



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **THE CHILD CENTER OF NY WELCOMES INAUGURAL CHIEF INNOVATION AND MEDICAL OFFICER**

**Queens, NY (February 7, 2024)** – The Child Center of NY (TCCNY) announced today that Deep Penesetti, M.D. will join the organization as its inaugural Chief Innovation and Medical Officer.

The new role, led by Dr. Deep Penesetti, aka “Dr. Deep,” will spearhead TCCNY’s vision of bridging the creative and clinical to create a mental health movement to serve our communities, including the building of an Innovation Lab and supporting ongoing projects like “Play Therapy,” the SoulHouse partnership, and the “Be There Campaign” with Born This Way Foundation.

He is a Board-certified Child, Adolescent, and Adult Psychiatrist from the Mount Sinai Hospital Triple Board Program, a native New Yorker, and an actively practicing clinician. Dr. Deep combines his preventative lens as a pediatrician with his specialization in Child, Adolescent, and adult Psychiatry to his mission of helping those who don’t make it to his office. His academic work leveraging art, entertainment, and sports therapeutically has dubbed him the “Modern Play Therapist.”

He is a Chair for the American Psychiatric Association’s Division of Diversity & Health Equity and helps lead the Minority Fellowship Program for the United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), helping select and mentor the nation’s leading fleet of culturally humble psychiatrists. Formerly, he served as a National Institute of Health (NIH), Pre-doctoral Research Fellow at New York University’s Child Study Center.

Dr. Deep describes his litmus test for a mental health initiative as “picturing if it would have worked for me and my family growing up with the same barriers of stigma, access and cost we unfortunately have today.”

Traci Donnelly, CEO of The Child Center, warmly expresses, “We eagerly welcome Dr. Deep, anticipating not just his arrival but the transformative touch of innovation he brings. His creative brilliance and dedication to pushing boundaries will undoubtedly propel our mission to unprecedented heights.”

Dr. Deep’s drive to embrace innovative clinical approaches to helping his community began when he was diagnosed with dyslexia as a medical student at New York University as a research

assistant at the Child Study Center. He gained mentorship and learned how to finance and conduct research alongside leaders at the National Institute for Health (NIH) and Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, which inspired him to found Imagine Health — launching, financing and studying the impact of over 100 public health campaigns leveraging film and social media co-developed with Oscar-Emmy-Clio winning creative professionals.

His expertise as a clinician and artist will support ongoing programs including a groundbreaking event titled, “**Outside In,**” at the iconic Lincoln Center on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 that includes a call to action for guests to experience the change and be the change. Attendees will be invited to an immersive theatrical production where they will walk a mile in the shoes of a teenager on the cusp of graduation, wrestling with life's trials and expectations. This is not just another spring fundraiser; it's a movement. The Child Center of NY aims to revolutionize the public's view on mental wellness through a series of innovative and creative programming and public awareness campaigns such as the “Be There Campaign,” in partnership with Born This Way Foundation, that aims to mobilize 10,000 individuals in communities across the world to earn their Be There Certificate – a free, self-paced, interactive online mental health course.

As the Chief Innovation and Medical Officer, he will also develop an Innovation Lab that will support an Incubator Lab for the nation's most promising mental health startups, a Mentorship Program for doctor-designed, peer-powered support in local communities, and an Internship Program for those interested in the range of careers at the cross-section of mental health, media, and entertainment.

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#### **ABOUT THE CHILD CENTER OF NY**

Our mission is to strengthen children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. Founded in 1953, The Child Center is a multiservice organization that reaches over 55,000 children and families each year, ranging from birth through adulthood, at almost 70 schools and community locations. The Child Center works in six main program areas: early childhood education; behavioral health; residential treatment; prevention and family support; health homes and integrated care; and youth development. The Child Center is based primarily in Queens but also serves children and families in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan, as well as Long Island. To learn more, please visit <https://childcenterny.org>