

CHILDREN'S CABINET PLAN FOR YOUTH

Goal: All Maine Youth Enter Adulthood Healthy, Connected to the Workforce and/or Education

The Children's Cabinet's strategies will promote inclusion and equity and consider the cultural, social, economic and linguistic needs of Maine's diverse population of youth aged 14 to 24 and their families.

Areas of Focus:

The Children's Cabinet will implement strategies that will:

1. Ensure basic needs of youth and their families are met.
2. Increase prevention services and programming in schools and at the community level.
3. Increase access to needed behavioral health, including substance use disorder, screenings and treatment.

Strategies:

Short term strategies: 2024

- Increase trainings in evidence-based practices to behavioral health providers.
- Disseminate a universally accessible and free Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum for all schools & after school programs.
- Support school-based health centers to provide additional hours for mental and behavioral health services to students.
- Fund Maine Youth Action Network to provide restorative practices support, education & technical assistance in schools.
- Increase training and technical assistance for behavioral health organizations on effective screening and identification of suicide prevention for youth living with a substance use disorder.
- Improve and align behavioral health screenings across state agencies to ensure early identification and referral to services.





Intermediate strategies: 2024 – 2025

- Increase access for youth to evidence-based behavioral health services, including prevention and early intervention.
- Increase access to youth substance use disorder treatment in primary care practices and school-based health centers.
- Establish a training program for school support staff members to recognize and mitigate the impact of trauma.
- Align and increase the incorporation of restorative practices and restorative justice across state programs for youth.
- Increase programming to support pregnant and parenting teens.
- Provide more opportunities for youth to participate in meaningful paid work experience.
- Increase awareness of careers, career pathways and access points to post-secondary education and training programs.

Long-term strategies: 2024 – 2027

- Expand housing options across the continuum of care and entire state.
- Ensure eligible youth and young adults are participating in public programs to increase food security and health coverage.
- Strengthen continuum of children's crisis services.
- Ensure successful and smooth transitions for youth moving from children to adult service systems.
- Ensure systems involved youth can access the services that they need in their communities.

