



An association of resources and advocacy for children, youth and families
www.aspiremn.org

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Dear Members of the House Human Services Policy Committee,

AspireMN supports HF1436 to build a workforce that reflects the children and families served throughout Minnesota communities, and, to strengthen support for key areas within our wider mental health workforce to meet mental health needs.

The discussion of mental health crisis continues unabated as children and families wait for months to access needed mental health care and services, or experience the emergency room as the only point of access to care. Fundamental to addressing this crisis is building capacity throughout our mental health continuum.

HF1436 includes numerous important provisions that build on current strengths and seek to enhance supports for crucial areas of mental health care. One key example of proposed growth is the Youth Care Professional Training Program. This speaks to the sophisticated requirements for staff who provide ongoing treatment support along with care, fun and nurture that all children need – in this care youth care professionals are serving in children’s residential mental health settings. Investing in quality caregivers in these settings is critical to grow and sustain this important care for children and young people, as one key response to address hospital boarding and the overall lack of capacity to meet child mental and behavioral health needs.

Investing in a culturally responsive, capable field of professionals is wise, necessary and future-focused as we build the system we urgently need – for the wellbeing on children, youth and families, and for all of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Anderson
Executive Director

AspireMN improves the lives of children, youth and families served by member organizations through support for quality service delivery, leadership development and policy advocacy.