

Mental Health – Children and Youth

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In this document, you’ll find sections on

- [Resources to Support Children](#)
- [Resources to Support Adolescents and Young Adults](#)
- [Resources to Support LGBTQ+ Youth](#)
- [Resources to Support Parents and Caregivers](#)
- [Emergency Services and Crisis Support](#)
- [Family Resource Centers](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Information on Insurance and Internet](#)

Handhold



The [Handhold website](#) is designed to help guide parents in caring for their child’s mental health and emotional wellbeing. It has tools and resources to help parents figure out how to best support their child in this difficult time.

Resources to Support Children

RESOURCE	DETAILS
<p>Children’s Emotional Health Resources</p>	<p>Massachusetts General Hospital offers resources on topics including recognizing young people’s concerns, discussing information in age-appropriate ways, and modeling coping skills. The page is also available in Spanish.</p> <p>Child Trends has a compilation of resources for children’s emotional wellbeing as well as tips for caregivers and parents.</p> <p>The DBSA Mood Crew is a resource designed to help children ages 4 to 10 recognize and discuss their feelings. The program may be especially valuable for young ones who are having a tough time with emotions.</p> <p>McLean released a pre-recorded webinar on Mindfulness for Kids & Teens and How Mindfulness Helps Families Cope with Stress.</p>
<p>For Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</p>	<p>The current situation may be particularly difficult for children with ASD and their families. The Autism Spectrum Center at Boston Children’s Hospital has information and resources to help support children with autism and their caregivers during COVID-19.</p> <p>Visit the Autism Insurance Resource Center’s page for information on telehealth and health insurance coverage.</p>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

Resources to Support Adolescents and Young Adults

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Phone and Online Chat	<p>Your Life Your Voice (aka the Boys Town National Hotline – services available to all genders) is staffed by specially trained counselors. Spanish-speaking counselors and translation services for more than 100 languages also are available 24 hours a day. Call Toll-Free: 1-800-448-3000 (24/7) Text VOICE to 20121 (every day, 1 PM – 1 AM ET) People with speech or hearing impairments: hotline@boystown.org</p> <p>Teen Line is also available if you have a problem or just want to talk with another teen who understands. Call: 1-310-855-4673 Text TEEN to 839863 Visit the Teen Line Message Board</p>
OK2TALK	<p>OK2TALK is a community where teens and young adults with mental health conditions can share their personal stories. Anyone can share stories, poems, inspirational quotes, photos, videos, song lyrics and messages of support in a safe, moderated space.</p>
Peer Support	<p>Department of Mental Health Access Centers provide peer support to adolescents and young adults. Access Centers are open to all members of the community and no registration, referral, or insurance is required. Contact your local access center for details on current services available, including virtual support options.</p>
Youth MOVE Massachusetts	<p>Youth MOVE Massachusetts is a youth-led organization devoted to improving services and systems that support positive growth and development by uniting the voices of individuals who have lived experience in various systems.</p>
Emotional Health Resources for Adolescents and Young Adults	<p>The Jed Foundation’s Mental Health Resource Center provides information about common emotional health issues and shows teens and young adults how they can support one another.</p> <p>Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development and Medway Public Schools have developed a course for teens with six tips for managing stress.</p> <p>Mindfulness: A Young Adult’s Guide to Meditation is a free interactive guide developed to help young adults learn or practice meditation and mindfulness skills.</p> <p>The Boston Globe published a helpful article, “In the rush to resume normalcy, don’t overlook your teenager’s mental health,” which includes five things parents should keep in mind to support their teenager’s mental health as they adjust to the new normal.</p>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

Resources to Support LGBTQ+ Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
The Trevor Project	If you are a young person in crisis, feeling suicidal, or in need of a safe and judgment-free place, contact The Trevor Project . 1-866-488-7386 (<i>talk, 24/7</i>) Text START to 678678 (<i>text, 24/7</i>) http://www.thetrevorproject.org/ (<i>online chat, 24/7</i>)
LGBT National Youth Talkline	The LGBT National Youth Talkline offers free and confidential peer support for the LGBTQ and questioning community ages 25 and younger. 1-800-246-7743 (<i>talk, Monday to Friday from 4 pm – midnight, and Saturday from noon – 5 pm</i>) Email: help@LGBThotline.org
Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth	The Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth has a list of resources for LGBTQIA+ Youth which includes links to resources on many topics including financial relief, social connection, mental health, education, housing, and many more.
Out MetroWest	Out MetroWest hosts a variety of free online meetings for LGBTQ+, trans and gender expansive, and allied youth in grades 6-12. Visit their website to learn more about their programs.

Resources to Support Parents and Caregivers

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Online Information on Parenting and Mental Health Concerns	The Handhold website is designed to help guide parents in caring for their child’s mental health and emotional wellbeing. It has tools and resources to help parents figure out how to best support their child. Effective Child Therapy provides parents and other caregivers with information on the symptoms and treatments of behavioral and mental health concerns in children and adolescents. Created by the Children's Trust, onetoughjob.org connects parents in Massachusetts with parenting information, resources, and connections to other parents who have asked the same questions and faced similar challenges. The CDC has a COVID-19 hub for children and families .
Tips and Resources for Parenting During COVID-19	William James College offers numerous resources for parents and other caregivers , including virtual support groups and an audio series on managing anxiety. Mental Health America also has caregiver guides to help families cope during COVID-19. The Child Mind Institute hosts a Parenting in the Time of Coronavirus Facebook group to support and connect parents and caretakers with tips and advice. They also have a webpage for parents with links to articles, resources, and daily tips for parenting during COVID-19.

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Parental Stress Line	The Parental Stress Line is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Services are free and confidential. Interpreter services are available. Call 1-800-632-8188 for support, someone to talk to, and help to plan what to do next.
Virtual Support Groups	<p>PPAL offers virtual support groups for parents and caregivers across Massachusetts. The groups are facilitated by someone who has raised or is raising a child with behavioral health needs.</p> <p>Parents Helping Parents of Massachusetts offers supportive, non-judgmental, and confidential support groups. You may join a group meeting by using the Zoom app or dialing in by phone.</p> <p>NAMI Massachusetts maintains information about online and call-in support groups for caregivers during COVID-19.</p>

Emergency Services and Crisis Support

If someone is experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please call 9-1-1.

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Mobile Crisis Intervention Teams	<p>If a child or an adolescent is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, Mobile Crisis Intervention (MCI) is available to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.</p> <p>Call 1-877-382-1609 and enter your zip code. You will receive the phone number for the provider that serves your area.</p> <p>MCI services are available to youth who are covered by MassHealth or who are uninsured. If you have a different health plan, you still may be able to get MCI services. You can call 1-877-382-1609 to learn more.</p>
Navigating a Mental Health Crisis	<p>The National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Massachusetts offers guidance on how to navigate a mental health crisis that either you or someone you support is experiencing.</p> <p>PPAL created these lists of resources to support youth and their families during a mental health crisis. They also have a version for transition-age youth (ages 16-22) and their families.</p> <p>Transitions ACR has a guide for creating a family safety plan so that you can help prepare your family members before a crisis occurs.</p>

Family Resource Centers



[Family Resource Centers](#) provide parent education programs, youth and parent support groups, early childhood services, information and referral, educational support, and cultural events for families with children ages 0-18.

Mental Health – Children and Youth

FAQs

My child needs behavioral health care but has not received care in the past. How can I access care right now?

If your child is new to the behavioral health system, you can start exploring behavioral health services through the [Network of Care website](#). Another great resource is [Handhold](#), which features tools and resources designed to help parents figure out how to best to support their child. You can also contact your child’s pediatrician for guidance about what behavioral health services might be best for your child.

My child is receiving outpatient mental health services or Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI) services. Can they continue to receive these services?

Outpatient mental health remains available through telehealth if your provider is not offering in-person care. It is best to be in touch with your provider for specific information on the services they are offering during the COVID-19 response. PPAL created a [guide to telehealth appointments](#) to make the visits work best for your child and your family.

CBHI services (Therapeutic Mentoring, In-Home Behavioral Services, In-Home Therapy, Family Partner) are still being offered either through home-based care or telehealth services. Contact your provider to find out how they will be providing care during this time. [Click here for specific information from MassHealth](#) about accessing home and community-based services.

Most insurance plans are covering telehealth services (visits by phone or video). Please contact your health plan for specific questions about telehealth coverage. If you are concerned about your ability to access the internet, scroll down to the [internet section](#) of this document for information about companies offering support.

Information on Insurance and Internet

TOPIC	RESOURCE LINKS
Insurance Information	MassHealth Massachusetts Health Connector Group Insurance Commission Private Insurance: please visit your insurer’s website Behavioral Health Child and Adolescent (BHCA) Benefit
Telephone and Internet Connectivity	Information about how broadband and telephone providers are responding during COVID-19.