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ROCKY MOUNTAIN PARTNERSHIP CALLS ON COMMUNITY TO RESPOND TO THE 'STATE OF EMERGENCY' FOR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH MADE BY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL COLORADO AND SUPPORT THE 17TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO AMPLIFY RESOURCES

Call for action to connect young people with mental health resources

ADAMS AND BROOMFIELD COUNTIES, COLORADO -- The Rocky Mountain Partnership is calling for action to support the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office to make a concentrated effort to connect young people with mental health resources and supports that are critically needed. This call to action from the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office was issued in response to a 'State of Emergency' for youth mental health issued by Children's Hospital Colorado last month.

In their 'State of Emergency,' Children's Hospital Colorado stated that their entity alone has seen a "90% increase in demand for behavioral health treatment in the past two years" and that "the organizations that serve kids are overwhelmed. Many children, families, local schools, county governments and healthcare facilities are at their breaking points."

"Supporting the mental health and well-being of our youth and families is nothing new. Many healthcare providers have been doing this for years. What we're seeing right now is a demand for mental health care that has been exacerbated by the pandemic. We have the opportunity to further come together as a region to get our youth and families connected to the support they need during this unprecedented time," said Whitney Gustin Connor, Executive Director with Kids First Health Care and Co-Champion for Health and Mental Health for the Rocky Mountain Partnership.

The Rocky Mountain Partnership, a cross-sector coalition of stakeholders working to improve economic and social mobility in Adams County, the City and County of Broomfield, and the City of Aurora, also emphasizes that it's not enough to promote existing mental health resources alone. With the heightened demand for mental health services across the state and nation, current programs and services are unable to meet the growing need.

"Many organizations are seeing a higher demand for these services than we have in previous years for a variety of reasons. And while we're trying our best to meet the needs of our youth and families, there's a huge opportunity for getting creative as a community in how we build on and scale the capacity of these programs to meet the growing need," said Constance Schmidt, CEO for of Centura Health's St. Anthony North Health Campus and Co-Champion for Health and Mental Health for the Rocky Mountain Partnership.

The 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office, who is also part of the Rocky Mountain Partnership, has taken the lead in doing just that. The Office has launched a "Summer Life Line" mental health crisis hotline, which connects youth facing mental health challenges to licensed mental health professionals from the office's Youth Diversion Program.

"Our Life Line is a unique program for a district attorney's office, but I envision our role in the community in a much broader sense," said Brian Mason, 17th Judicial District Attorney (Adams and Broomfield Counties). "Our community is facing a mental health crisis, and my office has access to mental health resources to be able to help those in need. We are not just here to prosecute crime; we are here to make a difference. I want our communities to be safer for everyone, and I want everyone to know they are not alone. Our Life Line can help do just that."

Mason is leading efforts within the Rocky Mountain Partnership to amplify and draw awareness to the critical work of this hotline and additional quick, short-term action to make sure youth and families have the support they need when it comes to mental health.

If you are aware of additional mental health resources or additional funding that could support this collective work, contact Levon Hupfer, Director of Diversion, Health, and Legislation for the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office, at lhupfer@da17.state.co.us. You can also visit <https://rmpartnership.org/youth-mental-health/> to learn more.

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About the Rocky Mountain Partnership



The Rocky Mountain Partnership is a coalition of cross-sector stakeholders working together to collectively improve economic and social mobility across Adams County (including 6 municipalities), the City and County of Broomfield, and the City of Aurora, specifically for those marginalized because of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, zip code, or circumstance. The Partnership does this by: utilizing data to set shared targets and as a scorecard to measure progress; advocating for and aligning policies, funding, and resources to remove barriers and accelerate progress; better coordinating and improving the work happening on the ground. For more information about the Rocky Mountain Partnership, visit www.RMPartnership.org.

About The 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office



District Attorney Mason assumed the oath of office on January 12, 2021. The 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office endeavors to seek justice on behalf of the citizens of Adams and Broomfield counties in felony and misdemeanor cases. DA Mason and his staff are dedicated to transforming the criminal justice system to better serve the citizens of the 17th Judicial District. For more information about the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office, visit <http://adamsbroomfieldda.org/>.

Learn more about the Life Line program here:

- Dial (303) 835-LIFE (5433)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdlEXLnLxes>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GK63jMZYKXo>