

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU CALL FOR HELP

After an assessment is completed, there are many possible courses of action. The professionals involved will recommend the most appropriate level of support based on the information that was gathered. The various levels of support could be:

- **Counseling or Community Support Services**

Individualized services; frequency and location determined by need.

- **Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)**

A group-based therapeutic program where individual typically attends half days, or 3-5 partial days per week, a few hours per day. Depending on the program, this could be during the day or in the evening after school.

- **Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)**

Individual will be in the program during school hours, traditionally Monday-Friday. Often school work is done 1-2 hours per day.

- **Inpatient Hospitalization**

Individual will remain in the hospital program 24 hours per day. These programs are meant for stabilization, reducing risk, and improving coping skills with the goal of discharge to less intensive services listed above. Typical stays can be 2-14 days.

- **Residential Treatment**

The most intensive treatment level for youth with serious emotional and behavioral health concerns. Individuals temporarily live within a facility where they are supervised 24/7. It is a comprehensive treatment consisting of individual and group therapy, psychiatric care, family involvement, as well as integrating a structured, individualized treatment plan and schedule. Length of programs vary based on need but typically 30 days to 6 months.

SUPPORT FROM SCHOOLS

Sharing sensitive information can be difficult, but it is very helpful for your school's nurse or social worker to be aware when a student is struggling emotionally. Information shared will be kept confidential and will be used to help support the student during school hours. Important information to share includes new or adjusted medications, increased frequency of mental health symptoms, behavioral health hospitalizations, safety plans and discharge information.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to sign a release of information when their child is receiving any behavioral health treatment in order to best help the student's mental health during the school day. If a student requires inpatient hospitalization, a release of information allows the hospital to communicate with the school, request school work, and notify the school of the discharge plan. If parents/guardians have questions about services offered through their local school, they may contact the school nurse or social worker to obtain more information. This collaborative effort can provide the necessary support and resources to help students navigate their emotional challenges while attending school.

During treatment or after release, your child may have tough days. Students in Illinois are allowed up to five mental health days as excused absences from school, without the requirement of a doctor's note. Additionally, if a student requests a second mental health day, a school counselor is required to contact the family and may refer that student for professional help.

ADDITIONAL PARENT AND YOUTH RESOURCES

Looking For More Resources And Tools To Help?

The BHC's Parent and Youth Resources page offers links to local resources for youth mental health, educational seminars on improving and supporting mental wellness, and guides about navigating the often difficult landscape of youth mental health.

