

If you are worried about your child's emotions or behavior, you can start by talking to friends, family members, your spiritual counselor, your child's school counselor, or your child's pediatrician/family physician about your concerns. The primary sources of information about options for helping your child are listed below. Contact information for local resources is listed by county on the back of this sheet.

Seeking help

Your child's **pediatrician** can talk with you about your concerns, and can make referrals for treatment.

Your **insurance company** can provide you with a list of the mental health professionals within your healthcare network.

School Psychologists, trained in both psychology and education, can help children and youth academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. They may be part of an IEP team and perform academic and psychological evaluations.

Core Service Agencies (CSAs) or **Local Behavioral Health Authorities (LBHAs)** are local agencies responsible for planning, managing and monitoring a specific region's public mental health services in Maryland. Many CSAs/LBHAs have specialists that coordinate services for children and adolescents that do not have health insurance.

Family or System Navigators provide one- to-one support to families. Each county in Maryland has Navigators that can help families access resources within Maryland's mental health system, understand their child's mental health concerns, find the right type of help, and provide support through the whole process. Family Navigators are parents who have cared for a child with special needs and have been trained to help other families. Any parent or caregiver can call a Navigator to request assistance for their child, aged 0 - 21 years, with special needs. There is no cost for navigation services.

County "warmlines" are community-based service referral call-lines staffed by trained people, often 24 hours a day. These phone numbers are designed to address certain non- life threatening concerns and questions.

Mental Health Education and Advocacy Organizations are dedicated to assisting family members with finding help for their child.

- **Mental Health Association of Maryland.** MHAMD is a statewide education and advocacy agency. Programs and services vary by chapter. www.mhamd.org

MHAMD offers information and resources on Health Insurance Protections, Parity Law, and the Affordable Care Act at www.mhamd.org/information-and-help/paying-for-care/maryland-insurance-protections/

- **Mental Health First Aid** trains parents and caregivers to recognize mental health problems, know how to access services and support youth struggling with mental health issues. www.mhfamaryland.org
- **Maryland Coalition of Families.** MCF has Family Navigators and offers advocacy training and support for families. www.mdcoalition.org
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness.** (NAMI) Maryland is dedicated to education, support and advocacy of persons with mental illnesses, their families and the wider community. www.namimd.org

It is important to remember that many children and families benefit from other services and supports in places other than traditional providers. Often, these services are provided along with other forms of services. It is well researched that many children benefit from after-school activities, athletics and community and faith-based organizations.