Ensure Healthy Development for all Youth

Jeff Jenson, Ph.D.
University of Denver

J. David Hawkins, Ph.D.
University of Washington

• Ensure healthy development for all youth includes two initiatives:

  – *Unleashing the Power of Prevention* (Hawkins, Jenson, and the Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health)

  – *Prevention of Schizophrenia and Severe Mental Illness* (DeVylder)
Thanks to our Policy Consultants!

• Nathaniel Counts, J.D., Director of Policy, Mental Health America

• Jeffrey Levi, Ph.D., Professor of Health Policy and Management, Milken Institute, School of Public Health, George Washington University

• Ron Manderscheid, Ph.D., Executive Director, National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors

• Deborah Klein Walker, Ed.D., Senior Fellow, Vice President, U.S. Health, Abt Associates
Preventing Behavioral Health Problems

• Behavioral health and mental illness in childhood and adolescence have adverse effects on morbidity, mortality, and economic independence

• Policy has focused on treating behavioral health problems after they have been identified, at a high-cost to the nation

• Controlled trials have identified over 60 effective policies and programs for preventing behavioral health problems including substance abuse, depression, anxiety, violence, and delinquency
  – *Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development*; [www.blueprintsprograms.com](http://www.blueprintsprograms.com)

• Effective prevention saves money
Goals

• Reduce the incidence and prevalence of behavioral health problems in the population of young people from birth through age 24 by 20% in a decade

• Reduce racial and socioeconomic disparities in behavioral health problems by 20% in a decade
Policy Recommendations

1. Ensure that 10% of all public funds spent on young people support effective prevention programs

2. Increase local and state capacity to support the high-quality implementation of effective preventive interventions

3. Develop community-level systems to monitor risk, protection, and behavioral-health outcomes
4. Provide tested, effective, family-focused preventive interventions without cost to patients or families through primary health-care providers

5. Reduce the duration of untreated mental illness in young people

6. Train and enable a workforce for effective prevention practice
Stakeholders and Partners

• **Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health**
  – Interdisciplinary group of 90 researchers, policymakers, and practitioners representing social work, public health, psychology, and other fields

• **Some Organizational Partners**
  – National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. [http://www.nasmhpd.org](http://www.nasmhpd.org)
  – Center for Children, Families, and Communities, Central Michigan University. [https://www.cmich.edu/colleges/chsbs/Psychology/Centers/CCFC/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.cmich.edu/colleges/chsbs/Psychology/Centers/CCFC/Pages/default.aspx)
  – Mental Health America. [http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net)
  – National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives. [http://www.npscoalition.org](http://www.npscoalition.org)
1. Collaborate with states to improve community-level prevention capacity and state-level backbone coordination and infrastructure

2. Promote healthy parenting programs in primary care settings

3. Work with universities, states, and communities to develop a prevention workforce
Summary

- Tested and effective prevention programs prevent behavioral problems and save lives
- Effective preventive interventions are cost-effective and have the potential to save millions of dollars annually

*We can prevent behavioral health problems in young people before they begin and improve the public health!!*
Unleashing the Power of Prevention

• *Unleashing the Power of Prevention* is published as a Discussion Paper by the National Academy of Medicine. It is available at: http://nam.edu/perspectives-2015-unleashing-the-power-of-prevention/

Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health

Coalition Steering Committee:

Jeff Jenson, PhD, Chair, University of Denver
J. David Hawkins, PhD, University of Washington
Richard F. Catalano, PhD, University of Washington
Valerie Shapiro, PhD, University of California at Berkeley
Kimberly Bender, PhD, University of Denver
Mark Fraser, PhD, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Gilbert J. Botvin, PhD, Cornell University
Brian Bumbarger, PhD, Pennsylvania State University

For information, contact: Jeff Jenson, PhD at: Jeffrey.Jenson@du.edu