

## SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT

# FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

The Thrive Center for Children, Families, and Communities at Georgetown University is showing how family mental health care improves outcomes for parents and children – and saves money.

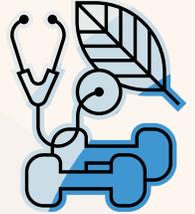
## ORGANIZATION

THE THRIVE CENTER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

## LOCATION

WASHINGTON, DC

## FOCUS AREA



HEALTH & WELLBEING

## THE CHALLENGE

**The need for mental health support has never been greater. Proven family-based approaches improve outcomes, yet outdated payment models and workforce shortages continue to block widespread adoption – limiting access to care that strengthens children and families together.**

# 70%

More than 70% of US counties do not have a practicing child psychiatrist, leaving millions of children without access to specialized mental health care.

## THE SOLUTION

The Family Mental Health Demonstration Project draws evidence from communities across the country to prove that bundled services that engage the whole family in pediatric primary care improve family health outcomes and generate cost savings.

Led by the Thrive Center for Children, Families, and Communities at Georgetown University, the project helps communities address family mental health through team-based, primary care interventions—providing capacity, technical assistance, and policy and research expertise, supported by innovative payment approaches.

Over the course of three years, the project will:

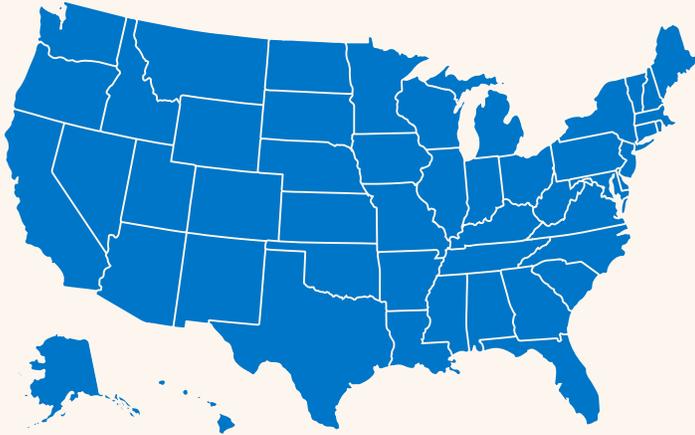
- **Focus on states** that are employing creative new approaches to payment for family-based healthcare.
- **Collect vital data** to support a nationwide adoption of innovative health care delivery and payment systems for families.
- **Support a broader strategy to define family mental health** as a concept that includes the promotion of positive mental health.

## NATIONAL COLLABORATION

The project is led by Dr. Matthew Biel, an Ascend Fellow and Director of the Thrive Center, and includes a leadership council made up of experts from across the country. Among them are Dr. Ron-Li Liaw, an Ascend Fellow and Mental Health In-Chief at Children's Hospital Colorado, and Dr. Peter Long, a professor at UCLA and expert in healthcare payment.

**“BY REFORMULATING OUR APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE AS A FAMILY STRATEGY, WE HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF EVERYONE.”**

-Dr. Matthew Biel



## ACCELERATING THE SOLUTION

In 2026, the project will select and enroll four sites across the country, which will include prospective data collection measuring clinical outcomes, process outcomes, and return on investment for payers and health systems.

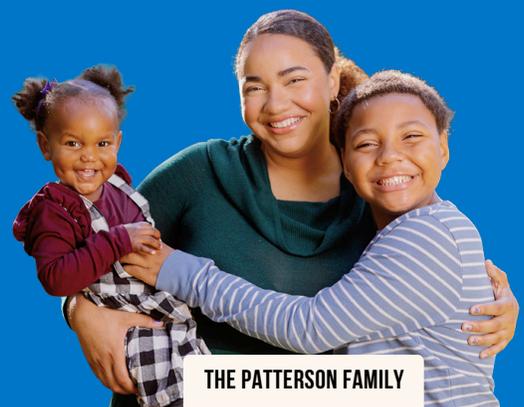
### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **New approaches to mental health are needed.** A family-friendly America requires mental health care that works for families.
- **It's time to invest in family mental health.** The Family Mental Health Demonstration Project is gathering evidence to show just how effective the approach can be.

- **Payment and workforce show promise.** Innovations in billing and workforce development are crucial in meeting families' needs.
  - **The Family Mental Health Demonstration project is ready to launch.** It will enroll 4 sites in 2026 and run for three years.
- To Learn More, please contact:**  
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## WHAT IS FORWARD WITH FAMILIES?

Forward With Families is a nationwide initiative powered by Ascend at the Aspen Institute to amplify programs, policies, and initiatives that make life affordable, economic mobility possible, and security attainable for every family in America. By lifting up what's already working across the Ascend Community, Forward With Families drives leaders at every level to act on solutions proven to ensure resources go farthest for the children and families who need them most.



THE PATTERSON FAMILY