



**VMAP**

Virginia Mental Health  
Access Program

# Virginia Mental Health Access Program (VMAP) Overview

Addressing the Mental Health Crisis in Pediatrics

---

Ally Singer Wright

*Program Director, VMAP*

# Scope of the Problem Nationally

- More than **1 in 5 (22.1%)** U.S. children have 1 or more mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral problems
  - *(National Survey of Children's Health, 2018-2019).*
- According to the World Health Organization, **half of all mental illnesses** begin by **age 14**.
- Many patients with mental health symptoms **will see their PCPs first**, before they have been diagnosed with a mental illness.

# Scope of the Problem in Virginia

In the *State of Mental Health in America 2023* report:

- **124,000** (19.56%) Virginia children have had **at least one** major depressive episode.
- **90,000** children (60.2%) who have had a major depressive episode **did not receive mental health treatment** in Virginia.
- Of those with severe depression who received treatment, **only 34.9%** received consistent treatment.



# Scope of the Problem in Virginia

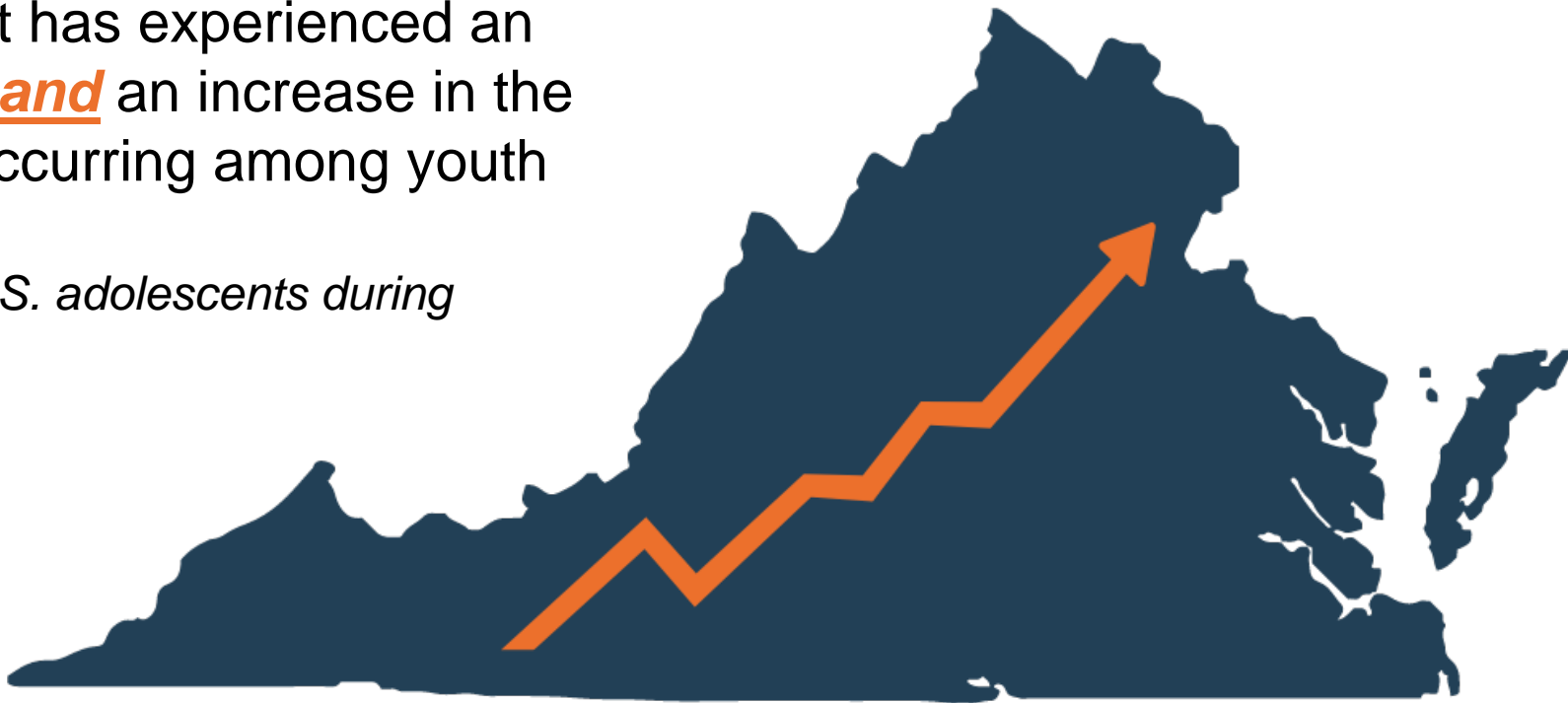
*According to the 2022 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions:*

- **40%** of Virginia high **schoolers felt sad or hopeless almost daily** for more than two weeks in a row.
- **10%** of middle school and **13%** of high school students said that they had **seriously considered attempting suicide** in the past 12 months.
- Of those, **56%** said **they made a plan** for how they would attempt suicide.



# Scope of the Problem in Virginia

- Suicide is the **2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death** for ages 10-24
  - *(National Institute of Mental Health, 2021).*
- Virginia is 1 of 5 states that has experienced an increase in youth suicides ***and*** an increase in the proportion of all suicides occurring among youth since the pandemic
  - *(Evaluation of suicides in U.S. adolescents during COVID, 2022).*

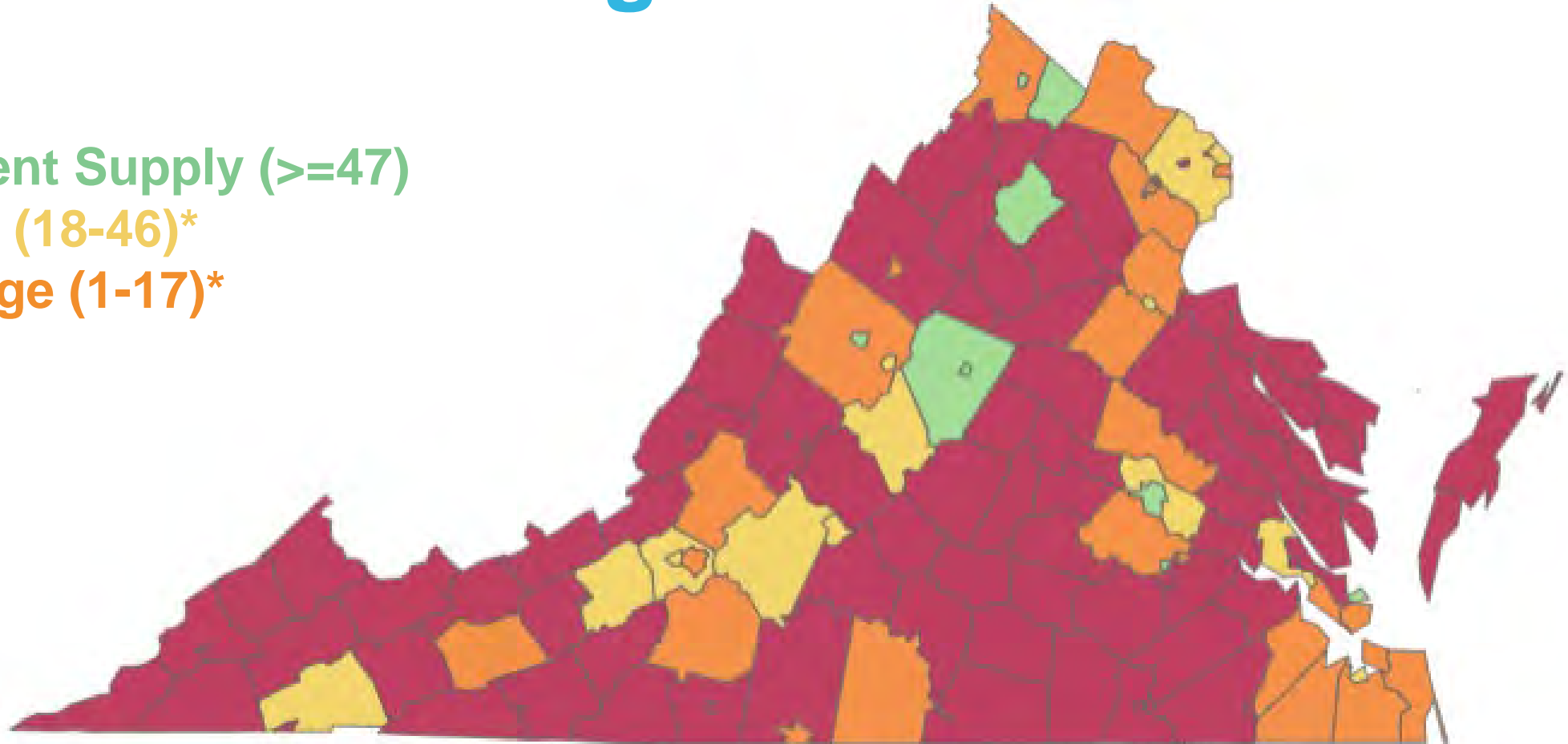


# The Workforce Shortage in Virginia

- Virginia ranks **48<sup>th</sup> lowest in the country** for prevalence of mental illness in our youth compared to access to care.
  - *(The State of Mental Health in America, 2023)*
- Virginia ranks **39<sup>th</sup> lowest** for the number of psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed social workers, counselors, and advanced practice nurses specializing in mental health care per population.
  - *(The State of Mental Health in America, 2023)*
- Only **four** counties have **sufficient** child and adolescent psychiatrists.
  - *(American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2019)*

# Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist Shortages Across Virginia

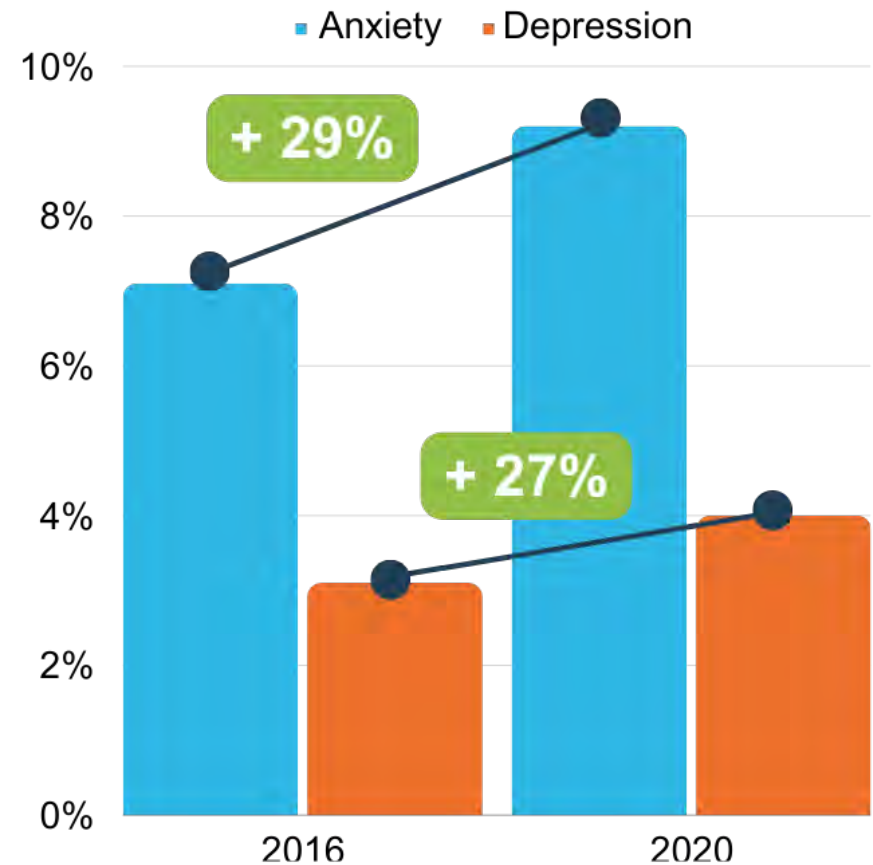
Mostly Sufficient Supply ( $\geq 47$ )  
High Shortage (18-46)\*  
Severe Shortage (1-17)\*  
No CAPs



*(American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2023)*

# Rise in Pediatric Mental Health Diagnoses

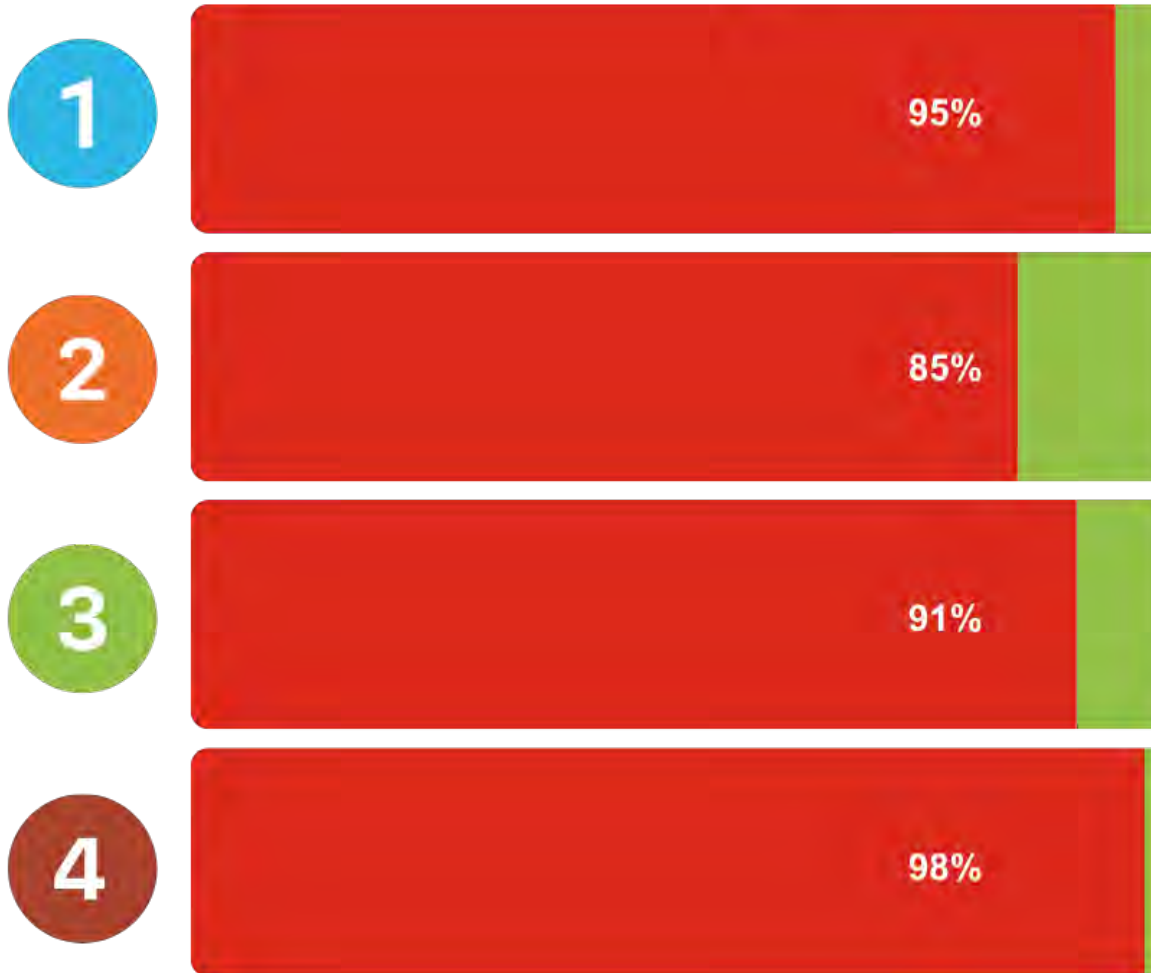
- Rates of childhood anxiety and depression diagnoses **rose 29% and 27%**, respectively, between 2016 and 2020.
  - (*JAMA Pediatrics*, 2022)
- These rates reflect increases seen in children and adolescents aged **3 to 17** in the United States.





# Limited Pediatric Mental Health Resources

■ Strongly Disagree / Disagree   ■ Strongly Agree / Agree



“There is adequate access to **child psychiatry** for my patients.” ( $n=125$ )

“There is adequate access to **other child mental health services** for my patients.” ( $n=124$ )

“With existing resources, I am usually able to **meet the needs** of children with mental health problems.” ( $n=116$ )

“When I need **a child psychiatric consultation**, I am able to receive one in a timely manner.” ( $n=121$ )

(VA AAP Survey Data from 2018, Pre-VMAP)

**91%**

of Virginia localities are  
mental health  
professional shortage  
areas

*(VDH Data from HRSA,  
2022)*

There are only

**14**

child and adolescent  
psychiatrists for every

**100,000**

children in Virginia

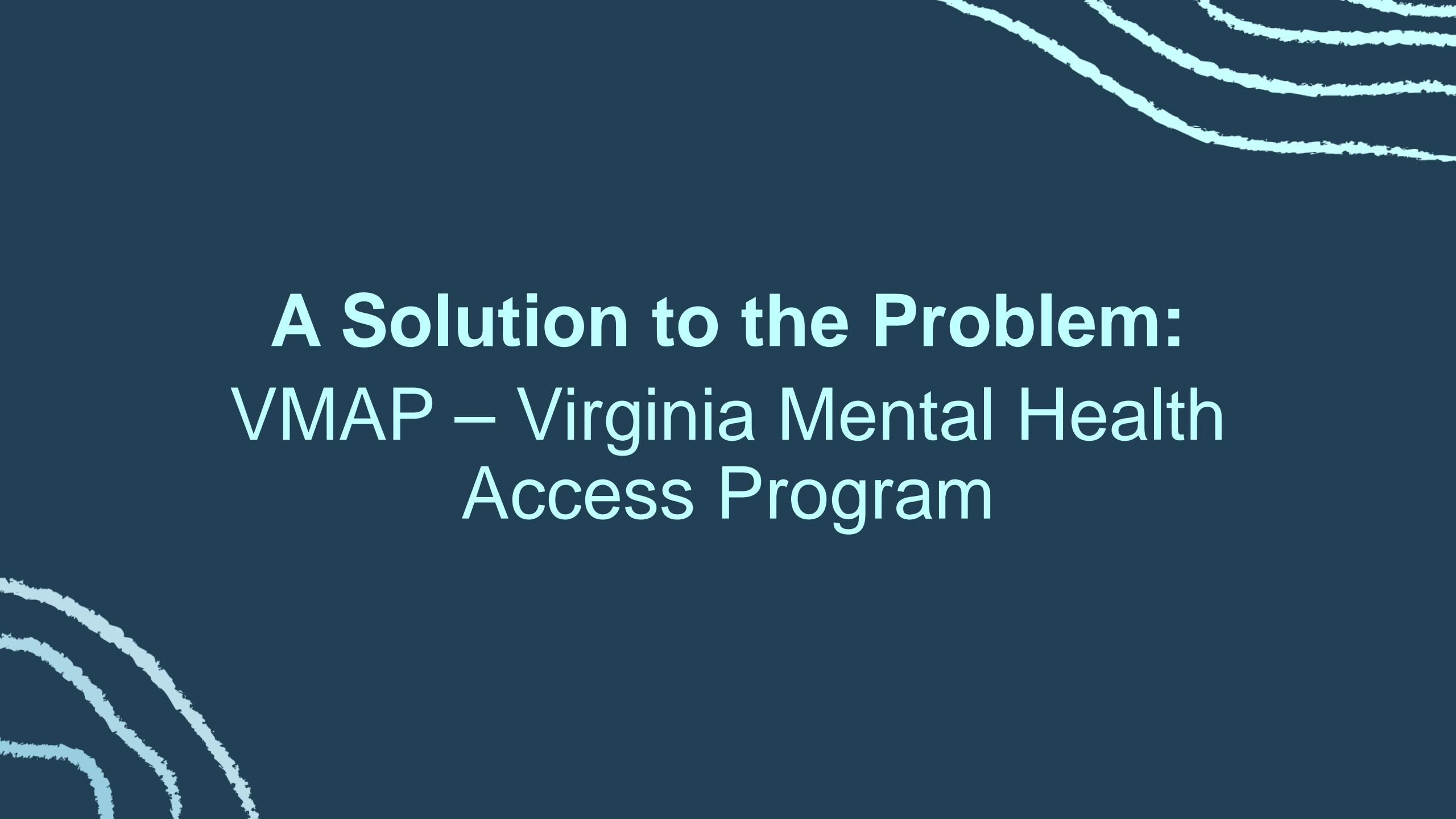
*(AACAP 2019)*

Over

**65%**

of pediatricians say they  
lack training, knowledge,  
and skills in pediatric  
mental and behavioral  
health

*(McMillan, Land, & Leslie,  
2017)*



**A Solution to the Problem:**  
VMAP – Virginia Mental Health  
Access Program

# Map of PMHCA Programs as of June 23, 2023

## TRIBAL NATION KEY

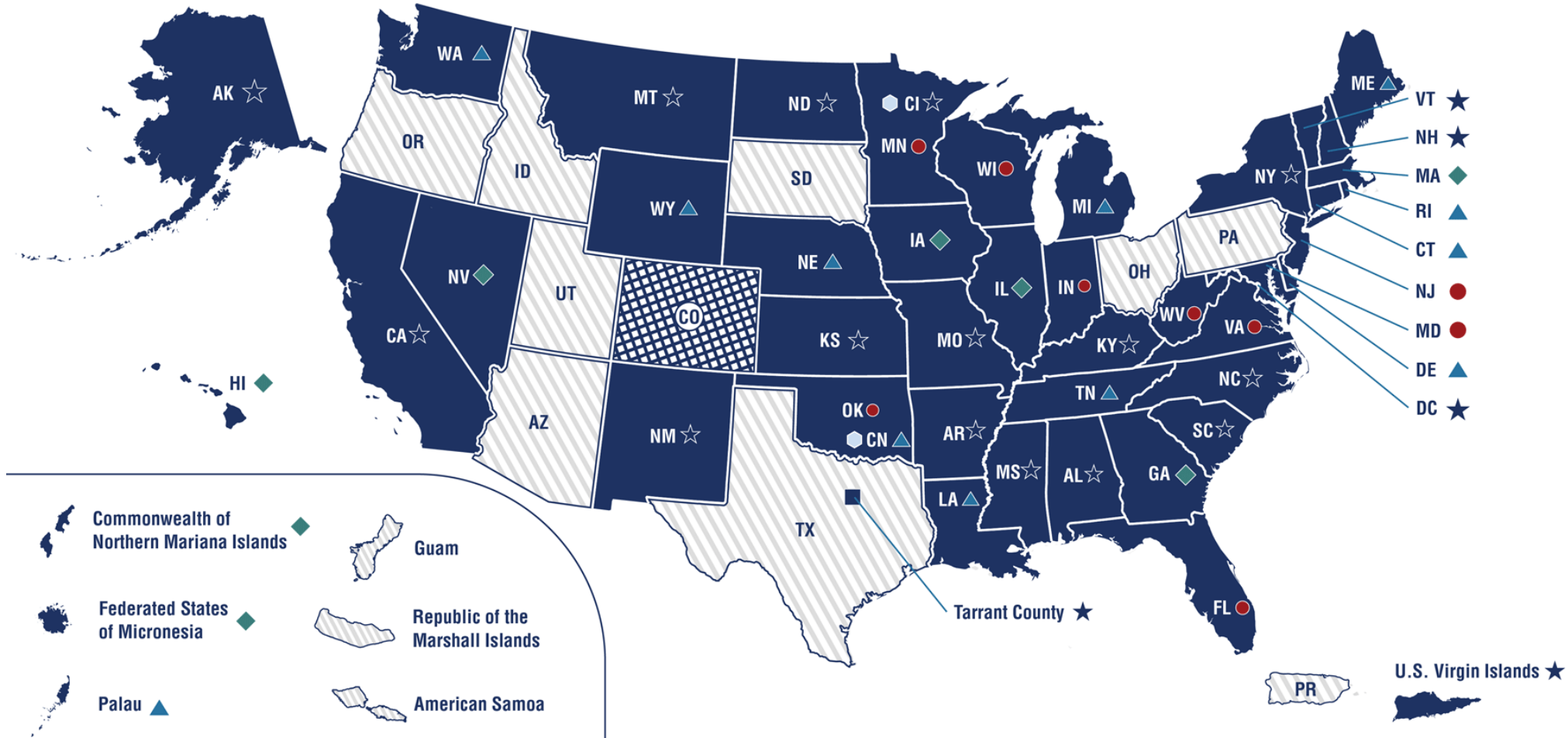
- Chickasaw Nation (CN)
- Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (CI)

## FUNDING KEY

- HRSA-PMHCA Initial and Expansion Funding
- HRSA-PMHCA Initial Funding Only
- Not HRSA-PMHCA Funded

## EXPANSION FUNDING USE KEY

- Schools
- Emergency Departments
- Both
- General





## Virginia Mental Health Access Program

### Provider Education

*Several education opportunities for primary care providers on screening, diagnosis, management, and treatment of pediatric mental health conditions.*

**REACH PPP**

**Pearls & Pitfalls**

**ECHO**

**Guidebook**

### The VMAP Line

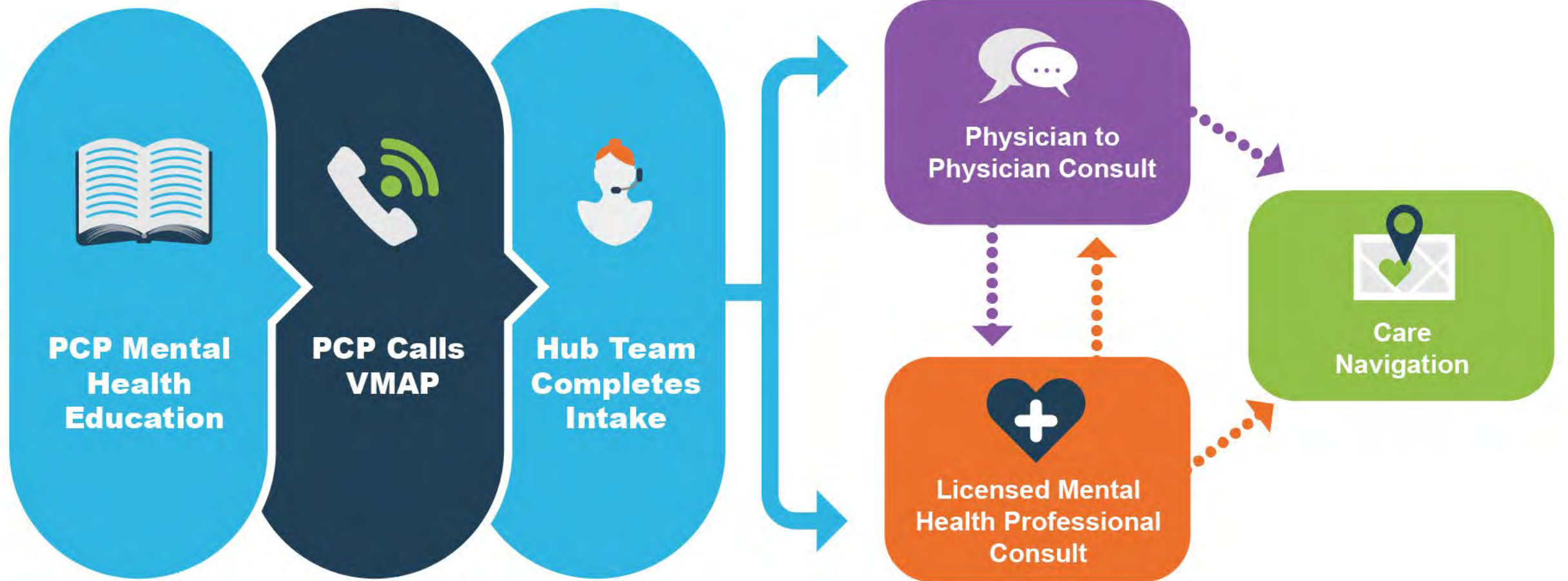
*Connects primary care providers to regional and/or specialist hubs that offer mental health consultation and care navigation for their patients 21 and under.*

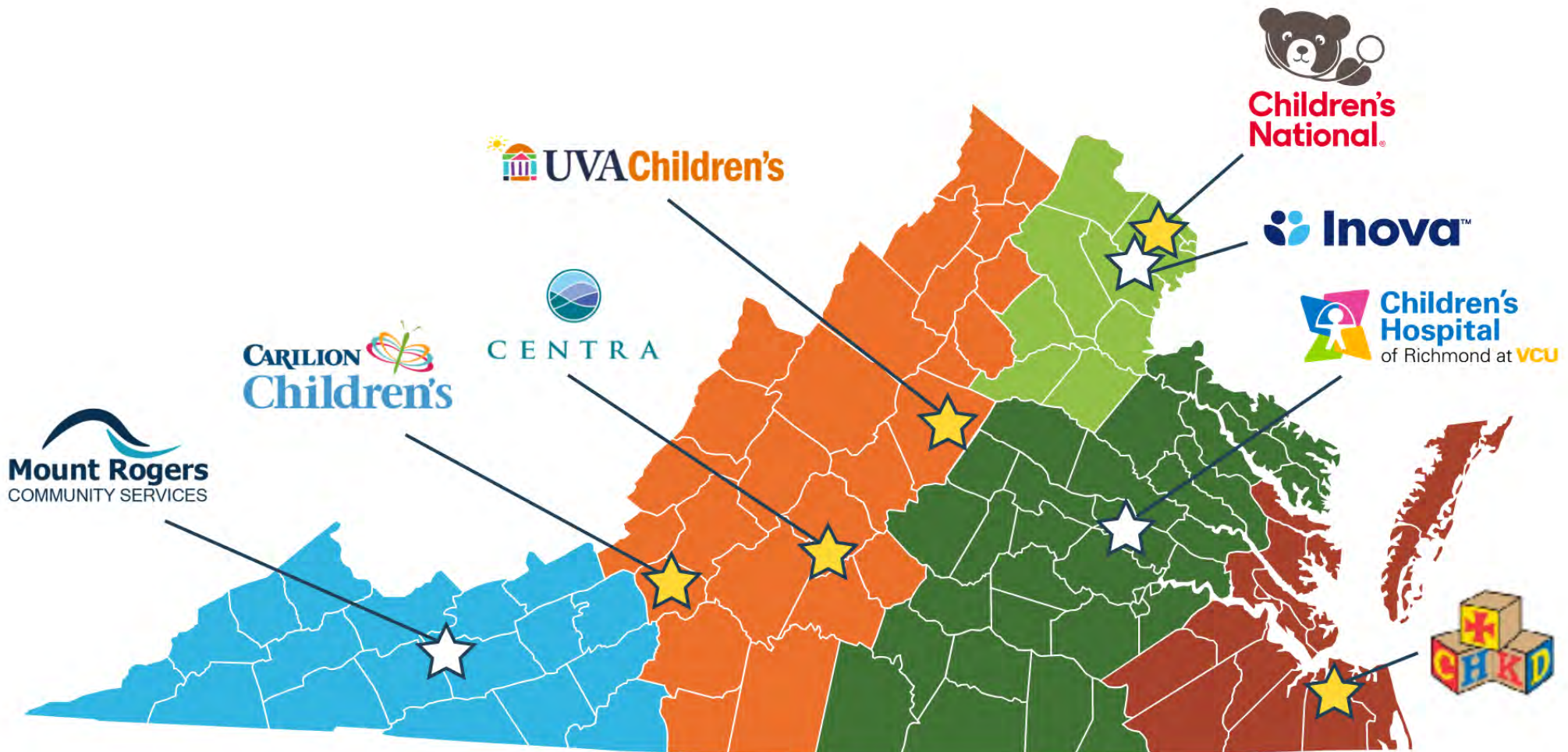
**Specialized Physicians**  
(child psychiatrists and/or developmental pediatricians)

**Licensed Mental Health Professionals**  
(psychologists and/or social workers)

**Care Navigators**

# *How Does VMAP Work?*



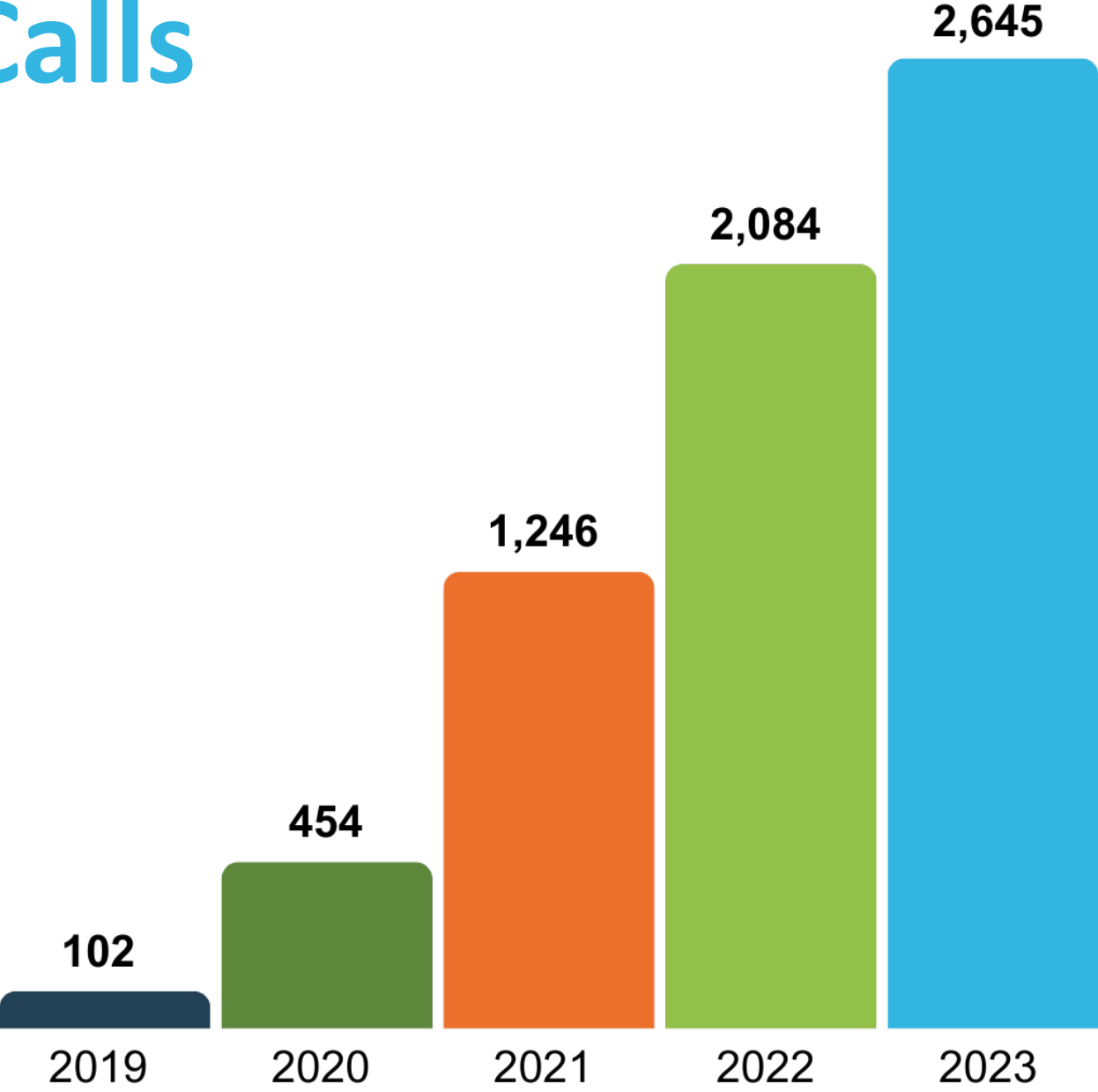


North
  East
  Southwest
  Central
  West

Also Servicing VMAP's Statewide Early Childhood Hub

# VMAP Line Calls

2019 – 2023





# VMAP By The Numbers (So Far!)



# VMAP Provider Education



*3-day course followed by 6-month case-based distance learning to help providers build skills and confidence in diagnosing and treating pediatric behavioral health problems.*

## **2024 Course Dates:**

- March 1-3 – *Virtual*
- April 26-28 – *In-Person* (Coastal VA)
- August 23-25 – *Virtual*
- October 11-13 – *In-Person* (NOVA)
- November 15-17 – *Virtual*

*CME, MOC-2, and MOC-4 available*

*1-hour cohorts meeting monthly with optional QI project.*

## **Common Conditions in Pediatric & Adolescent Mental Health**

- Teaches skills for integrating behavioral and mental health into pediatric primary care.

## **Birth to 5: A Deeper Dive**

- Addresses unique infant and early childhood mental health problems.

## **Mental Health of Adolescents & Young Adults**

- Explore mental health concerns faced by youth and young adults.

## **Early Childhood: Systems of Care for Kids (SOCKs)**

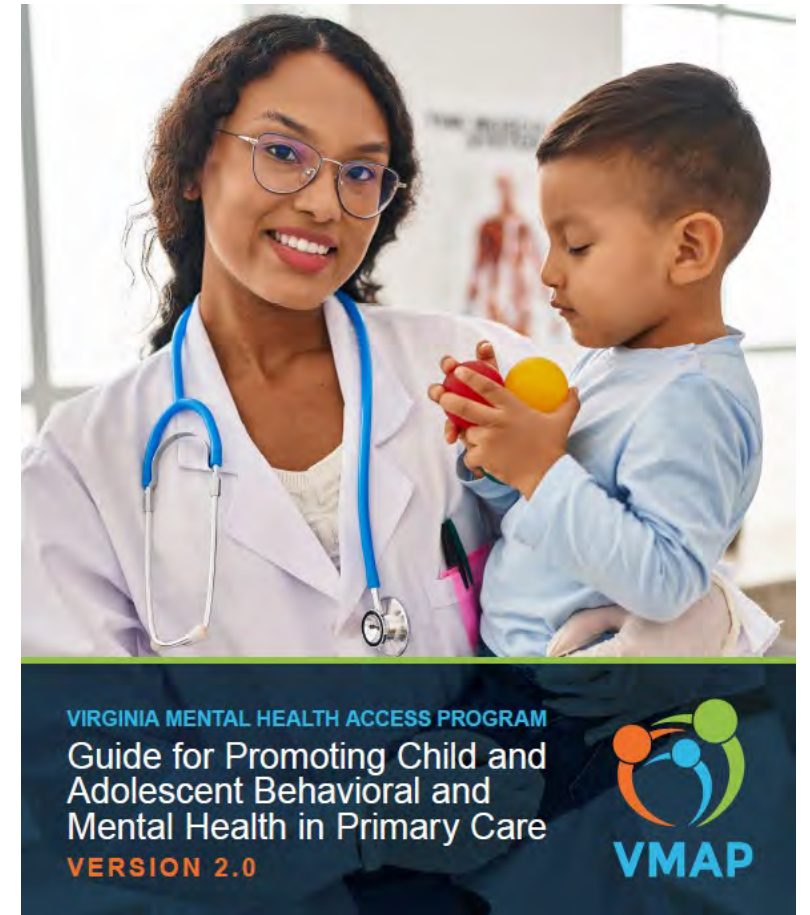
- Community interventions and referral options for PCPs supporting young families.

*CME and MOC-4 available*

# VMAP Guidebook

*For Promoting Child and Adolescent Behavioral & Mental Health in Primary Care*

- Compilation of **evidence-based practices, up-to-date resources, & practical knowledge** specifically geared towards pediatric and adolescent health care providers.
- **Available to download for free!**
- Serves as inspiration for similar guidebooks across the nation.
- 2nd edition released in April 2024.



# VMAP Guidebook

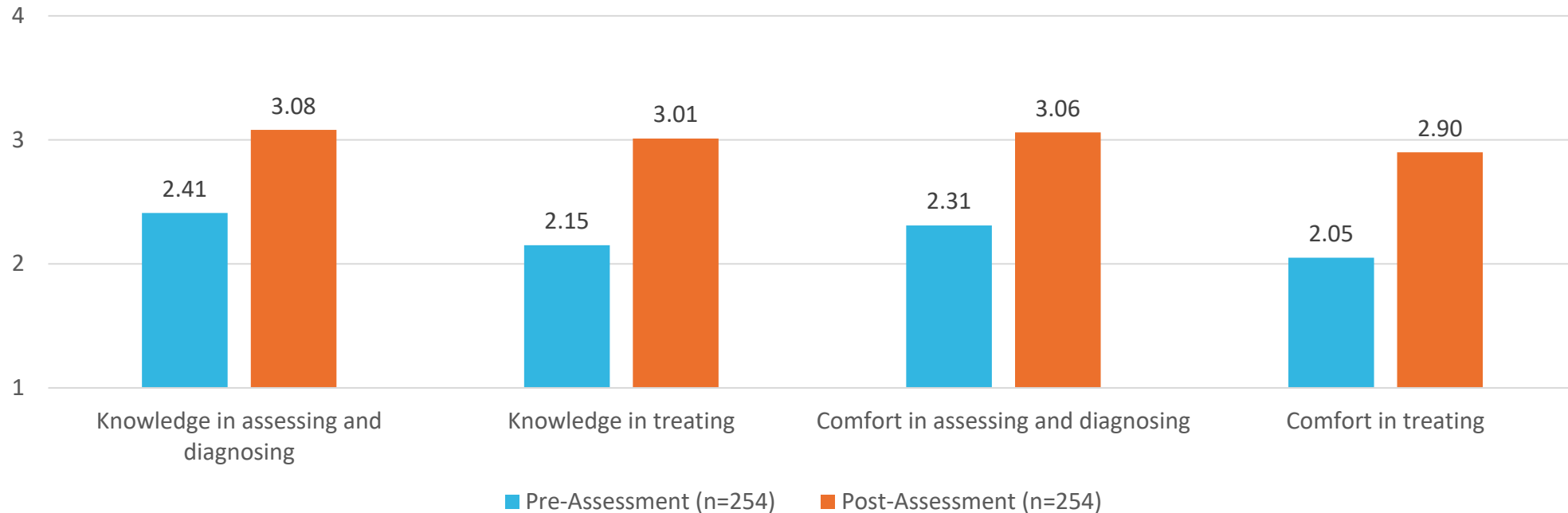
*Contains care guides on the following topics:*

- Aggression in Children 2-10
- Psychosis
- Substance Use Disorder
- Eating Disorders
- Sleep Challenges

- Depression
- Suicidality
- Anxiety
- Trauma & PTSD
- ADHD
- Bipolar Disorder

# VMAP Line & Education Highlights

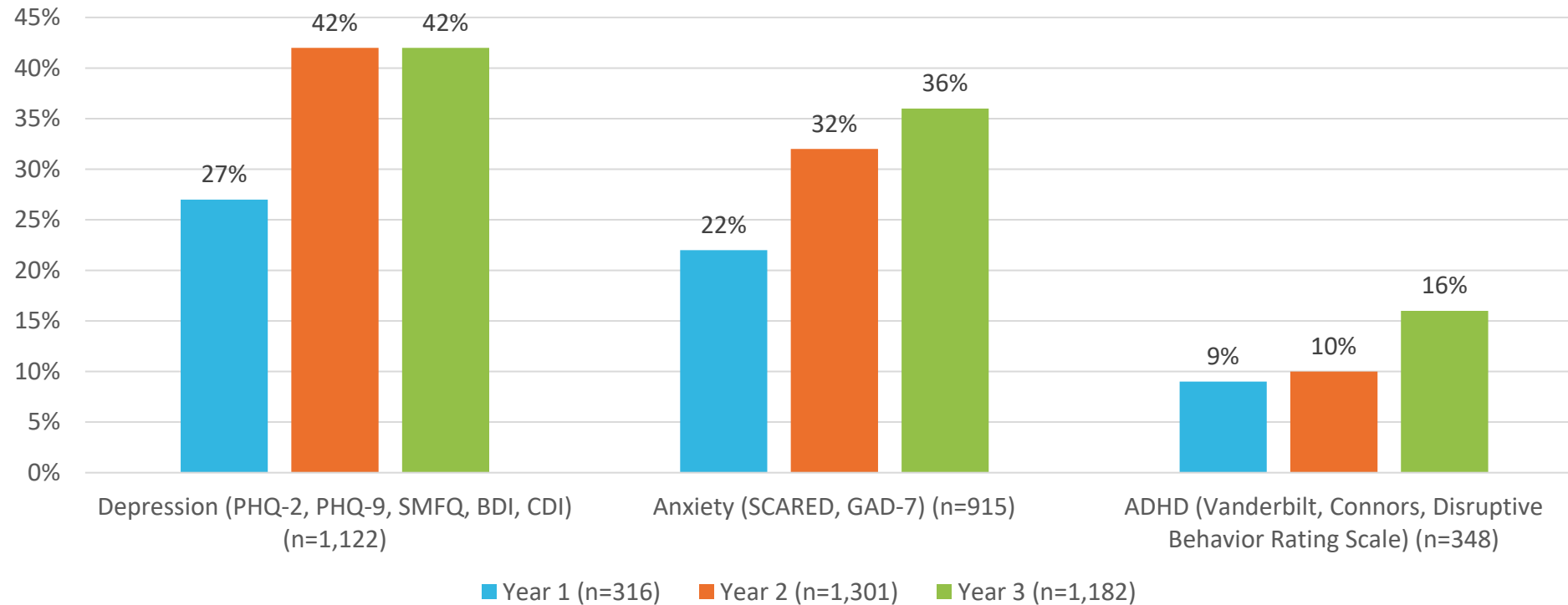
## Significant Increases from REACH Pre-Post Assessment Scores



1 – Not at all, 2 – Small amount, 3 – Moderate amount, and 4 – Great deal.  
Only Participants who completed the pre- and post-assessments

# VMAP Line & Education Highlights

## Significant Increases in Screening Tool Usage for Patients



Year 1 (Aug '19 – Jul '20)  
Year 2 (Aug '20 – Dec '21)  
Year 3 (Jan '22 – Dec '22)

# VMAP Project ECHO & VMAP Line

General findings show that VMAP Project ECHO participants:



Make up  
**one-quarter (27%)**  
of VMAP Line  
calls for consultation



Are  
**less likely to need  
a medication or crisis  
consultation**  
when calling the VMAP Line

VMAP Project ECHO participants who also utilize the VMAP Line  
for consultation show significant differences from their peers by:



Demonstrating  
**significantly higher rates**  
of screening tools utilization



Reporting  
**greater confidence in  
assessing and managing**  
behavioral health conditions

# Care Navigation

78% of care navigation cases saw resources provided to *both* PCP *and* Family.

## Care Navigation Outcomes:

- Resources Provided: 61%
- Unable to Reach Family: 32%
- Family No Longer Interested in Services: 7%

## Barriers to Care Navigation Referrals:

- Lower Priority/Too busy: 40%
- Resource Availability Issue: 34%
- Insurance or Financial Issues: 15%







# **VMAP Expansions**

## 2023 & Beyond

# Early Childhood Expansion

- In 2023, VMAP advocated for and **received additional state funds** to expand into early childhood mental health.
- The VMAP Line was expanded to include **early childhood specialists**, such as:
  - Early Childhood Psychiatrists
  - Developmental/Behavioral Pediatricians
  - Early Childhood LMHPs
  - Care Navigators
- **New trainings** offered on early childhood mental health.
  - Piloted **Triple P Trainings**
  - Launched early childhood VMAP ECHOs and learning collaboratives



# Emergency Department Education Pilot

- Educational webinars for emergency department (ED) providers created by VMAP based on statewide needs assessment.
- Webinars focused on pediatric mental health management in ED settings.
- 3 webinars held in 2023 with **102 attendees!**
- Sessions are recorded with VCU and will be available for future participants.
- Future programming in process.

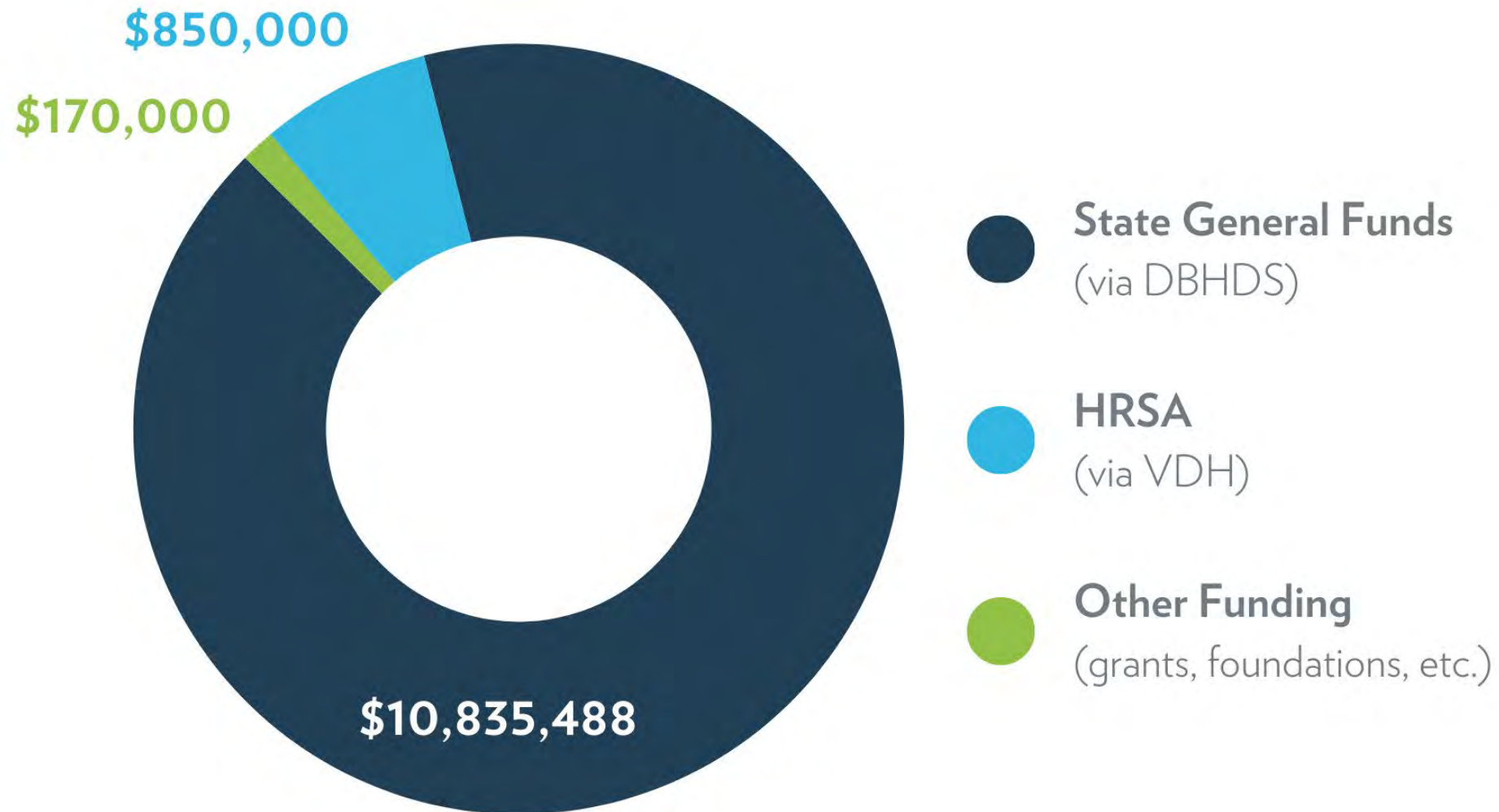


# Maternal Mental Health Expansion

1. **VMAP For Moms+ Line:** VMAP Line access connecting providers to perinatal psychiatrists, perinatal LMHPs, and care navigation for pregnant & postpartum patients.
2. **Provider Education:** Training for maternal health providers to screen, diagnose, and manage perinatal mental health conditions.
  - Maternal mental health providers includes healthcare providers caring for pregnant & postpartum patients, such as OB/GYNs, midwives, family physicians, etc.
  - Services will also be available for providers who interact with pregnant & postpartum patients like pediatricians, lactation professionals, etc.



# VMAP Funding



# VMAP Executive Committee



**Ally Singer  
Wright**  
**VMAP Senior  
Director**  
Medical Society of  
Virginia Foundation  
(MSVF)



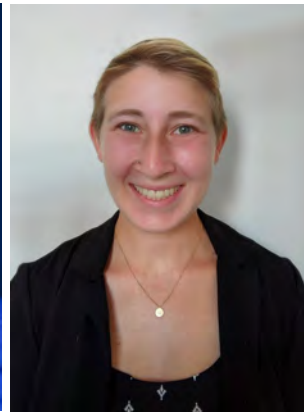
**Mary Beth  
McIntire**  
**Chief Programs  
Officer**  
Medical Society of  
Virginia Foundation  
(MSVF)



**Rachel  
Reynolds**  
**VMAP Asst.  
Director of  
Operations**  
Medical Society of  
Virginia Foundation  
(MSVF)



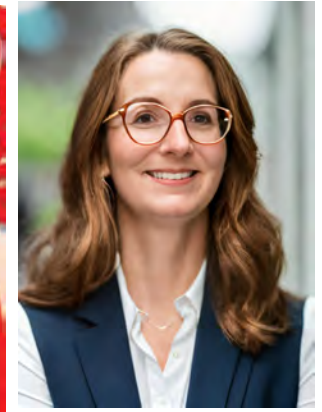
**Sandy Chung, MD**  
**VMAP Medical  
Director**  
Virginia Chapter of the  
American Academy of  
Pediatrics (VA AAP)



**Hanna  
Schweitzer, MPH**  
**VMAP State  
Program  
Administrator**  
Department of  
Behavioral Health  
and Developmental  
Services (DBHDS)



**Bethany  
Geldmaker**  
**HRSA Program  
Director, VMAP**  
Virginia Department  
of Health (VDH)



**Mandolin  
Restivo**  
**VMAP For  
Moms+  
Education  
Manager &  
Program Lead**  
Postpartum Support  
Virginia (PSVa)

# What Providers Are Saying:

“As a community pediatrician, **my practice has benefited immeasurably** from the services provided by VMAP. The combination of VMAP-supported education/training and utilization of the telephone consult line has **undoubtedly prevented** many patients in our practice from escalating to a crisis situation resulting in an emergency room visit, inpatient hospitalization, and even worse outcomes.”

“VMAP is a **lifeline** for pediatricians who are prescribing far more SSRIs than antibiotics this year- they **help us help kids** faced with months of waiting for care.”

*If you're a primary care provider  
treating children and adolescents...*

**REGISTER FOR VMAP** at [vmap.org](https://vmap.org) for the  
and gain access to:

- Real-time **consultations with regional child psychiatrists** & other licensed mental health professionals.
- **Care navigation** services to support with resource and referral needs.
- Consultations with **early childhood specialists**, including early childhood child psychiatrists and developmental behavioral pediatricians.
- Expert-led **pediatric mental health trainings** with optional CME and/or MOC credit.

**1-888-371-VMAP (8627)**

*This line is **not** for families to call directly. This is **not** a crisis line for patients.*



### **VMAP Line Hours:**

**Monday through Friday 9 AM - 5 PM**

- Hub team will ask for provider and patient info
- A behavioral health expert will call you back within 30-minute timeframe
  - Patients must be 21 years or younger
  - Provider must practice in Virginia OR patient must reside in in-state



# Current Partners & Funders





# Special Thanks To...

A coalition of **18** philanthropic foundations that:

- Provided **\$170,000** in funding
- **Supported implementation** of multiple REACH PPP trainings
- Enabled dozens of providers all over Virginia to receive extensive training on pediatric mental health

Danville Regional Foundation ● The Harvest Foundation ● Culpeper Wellness Foundation  
Northern Virginia Health Foundation ● Bob and Anna Lou Schaberg Foundation  
Claude Moore Charitable Foundation ● Northern Piedmont Community Foundation  
Williamsburg Health Foundation ● Community Foundation for Greater Richmond  
The Alleghany Foundation ● The Annabella Jenkins Foundation ● PATH Foundation  
Richmond Memorial Health Foundation ● Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia  
The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia ● The Cameron Foundation  
Virginia Health Care Foundation ● Potomac Health Foundation  
Community Foundation for Loudoun and Northern Fauquier Counties

## Questions?

Sandy Chung, MD, FAAP, FACHE

VMAP Medical Director

[schung@vmap.org](mailto:schung@vmap.org)

Ally Singer Wright

VMAP Senior Director

[asingerwright@vmap.org](mailto:asingerwright@vmap.org)

Hanna Schweitzer, MPH

VMAP State Program Administrator

[Hanna.Schweitzer@dbhds.virginia.gov](mailto:Hanna.Schweitzer@dbhds.virginia.gov)



# VMAP

Virginia Mental Health  
Access Program

## Register with VMAP

[www.vmap.org](http://www.vmap.org)

**1-888-371-VMAP (8627)**

*Follow us @VMAPva*



# References

2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health." Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Retrieved [02/15/23] from [www.childhealthdata.org].

"Adolescent and young adult health," World Health Organization, [Adolescent and young adult health \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/adolescent), 10 August 2022.

Charpignon, ML, et al. Evaluation of suicides among U.S. adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. JAMA Pediatrics. 2022. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.0515

Garnett MF, Curtin SC, Stone DM. Suicide mortality in the United States, 2000–2020. NCHS Data Brief, no 433. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2022. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.15620/cdc:114217>

Kim WJ, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Task Force on Workforce Needs. Child and adolescent psychiatry workforce: A critical shortage and national challenge. Acad Psychiatry. 2003;27:277–82.

McMillan JA, Land M Jr, Leslie LK. Pediatric Residency Education and the Behavioral and Mental Health Crisis: A Call to Action. Pediatrics. 2017 Jan;139(1):e20162141. doi: 10.1542/peds.2016-2141. PMID: 28011943.

Reinert, M, Fritze, D. & Nguyen, T. (October 2022). "The State of Mental Health in America 2023" Mental Health America, Alexandria VA.

*Virginia School Survey of Climate & Working Conditions (2022)*, administered by The Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Service.

Virginia Department of Health using data from the US Health Resources and Services Administration (July 2022)