

**How Are
These Services
Paid For?**

- Medicaid will cover the majority of services listed.
- Private insurance will cover office-based therapy.
- There is a sliding fee scale for those with no insurance.

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**What Every Family
Should Know
About
Social/Emotional/
Behavioral Needs
For Children**



Every child's mental health is important.

Emotional/behavioral problems in children are real, painful, and can be severe.

The children you love and care for may be fine, but it's important that you know the warning signs of possible problems.

This brochure will tell you what to look for and where you can get help.

Mental Health Problems are Real

It's easy for parents to recognize that their child has a high fever.

Children's mental health problems may be more difficult to identify. Mental health problems can't be seen, but the symptoms can be recognized.

Mental health is how we think, feel and act in order to face life's situations. It is how we look at ourselves, our lives, and the people we know and care about. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, evaluate our options, and make choices.

Like physical health, mental health is important at every stage of life.

Many children have mental health problems. Preliminary studies suggest that, at any given time, at least 1 in 5 children may have a behavioral, emotional or mental health problem. At least 1 in 20 children—or as many as 3 million young people nationwide—may have a serious emotional disturbance that severely disrupts his or her ability to function. Without help, these problems can lead to school failure, alcohol or other drug abuse, family discord, violence or even suicide.

Tragically, an estimated two-thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not getting the help they need.

We don't know all the causes of mental health problems in young people. We do know that both environment and biology can be involved. Examples of biological causes are genetics, chemical imbalances and damage to the central nervous system.

Many environmental factors can put children at risk. For example, children who are exposed to violence, abuse, neglect, lead poisoning or loss of loved ones through death, divorce, or broken relationships are more at risk for mental health problems. Other risk factors include rejection because of race, sexual orientation, religion or poverty.

Know the Warning Signs

A variety of signs may point to a possible mental health problem in a child or teenager. Some of them are listed below. Pay attention if a child you know:

Is troubled by feeling:

- Really sad and hopeless without good reason and the feelings don't go away;
- Very angry most of the time, cries a lot, or overreacts to things;
- Worthless or guilty a lot;
- Anxious or worried a lot more than other young people;
- Grief for a long time after a loss or death;
- Extremely fearful—has unexplained fears or more fears than most kids;
- Constantly concerned about physical problems or appearance;
- Frightened that his or her mind is controlled or is out of control;

Experiences big changes, for example:

- Does much worse in school;
- Loses interest in things usually enjoyed;
- Has unexplained changes in sleeping or eating habits;
- Avoids friends or family and wants to be alone all the time; daydreams too much and can't get things done;
- Feels life is too hard to handle or talks about suicide;
- Hears voices that cannot be explained.

Is limited by:

- Poor concentration; can't make decisions;
- Inability to sit still or focus attention;
- Worry about being harmed, hurting others, or about doing something "bad";
- The need to wash, clean things, or perform certain routines dozens of times a day;
- Thoughts that race almost too fast to follow;
- Persistent nightmares

Behaves in ways that cause problems, for example:

- Uses alcohol or other drugs;
- Eats large amounts of food and then forces vomiting, abuses laxatives or takes enemas to avoid weight gain;
- Continues to diet or exercise obsessively although bone-thin;
- Often hurts other people or animals; destroys property or breaks the law;



How Can We Help You?

Call 388-6751 to set up and appointment with our Youth and Family intake clinicians in Middlebury.

Our intake clinicians will meet with you and your child to collect information about the challenges you are facing.

You will be referred to one of our programs that best meets your child's and family's needs.