

# Children's Mental Health Services in Virginia

## *An overview of services and supports that may be available to you and your Family*

When your child has a mental health condition, it can be difficult for both your child and family. You may want to consider bringing additional support into your home for your child and family. There are services that may be available to help your family. A good place to start can be your local community services board, pediatrician, local NAMI affiliate, local parent support group, or insurance company. They should be able to inform you of the services that are available.

There are many different types of services that exist to provide treatment and support to a child and his or her family. Payers for services vary including private insurance, federal and state health care programs (Medicaid and FAMIS), local funds or educational funds. Access to and availability of services varies around the state. Here is a listing of some services that may be available in your community:

- **Case Management Services** helps people arrange for appropriate services and supports. A case manager coordinates mental health, social work, educational, health, vocational, transportation and other services as needed. All CSBs are required to offer case management. Targeted Case Management is a similar service offered for individuals with Medicaid/FAMIS.
- **Children's Services Act (formerly known as Comprehensive Services Act) (CSA)** is a law enacted in 1993 that establishes a single state pool of funds to pay for services for at-risk youth and their families. The state funds, combined with local community funds, are managed by local interagency teams (known as FAPT and CPMT) who plan and oversee services to youth. Not all children and youth qualify, but if they do, the family meets with the local FAPT where a plan is developed based on the family's strengths and needs. The CPMT is, in turn, responsible for approving or not approving the service plan. To see if your child qualifies, contact your local CSA coordinator. For more information, visit [http://www.csa.virginia.gov/html/for\\_parents/for\\_parents.cfm](http://www.csa.virginia.gov/html/for_parents/for_parents.cfm).
- **Community Service Boards (CSBs)** are the main entry point into the public mental health system. There are 40 CSBs located in Virginia. Some CSBs cover one community, while others cover a large area. Be aware that your local CSB may not include "community service board" in their name even though they are a Community Service Board, so don't be discouraged if you encounter a different name. In terms of services provided, it can vary from CSB to CSB, but they may include outpatient therapy, medication management, case management, therapeutic day treatment, and in home behavioral health. Every CSB is mandated to provide crisis intervention services and case management. To locate your CSB, visit <http://vacsb.org/directory.html>.
- **Counseling and Therapy** can be one-on-one, with the entire family or in a group session. Particular types of therapy have been shown to work best for particular symptoms or specific behaviors. Private insurance and Medicaid/FAMIS typically pay for these services, and many CSBs and private mental health providers offer sliding fee scales.

- **Crisis Intervention Services** are mandated by every CSB in Virginia. In this case, they provide an emergency assessment. In addition, in recent years, funds were added to the state budget to allow for each region to develop crisis services specifically for children and youth with mental health needs. These services vary from region to region, but they may include **mobile crisis services**, **crisis stabilization**, and child psychiatry. Get to know what is available in your community, so that you are ready in case you ever need it.
- **In Home Behavioral Health** is provided in the family's home. The service includes crisis treatment, individual and family counseling, and it teaches communication skills. It is a Medicaid/FAMIS service. A VICAP assessment is required for this service, unless coming out of Residential services or Inpatient Hospitalization services. A VICAP is not needed if linked to services within 30 days from their discharge.
- **Inpatient Hospitalization** is mental health treatment provided in a hospital setting 24 hours a day. Inpatient hospitalization provides short term treatment in cases where a child is in crisis and possibly a danger to him/herself or others and diagnosis and treatment when the child or youth cannot be evaluated or treated appropriately in an outpatient setting. It is typically paid for by private insurance or Medicaid/FAMIS. There is only one state hospital for children and youth, known as the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents. Otherwise, children and youth are served at a private hospital. Not all hospitals have an inpatient psychiatric unit for children and youth, so it will take some research to see what is available in your community. Your insurance company is a good place to start.
- **Intensive Care Coordination** is a service available to families who receive CSA funding. It is a more intensive form of case management and is best suited for families who have complex needs. It is rooted in the High-Fidelity Wraparound Model, which means that the service plan is determined by what the family and youth want for themselves. In five communities, a Parent Support Partner is also a part of the team. A Parent Support Partner is a parent who has a child or youth with mental health needs and uses their experiences to support other families.
- **Medication Management** is provided when you meet with a psychiatrist (medical doctor) or nurse practitioner in his or her office. The provider will work with you to find out if your needs to take medication and work with you to manage it. In a few cases, the psychiatrist will also provide therapy, but that practice is becoming rare. Private insurance and Medicaid/FAMIS will typically pay for the service. Many CSBs also offer the service.
- **Parent Education and Parent Support Services:** NAMI Virginia, [www.namivirginia.org](http://www.namivirginia.org), and other family organizations provide education and resources for parents. In addition, some CSBs have a Consumer and Family Involvement office. These offices may also offer trainings and workshops, as well as information on what services and supports are available in the community. Lastly, many communities have a Parent Resource Center. These centers are primarily focused on supporting families who receive special education services, but many offer list serves and other resources for the entire community.

- **Residential Treatment Centers or Facilities** provide treatment 24 hours a day and can usually serve more than 12 youth at a time. Children with serious mental health needs receive constant supervision and care. Treatment may include individual, group, and family therapy, special education, and medical services. It is typically more long term than inpatient hospitalization. It may also be known as Therapeutic Group Homes. It can be difficult to get these services paid for, as they are very expensive. Potential funding sources include, CSA, Special Education, and Medicaid/FAMIS.
- **Support Groups:** These groups offer parents a way to connect to other families that have children with mental health condition. Coordinating care for your child as they return home from residential treatment is exhausting and very time-consuming. Support groups give you a way to help take care of yourself. At a support group, you can meet other parents with similar experience and benefit from the support they give you. You also have a chance to support others who may be experiencing a situation you have already been through. By networking in these ways with other families, you create more support for yourself and your child, and increase your family's chance of staying together. Visit [www.namivirginia.org](http://www.namivirginia.org) for more information.
- **Transition Age Youth Services** are available through eight CSBs. Each CSB is using the Coordinated Specialty Care model is a team-based, collaborative, recovery-oriented approach involving the young adult, treatment team members, and when appropriate, family members as active participants. For more information, visit <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/individuals-and-families/mental-health-services/coordinated-specialty-care-for-young-adults>.
- **Therapeutic Day Treatment** is a service that is school-based. It combines therapies. It may include mental health treatment and learning about medications. The treatment lasts two or more hours a day. It includes groups of children and adolescents. Family contact will also occur with this service weekly. This service is for youth 21 years of age and younger. It is a Medicaid/FAMIS service, but your local CSB may offer similar school based mental health services. A VICAP assessment is required, unless coming out of Residential services or Inpatient Hospitalization services. A VICAP is not needed if linked to services within 30 days from their discharge.



*The Virginia Family Network is the only statewide network that solely represents families who have children and youth with mental health needs.*

NAMI Virginia is contracted by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) to provide the Virginia Family Network  
 P.O. Box 8260  
 Richmond, Virginia 23226  
 (804) 285-8264 x203  
[www.namivirginia.org](http://www.namivirginia.org)