



April 12, 2022

Honorable Chairman Mark Pearson  
House Health and Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee  
Legislate Office Building Room 205  
North Main St  
Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support of SB 444

Dear Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Holly Stevens, and I am the Director of Public Policy at NAMI New Hampshire, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI NH is a non-profit, grassroots organization whose mission is to improve the lives of all people impacted by mental illness and suicide through support, education and advocacy. On behalf of NAMI NH, I am here today to speak in support of SB 444, relative to childhood adverse experiences treatment and prevention.

Young children, birth to age 8, are some of the most vulnerable members of our society, both in terms of risk for maltreatment and regarding the long-lasting ramifications from exposure to trauma. Despite common misperceptions, young children can, and do, experience mental health issues which can manifest through developmental and behavioral challenges. High-quality, evidence-based early intervention has been shown to be more cost effective than waiting to intervene later in life. Child parent psychotherapy (CPP) is an evidence-based therapy for caregivers and young children, birth to age 8, who have experienced traumatic events or other traumatic stressor which can disrupt normative development and who are experiencing mental health, attachment or behavioral issues. CPP has emerged as the most frequently employed model in our state, largely due to CPP's effectiveness with traumatized young children and their caregivers.

However, there are simply not enough CPP providers to cover the need. SB 444 would go a long way to ensure that New Hampshire's children, who have experienced trauma or otherwise have a severe emotional disturbance, get the treatment they need. SB 444 would further the state's goal of supporting prevention and intervention as outlined in the state's 10-year mental health plan of 2019.

For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee vote ought to pass for SB 444.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly A. Stevens". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.