



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
www.mass.gov/masshealth

Important Notice about MassHealth Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youths under Age 21

MassHealth has made many improvements to behavioral health services for children and youths under 21. These changes include better ways to screen and test for problems. They also include many new behavioral health services that can treat mental health and substance abuse issues that may be affecting your child.

Well-Child Checkups

It's important for children, teens, and young adults to see their primary care doctor or nurse for regular checkups. "Well-child" checkups help children and youth stay healthy. They find small problems early before they become bigger. MassHealth pays for children and youths under 21 to see their primary care doctor or nurse for well-child visits at least once every year and more often if the child is under two years. At these visits, the doctor or nurse will check your child's health, development, need for immunizations, dental health, and behavioral health.

Behavioral Health Screening

During well-child visits, your child's doctor or nurse will offer to use a screening tool to check your child's behavioral health. This is a short list of questions that you, your teen, or a young adult fills out and then talks about with the doctor or nurse. If there are concerns about your child's behavioral health, your child's doctor or nurse will work with you to decide if more care is needed. If you decide that your child needs more care, the doctor or nurse can help you get services. You do not need a referral for the services. For more information, call your child's MassHealth health care plan. Telephone numbers are listed at the end of this notice.

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Tool

Behavioral health providers can be doctors, nurses, social workers, and counselors. If your child sees a behavioral health provider, MassHealth requires them to use the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool. The CANS tool helps the provider learn about your child's strengths and needs. The provider will write down and save important information gathered from the first visit or visits. It also helps you and the provider plan your child's treatment and watch his or her progress. Ask your child's behavioral health provider to tell you more about the CANS tool.

MassHealth Behavioral Health Services

MassHealth and the MassHealth health care plans pay for many new or improved behavioral services for children and youths under age 21. In these services, parents play a strong and active role in their child's treatment.

Outpatient Therapy*

If this is the first time your child is getting help, then outpatient therapy may be the best place to begin. A counselor will meet with you and your child to

- find out your child's needs and strengths;
- make a plan to help your child; and
- help your child get any other needed services.

In-Home Therapy*

If your child's behavior is making daily life hard for the family, then in-home therapy may be right for your child and family. Counselors work with your whole family, helping you as a parent to help your child. In-home therapy can help your child and family to

- resolve conflicts;
- learn new ways to do things;
- make new routines;
- set limits; and
- find community resources.

Intensive Care Coordination (ICC)

ICC is for children and youths with a serious emotional disturbance. ICC helps to get all the adults in your child's life to work together. In ICC, a Care Coordinator helps you bring together the main adults in your child's life so that everyone is working together to help your child. You choose who is on your team, including professionals (therapists, social workers, teachers) and your personal supports (friends or relatives). You may also ask for a "Family Partner," a parent trained to make sure your voice is heard. Together, the team will help you and your child reach your goals for your family.

Children and youths get ICC services through Community Service Agencies, or CSAs. There are 32 CSAs located throughout Massachusetts. There are three CSAs chosen for their special skill serving Black, Latino, and deaf and hard of hearing children and youths.

Mobile Crisis Intervention*

Mobile crisis intervention is for when your child is having a crisis and needs help right away. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A trained team will come to your home, a school, or other place in the community to help your child with the crisis. The team will also help you get other services for your child and family.

If your child gets outpatient therapy, in-home therapy, or intensive care coordination and needs more help, he or she may also be able to get the following services.

In-Home Behavioral Services

Sometimes a child will do something over and over that bothers other people or harms the child. If it is hard to get the child to act differently, a therapist will work with you and others in your child's life to try new ways to help your child change these behaviors.

Therapeutic Mentors

Some children want to get along with others, but need help and practice learning to talk or act in new ways. A therapeutic mentor will go with your child to the places where your child has the most trouble and teach him or her new skills, such as better ways to talk or act with other children and adults.

Family Support and Training (Family Partners)

Do you need support? Family Partners help parents and caregivers help their children reach their treatment goals. They are parents or caregivers of children with special needs – they’ve “been there,” understand what families go through and can share their experiences. Family Partners are not behavioral health professionals, but work closely with parents to help them get the services their children need.

For questions and more information, talk to your child’s primary care doctor or nurse or your child’s behavioral health provider, or call your child’s MassHealth managed care plan’s Customer Service number. The phone numbers are listed below.

MassHealth Health Plans - Customer Service Telephone Numbers

- **Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan (BMCHP)**
1-888-566-0010 (English and other languages); 1-888-566-0012 (Spanish) (TTY: 1-800-421-1220)
- **Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP)**
1-800-341-4848 (TTY: 1-877-608-7677)
- **Health New England (HNE)**
1-800-786-9999 (TTY: 1-800-439-2370)
- **Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP)**
1-800-462-5449 (TTY: 1-800-655-1761)
- **Network Health**
1-888-257-1985 (TTY: 1-888-391-5535)
- **Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Plan**
1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648)
- **Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership**
1-800-495-0086 (TTY: 617-790-4130)

Not sure which health plan your child has? Call MassHealth Customer Service to find out: 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648).

** Children and youths under 21 on MassHealth Family Assistance, Basic, or Essential who are enrolled in managed care may be able to get this service if it is medically necessary. Children and youths on MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth can get **any** service that is medically necessary.*