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CN Guidance Launches New Mobile Team in Suffolk County to Support Youth with Serious Mental Health Challenges

State-Funded Initiative Expands Access to Intensive Community-Based Care for Children and Families

HICKSVILLE, NY – CN Guidance & Counseling Services has launched a new Youth Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team in Suffolk County, expanding access to intensive, community-based behavioral health services for children and adolescents with significant mental health needs.

The program is funded through a more than **\$2.8 million grant from the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH)** and is designed to support young people ages 10 to 21 who are living with Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED). The team serves youth returning home from inpatient psychiatric or residential treatment settings, those at risk of entering higher levels of care, and individuals who have not successfully engaged in or responded to traditional outpatient services.

Youth ACT provides a highly coordinated, multidisciplinary approach that delivers individualized treatment and support where young people live, learn, and spend their time. By bringing services directly into homes, schools and communities, the program helps youth and families build stability, strengthen functioning, and reduces the need for hospitalization or residential placement.

The Suffolk County Youth ACT team includes a medical prescriber, licensed mental health professionals, clinical support specialists, and a certified family peer advocate (with lived mental health experience) who work together to address the complex needs of youth and their families. Services are tailored to each individual's goals and circumstances.

“New York State is the first in the nation to adapt the successful Assertive Community Treatment model to serve young people so they can get the support they can rely on to avoid higher levels of care,” **OMH Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said.** “CN Guidance & Counseling Services’ new Youth ACT team will provide comprehensive around-the-clock services to help youth living with mental illness remain at home with their families in a setting most conducive to recovery. Under Governor Kathy Hochul’s leadership, we continue to expand critical mental health services like this one, which are designed to help youth and families thrive within their community.”



"Children and families facing complex mental health challenges often need more than traditional office-based services," **said CN Guidance Senior Director, Victoria Guercio.** "Youth ACT meets families where they are, providing the intensive support and coordination necessary to help young people thrive in their homes, schools and communities."

Services provided through Youth ACT include:

- Mental health and substance use disorder treatment
- Psychiatric evaluation and medication management
- Psychiatric rehabilitation and skill development
- Vocational support
- Family support
- Referrals and connections to community resources

The new Suffolk County team builds on CN Guidance's successful ACT services across Long Island, which serve hundreds of individuals annually. With more than 60 behavioral health programs and services, CN Guidance is one of Long Island's leading providers of mental health, substance use and community-based support services.

"We are very grateful to the NY Office of Mental Health for this investment which allows CN Guidance to reach some of the most vulnerable young people in Suffolk County with the level of care and support they need to succeed," **said CN Guidance CEO, Jeffrey Friedman.** "Youth ACT fills an important gap in the continuum of care and reflects our commitment to delivering innovative services that keep families together and connected to their communities."

For more information about CN Guidance and its services, visit cnguidance.org or call **516-822-6111**

***About CN Guidance and Counseling Services:** Serving children and adults with mental and emotional disorders since 1972, CN Guidance delivers NY-State licensed mental health and substance use treatment services – especially to economically disadvantaged individuals and families, including many communities of color – working in partnership with county government and other community services. With deep, localized knowledge of Nassau County and Suffolk County communities, a 24/7 crisis center, mobile fleet, telehealth capabilities, and a NY State Integrated Outpatient Services license, CN Guidance maintains an exemplary track record of delivering outreach and high-quality behavioral healthcare to more than 25,000 individuals per year. For more information, visit <https://cnguidance.org/>*