

2011 General Assembly Archive

Voices for Virginia's Children, Campaign for Children's Mental Health

Wow! You spoke up for kids' mental health when it was needed most, and it worked. Campaign supporters sent more than 4,500 emails to the budget conferees about potential funding cuts to children's services. We are pleased to report positive results on the issues you addressed in your emails:

- The full \$5 million was restored for non-mandated services in CSA.
- The full \$7.5 million was restored for therapeutic foster care in CSA.
- The House's proposal to cut \$21.6 million from the Medicaid children's mental health budget by shifting thousands of children into CSA was rejected.

In an effort to control skyrocketing Medicaid expenditures in intensive in-home and therapeutic day treatment services, the conference budget introduces a new initiative: it directs the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) to develop five regional pilot programs to improve the care and control the costs for community mental health rehabilitative services (which include in-home and day treatment), achieving a savings of \$6.2 million in Medicaid (half state general funds and half matching federal Medicaid funds). Because this is new language, appearing for the first time in the conference budget, state agencies, CSBs and others are still trying to understand how this would be implemented. What we do know, however, is that we were able to reverse a huge potential cut to Medicaid and cost-shift to the localities, which would have resulted in delayed access to services for many children. We will keep you posted as we learn more. The Governor must still approve the conference budget, and he has the ability to make line item changes. He has said he will release his changes to the proposed budget by Wednesday, March 30 in advance of the reconvened session on April 6.

On behalf of Virginia's children who struggle with mental health issues, thank you for your advocacy! You have helped protect access to mental health services for thousands of children this year.

[Washington Post editorial page opposes CSA budget cuts](#)
[Don't Eliminate Non-Mandated CSA Funds- House version](#)
[Don't Eliminate Non-Mandated CSA Funds- Senate version](#)
[Maintain Therapeutic Foster Care- House version](#)
[Maintain Therapeutic Foster Care- Senate version](#)
[Reinvest CSA savings in children's mental health](#)
[Language Budget Amendments about Therapeutic Foster Care](#)