

# Division of Child and Family Well-Being: Overview & Priorities

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Eat Smart Move More Partners Meeting

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NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**



# NCDHHS Priorities

*These priorities and our work across the department are grounded in **whole-person health**, driven by **equity**, and responsive to the lessons learned responding to the greatest health crisis in more than a generation.*

## Behavioral Health & Resilience



We need to offer services further upstream to build resiliency, invest in coordinated systems of care that **make mental health services easy to access** when and where they are needed and to **reduce the stigma** around accessing these services.

## Child & Family Well-Being



We will work to ensure that North Carolina's children grow up safe, healthy and thriving in nurturing and resilient families and communities. **Investing in families and children's healthy development builds more resilient families, better educational outcomes and, in the long term, a stronger society.**

## Strong & Inclusive Workforce



We will work to strengthen the **workforce that supports early learning, health and wellness by delivering services to North Carolina.** And we will take action to be an equitable workplace that lives its values and ensure that all people have the opportunity to be fully included members of their communities.



## BUILDING ON THE DEPARTMENT'S VISION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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**Children are healthy and thrive in safe, stable and nurturing families, schools and communities**



# STRATEGIC GOAL – IMPROVE CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING



Improve child and family well-being so all children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential and thrive



**Key Objective:** Build a strong infrastructure to increase access to child and family well-being services.

## Key Strategies:

- ❑ Establish a **Division of Child and Family Well-Being** to maximize services and outcomes for children and their families, including all child nutrition programs, prevention services for children from birth to 21, children’s mental health services, and early intervention programs
- ❑ Build a **data and analysis infrastructure** across child-serving sectors to identify gaps and inequities in service provision and well-being outcomes to ensure the most effective deployment of federal, state, and local resources
- ❑ Increase access to **children’s mental health services** by expanding mental health services in primary care, schools, and specialty care

# WHY?

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The Division of Child and Family Well-Being will prioritize the coordination of behavioral health, physical health, social, and nutrition programs to support whole-person care to meet the escalating needs of children and families. Strategies include:



## **Enhancing how children and families access programs that support their well-being:**

Coordination across programs serving children and families allows more families to access programs across mental, social, and health services. An early area of work will be making it easier for families to enroll in the nutrition programs in the Division (e.g., WIC and FNS).



**Coordinating increased investments to improve child health and well-being:** The investments will be informed by data with a focus on closing equity gaps in child well-being. An early focus will be maximizing the impact of the federal American Rescue Plan funds to address inequities in child well-being, including increasing access to youth mental health services.



**Getting upstream of the behavioral health crisis:** DCFW is part of DHHS's collective commitment to building innovative, coordinated, and whole-person centered systems that recognize that physical, behavioral and social health are interdependent and that preventing the onset of health issues is the best way to support children thriving.

# PROGRAMS IN THE DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

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**Food and Nutrition Services:** North Carolina's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



**Community Nutrition Services:** North Carolina's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)



**Early Intervention:** North Carolina Early Intervention/Infant-Toddler Program (ITP) provides supports and services to children birth to 3 with developmental delays or established conditions

## **Whole Child Health:**



**Child Behavioral Health** programs support school & community mental health services for children and youth, such as system of care, children with complex needs, coordination with schools on mental health services, pediatric mental health care access program, and behavioral health supports and coordination for DSS-involved youth

**Children and Youth** health and prevention services, such as school health promotion, home visiting and Triple P programs, nurse consultation, supports for children and youth with special health care needs, genetics and newborn screening, care management for at-risk children, and more

## TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

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**Increase nutrition security among children and families through increased access to food benefits and nutrition education**



**Increase access to children's behavioral health services by expanding mental health services in schools, primary care, and specialty care**



## NCDHHS goals around nutrition security

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### Building upon NC's Early Childhood Action Plan:

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- **By 2025, decrease the percentage of children living across North Carolina in food insecure homes from 20.9% to 17.5% according to data provided by Feeding America.**





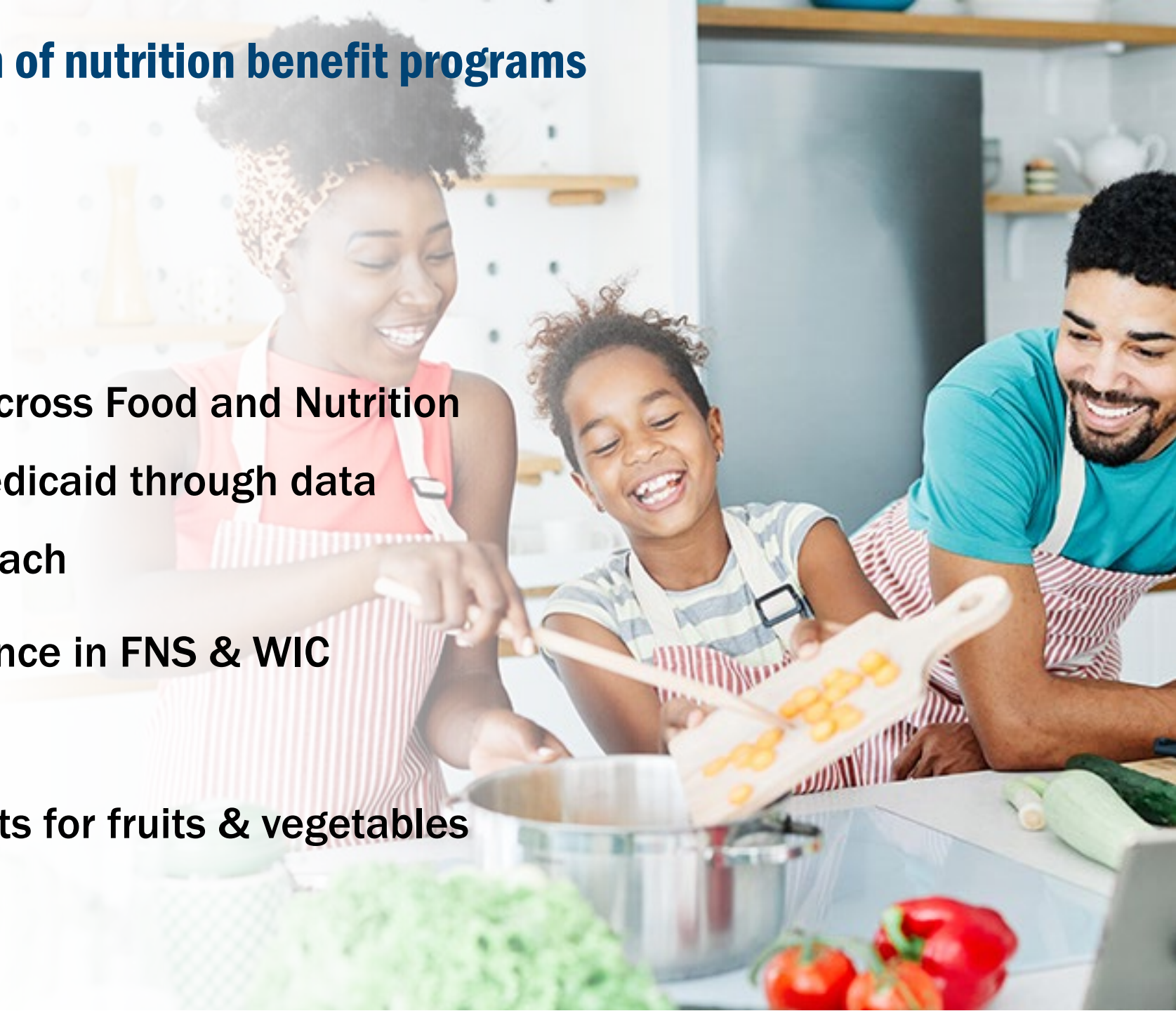
# Strategy 1: Increasing reach of nutrition benefit programs

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## Current DHHS Initiatives:

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- Increase cross enrollment across Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), WIC, and Medicaid through data matching and tailored outreach
- Improve beneficiary experience in FNS & WIC programs
- Issue WIC cash-value benefits for fruits & vegetables
- Implement Pandemic-EBT



## Strategy 2: Connecting health care and food supports

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### Current DHHS Initiatives:

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- **Implement Healthy Opportunities Pilots in Medicaid, which pays for food supports (e.g., medically tailored meals, healthy meal/box, DPP) to eligible Medicaid members**
- **Grow NCCARE360 network to include more food-supporting community-based organizations**





## Strategy 3: Increasing breastfeeding supports for mothers

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### Current DHHS Initiatives:

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- Conduct breastfeeding training for local WIC agency staff across NC
- Implement a statewide breastfeeding hotline



# Changes to the nutrition benefit landscape

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DHHS has been working to prepare for imminent changes:

- FNS emergency allotments ended in February 2023
- Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) ends on May 11, 2023 – impacts availability of FNS benefits to working adults, college students
- Promoting food resources to families:
  - [www.ncdhhs.gov/foodresources](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/foodresources)
  - [www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwic](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwic)
  - [www.nc211.org](http://www.nc211.org)





# How can you help families?

- Promote [www.ncdhhs.gov/foodresources](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/foodresources)
- Share NCDHHS face sheet: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/media/10249/download>
- Connect with/offer support to food banks in your community
- CBOs: Join the NCCARE360 network ([www.nccare360.org/join/](http://www.nccare360.org/join/))

**SNAC** NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
 NC Food and Nutrition Resource Programs  
 This document contains information on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) programs available in North Carolina.

- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** - Ensures children and adults attending approved non-residential care facilities and at-risk afterschool programs receive nutritious meals. [www.nutritionnc.com/cacfp](http://www.nutritionnc.com/cacfp)
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)** - Provides a monthly package of food designed to supplement the nutritional needs of low-income senior citizens ages 60+. Food packages are distributed by approved local agencies. [www.ncagr.gov/foodlist/programs.htm](http://www.ncagr.gov/foodlist/programs.htm)
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** - Teaches youth and adult participants skills and strategies to feed their families nutritious meals on a limited budget and improve their overall health. [www.ncfnep.org](http://www.ncfnep.org)
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)** - Provides USDA foods to income-eligible households living on the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians reservation and to Native American households residing in designated counties (Jackson, Swain, Cherokee and Graham) near the reservation. [www.fns.usda.gov/dpfr/applicant-recipient](http://www.fns.usda.gov/dpfr/applicant-recipient)
- School Meals - National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and After School Snack Program (NSLP, SBR, ASSP)** - Provides children and teenagers breakfast, lunch and snacks that meet federal nutrition standards in public schools. <https://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/programs/nsfp>
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)** - Provides eligible senior participants with benefits to purchase fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets. Program is not available statewide. [www.ncdhhs.gov/documents/north-carolina-seniors-farmers-market-nutrition-program-sfmp](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/documents/north-carolina-seniors-farmers-market-nutrition-program-sfmp)
- Senior Nutrition Program - Congregate Meals and Home-delivered Meals** - Provides nutritious meals and socialization to older adults. [www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/nutrition-congregate-home-delivered-meals](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/nutrition-congregate-home-delivered-meals)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program known in NC as Food and Nutrition Services (SNAP - FNS)** - Provides benefits to purchase food. [www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/food-and-nutrition-services](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/low-income-services/food-and-nutrition-services)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Educ** Provides approaches to improve nutrition through multi-level interventions, community and public health. <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/food-stamps/north-carolina-nutrition-education>
- Summer Nutrition Program** - Provides free meals during summer vacation. [childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/programs/nsfp](http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/programs/nsfp)
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** - Provides nutritious meals to low-income households. Food packages are distributed by approved local agencies. [www.ncagr.gov/foodlist/programs](http://www.ncagr.gov/foodlist/programs)
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** - Provides nutrition education, breast and support, access to healthy foods and referrals services for pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women under age 5. [www.nutritionnc.com/wmic](http://www.nutritionnc.com/wmic)
- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)** - Provides eligible women with benefits to purchase fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets. Program is not available statewide. [www.nutritionnc.com/wmic](http://www.nutritionnc.com/wmic)

**SNAC** NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
 NC Food and Nutrition Resource Programs  
[www.ncdhhs.gov/snac](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/snac)

Program Name	Food Delivery	Meal/Snack provided on site	Nutrition Education	Food Pick-up	Benefits to purchase food	Eligibility
CACFP		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				0-18 yrs and 60+
CSFP				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		60+
EFNEP			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			18+
FDPIR on Indian Reservations				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		All ages
School Meals		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				PreK-12 students
SFMNP			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	60+
Senior Congregate Meals		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			60+
Senior Home-delivered meals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			60+
SNAP (FNS)					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All ages
SNAP-Ed			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			All ages
Summer Nutrition Programs		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				Children 0-18 yrs
The Emergency Food Program				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		All ages
WIC			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0-5 yrs. & pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women
WIC FMNP			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2-4 yrs. & pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.  
 USDA nondiscrimination statement: If SNAP and FNS are used by local agencies, and their subgrantees, must post the following nondiscrimination statement: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or marital or family status in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, accessible formats) should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.  
 To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (FD-302) found online at <http://www.fda.gov/complaint>, and at any USDA office, and write a letter addressed to USDA and provide the letter of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9922. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by (1) mail, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-4402; or (2) email, [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.  
 NCDHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider. • 80,000 copies were printed at a cost of \$4,287.02 or \$0.05358775 each. • 10/2020

# How can you help families?

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- Refer families to FNS ([www.ncdhhs.gov/fns](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/fns)) and WIC ([www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwicreferral](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwicreferral))
- Order NC WIC materials and distribute to families (see QR code)
- Promote the NC WIC Online Referral Form ([www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwicreferral](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/ncwicreferral))
- Sign up to receive the WIC quarterly outreach newsletter (email [Laura.Tanase@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:Laura.Tanase@dhhs.nc.gov))



**SCAN ME**

## THE CRISIS: There is a national and state child behavioral health and youth suicide crisis

- 1 in 4 of youth experience a behavioral health need while in grade school
- The number of NC youth with 1+ major depressive episode increased 46% during COVID (2019-21)



## TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

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**Increase access to children’s behavioral health services by expanding mental health services in schools, primary care, and specialty care**

### **Priority Child Behavioral Health Initiatives**

- 1. School behavioral health** to meet children where they are and support our educators
- 2. Child behavioral health data dashboard** to share accountability and promote equitable access
- 3. Coordinated Action Plan** for children with complex behavioral health needs in child welfare



## THE RESPONSE: NC DHHS's leadership and management of crisis is critical

- We can meet kids where they are and overcome access barriers (e.g., transportation, stigma, and limited networks in rural and saturated areas) by going to schools
- Optimizing behavioral health resources/services in school settings increases health equity and builds resilience



# FEELING CLOSE TO PEOPLE AT SCHOOL PROVIDES CRITICAL PROTECTION FOR STUDENTS

Students who felt close to people at school

Students who didn't feel close to people at school

35%

53%

Experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past 12 months

14%

26%

Seriously considered attempting suicide during the past year

6%

12%

Attempted suicide during the past year



For more information, visit [cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom](https://cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom)



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# LEVERAGING COVID FLEXIBILITIES TO OFFER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SUPPORTS IN SCHOOLS

North Carolina public schools can opt-in to new funding opportunities to support school-based mental and behavioral health initiatives at no cost to K-12 schools through the CDC's Reopening Schools grant. Schools must be participating in our COVID testing program to be eligible for these behavioral health supports.



Funding to support **School Health Advisory Councils** that are based at the school district level. SHACs can choose activities that will benefit their local district that align with the WSCC model, including partnerships that support behavioral health services and professional development.



The **North Carolina Psychiatric Access Line (NC-PAL)** provides telephonic consultation and education programs on child behavioral health. Selected schools will receive behavioral health educational consultation and training for school staff.



**System of Care (SOC) Training** for schools will cover how to work with local behavioral health partners to engage families, transition plan for students, and be effective in the changing NC Medicaid landscape as we transition to Medicaid Managed Care.