



Voices for Virginia's Children
Opposes Immediate Closure of
State Inpatient Psychiatric Beds for
Children and Adolescents



Our Vision

- We support the creation of a community-based, family-centered system of care
- Such a system will provide community services which reduce the need for inpatient care, and when care is needed deliver it in programs close to home and family
- Only when this system is in place can Virginia safely and appropriately close its child psychiatric inpatient programs



The proposed budget cuts:

- Close 64 beds at Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents (Staunton) and the adolescent unit at Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute (Marion)
- Eliminate the only remaining state-run inpatient child psychiatry beds. Together serve 800-plus young people
- Set aside \$2.1M for purchase of inpatient services from private hospitals



Consequences

- Eliminating these programs by June 30, in the absence of realistic plans to provide alternative inpatient services, will potentially deny medically necessary acute care to hundreds of children with serious emotional disorders.
- Untreated psychiatric emergencies often have drastic consequences for the child, family and community



The last-resort safety net

- Most of the 800-plus children per year are admitted to these facilities because the private sector is unable or unwilling to serve them
- \$2.1M for purchase of local inpatient services – even if private hospital beds were available – is inadequate. **That amount will fund only an estimated 3000 bed days; last year the two state hospitals combined provided over 15,000 bed days of care.**



Summary

- Risks/potential adverse consequences are significant
- Safety net needed until realistic plan for alternative inpatient care
- Virginia has critical need for a community-based, family-centered system of care
- When this system in place, should no longer need large state facilities for kids

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Privately-funded, non-partisan children's
policy research, education and advocacy
organization

John R. Morgan, Ph.D., Executive Director

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