pending approval.*

STAY TUNED

Keep an eye on your inbox for future ICAAP mental health resources and don't forget to follow us on your favorite social media platforms for the most up-to-date information on children's health in Illinois!



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illinoisap.org

