



# Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

## MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM PILOT

We appreciate the City's mental health initiatives over the past few years, including the additional social workers in school this year. However, strategic investments are critical to fill significant gaps that remain.

Each year, thousands of students with significant emotional, behavioral, and mental health disabilities continue to be removed from class by uniformed police officers and School Safety Agents and taken away from school by Emergency Medical Services when medically unnecessary. In the 2018-2019 school year:

- » The NYPD intervened in more than 3,500 incidents involving students in emotional distress sent to the hospital for psychiatric evaluation ("child in crisis" interventions), a 31% increase since 2016-17.
- » The NYPD handcuffed students younger than 12 during these child in crisis interventions more than 60 times.

	2016-17 SY	2017-18 SY	2018-19 SY	3-year TOTAL <sup>1</sup>
NYPD Child in Crisis Interventions in School	2,702	3,547	3,544	9,793
TOTAL NYPD Interventions in School	9,385	10,895	11,179	31,459

Many students with significant mental health needs require a more extensive system of support. They need an integrated system of intensive supports and services to address their needs and to support schools in effectively preventing and responding to challenging behavior. **Advocates recommend the FY 2021 budget include and baseline \$15 million to launch and sustain a Mental Health Continuum pilot in two designated neighborhoods with high-needs schools.** This comprehensive model—recommended by the Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline<sup>2</sup> and the City Council's Response to the FY 20 Preliminary Budget<sup>3</sup>—includes **school partnerships with hospital-based mental health clinics; a call-in center to advise school staff about students in crisis; clinician response teams who respond during crises in schools; student assessments to determine the appropriate level of care needed; direct, ongoing mental health services for students, including intensive in-home individual and family behavioral supports; School-Based Mental Health Clinicians; and whole-school training in Collaborative Problem Solving, an evidence-based, skill-building approach to change the most challenging student behavior in an environment where the adults are trained to support them.**

<sup>1</sup> NYPD child in crisis data reported pursuant to the Student Safety Act Amendments, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/stats/reports-analysis/school-safety.page>.

<sup>2</sup> The Mayor's Leadership Team on School Climate and Discipline, "Maintaining the Momentum: A Plan for Safety and Fairness In Schools, Phase Two Recommendations," (July 2016), 8, 21-25 [http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/sclt/downloads/pdf/SCLT\\_Report\\_7-21-16.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/sclt/downloads/pdf/SCLT_Report_7-21-16.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> The New York City Council's Response to the Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Budget and Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Management Report (April 9, 2019), 34, [https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2019/04/Fiscal-2020-Preliminary-Budget-Response\\_FINAL.pdf](https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2019/04/Fiscal-2020-Preliminary-Budget-Response_FINAL.pdf). See also New York Immigration Coalition, Just and Equitable Behavioral Health for Immigrant New Yorkers: A Policy Agenda (Dec. 2019), 6, 22, 26, & 46, <https://www.nyc.org/our-work/health/behavioral-health/>; Advocates for Children of New York, Children in Crisis: Police Response to Students in Emotional Distress (Nov. 2017), <https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/node/1183>.