



For Immediate Release  
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## **Children's Fund of Connecticut Awards Grant to UCONN to Study Pediatric Emergency Department Use for Behavioral Health Concerns**

Farmington, CT - [The Children's Fund of Connecticut \(CFC\)](#) announced the award of a one-year \$57,500 grant to the [University of Connecticut School of Social Work](#) to evaluate the impact of [Connecticut's Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services \(EMPS\)](#) program on the use of emergency departments (ED) among youth with behavioral health concerns. When children face behavioral health crises, many families turn to hospital EDs for treatment. Although treatment in an ED can be the appropriate level of care for youth at imminent risk of harm to themselves or others (e.g., actively suicidal, experiencing psychotic symptoms), for many other youth, community-based alternatives are preferred. Connecticut has developed one of the nation's best mobile crisis intervention service programs for children (EMPS), which is used by many families and schools as an alternative to an ambulance or ED.

The research team, led by [Michael Fendrich, Ph.D.](#) (Associate Dean for Research), will use administrative data from EMPS and Medicaid claims to compare EMPS clients to a matched comparison group on ED utilization. They will also conduct focus groups with EMPS providers to supplement the quantitative findings and to further inform system and practice changes. The project will identify risk factors influencing subsequent ED use among those who receive EMPS services. Findings will inform future planning to ensure Connecticut has an appropriate array of high quality, cost-effective services for children and their families.

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For additional information, read CHDI's Issue Brief 48: "[Caring for Children in the Midst of a Behavioral Health Crisis](#)," or visit [www.chdi.org](http://www.chdi.org) or [www.empsct.org](http://www.empsct.org). For media questions, contact Julie Tacinelli at [tacinelli@uchc.edu](mailto:tacinelli@uchc.edu) or 860-679-1534. For media questions related to the UConn School of Social Work, contact Reesa Olins at [reesa.olins@uconn.edu](mailto:reesa.olins@uconn.edu) or (860) 570-9123.

The [Children's Fund of Connecticut \(CFC\)](#), a public charitable foundation and supporting organization of [Connecticut Children's Medical Center](#), is dedicated to ensuring that all children have a strong start in life with ongoing supports to promote their optimal health and well-being. To carry out this vision, the Children's Fund champions sustainable improvements through innovative grant making.