

Child Mental Health

National studies show that 8-12% of children and youth have mental health concerns and 3-6% have serious emotional problems. Parental depression also contributes to children's mental health. Studies have shown that addressing children's mental health requires different approaches than addressing adult mental health; and that there is a particular need to develop systems that help and support parents in responding to their children's mental health needs. Iowa is one of few states that rely substantially upon property taxes for mental health services, and there is wide variability in the availability of mental health services for children across the state.

As Governor, what will you do to improve access to quality mental health services for young children and adolescents, across Iowa?



CULVER: Under my Administration's leadership, the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) has worked with stakeholders to improve the children's mental health system through the redesign of Remedial Services program. We have also increased funding for the children's mental health waiver through the Medicaid program so that families can keep children with serious mental illnesses at home with supportive services. When children are not able to remain at home, continuous one-year Medicaid eligibility for children has helped to ensure continuous care at PMICs as well as provide traditional services when the child moves home. We have also increased PMIC rates and improved the manner in which they are reimbursed. During my second term, I will continue to guide state government towards a policy that promotes at-home mental health treatment for children when possible.



BRANSTAD: When I was governor before, I shifted mental health services from being solely funded by property taxes to state funding. Over time variability in the level of services from county to county has developed. As governor I would attempt to provide greater equity of services from county to county.