Candidate Name

Address

Postcode

[Insert Date]

Dear [Insert Name],

The mental health of babies, children and young people is one of the most pressing issues of our time. As one of the 300 members of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition, we are calling on all political parties to make a strong commitment to prioritise this vital issue in the forthcoming election and beyond.

Mental health needs in children and young people have risen sharply in recent years, with the Covid-19 pandemic further exacerbating need and deepening socal inequalities, that in turn further impact on mental health. One in five children and young people now have a mental health problem, up from one in nine in 2017 and one in ten in 2004[[1]](#footnote-2). Too many also struggle to get the support they need, contending with high thresholds for support, rejected referrals and long waiting times.

Yet, findings from a recent poll of 2,000 voters, conducted for the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition, **found that 59% felt political leaders have failed to do enough to address this critical issue over the last decade – rising to 69% among 18–24-year-olds.** And only 23% of voters feel confident that issues relating to children and young people will be prioritised at the next election.

These findings highlight the urgent case for change. Two-thirds of voters told us they want to see mental health support embedded in local communities – like schools and early support hubs – coupled with more investment in mental health services. That’s why, alongside the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition, we are calling on all political parties to prioritise action to improve mental health outcomes for all babies, children, and young people in order to build a healthier and more prosperous society.

We call on political parties to:

* Commit at least an additional £1.7bn per year for Integrated Care Systems to deliver a comprehensive mental health pathway for all babies, children and young people aged 0-25.
* Embed whole educational approaches to mental health and wellbeing across all education settings.
* Increase the provision of early intervention support in the community through the national roll-out of early support hubs in every local area.
* Bring forward reform of the Mental Health Act 1983, to ensure that children and young people’s rights are protected and promoted, and that they receive high quality and compassionate care.

A full copy of the Coalition’s manifesto can be found via this link: <https://cypmhc.org.uk/publications/a-manifesto-for-babies-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health/>

And, a full copy of the polling findings can be found via this link: <https://cypmhc.org.uk/publications/shaping-tomorrow-prioritising-babies-childrens-and-young-peoples-mental-health-in-the-2024-election/>.

Addressing the challenges faced by babies, children and young people is not only a moral obligation but a crucial investment in the nation’s future. The election is a key opportunity to create the change that is so urgently needed. We urge you to show your support and commit to action to help shape a better tomorrow for babies, children and young people.

Yours faithfully,

[Insert Name]

1. NHS Digital (2023) Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2023 - wave 4 follow up to the 2017 survey. Available from: [https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2023-wave-4-follow-up#](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2023-wave-4-follow-up) [Accessed 21 November 2023] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)