



## Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency, Inc

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### House Bill 1107 Testimony

Adrienne Mickler, Executive Director Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency

As the mental health director for Anne Arundel County, I can attest to the increased need for children's mental health services. The need was evident prior to the pandemic and COVID has exacerbated the demand. We have taken many steps as a system and community to address these needs, but the demand still outweighs the capacity. HB1107 will leverage some of the lessons we have learned and provide a mechanism to further support our children. I helped work on this bill because I believe that Anne Arundel County is in a unique position to pilot this program. The Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency has been fortunate to either co-chair or participate in several initiatives where the focus has been the need for Children's Mental Health Services. This bill will allow us to demonstrate how aligning the lessons we learn in these initiatives can support our efforts to best serve our children and help them navigate a very complex health care system. It will also enhance our ability to analyze the data and to further identify areas where successful outcomes can be obtained by expanding specific programs and enhance our system of care in the most meaningful way. We understand that resources are limited. Therefore, using the data as requested in this bill, we can be strategic in our focus for making system improvements for our children.

#### Data:

- Suicide was the second leading cause of death among 10- to 19-year-olds from 2016-2020. (Source: MVDRS: Maryland Violent Death Reporting System)
- 1 in 5 adolescents, age 10-19 disclosed suicide intent to a friend or peer from 2016-2020. (Source: 2021 Maryland Youth Pandemic Behavior Survey YPBS-21)
- 1 in 11 middle school students reported attempting suicide in 2021. (Source: 2021 Maryland Youth Pandemic Behavior Survey YPBS-21)
- Black youth had a higher suicide rate than white youth aged 15-19 (8.95 per 100,000 vs. 6.27 per 100,000 respectively) and 20-24 (12.01 per 100,000 vs. 9.27 per 100,000) in 2020. (Source: MVDRS: Maryland Violent Death Reporting System)

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