

Family LINCS Newsletter

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Foster Families Website:

<http://fhcweb.absfirst.com>

Look at this month's trivia question to win movie tickets!

Below are some web sites on Health and Fitness that you can use this summer.

www.kidshealthandfitness.org

library.thinkquest.org

www.hoptecno.com

school.discovery.com

www.kidnetic.com

Being Prepared: Understanding Your Mental Health Insurance

Insurance benefits for mental health services have changed a lot in recent years. Though these changes are consistent with the nationwide trend to control the expense of health care, it is important to understand your mental health care coverage so that you can be an active advocate for your child's needs within the guidelines of your particular plan.

Here are some useful questions to ask when evaluating the mental health benefits of an insurance plan or HMO:

- Do I have to get a referral from my child's primary care physician or employee assistance program to receive mental health services?
- Is there a "preferred list of providers" or "network" that you must see? Are child psychiatrists included? What happens if I want my child to see someone outside the network?
- Is there an annual deductible that I pay before the plan pays? What will I actually pay for services? What services are paid for by the plan: office visits, medication, respite care, day hospital, inpatient care?
- Are there limits on the

number of visits? Will my provider have to send reports to the managed care company?

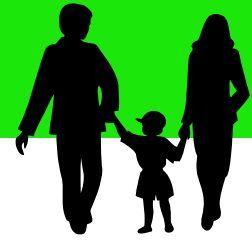
- What can I do if I am unhappy with either the provider of the care or the recommendations of the "utilization review" process?
- What hospitals can be used under the plan?
- Does the plan exclude certain diagnoses or pre-existing conditions?
- Is there a "lifetime dollar limit" or an "annual limit" for mental health coverage, and what is it?
- Does the plan have a track record in your area?

Along with these questions, some of the language used in describing your health care plan may be unfamiliar to you. Managed care refers to the process of someone reviewing and monitoring the need for and use of services. Your insurance company may do its own review and monitoring or they may hire a "managed care company" to do the reviewing. The actual review of care is commonly known as "utilization re-

view" and is done by professionals, mostly social workers and nurses, known as "utilization reviewers" or "case managers." The child psychiatrist treating your child may have to discuss the treatment with a reviewer in order for the care to be authorized and paid for by your insurance provider.

It is important to understand as much as possible about your particular insurance plan. Understanding your coverage will put you in a better position to help your child. Sometimes you may need to advocate for services that are not a part of your plan but are services you and your child's psychiatrist feel are necessary. Advocacy groups may provide you with important information about local services. Additionally, the support of other parents is also useful and important when engaged in advocacy efforts.





Advocating For Your Child

According to *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General (1999)*, 1 in 5 will experience signs and symptoms of a psychiatric disorder during the course of a year. Some nine million children have serious emotional problems at any point in time, yet only 1 in 5 of these children are receiving appropriate treatment. When parents or teachers suspect that a child may have an emotional problem they should seek a comprehensive evaluation by a mental health professional specifically trained to work with children and adolescents. Signs and symptoms of childhood and adolescent emotional problems may include:

- school problems
- setting fires
- frequent fighting
- mood swings
- trouble sleeping
- stealing or lying
- feeling sad
- use of drugs
- trouble paying attention
- anxiety or frequent worries
- withdrawn or isolation
- injuring or killing animals
- excessive weight loss or gain
- thoughts about suicide

Throughout the evaluation process, parents should be directly involved and ask questions. It's important to make sure you understand the results of the evaluation, your child's diagnosis and the full range of treatment options. If parents are not comfortable with a particular clinician or treatment option, or are confused about specific recommendations, they should consider a second opinion.

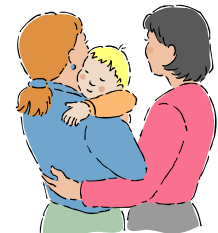
Before a child begins treatment, parents may also want to ask the following questions:

- What are the recommended treatment options for my child?
- How will I be involved with my child's treatment?
- How will I know if treatment is working?
- Does not my child need medication?
- What should I do if the problems get worse?
- How long should it take before I see improvement?
- What are the arrangements if I need to reach you after-hours or in an emer-

gency?

Ongoing parental involvement and support are essential to the overall success of treatment. Depending on the nature of your child's problems, it may also be important to involve the school, community agencies, and/or juvenile justice system. In addition, it may be helpful to learn how to access other support services such as respite, parent skill building, or home-based programs. Local advocacy groups can also provide valuable information, experience and support for parents.

Although serious emotional problems are common in childhood and adolescence, they are also highly treatable. By advocating for early identification, comprehensive evaluation and appropriate intervention, parents can make sure their children get the help they need, and reduce the risk of long term emotional difficulties.



Services In School For Children With Special Needs: **What Parents Need To Know**

Some children experience difficulties in school, ranging from problems with concentration, learning, language and perception to problems with behavior and/or making and keeping friends. These difficulties may be due to one or more of the following: physical disorders, psychiatric disorders, emotional problems, behavioral problems, and/or learning disorders (or disabilities).

Children with special needs are usually entitled to receive special services or accommodations through public schools. Federal law mandates

that every child will receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. It also entitles children with special needs to receive extra services to support their ability to learn in school. Currently, three Federal laws apply to children with special needs:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1975)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990)

Between states, there are different criteria for eligibility, services available, procedures for implementing the Federal laws and procedural safeguards. It is important for parents to be aware of these laws and regulations in their particular area.



For more information log onto:
www.aacap.org/publications
Facts for Families

KIDS STUFF

Getting and Staying Organized: Tips to give your child for the new school year

YOUR LOCKER

1. Don't be afraid to use your locker—that is why it's there.
2. Clean out your locker regularly.
3. Organize your locker—put books in order of your schedule.
4. Try rolling your jacket so that it doesn't get in your way or take up too much room in your locker.
5. When you have an organized plan for your locker, make it a habit to always put things back in that order!



AT SCHOOL

1. Use a book bag or notebook to carry all your papers and books.
2. Use pocket folders or dividers with tabs in a notebook to keep each subject separate from the others.
3. Use pencil holders to keep up with pencils, pens and/or rulers.
4. Write down assignments when they are given in a spiral notebook or on homework assignment sheets.



AT HOME

1. Before studying always have all your supplies: paper, sharpened pencils and books ready at your study place.
2. Set aside a regular time to study or review your work every night.
3. Make a habit of bringing your homework folder or assignment sheets home every night.
4. When homework is complete, put it back in the folder so it doesn't get lost.
5. Before going to bed, lay out your outfit for the next day.

Homework & Study Tips

1. Have a positive attitude.
2. Choose a quiet study place.
3. Make a list of what needs to be done each day.
4. Know what your teacher expects
5. Shut off the TV and don't accept phone calls.
6. Decide how long you can study and set a timer.
7. Take short breaks.
8. Keep up with assignments.
9. File any worksheets or homework papers.
10. Break large assignments into small parts.
11. Enter long term assignments on monthly calendar.
12. Keep parents informed.

Microwave Ravioli Casserole

Prep Time: 5 min

Start to finish: 20 min



Quick! This four-ingredient Italian main dish goes together in under 20 minutes. Add some steamed broccoli and a loaf of garlic bread and dinner is on the table in no time.

Servings: 6

- 1 pound lean ground beef
 - 1 small onion, chopped (1/4 cup
 - 2 (15 oz) cans beef ravioli
 - 1 cup shredded Mozzarella or Cheddar cheese (4 oz)
1. Crumble beef into 2-quart microwavable casserole dish. Add onion. Cover loosely and microwave on High 5-6 min., stirring after 3 min., until beef is no longer pink; drain.
 2. Stir in ravioli. Cover tightly and microwave 5-7 minutes, stirring after 3 minutes, until hot. Sprinkle with cheese.

Test Taking Tips

1. Have a positive attitude.
2. Study in advance. Review the night before.
3. Have test taking supplies ready.
4. Get a good night's sleep.
5. Get up early to review.
6. Eat a good breakfast.
7. Wear comfortable clothes.
8. Always write your name and date on the test first.
9. Glance through the whole test to plan your time.
10. Read all directions carefully.
11. Write neatly.
12. Allow time to check your test for mistakes.

Alternative Behavioral Services

**The Pines Residential
Treatment Center**

**Crawford Campus
825 Crawford Parkway
Portsmouth, VA 23704**

L i n k i n g

I n d i v i d u a l s

N e i g h b o r h o o d s &

C l i n i c a l

S e r v i c e s



**D
I
R
E
C
T
O
R
Y**

Alternative Behavioral Services

Centralized Admissions
240 Corporate Boulevard
Norfolk, VA 23502
(757) 459-5454
1- 877-227-7000

**The Pines Residential
Treatment Center**

Crawford Campus (VA)

825 Crawford Parkway
Portsmouth, VA 23704
(757) 393-0061
Fax (757) 397-5673
(877) 227-7000 for Admission Information

Brighton Campus (VA)

(757) 398-0363

Kempsville Campus (VA)

(757) 391-6579

**The Pines
South Carolina
Charleston Campus**

Corporate Office
225 Midland Parkway
Summerville, SC 29485
(843) 851-5015

Midlands Campus

200 Ermine Road
West Columbia, SC 29170
(803) 791-9913

www.absfirst.com



**Virginia Beach
Psychiatric Center**

1100 First Colonial Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
(757) 496-6000
Fax (757) 481-0484

**Foundations Home
and Community**

1634 I Street NW
Suite 201
Washington, DC 20036

First Home Care Corporation

1634 London Blvd.
Portsmouth, VA 23704
Phone(757) 393-7200
Fax (757) 391-6786

**First Home Care
Foundation House**

(757) 393-6638