

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Governors Launch Youth Mental Health Initiative

10/19/2022

Salt Lake City – National Governors Association (NGA) Chair New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy and NGA Vice Chair Utah Governor Spencer Cox met with those on the frontlines of youth mental health care to advance the NGA Chair's Initiative: Strengthening Youth Mental Health.

"As leaders, one of our most important and sacred responsibilities is protecting the health and well-being of our children," said Governor Murphy. "For far too long, our nation's youth mental health crisis has been overlooked and those living with mental health challenges have been stigmatized. Families have lacked access and resources to get their children the critical assistance they need. It is past time we address this crisis head-on and empower communities to act together. As we navigate this issue, we remain committed to working with young people, parents, teachers, providers, and other stakeholders to ensure that our approach is well-rounded and offers the best support for children across the country."

"Youth mental health is an urgent issue in Utah and nationwide," stated Governor Cox. "The pandemic has heightened the problem, and it's important that we be proactive in bolstering support resources and letting young people know that help is available."

Mental health hospitalizations are up 61% for children under age 19, according to Clarify Health Institute (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/33xdbi/7ys5259b/fx4fk0_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JrZJmJe9lvVua_4EuDxxz2JEUpw6pf3J1XpCU0fHFLDgcvYZckXguBM86KKvc66yePa9b23EQLubwiNZf\$), and suicide (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/33xdbi/7ys5259b/vp5fk0_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JrZJmJe9lvVua_4EuDxxz2JEUpw6pf3J1XpCU0fHFLDgcvYZckXguBM86KKvc66yePa9b23EQLpBFFpm2\$) is now the second leading cause of death for 10- to 24-year-olds.

In response to rising rates of mental health distress among young people, Governor Murphy introduced his NGA Chair's Initiative (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/33xdbi/7ys5259b/bi6fk0_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JrZJmJe9lvVua_4EuDxxz2JEUpw6pf3J1XpCU0fHFLDgcvYZckXguBM86KKvc66yePa9b23EQLJ2LgM-o\$) in July (https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/33xdbi/7ys5259b/ra7fk0_!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtba!JrZJmJe9lvVua_4EuDxxz2JEUpw6pf3J1XpCU0fHFLDgcvYZckXguBM86KKvc66yePa9b23EQLtMTZ7BH\$). Through the Strengthening Youth Mental Health initiative, Governors from across the nation are collaborating to develop bipartisan solutions.

During the two-day roundtable event in Salt Lake City, Governors Murphy and Cox held discussions with parents, physicians, pediatric psychologists, educators, policymakers, and other mental health experts. Conversations focused on challenges and solutions connected to prevention, early intervention, and resilience building.

New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy and Utah First Lady Abby Cox also spoke at the event, highlighting holistic efforts to support children and parents – including Tammy Murphy's initiative focused on maternal and infant health.

The Utah event is the first of four roundtable discussions Governors will convene in multiple states in support of the Strengthening Youth Mental Health initiative.

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