## CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

# of West Virginia's Students



In West Virginia—a ruggedly independent state with an independent spirit—mental health woes are fueled by social problems and a shortage of providers.

> Despite the adopted slogan, "Almost Heaven," many West Virginians are not in a great state of mind. West Virginia has one of the nation's highest rates of deaths of despair: fatalities attributed to suicide, drug overdoses, and alcohol-related disease."

-Joseph Williams, U.S. News and World Report



#### THE PROBLEMS

### KIDS IN CRISIS

#### Do you know that in West Virginia:



**21,000** children have major depression & 13,000 of those children do not receive treatment (2018)<sup>2</sup>



Suicide is the **2nd leading cause** of preventable deaths for teens (ages 10-17; 2019)3



**29%** of 4th graders are chronically absent (2019)4



10% of children do not live with either parent (2019)5



**5–3**% of babies born are exposed to drugs (2017)6

## DIRE SHORTAGES<sup>2,7</sup>

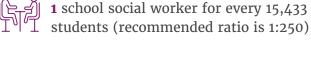
#### **West Virginia has:**



1 school psychologist for every 1,881 students (recommended ratio is 1:500)



1 school counselor for every 366 students (recommended ratio is 1:250)



**Provider Shortage** 

**Causes of Mental Health** 

» Opioid crisis

» Growing demand

» Lack of

» Low salaries

funding

» Low

» Aging professionals reimbursement

rates



### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS











**Implement** evidence-based

practices, such as Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Cynthia Parsons, Program Director.

**Address** mental health provider shortage

Support tiered school-based prevention & crisis response Streamline

career pathways for mental health providers

Align funding & infrastructure, especially in rural areas

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- <sup>1</sup> Williams, J.P. (2021, Sept. 1). Almost Heaven, but not for Mental Health. U.S. News & World Report. Retrieved April 19, 2022 from https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-health-news/articles/2021-09-01/west-virginia-almost-heaven-but-not-for-mental-h
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