**Mental Health Advocacy – Draft Proposal**

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**Objective**

Improve access to mental health resources and help narrow the childhood and adolescent mental health service gap. Focus on enhancing school-based services in Orange County.

**Strategy**

1. Work with the local AAP -Orange County Chapter to develop and strengthen relationships with mental health advocates, schools, human service agencies, mental health and substance abuse providers, and developmental specialists by collaborating on system-focused initiatives. Specifically here, we were thinking of starting with increased school mental health resources/interventions?

2. Heighten community awareness regarding the creation of CHOC Children's Mental Health Inpatient Center and expansion of outpatient and community outreach programs.

3. Advocate for assembly bill AB 1644: School based early mental health intervention and prevention services. (Done with Kris Calvin)

**Expected Outcome**

Increase local services for childhood and adolescent mental health and enhance early intervention by improving access to mental health services.

**Things we’ve started on**

- Researched the problem

- Read the Pediatrics article, Enhancing Pediatric Mental Health Care: Strategies for Preparing a Community, as a tool to learn about different avenues of local advocacy

- Searched for list of available mental health resources in Orange County

- Composed an advocacy letter for AB 1644

- Contacted AAP and the local OC chapter (seeking your help!)