

## **WEEK 9 – IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILD & ADOLESCENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY**

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When we discuss advocacy efforts and initiatives, it is important to remember that, at the end of the day, there should be tangible results. Look at president Obama's fiscal year 2014 budget, which included a new \$130 million dollar initiative to support children and adolescents with behavioral health problems, including school and community-based behavioral health screening and referral, innovative state-based programs for young people ages 16 to 25, and a workforce development program to train professionals with a focus on serving students and young adults.

All of these activities and dollars, at some time during the budget process, have been advocated for by someone or some group. Now, how those dollars will be spent at the state and local levels, will again be influenced by advocacy efforts at the respective state and local levels.

Effective advocacy helps prepare policymakers to understand the value of the service over that service, or the needs of a specific at risk population, or the long term effects of not attending to prevention screening in early intervention. It is about being a voice that policymakers respect, and ask to speak to inform them and to help decide on measures of performance and outcomes.