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2005-2010 AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS TASK FORCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

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**Introduction:** Children and adolescents experience significant emotional disorders and the prevalence of these conditions is notable. In 1999, the U.S. Surgeon General's report on children's mental health listed the following prevalence data: Anxiety disorders 13.0%; Mood disorders 6.2%; Disruptive disorders 10.3%; Substance use disorders 2%; Any Disorder: 20.9%\* (\*Children age 9-17 with mental or addictive disorders, combined MECA sample, 6-month prevalence.) However, there is an acknowledged dearth of pediatric mental health care professionals in the U.S. and among those professionals available, geographic and reimbursement limitations restrict access to the care available for many children and adolescents.

**Objectives:** Primary health care providers are being encouraged to provide some of the identification and care management to offset this access problem.

**Aims:** Expand clinical skills of providers, develop tools for planning at state and local level, educate public about importance of early screening and diagnosis.

**Methods:** In 2005, the American Academy of Pediatrics convened a Task Force of members and consultants to develop recommendations and paradigms for melding physical health care and mental/behavioral care in the primary practice medical home for children and adolescents.

**Results:** This project concluded in 2010 with six published papers and appendices detailing increased identification of pediatric mental health conditions, methods for primary care providers working collaboratively with families and mental health specialists, algorithms for decisions and actions, and payment mechanisms supporting parity between mental and physical care in the US third party payer system.

**Conclusions:** Paper presents the major recommendations and outcomes from this 5 year project.