

Many Children Lack Access to Mental Health Care



Nearly **1 in 5** U.S. children are diagnosed with a mental disorder. **20%** of those with a mental disorder receive care from a specialized care provider for mental health.

Barriers to pediatric mental health specialty care

- Parents may be reluctant to seek professional help
- Cost
- Not enough mental health providers to meet demand
- Lack of access to specialized providers
- Long waiting lists
- Lack of insurance coverage

Pediatric primary care:

9 in 10 children receive regular medical care from a primary care provider, but **1 in 3** pediatricians report that they have sufficient training to diagnose and treat children with mental disorders.



Specialized care providers for mental health

- Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists
- Child Psychologists
- Behavioral Therapists

Improving Access to Mental Health Care through Behavioral Health Integration

Behavioral Health Integration (BHI) is an approach to delivering mental health care that makes it easier for primary care providers to include mental and behavioral health screening, treatment, and specialty care into their practice. It can take different forms, but BHI always involves collaborations between primary care providers and specialized care providers for mental health.

Phone consultation

The primary care provider can receive consultation by phone about a diagnosis and treatment plan from the care provider for mental health.



BHI can result in

- Better outcomes for children and youth
- More efficient and coordinated care
- Higher treatment rates
- Reduced parental stress
- Improved consumer satisfaction

CLINIC



Practicing together

The primary care practice has a care provider for mental health practicing on-site who is responsible for screening and referrals and may provide therapy. This is often called co-location.



Improving referrals and communication

A care coordinator manages referrals to care providers for mental health and needed social services, and maintains communication between the primary care practice and care providers for mental health.

This publication was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 5U38OT000141-03 awarded to Changelab Solutions and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.