

## Other Child Initiatives

*Expansion and Alignment of Existing Frameworks:* As HMG Kansas deepens its reach in early childhood systems, it is also exploring how to expand outreach and reporting to be inclusive of adolescents who are navigating transitions related to mental health, physical health care, and access to youth-friendly services. This includes identifying how existing early childhood tools and infrastructure, such as centralized access points, resource directories, and referral platforms can be adapted to support adolescent well-being and early intervention.

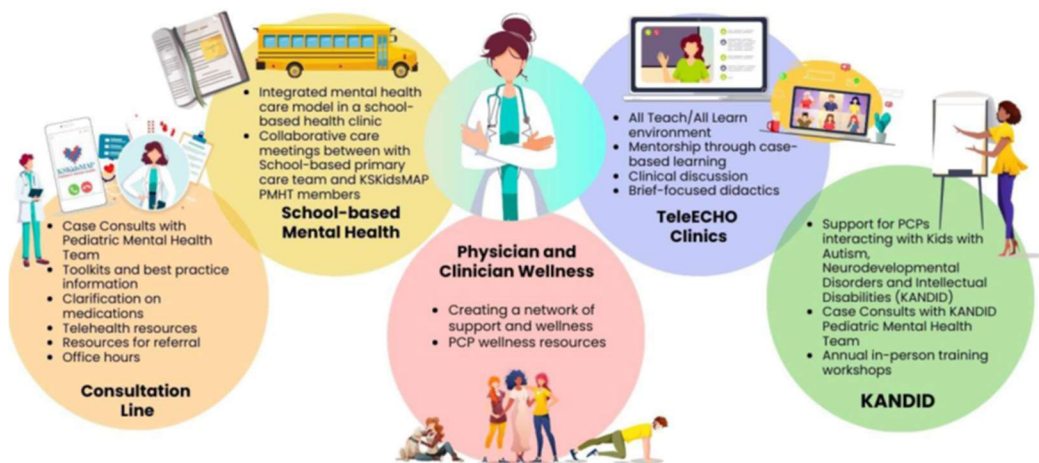
During FY26, the Title V team will work collaboratively to align the Kansas Perinatal Community Collaborative (KPCC) framework, and the Help Me Grow framework. A joint work plan will be developed to assess community needs, identify points of alignment, and guide the strategic integration of both frameworks.

Both of these efforts to align services and expand outreach will bolster Kansas's ability to deliver seamless, developmentally appropriate care coordination across the lifespan, improve access to behavioral and physical health services for youth, and strengthen family-centered supports within communities.

*Pediatric Behavioral Health:* The MCH Behavioral Health Director serves as the project director for the HRSA funded Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) program, [KSKidsMAP](#). KSKidsMAP, a statewide program, aims to: 1) Strengthen the PCP workforce's capacity to screen, diagnose, and treat youth with developmental, behavioral, and mental health disorders through trainings that incorporate equity and culturally and linguistically responsive care standards; 2) Increase utilization of real-time psychiatric consultations and care coordination support services, especially utilization by PCPs who serve individuals who experience health disparities (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, Medicaid, rural or frontier); 3) Improve equitable access to referrals and quality treatment (in-person and via telehealth) for youth, with particular emphasis for those residing in rural and underserved areas; and 4) Further program impact through effective leadership and partnerships to achieve program goals, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, and sustain program components.

KSKidsMAP works directly with PCPs statewide, providing tailored resources to ensure confidence in delivering evidence-based mental health care to youth. Goals of KSKidsMAP include increasing PCPs' capacity to screen, diagnose, treat, and refer youth with psychiatric disorders through established trainings (KSKidsMAP TeleECHO Clinic), continuation of its centralized access point (Consultation Line) for case consultation and resource and referral support, increasing timely access to quality mental health services for youth, especially those in rural, frontier, and other underserved areas, and supporting PCP wellness through resource sharing and wellness coaching to ensure a healthy, well-trained PCP workforce is available to appropriately identify and treat pediatric mental health conditions.

KDHE BFH was re-awarded the PMHCA grant in 2023 supporting the continuation of KSKidsMAP activities and opportunity to expand the program to provide training and consultation support to school-based health clinics and expand the expertise of the KSKidsMAP Pediatric Mental Health Team through utilization of two developmental and behavioral pediatricians (with one triple-boarded in pediatrics, psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry), both with expertise in neurodevelopmental disorders. Added expertise will provide additional education through training and case consultations regarding youth with neurodevelopmental disorders. These services are part of a new program arm designated as KSKidsMAP for autism, neurodevelopmental disorders, and intellectual disabilities (KANDID) that will serve PCPs working with these vulnerable populations.



**Pediatric Behavioral Health: System Services and Supports for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):**

Individuals with ASD, intellectual disability (ID) and other neurodevelopmental disorders (ND) meet criteria for additional psychiatric disorders at rates that are significantly higher than in the general population. A recent meta-analysis examining prevalence of psychiatric disorders in adolescents and adults with ID showed an estimated pooled prevalence of 33.6%, with mood disorders being the most common, followed by anxiety disorders. Even higher rates of co-occurring disorders have been found in youth with ASD, some of whom will, of course, also have ID, with rates ranging from 27%-95%. The most frequent diagnoses in youth with ASD are anxiety disorders (upwards of 40%), ADHD and depressive disorders. Rates of conduct and oppositional defiant disorders are also high.

While stress, financial and time burdens are significant for families of youth with ASD/ID, the presence of co-occurring psychiatric disorders further exacerbates their problems. Children with ASD/ID and comorbid conditions are likely to need additional treatment, including psychopharmacology and therapies, as well as experience crisis situations linked to ongoing behavioral and emotional difficulties. Access to services may also be limited, either because of lack of expertise or structural issues related to the financing of publicly funded health services. In many states, funding streams providing resources for youth with psychiatric disorders are separate from those providing resources for youth with ASD/ID/ND.

In mental health professional shortage areas, primary care has become the default mental health service. This is as much the case for youth with ASD/ID/DD and co-occurring psychiatric disorders, as it is for those who do not have underlying neurodevelopmental disorders. Approaches that are designed to enhance the knowledge, confidence and skills of PCPs have been employed for both mental health disorders and for ASD.

As such, KSKidsMAP has expended their approach to provide case consultation, wellness resources, referrals and other support to PCPs who are providing care in their own practices to children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders. The KSKidsMAP Autism, Neurodevelopmental and Intellectual Disabilities (KANDID) extension offers expert consultations to physicians and clinicians enrolled who seek guidance on screening, assessment and management of these complex disorders. KSKidsMAP anticipates PCP needs around screening in early childhood, ongoing monitoring, evaluation, management and treatment of common medical comorbidities (e.g., gastrointestinal problems, seizure disorders, sleep), and co-occurring psychiatric disorders (e.g., ADHD, anxiety and mood disorders).

The goals of KSKidsMAP KANDID are to 1) provide ongoing case consultations to PCPs to support them in providing care for this patient population; 2) make resources, such as toolkits and practice guidelines, accessible to PCPs; and 3) provide wellness resources for professionals to support them in expanding their services to a challenging patient population.

In order to address these needs, KSKidsMAP has expanded their Pediatric Mental Health Team (PMHT) to include a child and adolescent psychiatrist with special expertise in diagnosis and management of neurodevelopmental disorders, a child and adolescent psychologist with ASD experience, and a developmental behavioral pediatrician. All practitioners are available to provide psychiatric case consultations and facilitate at TeleECHO Clinic sessions and/or webinar series focused on KANDID topics.