



## ***The Kid Angle***

***Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children***

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### **Children's mental health must have more providers, wider reach March 17, 2022**

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***“Teens are talking and we need you to listen.”***

Seventeen-year-old mental health advocate Trace Terrell called on Congress to create a national peer-to-peer teen crisis line during First Focus on Children’s inaugural Kids and Covid Conversation this week, which examined — and proposed solutions for — the [mental health crisis afflicting the country’s children and young people](#).

Terrell and his fellow panelists strongly recommended bringing services to where the children are — schools, pediatrician’s offices, child care centers — and offered additional remedies:

- **Miriam Calderón (Zero To Three):** Recognize that babies and toddlers experience mental health challenges and develop the workforce to serve them and other children and youth. Uplift programs that improve the physical and mental well-being of all children, like the Child Tax Credit, early learning, and child care programs.
- **Dr. Sharon Hoover, PhD. (University of Maryland School of Medicine):** Strengthen the role of schools in mental health promotion, prevention and intervention. Research has shown that youth are six times more likely to initiate and complete mental health treatment in schools than in community settings. “Every adult in the school building and every peer in the building plays a role in mental health,” she said.

- **Scott Hutchins (*Michigan Department of Education*)**: Increase the number of mental health professionals in schools and integrate the program with existing systems — such as Medicaid — to make them reimbursable and sustainable. Michigan began building its school-based mental health services with a \$30 million investment in FY 2019 — just \$20 per student. This year, the \$300+ million effort has more than 1,400 service providers in schools across the state.

[Watch the full discussion on the First Focus on Children website.](#)

## **COMING UP: *Kids and Covid Week 2: Homelessness and eviction, vaccines and physical health***

In the next installment of our [Kids and COVID Conversation Series](#), experts and members of Congress will tackle the growing problem of child homelessness and eviction (3/22) and examine the impact of the pandemic and its fallout on the physical well-being of children, including on vaccine status (3/24). Join us:

### **3/22 Tues. 2pm ET | [Child and Youth Homelessness](#)**

- Barbara Duffield (*SchoolHouse Connection*)
- Katrina Bostick (*Family Promise of the Coastal Empire*)

### **3/24 Thurs. 3pm ET | [Physical Health and Vaccinations](#)**

- Rep. Kim Schrier (*WA-08*)
- Dr. Mark Kline (*Children's Hospital New Orleans*)
- Dr. Theresa Chapple, Director (*Oak Park Department of Public Health*)



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