


Kinship Quarterly Strengthening Families

January 2025

Mental Health Services in your Community

In addition to private counselors and doctors, you may access mental health services for your child and family through your local mental health authority (LMHA) or local behavioral health authority (LBHA).

Texas Health and Human Services contracts with 39 LMHAs and LBHAs to deliver mental health services across Texas.



Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA) or Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) provide crisis and specialized mental health care in local communities in offices, schools, or homes. Mental health services may include:

- Crisis intervention
- Skills training and development
- Counseling
- Supportive employment
- Medication training and support
- Case management
- Peer services (family partner support services)

To learn more, read the [Family Guide to Children's Mental Health Services \(PDF\)](#).



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services
Child Protective Services



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Mental Health Updates

New and expanded specialized mental health services for children and families were funded in the last Texas Legislative session. These specialized services are located at some LMHAs and LBHAs and are available to children and youth in kinship settings who meet the service eligibility criteria.

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

is designed to treat youth ages 12-17 years, with delinquent behaviors and/or juvenile justice involvement who are living with committed caregivers. Intensive services are delivered in the youth's community and home over a period of 3-5 months. The MST treatment team works with the youth and their entire support system to address concerning behaviors with the goal of keeping the youth in the community. The team has 24/7 availability to support the youth and caregivers. The approach builds on strengths in all areas of the youth's life. MST is currently available in 33 of our 254 Texas counties.

Youth Crisis Outreach Teams (YCOT) intervene with a child and caregivers in a mental health crisis and provide follow up services including

connections with community resources. YCOT staff have specialized training in child and youth specific crisis response and stabilization. All Texas communities have access to Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOTs) through their LMHA or LBHA. So, if your community does not yet have a youth specific crisis team then the existing MCOT will support children, youth, and adults.

To find your LMHA or LBHA call 2-1-1 or visit [Find Your Local Mental Health or Behavioral Health Authority | Texas Health and Human Services](#).

You may request additional referrals for these services through your child's STAR Health Plan by calling Member Services at **1-800-912-6283**

Children's Crisis Respite

Some communities offer mental health crisis respite for youth and their caregivers. These respites offer short term, supervised stays allowing youth to work through a crisis and gain access to services. Caregivers actively participate with respite staff to plan for reunification and continuing care.

Crisis respites are a less restrictive alternative to psychiatric hospitalization and appropriate for youth at low risk of harm to themselves or others.

Which Mental Health Service is Right for My Child?

You may recognize that your child needs some additional supports. Some signs might be:

- Excessive worry, anxiety, fear, or sadness
- Self-harm
- Problems concentrating or learning
- Extreme mood changes
- Avoiding friends or social activities
- Sleep or appetite changes
- Sudden poor school performance
- Hyperactive behavior
- Frequent nightmares
- Out-of-control behaviors

Maybe one of the new mental health services sounds like a match for your child and family. Or maybe you know services would be a good idea, but you don't know where to start.

You don't have to know which service is the best match! Connect directly with your [LMHA or LBHA](#) or contact Superior Health Plan Member Services at 1-800-912-6283.

Either can assist you in finding the right provider and taking the steps to access services.