

United Health Foundation and Children's Wisconsin: *Connecting Children to Mental Health Care*

In Milwaukee and throughout the state, Children's Wisconsin provides kids and their families a wide range of care and support as the region's only independent health care system dedicated solely to the health and well-being of children.

In 2020 the United Health Foundation, the philanthropic arm of UnitedHealth Group, awarded Children's Wisconsin a three-year, \$2.5 million grant to establish a crisis response team in the emergency department (ED) available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for children with behavioral health needs. This is the first urgent mental health system of care dedicated solely to pediatric patients in southeast Wisconsin. According to the 2022 *America's Health Rankings Health of Women and Children Report*, the rates of mental and behavioral health challenges have increased broadly among children across the nation. Specifically, anxiety and depression among children rose steadily in recent years, with anxiety among children ages 3-17 increasing 23% from 2017-2018 to 2020-2021 and depression increasing 27%.



COMMUNITY IMPACT*

4,183

children visited the pediatric crisis response team while experiencing acute mental or behavioral health challenges

6.8%

reduction in the number of children with a primary mental/behavioral health issue

97%

of participating providers report utilizing new de-escalation resources for a primary or secondary mental/behavioral health issue

93%

of patients and families report feeling satisfied with the care they received in the ED

100%

of participating nursing staff report increased confidence and knowledge in caring for mental/behavioral health patients in the ED

95%

of participating providers report increased confidence and knowledge in caring for mental/behavioral health patients in the ED

*2019-2023

WHY IS THIS WORK CRITICAL?



We're providing better and more supportive care for kids and families managing a mental or behavioral health need, and we're improving access to care after that visit."

AMY HERBST

Vice President for Mental and Behavioral Health at Children's Wisconsin

