

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SAVE THE CHILDREN CHAMPIONS CHILD PARTICIPATION IN LANDMARK MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION

Save the Children Philippines welcomes the inclusion of children's voices in Republic Act 12080, the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act, and its newly signed Implementing Rules and Regulations on March 4.

This landmark legislation promotes mental health and well-being within educational institutions across the country. It mandates the development of School-Based Mental Health Programs and Services in consultation with learners, their parents or guardians, and local government units.

This ensures that mental health initiatives are tailored to the specific needs of students, rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all model. Section 4 of the law outlines the role of every stakeholder in addressing mental health concerns through prevention, intervention, postvention, and recovery.

"By actively involving children in the design of mental health programs, we ensure that their unique perspectives and experiences are acknowledged. This participatory approach not only leads to more effective interventions but also upholds their rights to be heard on matters that greatly affect their generation and the next," said Atty. Alberto Muyot, Save the Children Philippines Chief Executive Officer.

This aligns with the Philippines' commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which underscores the importance of children's participation in decisions impacting their lives.

Save the Children has long worked for and with children, alongside partner communities, in designing programs that are responsive to their needs. Co-designing means working directly with those affected to create solutions that make sense in their context. This approach is particularly valuable in implementing the new law, recognizing that while immediate full realization may be constrained by resources, continuous and progressive efforts are essential.

While the law focuses on school settings, Save the Children acknowledges that children's well-being extends beyond classroom walls and is also shaped by their homes and immediate communities, both offline and online.

The child rights organization emphasizes the crucial role of the private sector and civil society organizations in creating supportive environments both inside and outside educational institutions. They, too, should be consulted to ensure that mental health programs are comprehensive, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of children.

"Save the Children has consistently worked for and with children, the government, and various stakeholders. We remain steadfast in our commitment to support the Department of Education in ensuring that this law and the recently signed Implementing Rules and Regulations bring about meaningful change in the lives of our children, particularly the most excluded and disadvantaged," said Muyot.

Find out more about what Save the Children Philippines does and support our work in building a safer, healthier future for and with children. Visit www.savethechildren.org.ph.

ABOUT SAVE THE CHILDREN

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. In the Philippines and around the world, we do whatever it takes – every day and in times of crisis – so children can fulfill their rights to a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn, and protection from harm. With over 100 years of expertise, we are the world’s first and leading independent children’s organization – transforming lives and the future we share.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Save the Children Philippines CEO Atty. Alberto Muyot (sixth standing from left) together with Department of Education (DepEd) Secretary Juan Edgardo "Sonny" Angara, officials of the Department of Budget and Management, the Professional Regulation Commission, the Education Commission II, the Civil Service Commission, and partners at the ceremonial signing of the Implementing Rules and Regulations for Republic Act 12080, the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act. (Photo from DepEd)