



## AccessCNY's Children's Mental Health Center to Bridge Critical Gaps in Mental Health Services.

In 2025, AccessCNY will start construction on a new Children's Mental Health Center, the first of its kind program in New York State.

The \$5.1 million, eight-bedroom center will serve as a transitional residence for children ages 11 to 17 who are in mental health crisis and stuck in the hospital. The Children's Mental Health Center will serve youth with mental health diagnoses but also will support kids with co-occurring intellectual or developmental disabilities, such as an autism spectrum disorder.

The program is a bridge for kids who don't need an inpatient stay but still need intensive support before returning home.

AccessCNY has secured \$3.9 of the \$5.1 million needed to fund the project. **Just as the program is a bridge to recovery, your financial support will bridge the \$1.2 needed to complete the project.**

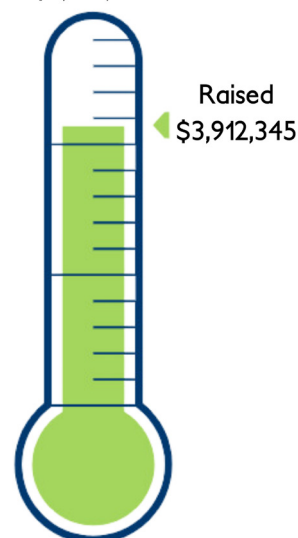
The Children's Mental Health Center will provide support for up to 120 days, if needed. The length of stay will be determined by the youth's readiness to transition back into their community and the systems of support that have been established through case-management.

Day-to-day experience in the Children's Mental Health Center will be specific to each individual and their family and will include a range of services including social work counseling, case management, behavioral support, specialized interventions from recreational therapists and youth peer advocates. Each child will also continue their education through the assistance of education and vocational specialists.

While starting a new program and building a new building is exciting, what's most exciting is that in the coming months AccessCNY will hire roughly 20 new mental health professionals for our community. One of the biggest hurdles to kids in crisis getting the care they need is long waiting lists due to lack of mental health staff. Staff will receive training in crisis intervention, trauma informed care, motivational interviewing, person-centered planning and collaborative problem solving. 🌱

Make a gift today to help kids in mental health crisis in our community. Use the enclosed envelope to make a gift or learn more at <https://www.accesscny.org/cmhc/>

Fundraising Goal  
\$5,100,000



# NEW HOUSING, NEW HOPE

UPDATES FROM OUR VICE PRESIDENT OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, ERIC BOYE

This year is an exciting time for AccessCNY's Mental Health services as teams prepare and implement new programs to support people with mental health needs.

Our housing services now include staff who are designated specifically to help young adults aged 18 to 25 to obtain and maintain their own home in Onondaga County. AccessCNY's Enhanced Housing for Young Adults, is tailoring services specifically to the needs of young adults as they build skills to live more independently in our CNY community.

We have also expanded our mental health housing supports geographically by adding apartment programs for adults living in Cortland and Cayuga counties, allowing our Mental Health Housing services to help people live where they choose. These new programs allow AccessCNY mental health housing to serve over 220 people in Central New York; an increase of 20% over the last year.

AccessCNY's Mental Health Community-Based Services are also improving and expanding by relocating the offices for these programs to downtown Syracuse, in the same building as our Peer-Run Recovery Center, Unique Peerspectives. All community-based mental health programs will be more accessible for people receiving services and will facilitate greater access to other resources.

These changes will make it easier for more people to participate in AccessCNY programs this year and in the future. All of our Mental Health teams at AccessCNY look forward to meeting new people and helping them to reach their goals! To learn more visit: [www.accesscny.org](http://www.accesscny.org)



Our Unique Peerspectives team will be able to provide members better access to other community-based services.

## HELP SUPPORT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CENTER



Please cut out and return donation form to:

**AccessCNY**  
1603 Court Street  
Syracuse, NY 13208

Give securely online at  
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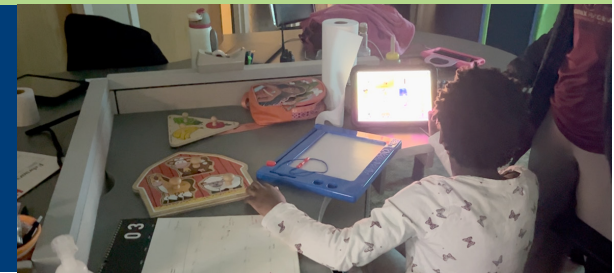
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☐ \$30 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a monthly credit card gift of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## NEW BEGINNINGS FOR CRYSTAL HOUSE AS CHILDREN'S INTENSIVE RESPITE HOME



Earlier this year, AccessCNY's Crystal House respite home transformed into the Children's Intensive Respite home. The program currently serves youth ages 5-17 who are being discharged from Upstate Children's Hospital's Biobehavioral Health Unit.

With 24/7 staffing, the home employs Licensed Behavioral Analysts and Behavior Intervention Specialists to provide enhanced site-based support and create an optimal behavior plan to integrate the child back into their community. Guests and their caregivers will be connected to wraparound services to ensure that the behavior plan can be maintained after the transition period. The children will also continue to receive outpatient care from Upstate for several hours a day to assist in the transition process.

After undergoing \$500,000 in renovations to ensure the safety and privacy of guests, the home began serving children this February.

"We recently had the privilege of supporting a young girl with autism. Over the course of several weeks she made incredible progress," said Amy Eells, Chief Innovation Officer. "Most notably, she learned to communicate her wants and needs using an iPad, a significant step forward in her journey. She developed a range of skills that ultimately prepared her for future success."

Crystal House seeks to provide the individuality and flexibility that each child needs to adapt to their surroundings. To learn more about Crystal House, or donate to it's Amazon Wishlist, please visit [www.accesscny.org/services/childrens-intensive-crisis-respite](http://www.accesscny.org/services/childrens-intensive-crisis-respite).



## TRAINING ACADEMY MARKS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

This March, AccessCNY celebrated the one-year anniversary of its Training Academy, an initiative launched to enhance the skills of direct support professionals (DSPs). Direct support professionals provide personal care to participants to assist with daily living skills and to achieve their personal goals.

The academy was developed to ensure all new members of our team are informed and supported as they begin their employment with AccessCNY. The learning environment provides opportunities that simulate scenarios staff will encounter in direct support settings.

Training allow new hires to practice critical skills including personal care, medication management, hygiene, safety, and privacy. There is also additional situation-based training in transportation, lifting and transfers. Trainings are conducted in our academy classroom and mock apartment. Funding for the academy was made possible by the Central New York Community Foundation.

The academy dives deep into the values that define AccessCNY. Employees explore history and disability rights, topics including human growth and development and modern medical trends. The curriculum also introduces employees to agency values, culture and guiding principles. All trainings prioritize person-centredness.

Feedback from staff has been crucial in updating and creating a more effective curriculum. A year on, we continue to refine and expand training efforts to meet the evolving needs of both staff and participants.

"We get some of the most interesting feedback from seasoned or senior professionals in the field who come to work for AccessCNY," said Chris Marchitelli, Employee Development Specialist. "We often get compliments on the positivity of AccessCNY staff. The training is pretty fun. Groups bond and make friendships and connections by the end of the week. Some of our academy "grads" have even become trainers for us!"



Staff participate in CPR and AED training in the academy mock apartment.





1603 Court Street | Syracuse, NY 13208



## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Help with AccessCNY events and make a difference for people of all abilities! Join us by:

- Volunteering for an event
- Donating auction items
- Helping us promote an event

Contact Nikki at [nikki.bomasuto@accesscny.org](mailto:nikki.bomasuto@accesscny.org) to get started!



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