

# It Starts with You!

## Help Us Continue to Make a Difference by Donating to the Campaign for America's Kids – Access Initiative

Despite advances in medicine, only a fraction of children and adolescents suffering from mental illnesses receive treatment. Access to quality mental health services is a major barrier, and the AACAP is dedicated to eliminating all barriers that prevent children and adolescents from receiving the treatment they need.

Since 1953, the AACAP's goal has been to promote a more positive understanding of mental illnesses and remove the stigma associated with them. The AACAP is dedicated to improving the quality of life for children, adolescents, and families affected by mental illness. That is why the AACAP developed the *Campaign for America's Kids – Access Initiative*.

The AACAP requests your help with our mission of making quality care more accessible across America for children, adolescents, and families.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

The *Campaign* has helped thousands of children and adolescents attain the proper

diagnoses and treatment they need to lead successful lives, but more needs to be done. The headlines that appear in newspapers and television programs are evidence that our children and adolescents are in crisis and existing systems are failing to provide them with the help they need.

It has been nearly a decade since the *Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, 1999*, documented that emotional, behavioral, developmental, and mental disorders among children and adolescents were at an epidemic level, with an estimated 15 million, or one in five children and adolescents, having a mental illness. That is more children than those diagnosed with all other childhood diseases combined.

The statistics today, more than seven years later, show we have failed as a nation to reduce the staggering number of children and adolescents involved—still one in five children and adolescents are affected by mental illnesses that disrupt their daily functioning at home, in school, or in the community. Why does the number of children and adolescents affected refuse to decline? One answer is the lack of access to quality mental health care. Fifteen million children and adolescents are affected. Yet, only one in five of them are receiving diagnosis and needed treatment, leaving more than 12 million untreated.



## There Is No Time to Waste, America's Children and Adolescents Need Our Help Now!

Most of America's children and adolescents who are struggling with mental illness are not receiving the appropriate treatment. It is time to face this fact and work together constructively to provide them with access to quality mental health care.

It starts with you! To make a donation:

- Visit AACAP's Web site at [www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org).
- Contact the AACAP Development Office at 1.800.333.7636, ext. 140 or [development@aacap.org](mailto:development@aacap.org).
- Mail checks (payable to AACAP) to AACAP, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20016-3007

*"The burden of suffering by children with mental health needs and their families has created a health crisis in this country. Growing numbers of children are suffering needlessly because their emotional, behavioral and developmental needs are not being met by the very institutions and systems that were created to take care of them."*

*(Report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health: A National Action Agenda, January 2001)*