

## Specialized Services

### Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) — for Autism

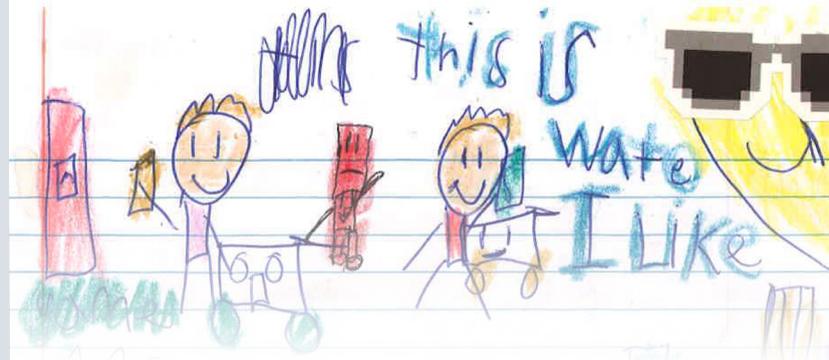
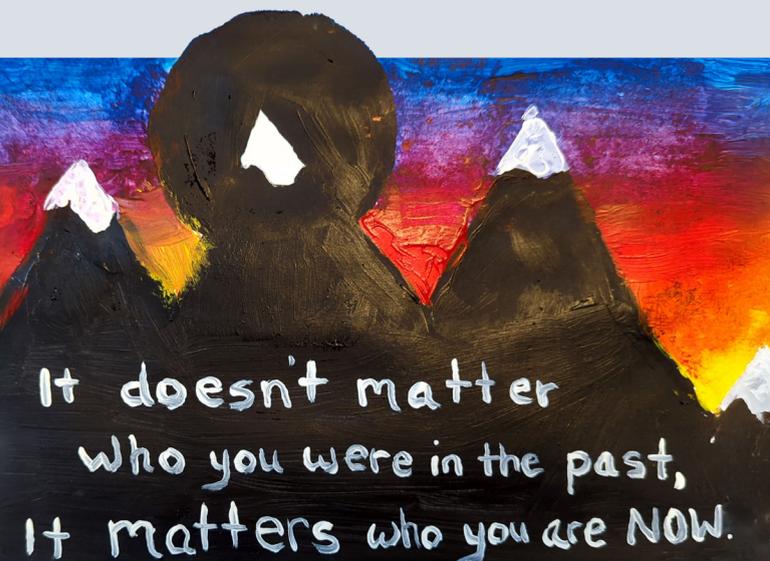
- **Applied Behavioral Analysis** is a service that helps children who have autism spectrum disorder, and their families, to increase skills such as language, communication, social skills, and positive behaviors useful for daily activities. A Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst (LABA) and a behavior technician/paraprofessional develop a behavior plan and work closely with the youth and caregiver in the home or a clinic-based setting. **Note:** As of 1/1/26 this service is available to youth with Down syndrome. Find information about ABA on the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Access (MABHA) website at: [www.mabhaccess.com/Search.aspx](http://www.mabhaccess.com/Search.aspx)

### Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

- Find information about the **Structured Outpatient Addiction Program (SOAP)**, also known as the Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), and other SUD-related services at:
  - **Massachusetts Behavioral Health Access (MABHA):** [www.mabhaccess.com/SUD.aspx](http://www.mabhaccess.com/SUD.aspx)
  - **Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline**, or call (800) 327-5050: [helplinema.org/](http://helplinema.org/)

### Children Under 3

- **Massachusetts Early Intervention (EI)** is a program for infants and toddlers (birth to 3 years old) who have developmental delays or are at risk of a developmental delay. [www.mass.gov/orgs/early-intervention-division](http://www.mass.gov/orgs/early-intervention-division)
- **Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI)** is a program available for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD): [www.mass.gov/info-details/early-intervention-ei-autism-spectrum-disorder-specialty-services](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/early-intervention-ei-autism-spectrum-disorder-specialty-services)



## Find a Provider or Service

It takes a village to raise a child. Here are a few different ways to find services and other supports.

### If you are looking for someone to talk to, need help now, or are looking for mental health or substance use care in your area...

- **Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs)** provide access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment and are open daily for walk-ins, routine appointments, and crisis care. CBHCs offer individual and group therapy, crisis services, and medication. There are 27 CBHCs which cover every MA city and town. Find your nearest one at: [www.mass.gov/community-behavioral-health-centers](http://www.mass.gov/community-behavioral-health-centers)
- **Massachusetts Behavioral Health Access (MABHA)** provides descriptions of children, youth, and family services. You can also search for providers who have openings at: [www.mabhaccess.com/CBHI.aspx](http://www.mabhaccess.com/CBHI.aspx)
- **Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL)** lets you search for services by type, location, and other preferences. You can also call their help line at (833) 773-2445 and chat with a live person. [www.masshelpline.com/bhhl/directory/](http://www.masshelpline.com/bhhl/directory/)

### Or, if you aren't sure which service is right for you...

- **Call (833) 773-2445** or chat online with a representative. It's free, confidential, and no health insurance is required. Real-time interpretation in 200+ languages: [www.masshelpline.com/](http://www.masshelpline.com/)

### If you are deaf or hard of hearing...

- **Contact MassRelay at 711** or use your video relay or caption provider of choice: [www.mass.gov/massrelay](http://www.mass.gov/massrelay)

Original artwork contributed by youth and children receiving CBHI services.

## Get More Information

Navigating the system can be confusing, especially when you have a child who needs help and aren't sure where to turn.

### Read more or watch videos about MassHealth

- **MassHealth Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI)** posts guides, tipsheets, and videos about some of the services described in this brochure: [www.mass.gov/info-details/cbhi-for-families](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/cbhi-for-families)
- **HandHoldMA** has a helpful guide on where to begin, including how to find a provider and tips on getting ready for visits: [handholdma.org/who-can-help](http://handholdma.org/who-can-help)

### Read more about mental health care, autism care, or substance use care as a parent/caregiver

- **Family Resource Centers (FRCs)** are located in each of the 14 counties across Massachusetts and can connect you to support, information, and community resources: [www.frcma.org](http://www.frcma.org)
- **Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)** is a statewide family organization dedicated to improving the mental health and well-being of children, youth, and families through education, advocacy, and partnership: [ppal.net](http://ppal.net)
- **Insurance Resource Center for Autism and Behavioral Health** offers resources for consumers, providers, clinicians, employers, and educators on issues related to medical insurance for autism and behavioral treatments: [massairc.org](http://massairc.org)
- **Learn to Cope** is a peer-led support group for families and loved ones who have someone in their life experiencing substance use issues: [learn2cope.org](http://learn2cope.org)
- **Mass211** serves as a resource to find government benefits and services, nonprofit organizations, support groups, volunteer opportunities, donation programs, and other local resources: [mass211.org/](http://mass211.org/)
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization and offers support, education, and advocacy for people affected by mental health conditions: [namimass.org](http://namimass.org)

### Speak to a person

These customer service help lines can help answer any questions you might have regarding MassHealth services and your child's eligibility.

- **MassHealth** provides a directory of accountable care organizations where you can find information on certain plans: [www.mass.gov/info-details/full-list-of-masshealth-acos-and-mcos](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/full-list-of-masshealth-acos-and-mcos)
- **MassHealth Customer Service**  
If your child is under 21 and doesn't have health insurance, find out if they can get MassHealth by calling (800) 841-2900 or apply online: [www.mass.gov/information-for-masshealth-applicants](http://www.mass.gov/information-for-masshealth-applicants)

# MassHealth

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



Did you know that MassHealth offers many behavioral health services for children and youth through age 20?

# Continuum of Outpatient Behavioral Health Services for Children & Youth



LEAST INTENSIVE

MOST INTENSIVE



The information and resources below are designed to help caregivers find the right service to match the behavioral health needs of their youth. The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL) and the network of Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs) are available to help guide any family seeking services for youth aged 0–20, regardless of insurance status.

- **The Behavioral Health Help Line** is a free, confidential service available 24/7 to help connect families to a range of treatment services. It is staffed by trained clinicians and certified peer specialists who can provide immediate support and connection to appropriate community resources. Call (833) 773-2445, or visit: [www.masshelpline.com/](http://www.masshelpline.com/)
- **27 Community Behavioral Health Centers** are located across Massachusetts, serving every city and town. The CBHC provides access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment and is open daily for walk-ins, routine appointments, and crisis care. CBHCs offer individual therapy, group therapy, crisis services, and medication. [www.mass.gov/community-behavioral-health-centers](http://www.mass.gov/community-behavioral-health-centers)
- **Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention** (YMCI) is a behavioral health crisis intervention team that provides immediate, community based mobile response and stabilization services for up to seven days. If it is determined that the youth cannot be safely maintained in the community, out of home placement options may be discussed. This service is available 24/7 in the community (including homes, schools) and the YMCI office, for youth who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral health distress. [www.mass.gov/info-details/mobile-crisis-intervention](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/mobile-crisis-intervention)

For MassHealth members under the age of 21, voluntary behavioral health services are available to children, youth, and families in need of mental health care, autism care, or substance use services. Eligibility for each service may vary depending on the type of MassHealth coverage. Contact your health plan for specific information. If you don't know your plan, contact MassHealth Customer Service online or call (800) 841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711.

All behavioral health services for children, youth, and families are detailed on the following pages, from least intensive to most intensive. These descriptions are intended to offer a general guide. Once a referral is made, your provider will help to ensure that the needs of the youth match what the service can offer.

## Outpatient Therapy

Individual, group, or family therapy provided by a behavioral health clinician. The therapist will create a plan based on the youth's strengths and needs and can help get additional services, if indicated.

- **Typical frequency:** Weekly or biweekly sessions that are usually held in an office
- **Who can benefit:** Youth with a range of behavioral health needs from mild to very serious. This service is often where families first look for support, as this type of therapy can help with many kinds of challenges.

## Outpatient Medication Management

A structured approach by a psychiatric prescriber to support the youth and family, through initial evaluations and exploration of the use of medication in treatment, ongoing monitoring, and collaboration among health care providers.

- **Typical frequency:** Monthly appointments
- **Who can benefit:** Youth with moderate to severe behavioral health symptoms, or with symptoms that persist while they are receiving therapy, may benefit from this service

## Therapeutic Mentoring (TM)

Mentoring that pairs a youth with an adult mentor to help the youth build and improve their social, communication, and life needs.

- **Typical frequency:** Weekly sessions at home or in the community
- **Who can benefit:** Youth who have moderate to severe behavioral health symptoms and who need support in the areas of problem-solving, social skills, communication, or conflict resolution. To receive TM, the youth also need to be receiving another behavioral health service (outpatient, IHT, IHBS, ICC, or FIT).

## Family Support and Training (FS&T)

Caregiver support and coaching provided by a Family Partner (a professional who also has lived experience caring for youth with special needs).

- **Typical frequency:** 1–2 sessions per week that occur at home or in the community
- **Who can benefit:** Caregivers who want to become more effective advocates for their youth through understanding how to navigate systems and access community support. For caregivers to receive FS&T, the youth also needs to be receiving another behavioral health service (outpatient, IHT, IHBS, or ICC).

## In-Home Therapy (IHT)

Intensive family therapy provided by a team of two behavioral health staff to help youth with social, emotional, or behavioral challenges.

- **Typical frequency:** 1–3 sessions per week that occur at home or in the community
- **Who can benefit:** Families of youth with moderate to severe behavioral health symptoms who want help to resolve conflicts, learn new ways to talk to and understand each other, create new helpful routines, and find community resources

## In-Home Behavioral Services (IHBS)

Behaviorally based therapy provided by a two-person behavioral health team that works directly with both the youth and the caregiver. Together, they develop a targeted behavior plan that the caregiver and youth can implement at home.

- **Typical frequency:** 1–3 sessions per week that occur at home or in the community
- **Who can benefit:** Youth whose behaviors are significant enough to interfere with their functioning at home or in the community

## Intensive Care Coordination (ICC)

A care planning service for youth who have serious emotional and behavioral needs. ICC is delivered by a care coordinator, and is often provided with a Family Partner (FS&T described above).

- **Typical frequency:** Minimally 1 contact per week at home, in the community, or by phone
- **Who can benefit:** Youth with serious behavioral health symptoms, including youth who have co-occurring mental health and autism spectrum disorder, who need coordination across multiple services (mental health, state agency, special education, etc.). The care coordinator facilitates a team-based process including professionals and natural supports to create one plan.

## Family-based Intensive Treatment (FIT)

A combination of intensive family therapy, care coordination, and caregiver support for youth with serious behavioral and emotional needs. This service is delivered by a team of two behavioral health staff and a Family Partner (see FS&T above).

- **Typical frequency:** 3–5 sessions per week that occur at home or in the community
- **Who can benefit:** Youth experiencing significant behavioral health symptoms, including co-occurring mental health and autism spectrum disorder, whose needs have required acute/urgent behavioral health services in the last 30 days such as a crisis evaluation or an out-of-home placement. The focus of this service is to stabilize the youth's behavioral health needs, strengthen family and community supports, and transition to outpatient therapy or IHT in 4–6 months.



Scan the QR code to learn more about these MassHealth services for youth and children.

