

Mental Health – Children and Youth

Last Updated: February 25, 2021 at 11:15 AM EST

In this document, you’ll find sections on

- [School and Remote Education Resources](#)
- [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](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Information on Insurance and Internet](#)

School and Remote Education Resources

RESOURCE	DETAILS
<p>For Parents and Families of Young Children</p>	<p>MassAIMH has several resources and tip sheets to help prepare young children and early education providers to reopen.</p> <p>Office of the Child Advocate has also created COVID-19 tip sheets in multiple languages for Early Childhood Educators to support children and early childhood educators during reopening.</p>
<p>For Parents and Families of Children and Youth of All Ages</p>	<p>Several organizations have created lists of resources to support families including the Child Mind Institute, NAMI Mass, and the CDC.</p> <p>Mental Health America has created this fact sheet to help teachers and parents work together to make distance learning work. Remote learning can be especially hard for kids with attention issues, and the Child Mind Institute has tips for supporting kids with ADHD during COVID-19.</p> <p>The MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created a back to school website specifically designed to provide guidance on school reopening and FAQs about this school year. They also compiled a list of educational resources for students and families to support learning during remote or hybrid learning.</p> <p>Families in Schools has created a list of Coronavirus Learning Resources for Families with educational resources for all ages. They also have resources available in Spanish.</p>
<p>Advocating for Special Education Services During COVID-19</p>	<p>The Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids (MHAP 4 Kids) at Health Law Advocates developed this fact sheet and toolkit to help ensure children receive needed services during COVID-19. MHAP 4 Kids and the Children’s Mental Health Campaign also hosted a Lunch and Learn on Advocating for Special Education Students.</p> <p>The Federation for Children with Special Needs offers information to help parents and families plan for this school year.</p> <p>Educating All Learners has developed a resource library to support equity for all learners during COVID-19.</p>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Advocating for Special Education Services During COVID-19 (continued)	<p>Massachusetts Advocates for Children runs an education helpline, hosts weekly chats, and maintains a special education resource page to help families during COVID-19.</p> <p>The Child Mind Institute has a helpful article about how to modify an IEP or 504 for distance or hybrid learning. A Parent’s Guide to Virtual Learning from the National Center for Learning Disabilities also has information about supporting your child during virtual learning.</p>
For Teens and Young Adults	<p>The Temple University Collaborative has a Back to Campus Planning Guide that provides helpful tips for college students with mental health conditions, including considerations for remote, in-person, and hybrid learning formats.</p> <p>Mental Health America has created fact sheets on how to maintain your social relationships during online school, what to do when you are missing how things used to be, and a worksheet to help you deal with tough situations.</p> <p>iSPARC has put together a guide for Finishing College Classes During COVID-19. TransitionsACR also has a recorded webinar providing tools and strategies to students with mental health conditions who are attending courses from home.</p>

Resources to Support Children

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Talking to Your Child About National News	<p>Child Mind Institute created this helpful Instagram post with direction on how to talk to kids about the attack on the Capitol and how to help them deal with any anxiety they may be feeling.</p> <p>CNN Health also published an article with 10 tips for talking to your kids about the attack on the US Capitol.</p> <p>Tips for Parents on Media Coverage from the National Traumatic Stress Network.</p>
Talking to Your Child About COVID-19	<p>Talking with Children: Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teacher during Infectious Disease Outbreaks provides information about how to support children of all ages (0 to 19). It is also available in Spanish.</p> <p>Zero to Three, MA Association for Infant Mental Health, and Sesame Street provide tips on answering questions that young children may have about COVID-19 and the changes happening around them.</p> <p>The Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Massachusetts and the Harvard Graduate School of Education have resources to help youth develop skills for managing anxiety and coping with COVID-19.</p> <p>COVIBOOK is a book for children that explains the virus and how to protect yourself. It is available in 19 languages.</p>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
<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 Child Mind Institute and the Autism Spectrum Center at Boston Children’s Hospital have information and resources to help support children with autism and their caregivers during COVID-19.</p> <p>Visit the Autism Insurance Resource Center’s Facebook page for information on telehealth and health insurance coverage.</p>
<p>Children’s Emotional Health Resources</p>	<p>Click for resources from the Children’s Mental Health Campaign, including information on how to access behavioral health services.</p> <p>Massachusetts General Hospital has compiled resources on topics including recognizing young people’s concerns, discussing information in age-appropriate ways, and modeling coping skills.</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 National Institute of Mental Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have resources in English and Spanish to help parents and caregivers support children cope and overcome experiences of disasters and trauma.</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>

Resources to Support Adolescents and Young Adults

RESOURCE	DETAILS
<p>Phone and Online Chat</p>	<p>Your Life Your Voice (also known as 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.</p> <p>Call Toll-Free: 1-800-448-3000 (24/7)</p> <p>Text VOICE to 20121 (every day, 1 PM – 1 AM ET)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Call: 1-310-855-4673</p> <p>Text TEEN to 839863</p> <p>Visit the Teen Line Message Board</p>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
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 virtual peer support to adolescents and young adults.</p> <p>The Zia Young Adult Access Center provides phone and online peer support for young adults ages 16-22. All peer support is free and is intended to be accessible (no registration, referral, or insurance).</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 NAN Project has compiled this Resource Guide for Young Adults to offer a range of strategies and supports for managing the stress and anxiety that many are experiencing during this time. The Crisis Text Line also has a helpful tips on how to cope and deal with isolation.</p> <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. They also have a COVID-19 Resource Guide for Students, Teens, & Young Adults with resources specific to navigating these challenging times.</p> <p>Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development in partnership with Medway Public Schools has developed a course for teens with six tips for managing stress.</p> <p>Just for Teens page from PIN has curated information to support teens and college students during COVID-19.</p> <p>Teen Mental Health is a website designed to help teens learn more about mental health, the challenges that many teenagers face, and how to get through them.</p> <p>The MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness has an eight-part webinar series called, “Let’s Talk! Supporting Asian and Asian American Students Through COVID-19.”</p> <p>Mental Health Support for Athletes & Students during COVID-19 and Beyond is a collection of online modules that provide tools and support for middle school, high school, or college students who may be struggling right now.</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>

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
Handhold	Handhold 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.
Effective Child Therapy	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.
One Tough Job	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.
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.
Family Resource Centers (FRCs)	Family Resource Centers provide parent education programs, youth and parent support groups, early childhood services, information and referral, educational support, and cultural events.

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
Virtual Support Groups	<p>PPAL offers virtual support groups for parents and caregivers across Massachusetts. The groups are, for the most part, facilitated by someone who has raised or is raising a child with emotional, behavioral or mental 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>
Providing Foster Care During COVID-19	<p>The Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children maintains resources for foster parents during COVID-19.</p>
Tips and Resources for Parenting During COVID-19	<p>William James College offers numerous resources for parents and other caregivers, including virtual support groups and an audio series on managing anxiety.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The National Child Traumatic Stress Network and Mental Health America both have caregiver guides to help families cope during COVID-19.</p> <p>The University of Maryland School of Social Work put together a vlog series on caregiver self-regulation, children’s responses to stress, fighting between siblings, and when to seek help.</p> <p>Transitions ACR’s Family Advisory Board created Parents Chime In: a tip sheet sharing self-care strategies for parents and caregivers supporting loved ones with mental health conditions.</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>

Mental Health – Children and Youth

RESOURCE	DETAILS
<p>Navigating a Mental Health Crisis</p>	<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>

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. Where appropriate, [MassHealth will also cover initial assessments via telephone](#). 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 during this time.

Most insurance plans are covering telehealth services (visits by phone or video). Please contact your health plan for specific questions about telehealth coverage. [MassHealth will continue to offer enhanced access to telehealth](#) for its members at least through March 31, 2021. 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.

I was getting care through my college or university. How do I continue treatment if I will be learning remotely?

You can continue treatment using telehealth (care over the phone or video). During the COVID-19 response, all licensed nurses, social workers, psychologists, and medical doctors can use telemedicine across state lines for established patients who are enrolled in a Massachusetts college or university. [Click here to read the Governor’s order about providing telemedicine to established college students](#).

Mental Health – Children and Youth

Information on Insurance and Internet

TOPIC	RESOURCE LINKS
Insurance Information	<p> MassHealth Massachusetts Health Connector Group Insurance Commission Private Insurance: please visit your insurer’s website Behavioral Health Child and Adolescent (BHCA) Benefit </p>
Telephone and Internet Connectivity	<p> Options for free or low-cost wireless and Wi-Fi are listed here. Here is additional information about how broadband and telephone providers are responding during COVID-19. Comcast is offering affordable internet options for eligible households. </p>