KEEP THE PROMISE COALITION
Community Solutions, *Not* Institutions!
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To: United States Representatives and Senators of Connecticut

From: Eric Arzubi, MD
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Co-Chair, Keep the Promise Coalition
Director of Public Policy, NAMI of Connecticut

Re: Connecticut's Child Mental Health Crisis

Date: April 8, 2011

WHO ARE WE?

The Children's Committee of the Keep the Promise Coalition is Connecticut's largest coalition of stakeholders in child mental health, including patients, families, advocates, physicians, as well as school-based and community-based mental health service providers.

We are dedicated to promoting mental health among all Connecticut children, youth, and families by providing access to affordable community-based prevention and treatment services. We are committed to pursuing our mission through tireless advocacy and stimulating systems change.

We recognize that hundreds of thousands of Connecticut children and youth are at risk for mental illness, including, but not limited to, those who are

1. Struggling with academic problems and learning disabilities;
2. Victims or perpetrators of bullying;
3. Victims and/or witnesses of traumatic experiences;
4. Using drugs or alcohol;
5. Living among families in crisis or poverty;
6. Impacted by the justice system.

CALL TO ACTION!

We urge you to champion legislation aimed at supporting the following goals:

1. Broaden coverage of mental health and substance abuse treatments for children who are privately insured;
2. Improve access to school-based mental health and substance abuse services;
3. Enhance collaboration between child mental health system and primary care providers;
4. Strengthen supports for young adults in transition from DCF to DMHAS;
5. Provide appropriate levels of care in Connecticut for children with serious and chronic mental health and substance abuse problems.