

Chester County's Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services

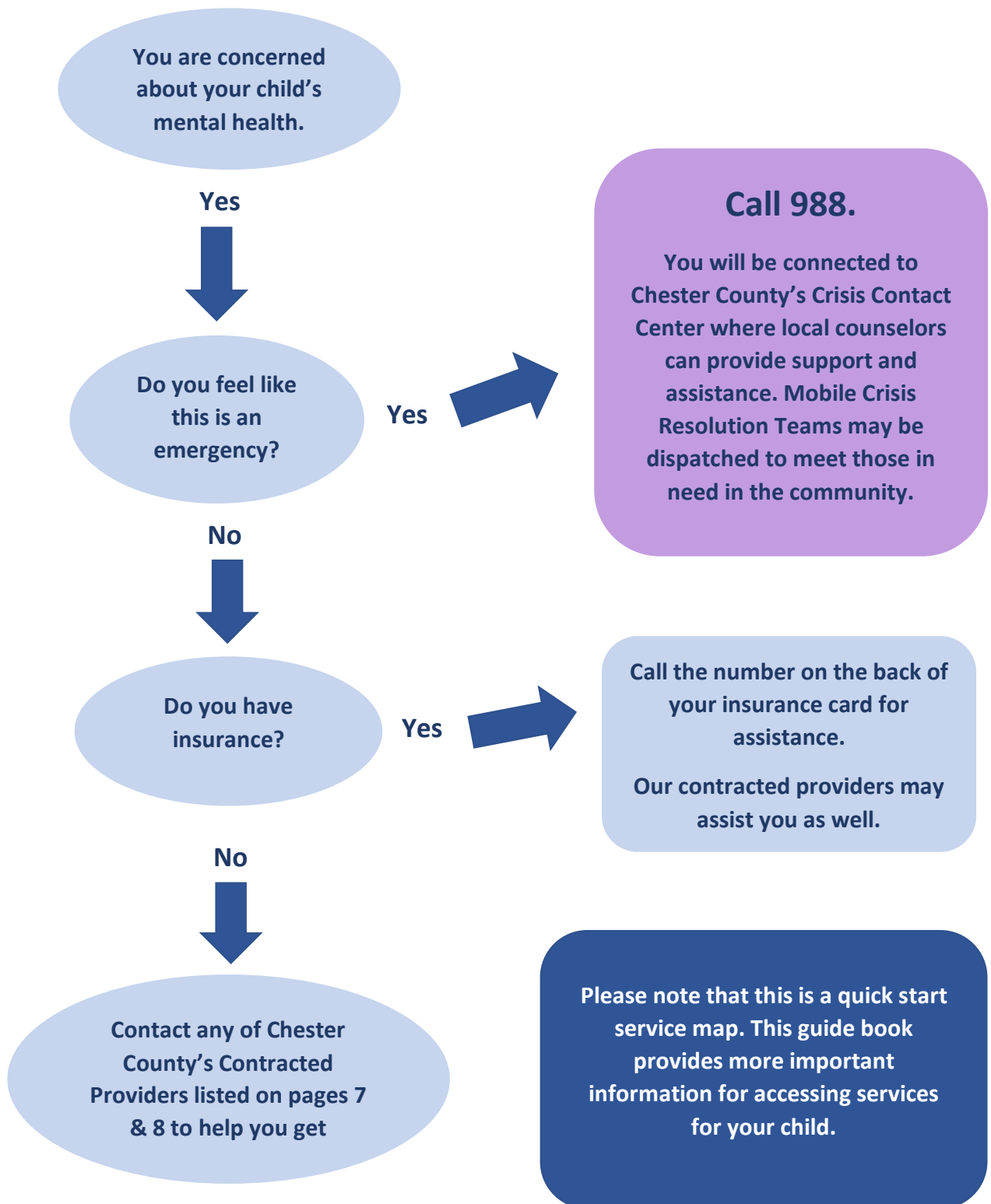


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Quick Start - Chester County Service Map



If you are concerned about your child’s mental or emotional health, there is help.

Mental and emotional health are an essential part of everyone’s overall health and well-being. Like adults, children can experience times of stress, sadness, and anxiety. That is a normal part of life. But if a child is experiencing these things for longer than a couple of weeks, and it begins to interfere with their daily activities and relationships, it is a good idea to seek professional help.

We know that accessing mental health services can be complicated and overwhelming. Currently a national workforce shortage of mental health professionals has made the process more difficult. We are here to assist and support you.

In Chester County, there are many private counseling practices and treatment centers that accept various types of insurance. There are also some practices that offer services with a sliding scale for their fees. Some practices do not accept any insurance; the fees are paid out-of-pocket. This guide can help you begin your search for the best and most-affordable care for your child.

Our office also contracts with four different agencies to provide treatment services for children who have Medical Assistance. In Pennsylvania, most children seeking mental health treatment will qualify for Medical Assistance, regardless of family income. (See page 6) We also contract with agencies to provide resources and support for families. To get started, we list five possible first steps you may take, in ***no particular order*** on the next few pages.

You are not alone!



1 Schedule an appointment with your child's pediatrician or primary care physician. Because mental and physical health are connected, it is a good idea to make sure there are no medical concerns contributing to your child's mental health concerns. Mental health conditions are common, and many physicians today have training and an understanding of the mental health of their patients. They may be able to provide support and guidance.



2 If you have medical insurance, call the number on the back of your insurance card for behavioral health services. This is often the best place to start. Your insurance company can explain your benefits and provide names and phone numbers of practices and clinicians covered by your plan.

3 If your employer offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) use that resource. You can be assured that any information you provide the EAP will not be disclosed to your employer, and having this help will take some of the work out of an already stressful situation.



4

Do a search on the Psychology Today website. This site has a comprehensive database of therapists and counselors, and you can search for clinicians in a specific area. The site includes a therapist's credentials, philosophy, and areas of expertise. It also includes headshots and occasionally a short video from the therapist for you to view. Visit www.psychologytoday.com to access the database.

5

Contact a supportive agency that can help you navigate your search and assist your family through this process. The Chester County Department of Mental Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (MH/IDD) contracts with local agencies to provide this assistance at ***no cost to families***.

- **NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)** is the country's largest grassroots non-profit dedicated to helping families affected by mental health conditions. The Chester County chapter launched in January 2023 and is located at 317 Exton Commons, Exton. NAMI provides support groups, education, and resources. You may email the office at info@namichescopa.org or visit the website at www.namichescopa.org.
- **Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health for the Student Assistance Program (SAP).** This is a state-mandated program to remove a student's barrier(s) to learning. Each public school district in Chester County has a SAP team with people who can help. In Chester County, Devereux currently provides trained SAP liaisons. For information about SAP, contact your child's school.

If your child is experiencing a mental health crisis, call 988 any time.



Chester County's Human Needs Network connects people in need with local resources, emotional support and crucial help during a suicidal crisis. Call 988 any time to connect with free, confidential assistance. Mobile Crisis Resolution Teams may be dispatched to any Chester County location personally reach those in need during a behavioral health or suicidal crisis.



Important to know!

Medical Assistance

In Pennsylvania, most children under age 19 with serious mental health needs will qualify for Medical Assistance (MA) regardless of the family income.

MA is a valuable resource for families. If you already have private health insurance, MA may be a secondary insurance that can give your family access to additional treatment options, as well as comprehensive coverage. You can apply for MA by completing the [COMPASS application](#) at the PA Department of Human Services website. Our contracted service providers listed in this guide and can also assist you in accessing benefits for which you qualify.

Individuals with MA may also check with Chester County's HealthChoices behavioral health managed care organization, [Community Care Behavioral Health](#). CCBH has contracted with additional mental health providers that accept MA and may be able help you connect with services. Visit the website with the link above or call them at **866-622-4228**.

Chester County's Contracted Mental Health Providers for Children & Adolescents

Our office contracts with 4 mental health providers, listed below. They all accept Medical Assistance (MA, see page 6), and all can serve as an entry point for receiving services. Access these provider websites with the links.

1

Creative Health Services

Pottstown: 484-941-0500

Spring City - 610-948-6490

2

Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health

Malvern - 610-933-8110

Toll free: 800-935-6789

3

Holcomb Behavioral Health Services

Exton: 610-363-1488

Kennett Square: 610-388-7400

4

Human Services, Inc.

Coatesville, Thorndale

Oxford and West Chester: 610-200-6222

Please note that there are also many privately operated mental health service providers in Chester County. Those services are not listed in this guide but may be found on the Psychology Today website (see page 5).

Sometimes we all just need someone to listen.

Chester County has a Teen Talk & Text Line



Teens are encouraged to use this free service if they are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, sad, isolated, or confused. Trained, caring young adults respond to all calls and texts during hours of operation.

For services that operate 24/7, call 988.

Call any day from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM

To talk: 855-852-TEEN

Text: 484-362-9515

Chester County Department of MH/IDD Contracts with Access Services to operate the Chester County Teen Talk and Text Line. Learn more at www.accessservices.org/services/peer-support-and-teen-talk-line

Youth Peer Support

Youth Peer Support is a non-clinical service for young people with a serious mental illness or emotional disorder. It is available to Chester County youth aged 14-18 years old.

This service is staffed by Certified Peer Specialists (CPS). A CPS is a well-trained, highly qualified individual who has their own lived experience with mental health challenges.



A Certified Peer Specialist offers the unique perspective of someone who knows that resilience is achievable, and that recovery is possible.

For more information about Peer Support Services, contact one of these providers:

- **Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health –
610-933-8110**
- **Penn Psychiatric Center –
610-917-2200**



Anyone who needs assistance with stable housing, food, healthcare, insurance, disaster relief or other basic human needs, should call Chester County's Human Needs Network at 211.



There are also new local mental health community resources available in Chester County!

**Some are contracted or supported by Chester County,
and some are private or non-profit organizations.**

See pages 16 – 18 for more information.

Outpatient Services

A person who receives services or treatment without being admitted to a hospital is receiving outpatient services.

Outpatient services may include:

1. Initial intake and evaluation

- Concerns are discussed with the mental health professional
- An initial mental health diagnosis may be provided as well as a course for treatment



2. Psychiatric evaluation

- Concerns are discussed with the psychiatrist or nurse practitioner
- The provider may recommend medication

3. Medication management

- After an initial evaluation, the practitioner will see clients to monitor progress and effectiveness of medication
- Most medication check appointments are about 15 minutes long

4. Talk therapy

- The process of working through thoughts, beliefs, behaviors, and emotions
- While mostly occurring individually between therapist and client, services may be provided as group or family therapy
- Success for talk therapy is highly dependent on the relationship with the therapist.

**There are different types of providers for outpatient services.
They may include:**

- **Psychiatrists are medical doctors who specialize in mental health. They prescribe psychiatric medication.**
- **Nurse Practitioners are nurses who have education and clinical training beyond their R.N. training. They offer a wide range of acute, primary or specialty care and can also prescribe psychiatric medication.**

Other mental health professionals trained to help individuals, couples, families overcome behavioral and mental health challenges include:

- **Psychologists**
- **Licensed Professional Counselors**
- **Licensed Clinical Social Workers**
- **Master's Level Therapists**

**It can take time to find the right
mental health service provider for
your child.**

**Don't give up! The time you spend
will be worth the effort.**

Therapy can be life changing!



Outpatient Services from Our Contracted Providers

Children who have qualified for Medical Assistance (see page 6) may be eligible for other types of specialized service. Here are some that may be considered.

- **Blended Case Management (BCM)**

This service offers support in connection to mental and behavioral support services and a coordination of resources to help families with education, healthcare, social skills and more.

- **Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS)**

This more intensive service may take place in a youth's home, school, or community. Individual and group services as well as applied behavior analysis may be included.

- **Family Based Mental Health Services**

The goal of Family Based service is to keep children and youth who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral challenges in their home setting. Service often takes place for several hours weekly for approximately 32 weeks.



Additional Services from Contracted Providers

Contact Providers with links and phone numbers on page 7.

Creative Health Services

Substance Abuse and Addiction

Comprehensive addiction treatment, including co-occurring mental health conditions.

Sibling Support Workshops

Opportunities for siblings of children with special health needs to connect with others in similar situations. Participants learn how their siblings experience the world, make new friends, and have fun.

SAFE for Children

Stop Abuse Foster Empowerment is a 12-week program for children exposed to domestic abuse.

Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health

DBT

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy combines standard cognitive behavioral techniques with teaching coping skills and mindful awareness. It is effective for treating personality disorders.

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

This therapy teaches skills to young people who have experienced trauma to assist with challenging emotions and behaviors.

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy/Intensive Family Coaching

An evidence-based practice for 2-7-year-olds who are experiencing disruptive behaviors.

**Contact any of Chester County's contracted providers
(See page 7) to learn more about these services, obtain an
assessment, and determine if there is a therapeutic need.**

Respite Services

Caring for a child with a mental health diagnosis can be exhausting and hard on a family. Respite care can help. This service provides free short-term temporary care to increase the wellness of the family and give caregivers a break.



To receive respite services, children (aged 3-21) must be referred by a mental health service provider or other professional. Families who meet eligibility requirements may receive respite for a period of 3 months.

We contract with Child & Family Focus to provide this service. Learn more about eligibility requirements and the service at the website.

www.childandfamilyfocus.org.

Other Services from Child & Family Focus

On My Way

This is a coordinated specialty care approach for children and young adults who have experienced their first episode of psychosis. The program aims to improve the quality of life for the young person by providing encouragement, support and education to guide recovery. It offers an array of services, including low-dose medication management, individual and group therapy, and family education. Use the links or call **(610) 650-7750** for more information.

Children's Review Team

This team assists Chester County residents who are considering placing their child in out-of-home placement. The team works with other child-serving systems to ensure collaboration, and advocates for the child and family's needs.

Anyone can make a referral for these services. [Visit the website for information](#)

Inpatient Services - Hospitalization

If someone is experiencing a mental health crisis, hospitalization may be necessary for safety. This may be a difficult and scary time, but inpatient care can be lifesaving and it is usually short-term.

Chester County strives to ensure that children, youth, and their families receive continuity of care from the time of the initial crisis and aftercare support by working with our service providers and our county's school districts.

Partial Hospitalization

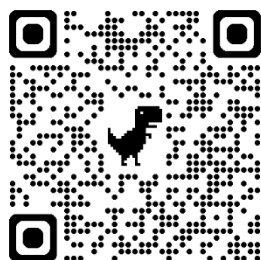
Individuals continue to reside at home for this type of hospitalization. Patients commute to a daytime program that provides individual therapy, group sessions, medication management and educational support. Your treatment provider, or one of our contracted providers, can help with decisions on this type of treatment and finding a partial program.

Acute Inpatient Hospitalization

Inpatient psychiatric hospitals are locked facilities to keep patients safe and supported while working to stabilize behaviors and emotions. These hospitalizations are generally short-term and focus on stabilization.

Information about [what to expect with an inpatient hospitalization](#) is available on the Mental Health America website. Mental Health America is a national non-profit dedicated to the promotion of mental health, wellbeing, and illness prevention. You can find additional resources at the site as well. Mhanational.org

If you need assistance with transport to the hospital, Chester County's Mobile Crisis Resolution Teams may help. Call 988 any time. Use the QR code below to see the Chester County's Human Needs Network website.



Community Resources

When you are helping a loved one with a mental health concern or condition, it's important to take care of yourself! There are many helpful resources and programs available in Chester County. Some of these are contracted or supported by our office, and some are private non-profit organizations.



Knowledge Is Power!

Learn to recognize, understand, and respond to mental health or substance use challenges in adults and children with a **Mental Health First Aid** class.

Chester County offers this national certification course for community members at no cost to participants. A schedule of classes and registration information is at **our website** under the Training tab.

Chester County ACEs Coalition

ACEs stands for Adverse Childhood Experiences. This can include various types of abuse, neglect or other trauma that occurs before the age of 18. ACEs can have a profound impact on a person's life-long mental and physical health. The county's ACEs Coalition increases awareness, understanding and prevention strategies for trauma and toxic stress through free trainings and awareness events. Visit www.ccacescoalition.com to learn more about ACEs, the impact and what the coalition is doing in Chester County.

NAMI Chester County (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

NAMI the country's largest grassroots non-profit dedicated to helping families affected by mental health conditions. The Chester County chapter launched in January 2023 and is located in Exton. NAMI provides support groups, education, and resources. You may email the office at info@namichescopa.org or visit the website at www.namichescopa.org.

Community Resources, Continued

Chester County Suicide Prevention Partnership (CCSPP)

This organization works to prevent suicide in Chester County through awareness and education. CCSPP works with the Chester County Intermediate Unit to deliver the national QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide prevention training to ninth graders in most local school districts. The Partnership also offers these trainings to the community at no cost. Visit the website at www.chestercountysuicideprevention.com for information about the group and classes.

Let's Talk About It at 953 WCHE

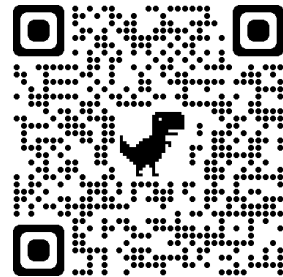
This local radio show airs each Thursday from 11:30 – noon and covers any and all aspects of mental health and wellness. Hosts from the Chester County Departments of Health and Mental Health, as well as the Chester County Intermediate Unit, discuss trauma and suicide prevention, among other topics.

Local resources and guests from non-profit agencies are highlighted. Podcasts are available at wche1520.com.



Minding Your Health Monthly Newsletter

Stay connected and learn about new programs related to mental health and wellness with this free electronic newsletter published by the Chester County's Office of Mental Health. Use the QR code here to subscribe.



Children with Medical Assistance (MA)

Visit the Health Choices / Community Care Behavioral Health website to find out more about the support and services they provide.

www.ccbh.com or call for member services at 1-866-622-4228

These independent organizations offer support and services for Chester County residents, usually at no or low cost.

1. Grief Support

- [Peter's Place](#) in Radnor
- [A Haven](#) in Exton

2. Community Health/Mental Health Services

- [Project Healing Hive](#) free drop-in wellness center in Phoenixville
- [Maternal and Child Health Consortium](#) for prenatal and parenting families and support for postpartum depression
- [Seeds of Hope](#) has treatment for eating disorders. Ages 13 and up and takes most insurance.

3. Family Support

- [NAMI Chester County](#) – See pages 5 & 16
- [Learning Life Skills Together](#) is a free online program that includes weekly community meetings, informative podcasts, videos and many mental health resources for families and others who work with youth. This program was created by the West Chester University Center for Contemplative Studies and Senator Carolyn Comitta. Coming in Spanish.

4. Support through schools

- Student Assistance Programs (SAP) in every Chester County public high school, see pg. 5
- [Aavidum](#) – school-based clubs promoting mental wellbeing

5. Sliding Scale Services

- [Family Services of Chester County](#) non-profit counseling center
- [Community Mental Health Services](#) from West Chester University

6. LGBTQI+ Resources

- [LGBT Equality Alliance](#) of Chester County
- Pride Squad Support Group at Tranquil Solutions in Downingtown - contact daltemus@tscllc.org
- [South Eastern PA Trans-Parents Support Group](#) for parents with Transgender children
- [Devereux LGBTQ Teen Group](#) meets virtually on Mondays

7. Spanish Speaking Resources

- [LCH](#) health and social services center in Kennett Square

Self-Care Is Essential

Self-care is the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own mental and / or physical health. In today's world, self-care is necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle – even for children and adolescents!

While everyone benefits from basic self-care practices – enough sleep, healthy diet, and some exercise – other practices are very individualized. Self-care is definitely not the same for everyone.



Here are some steps to help you and / or your child begin:

- 1. Reflect on things that help you de-stress, feel calm or cared for. Even simple acts, like listening to music you enjoy or stepping outside for a breath of fresh air help.**
- 2. Consider other, more deliberate practices, such as yoga, meditation or writing in a gratitude journal. These are just a few examples of things you can try.**
- 3. Start slowly! As you become comfortable with your self-care routine, you may want to add more practices.**
- 4. Remember that making lifestyle changes can be hard, so give yourself credit for even small positive actions.**

These tips can be helpful when you are waiting for an appointment with a mental health professional.

You may also call the Chester County Department of MH/IDD. Although our office does not provide direct care, we are here for you!

We can provide information and guidance.

Call during business hours at 610-344-6640