



Department
of Health

Medicaid NYRx

NYRx Education & Outreach Serious Mental Illness Newsletter

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February 27, 2026

Highlights

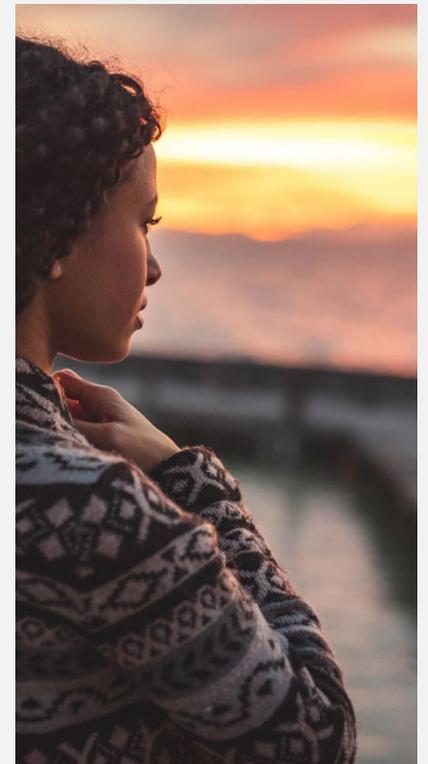
Serious Mental Illness

[Protecting Our Kids: Governor Hochul Announces Leading Initiatives to Safeguard Children Online, Limit AI Chatbots, and Address the Youth Mental Health Crisis](#)

During a presentation at her alma mater, Hamburg High School, New York State Governor Kathy Hochul [announced](#) first-of-its-kind proposals aimed at protecting children online, restricting AI chatbots, and addressing the youth mental health crisis. The Governor's proposed legislative package focuses on safeguarding children from emerging risks on social media and online gaming platforms. It includes a more than \$1 billion investment in the state's mental health system, building on her already nation-leading efforts.

One proposal removes smartphones from classrooms for the entire school day. Although initially controversial, the policy is already showing positive results — students are more focused in class, engaging more face-to-face with peers, and developing critical social and communication skills.

The Governor's legislative package also includes the following measures to strengthen online safety for children:



- **Expanding Age Verification:** Expanding requirements for platforms to conduct age verification, including online gaming platforms.
- **Privacy by Default:** Kids will be set to the highest privacy settings on covered platforms by default, meaning non-connections cannot message kids, view their profile, or tag them in content. Location settings will be turned off by default, and children under 13 must receive parental approval for new connections.
- **Disabling AI Chatbot Features:** Certain AI chatbot features on social media platforms for kids will be disabled.
- **Parental Controls:** Parents must be able to set limits on their children's financial transactions.

Promoting Youth Mental Health with Programs Designed to Foster Peer Connections



From expanding YOUTH mental health services to investing in suicide prevention, to school-based mental health clinics and peer-to-peer mental health training, New York will lead the nation in Teen Mental Health First Aid Training.

These programs will:

- Expand resources and propose peer-to-peer counseling in more than 1,300 school-based Mental Health Clinics.
- Allow every tenth grader to be trained in teen mental health first aid, which empowers kids and young people to support their peers.
- Restrict addictive feeds and ban toxic social media algorithms. Social media addiction is real.
- Prevent companies from selling our children's personal information for profit.
- Create safeguards against harmful AI companions.
- Mandate and enact social media warning labels. Surgeon General-type warnings for social media platforms. "This is detrimental to your health."

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Supportive Housing Single Room Occupancy (SP-SRO) Housing for Adults with Serious Mental Illness

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) invests in permanent housing for individuals with a serious mental illness.

All applicants must be registered with the New York State Grants Gateway System (GGS), and all Not-for-Profit agencies must be prequalified prior to proposal submission.

Please share registration forms with those you think would be eligible. Registration forms are available at the [GGS website](#).



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Mental Health Hotline

For immediate crisis support,
dial or text

988

or visit [988 Lifeline](#)

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Quiz

Online platforms like Roblox promote unsafe environments for children. The passage of online safety protections is crucial to stop predators from exploiting children and create safer online environments for children to play. For many reasons, New York State is taking action — so "virtual threats cannot turn into real life harm." — Gov. Hochul.

Which threats does this legislation protect children from?

Receiving
explicit
messages

Losing privacy,
revealing
where a child
lives

Chatbots and
scammers directly
contacting a child
or teen

Exposure
to violent
content

All
of
these

None
of
these

Were you correct?

*Scroll down
to find out!*

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Publications

Click to access [NYRx, the Medicaid Pharmacy Program](#) website for these publications and more.

- Billing & Coordination of Benefits
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Quicklinks



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[NYRx Brand Less Than
Generic Program Updates](#)



[NYRx Preferred Diabetic
Supply Program](#)

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About the NYRx E&O Team

The NYRx E&O team serves as a liaison between all stakeholders and NYRx to support care coordination. Clinical liaisons are trained to support and help solve complex pharmacy cases for:



- Managed Care Plans
- Case workers and NYS agencies
- Prescribers and pharmacies with questions regarding NYRx drug coverage, prior approval requirements, and NYRx enrolled pharmacies
- Complex care coordination for populations such as HIV/AIDS, Hemophilia, Foster Care Children, Serious Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorder, and Hepatitis C

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Weekly Webinars

To register, please visit the [NYRx Education & Outreach](#) website.

Prescriber Webinar

Mondays

12 PM – 1 PM ET

Pharmacy Webinar

Wednesdays

12 PM – 1 PM ET

NYRx, the Medicaid Pharmacy Program

Fridays

12 PM – 1 PM ET

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Contact Us

Office Hour Q&A Pop-In

Mondays and Wednesdays
12 PM – 1 PM ET

[Click here to join.](#)



Meet with the Team

The NYRx E&O team meets with various 29-I agencies throughout the month. Would you like to request a meeting with us? Click [here](#).

NYRx E&O Call Center

1-833-967-7310

Monday – Friday
8 AM – 5 PM ET
Excludes Holidays



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Quiz Answer: All of these