



NEWS FROM
ULSTER COUNTY
County Executive Jen Metzger

******For Immediate Release******

Date: Wednesday, October 16, 2024

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Children’s Mental Health Clinic Next Steps Approved by Legislature

KINGSTON, NY - At its October session last night, the Ulster County Legislature approved a contract and lease agreement with the Children’s Home of Poughkeepsie to provide children’s mental health services at 368 Broadway, the Ulster County Center for Well-Being in Kingston. The initial proposal to create new clinics for children and families was first proposed by the County Executive and Mental Health Commissioner, and approved by the Legislature in April of 2024.

The first clinic will be named the “Children’s Way Counseling Center” and will be located on the third floor of the Center for Well-Being. The clinic will provide diagnostic assessments, individual therapy, family therapy, medication management, crisis intervention, complex care management, and referrals, and will work in collaboration with community providers — specifically school-based mental health support — as well as with the Crisis Stabilization Center, currently under construction on the 1st floor of 368 Broadway.

The Children’s Way Counseling Center is expected to open in early 2025 and serve up to 115 children and families in 2025, 170-210 children and families in 2026, and 210-240 children and families in 2027.

ARPA funding in the amount of \$730,000 is expected to cover clinic startup costs for two years, with the expectation that the clinic will be self-sustaining after that.

A second location in Ulster County will be determined following completion of a Behavioral Health Needs Assessment, expected within six months. The Behavioral Health Needs Assessment will identify areas of greatest need, opportunities to ensure future sustainability of current services, and gaps in transportation and access to behavioral health services.

Site renovations are already underway on the third floor of the Center for Well-Being in Kingston, and the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie has already submitted its application for state licensure.

"Children today are dealing with unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety, and emotional distress. Addressing their mental health needs is essential for them to thrive socially, emotionally, and in school, and is so important to their growth and development," **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger**. "We are happy to partner with the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie in our efforts to support young people's resilience and well-being."

"The partnership between Ulster County and the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie at our new Center for Well-Being marks a significant step in addressing the critical mental health needs of our youth. By providing early intervention and empowering families, we are investing in the future of our community. Together, we can ensure that every child has access to the support and care they need to thrive," **said Peter Criswell, Chair of the Ulster County Legislature**.

"This is a huge step forward when it comes to the mental health of children throughout Ulster County," **said Majority Leader Abe Uchitelle, Chair of the Legislature's Health, Human Services, and Housing Committee**. "We've made strides by providing support services in schools, and our commitment to the County's children is furthered by the establishment of a dedicated clinic."

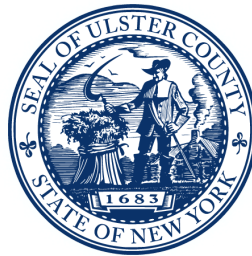
"The Department of Mental Health is pleased to welcome the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie into our system of care in Ulster County," **said Tara McDonald, Ulster County Department of Mental Health Commissioner**. "Youth are struggling with increased feelings of isolation and depression nationwide. Through the creation of the new Children's Way Counseling Center, the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie will be expanding access to crucial clinical services, while offering more choice to youth and their families within the County."

"The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie is excited to collaborate with Ulster County on the development of our new children's mental health clinic, Children's Way Counseling Center," **said Walter Joseph, Children's Home of Poughkeepsie Executive Director & CEO**. "For 177 years, our agency has been dedicated to serving youth and families, providing essential support and resources to promote optimal health and well-being."

"We are truly honored to partner with Ulster County on delivering these critically needed services. This innovative partnership marks a significant step forward in our mission to

empower children and families,” **said Dr. Courtney E. Rovere, Children’s Home of Poughkeepsie Assistant Executive Director for Clinical Program Development.** “Children’s Way Counseling Center is committed to prioritizing mental health and well-being, expanding access to treatment, and fostering an integrated approach to support the diverse needs of our community.”

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