



Advocating for Children's Behavioral Health Programs through **Opioid Settlement Funds in Southeast Pennsylvania**

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Children First is a child advocacy organization that works to improve the lives of our region's children by developing initiatives and advocating for quality health care, childcare, public education, and family stability.

https://www.childrenfirstpa.org

- School-based behavioral health programs are a necessity for children
- Early identification and treatment will lead to better outcomes for students' academic performances
- Half of all the lifetime cases of mental health begin at 14 years old
- Only around 20% of children access the behavioral care they need and only 70-80% of those children access them in schools.
- Children are six times more likely to complete treatment in school settings than in the community.
- Schools tend to be less stigmatizing, leading to more effective care.

TEAM'S EXPERIENCE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS	REFLECTION
 Completed two projects that 	Opioid Settlement Funds in • Created infographics	 Gave me a greater

συπριείεα ίνα ρισμεσίο παί advocate for a part of the opioid settlement funds to go towards behavioral health funding for children in the Southeast Pennsylvania counties

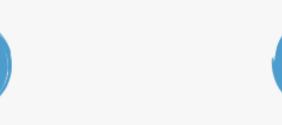
• Researched the effects of opioid usage on kids and created infographics that detailed rates of emergency room visits, neonatal abstinence syndrome, overdose deaths, as well as recommendations on how the settlement funds should

Delaware County

Delaware County will receive 63 million dollars in opioid settlement funding over 18 years. The recklessness and deadly practices of drug manufacturers affected not only adults who use drugs but the children who live with them. 25% of Delaware County's opioid settlement money should go to our children

2020 IN DELAWARE COUNTY:

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Over 11.000 individuals live with 205 overdose deaths substance use disorder reported



At least 60% of these victims in Delaware County, 84% of in Delaware County had at least one opportunity for which were caused by opioids specifically intervention



The rate of ED visits in Delaware County related to opioids among children is as high as 17 per 10,000 population.

Cicalcu iniugraphius that will be used to advocate for funding for children's mental health programs from the opioid settlement funds that each county received

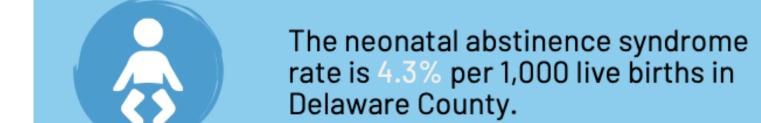
 Created an Excel spreadsheet that tracked 61 school districts' MTSS supports and interventions being offered at the elementary, middle,

understanding of all the issues that children face in Pennsylvania as well as a greater appreciation of the tireless work of advocates fighting for change

- Became inspired by the passion that the staff at Children First share to develop policies that aim to better the community
- would love to continue the work that I accomplished this

be spent to serve children in SEPA

 Completed a resource mapping project that compiled 61 school districts' behavioral supports and interventions using the MTSS framework to identify districts with standout programs that can be modeled after



Recommendations

In the first year, Delaware County can administer planning grants to each of the 15 school districts to create districtspecific implementation plans

In years 2-5, districts will operationalize the provision of primary, secondary, and tertiary drug use prevention strategies in partnership with insurers and mental health professionals to meet the needs of diverse students in their districts

Delaware County can use additional funds to create effective professional development programs for teachers, school counselors, and school administrators to deepen understanding of trauma and adversity that serves as the underpinning of substance use disorder

children FIRST

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and high school levels • Also includes the school district population, township politics, funding, expenditures per pupil, and number of counselors,

psychologists, and social worker for each school district

summer, whether that looks like working on policy reform for mental health or tying in public health aspects with clinical dentistry

am thankful for the lifechanging experience of working with and learning from the staff at Children First."