

Mental Health is Health

Addressing the mental health crisis must be a top priority. This is an issue I hear about across our community—from parents, from teachers, from first responders, and from people who are struggling to get the help they need. Supporting better mental health policy means expanding access to care, improving how we respond in a crisis, and making sure young people can get help early.

Right now, mental health care is too hard to access and too expensive for too many people. About half of those who need care aren't getting it. That has real consequences—not just for individuals, but for families and for the broader community. We need to make it easier to find care, schedule appointments, and afford treatment. And insurance companies need to follow through on the coverage people are already paying for.

Too often, people are stuck fighting delays and denials from insurers. That means paying twice—once in premiums, and again out of pocket when care is denied. If a doctor says someone needs mental health treatment, insurance companies shouldn't be able to stand in the way. Fixing that is a key part of making care more affordable and accessible.

We also need to treat mental health emergencies with the same urgency as physical ones. When someone is in crisis, there should be a clear number to call, trained professionals who can respond, and a safe place to go for help. Done right, crisis response doesn't just stabilize a situation—it saves lives.

For young people, early support is critical. Kids today are facing real challenges, and we know that early intervention works. The most effective way to reach them is where they already are—at school. Expanding school-based mental health services is one of the most practical steps we can take.

Finally, none of these work without a strong mental health workforce. We need more trained professionals, and we need to support the ones we have. That means investing in training, paying providers fairly, and addressing burnout so people can stay in this field and continue doing this essential work.

This is a solvable problem. But it requires treating mental health care as the essential part of our health system that it is—and making sure people can actually get the help they need when they need it.