

Social Justice

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FAMILIES
Bringing Lived Experience to Family Support



For Youth Who Experience Mental Health and/or Substance Use Challenges



We asked parents and caregivers, "What **access and opportunities** would your child gain if their mental health challenges were supported and **ACCEPTED** in your community?" Here's what they said.

Supportive Community



- Easier to make friends
- Access to a school psychologist or counselor
- Relationships/connections with supportive adults & peers
- A meaningful role in the community

“Support and resources would be devoted to ensuring my child can be as successful as any other child in the community.”

Appropriate Education



- Inclusion rather than isolation
- Well-established accommodations for I.E.P.s & 504 plans
- Participation in prosocial sports, clubs & school activities
- Support, rather than discipline, for difficult behaviors

“With appropriate support, youth could achieve a higher level of education, leading to expanded employment choices, financial growth, independence and stability for their future.”

Improved Treatment



- More likely to seek help; less reluctant to ask
- Having skilled providers in every community
- Families/youth would guide treatment planning
- Effective treatment is available - *when it's needed*

“Access to skilled providers and referral services would be a relief. Coordinated efforts between schools, families and support agencies is imperative.”

Increased Funding



- For research on mental health challenges
- For schools, camps and other programming
- Equitable insurance reimbursement for treatment
- To support families balancing work and care needs

“Our children need resources, support, and the chance to learn, grow, and - most of all - thrive as they are. **We need equity!**”