

# ***CHESTER COUNTY***



## ***WHERE TO GO FOR HELP***

**Behavioral Health Resources  
For Young Children (Birth to Age 5)  
Enrolled in Medical Assistance or CHIP**

A Guide for Early Care and  
Education Professionals in  
**Chester County**



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## INTRODUCTION

Young children communicate through their behaviors.

Children who often throw temper tantrums, don't get along with other children, or shy away from adults are sometimes viewed as "difficult to handle" or "problem children" by teachers or parents. These behaviors are part of normal development. Usually the

behaviors don't last a long time and can be addressed by parents and child care providers. Sometimes, however, these behaviors don't go away, or become more intense over time. When this happens, it is often upsetting to parents, child care providers and the children and can be an indication of other issues.



We hope this guide will help those who work with young children to:

- *Understand what they can do to help children grow up healthy and strong*
- *Understand when a child may need help to develop social and emotional competence and*
- *Know where to look for help*

When child care workers, parents, the Early Intervention system, health care providers and mental health providers work together, it is more likely that children will have bright futures.

**When you are caring for a child who poses a challenge, it's easy to blame someone or something. But blaming doesn't help. Instead work with the parent and develop a plan to address the problem.**

- 1. Look at the environment – is it a good place to learn and play?**
- 2. Talk with the parent– is there a stressful situation at home?**
- 3. Look at the classroom schedule – is the child getting enough time to play?**
- 4. Look at the child – has she changed her behavior recently?**

If the child's behaviors continue, maybe he needs more help. You may want to refer him for a social and emotional development assessment (see the **yellow pages** for where to turn for help).

**EXPELLING A CHILD DOESN'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM.**  
**When this happens parents may be left with no child care and no idea how to get help for their child.**

If you have a young child with a behavioral health concern and you need assistance getting insurance or finding help, call PCCY at 215-563-5848 x17.

### **HOW DO YOUNG CHILDREN DEVELOP?**

Every child is different and develops at his or her own pace. As children grow, they learn new skills such as walking or talking. These skills, called developmental milestones, are usually learned in a predictable way. For instance, children usually crawl before they walk and point before they use words.

Many people use developmental milestones to help decide whether a child is developing at a healthy pace.

Children grow and change quickly during their first 5 years. Growth occurs in several areas:

- **Adaptive Behavior** – *how children eat, dress and take care of themselves*
- **Cognitive** – *how children think and learn*
- **Communication** – *how children use signs, sounds and words to express needs and understand what others are saying*
- **Physical** – *how children hear, see, taste, smell and touch things in their world*
- **Social-Emotional** – *how children take in and understand things that happen in the world around them, show emotions and develop relationships*

Don't be surprised if one child's development is a little different from another child's development. Some children develop more quickly (or more slowly) in one area than another – and it's still normal.

## HOW CAN I TELL IF A CHILD HAS A DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEM?

It is often difficult for parents and child care workers to determine if a child needs help. If you are worried or frustrated, you don't have to be alone. Help for both children and parents is available.

**Some children can be considered challenging by parents and child care workers. Here are some examples:**

- Children who are very energetic and always on the go
- Children who don't like to change activities
- Children who get very upset when things don't go their way
- Children who are withdrawn or very shy in new situations
- Children who are very difficult to calm down or soothe when crying or angry
- Children who are experiencing developmental delays, such as not being able to hear, speak, or perform acts their peers can, and therefore act out

These children don't necessarily need behavioral health attention. However, if you are concerned that a child is not doing things that most children of the same age are doing, or if a child's behavior seems extreme or has changed suddenly, you should discuss this with the child's parent.

**Some questions to ask when you are considering if a child may need help:**

- Does he have frequent temper tantrums?
- Is she unusually quiet or withdrawn?
- Does he often play very aggressively (biting, hitting or kicking)?
- Does she aggressively destroy objects such as furniture, walls or toys?
- Have you observed a dramatic change in his personality?
- Does she show no delight or pleasure?
- Does he engage in inappropriate sexual behavior?
- Does she frequently soil herself, even after being toilet trained?
- Is she cruel to animals?

- Does he make serious threats to others?
- Does she have frequent nightmares?
- Does he bully younger children?
- Does she have delayed speech?
- Does the child's behavior often make you angry?
- Do you usually have to threaten to get the child to listen?
- Does the child have a poor appetite or overeat?

If you think that a child might have a developmental or behavioral problem, you should talk to the child's parent. Parents should be encouraged to talk to their child's health care provider and ask if their child needs a developmental screening or an appointment with a behavioral health professional (see the **yellow pages** for a list of behavioral health agencies).

### **The Connection between Trauma & Behavior**

Sometimes a child's challenging behavior is a response to, or consequence of, experiencing trauma. The types of traumatic events experienced by young children can include: witnessing domestic and community violence, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, separation from, or loss of, a caregiver, natural disasters and war.

Scientific research on early childhood brain development has shown that exposure to trauma and stress can "re-wire" and change the chemistry in the brain in ways that affect how children learn, bond with adults and behave.

There are also many factors that influence how a child responds to trauma, including the frequency and duration of exposure, the age of the child, the absence or presence of protective factors such as nurturing caregivers and safe communities.

Some young children who experience trauma may also experience stress, anxiety and depression, which can be expressed through behavior. Some signs of stress, anxiety and depression can be identified by asking the questions listed on p. 4-5.

## **WHAT CAN I DO IF A CHILD SEEMS TO HAVE A DEVELOPMENTAL OR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROBLEM?**

Talk to the parents (see box on p. 7-8). Parents and child care workers need to work together to address children's behavior problems.

Behavior is one important way a young child can tell us his or her needs! Ask yourself, "what is this child trying to tell me?"

Here are some things you can do in your child care center:

### **1. Identify what might be causing the behavior: look for people, places and things.**

- a. Are there certain people that upset the child?
- b. Are there parts of the room that upset the child?
- c. Are there certain things (such as time of day) that upset the child?

### **2. Record the child's behaviors.**

### **3. Set aside time to make sure the child's individual needs are being met (talk to him, hug her, help resolve problems, feed him, change her diaper).**

### **4. Ask yourself if there are changes you can make to your child care setting that might help the child. A quality child care program offers children the following:**

- a consistent, predictable routine
- calming activities
- a balance between active and quiet time
- consistent praise for positive behavior (for sharing, turn-taking and cooperative play)
- enough toys and materials for all of the children to play with
- a quiet place to go when children want to be left alone (make sure you can still see them!)
- a place to go when children want to play
- appropriate "circle time" or "sitting time"– Make sure you are not asking children to sit still for too long!
- one-on-one time with the teachers
- enough adults in the room

*Here are a few organizations that you can contact for help creating a better child care environment for children:*

**Devereux Early Childhood Initiative –**

1-866- TRAIN US (872-4687)

**DVAEYC – 215-893-0130**

**Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS) –**

800-243-2357

**Institute for Family Professionals – 215-654-9414**

**Keystone Stars Technical Assistance – 877-660-2273**

If the child's problems continue, talk to the parents again. Encourage parents to talk to their child's health care provider. **This child might need more help!**

## **HOW TO TALK TO PARENTS ABOUT THEIR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR**

Talking to a parent about his/her child's behavior can be difficult. Many parents feel guilty and upset once they realize their child is experiencing difficulties or is in need of help. Other parents may become defensive and try to place blame for their child's problems on something or someone. Remember, parents love their children and want the best for them. Work with parents as a team to help the child. Maintain an atmosphere of safety and trust for children and parents.

***It is important for child care providers to understand how parents are feeling and to work with them as much as possible.***

It is important for child care providers to understand how parents are feeling and to work with them as much as possible. The ultimate goal should be to help the child!

**Here are a few tips on how to communicate with parents:**

Be clear and give examples of how the child is behaving— first start with something positive. For example, say, "Susie plays well in the morning," then be concrete: "Susie had four temper tantrums today." **Do not say**, "Susie is too difficult for me to handle."

Focus on the most difficult problems; don't give a list of troubling incidents. Parents can get overwhelmed when hearing about their children's behavior.

Be positive about the child's future. **Do not say**, "Your child is going to get kicked out of my center if he doesn't stop biting." Instead, say, "We are concerned about your son's biting and want to talk about it."

Put yourself in the parent's shoes. It is never easy to hear that your child is not behaving normally. Try to be sensitive to how parents may feel.

Offer information on parent support groups and parenting classes (see p. 20-23), because sometimes parents need help, but do not know where to turn.

### **DO VERY YOUNG CHILDREN EVER NEED HELP WITH THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND/OR BEHAVIOR?**

Yes, sometimes young children, even infants and toddlers, need help with their social and emotional development. It is important that emotional or behavioral health problems are recognized and handled early. The challenge for child care providers is to help parents better understand the needs of their children and to assist them in finding help when needed. If children don't receive attention when they need it, they often feel frustrated or hopeless and sometimes fall behind. When children get the right help it is more likely they will build good relationships, be better prepared for school and grow up healthy and strong.



Each of us has a role to play in supporting the social and emotional development of children. When children exhibit behavior problems, parents, child care practitioners, health care providers and mental health professionals need to work together to come up with the right response for the child. For some children this means that they will get help from the Early Intervention system, while others will be better served in the behavioral health system through wraparound or family counseling.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER I HAVE TRIED VARIOUS APPROACHES WITH A CHILD WITH PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOR?

After some preventive steps (reinforcing positive behavior, talking with the parents or making sure the child care environment is developmentally appropriate), the child may still need to be referred for help. Your first call should be to Early Intervention. The early intervention staff may deal with parents and children together by answering parents' questions, helping teach parents how to interact with their children more effectively and supporting the child's development.

### For Children Birth to Age Three:

The place to begin is the Chester County Early Intervention Service Coordination Unit, located at 601 Westtown Rd., Suite 170, West Chester, PA 19380, which offers services to children from birth to three years old who experience a 25 percent or more developmental delay in one of five areas (see p.3 for a description of these areas):

- adaptive behavior
- cognitive
- communication
- physical
- social and emotional



Available services through this office include occupational therapy, physical therapy, special instruction, nutrition services and service coordination.

Services are free for children residing in Chester County.

**Below is the process of getting Early intervention (EI) services for your child, birth through age three:**

**Step 1:** Call the Chester County Early Intervention Service Coordination Unit at (610) 344-5948; information such as the child's name and date of birth, the family's home address and concerns about the child, will be gathered over the phone.

**Step 2:** The family will be assigned to a service coordinator, and within a few days of the family's initial phone call to EI, the service coordinator will call the family to schedule a meeting (intake) in the home.

**Step 3:** During the intake the service coordinator explains the Early Intervention process and parents' rights within that process. This is an opportunity for the family to voice concerns about the child, and to discuss priorities and resources. At this visit, the service coordinator contacts Easter Seals, which provides staff to complete the EI evaluation, and arranges a convenient time for the evaluation.

**Step 4:** Within two to three weeks of the intake visit the evaluation with the service coordinator and Easter Seals is conducted, typically in the home. Following the evaluation, if the child is found to have a 25 percent or more delay in any of the five main developmental areas, an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) will be written.

*\*Steps 2-4 must occur within 45 days of the parent's initial call.*

If a 25 percent delay is not found, the child will be placed in the Chester County Early Intervention Service Coordination Unit's tracking program. A tracking coordinator will call the family every three months to check up on the child who was found ineligible for services. A screening questionnaire is offered to the family at each contact. If the family agrees, a screening form will be sent to the family, which they complete and send back to the Early Intervention Service Coordination Unit. If the screening indicates that an evaluation is necessary, another evaluation will be performed.

### **For Children Ages Three to Five**

In order for children ages three to five, to receive preschool special education services, they must have a disability and/or developmental delay that impact(s) their ability to learn.

**Step 1:** The child's parent should call the Chester County Intermediate Unit (IU) at (484) 237-5150 or (484) 237-5183.

**Step 2:** An IU intake secretary takes some initial information from the family and sends a screening packet to the family to be filled out, with consent and social history

forms, that will help determine what evaluations the child might need (adaptive behavior, cognitive, communication, physical, social/emotional and/or behavioral). A screening appointment is also made at this time

**Step 3:** The parent brings the child to the IU for the screening unless the concerns are around the child's behavior (rather than development), in which case a service coordinator screens the child at his or her preschool or child care. Screening appointments last between 45 minutes to an hour.

**Step 4:** If the child is found to be eligible for services because he or she exhibits a 25 percent or more delay in one or more of five developmental areas (adaptive behavior, cognitive, communication, physical and social/emotional) OR has one or more of the 13 disabilities listed below, AND needs specially designed instruction, and the parent wants services for the child, he or she must consent to an evaluation to be done by the service coordinator. From the date the IU receives the consent forms, a service coordinator has 60 days to do the evaluation. Depending on why the child failed the screen determines where the evaluation will be done—whether at the IU, the family's home or the child's preschool.

- autism/pervasive developmental disorder
- serious emotional disturbance
- neurological impairment
- deafness/hard of hearing
- specific learning disability
- mental retardation
- multiple handicaps
- other mental impairment
- physical disability
- speech impairment
- blindness/visual impairment



**Step 5:** The evaluation report is sent home to the parent to look over, and an appointment is set up for the parent to meet with IU staff to review the evaluation. If from the evaluation the child is found to need an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), it will be developed with specific services to meet the child's needs.

**Step 6:** IEP services are offered in the child's preschool or in a classroom-based program run by the IU. Currently, the IU operates 27 classroom-based programs, thirteen of which are located in regular elementary schools throughout the county. Students attend for varying amounts of time per day and per week.

### **WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH EARLY INTERVENTION?**

Children who receive early intervention services have protections to insure that their special needs are met. Contact your service coordinator (case manager) with any questions or concerns about your child's early intervention services. Hopefully this will resolve the problem.

If you still have concerns you can:

1. File a complaint with the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (717) 346-9320
2. Ask for mediation by contacting the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) at 1 (800) 992-4334; TTY: 1 (800) 654-5984
3. Request a due process hearing by asking your service coordinator to arrange one or by contacting the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) at 1(800) 223-3353; TTY: 1(800) 654-5984

### **WHAT KIND OF HELP WOULD A CHILD RECEIVE THROUGH THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM?**

Some children with behavioral or social challenges may receive early intervention, while others are referred to other community resources. If behavioral health services are necessary, a mental health provider can assist parents in preventing or addressing their children's emotional or behavioral difficulties.

For children who need significant help, some behavioral health agencies might recommend wraparound services. For a list of agencies that provide wraparound services, please see the chart on the **yellow pages** or call Community Care Behavioral Health Organization, (1-866-622-4228).

**If wraparound services are recommended for a child insured through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), private health insurance or one who is uninsured, contact PCCY at 215-563-5848 x17, to ask about applying for Medical Assistance. Privately insured children may be eligible for Medicaid and Wraparound.**

**Wraparound Services** (also known as Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services or BHRS) are special home or school based intensive support services that focus on children's individual emotional, developmental and educational needs. These services must be prescribed by a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist based on an assessment of the child. Wraparound services may include:

**Mobile Therapist** A Mobile Therapist is a person who provides therapy to children in their own home. They help children and families cope with issues such as loss, developmental delays or disabilities, anger management, parenting, and behavior modification.

**Behavior Specialist** A Behavior Specialist is a behavioral health professional who works with the child and the family to develop a plan for re-shaping the child's behavior. The behavior specialist observes the child's behavior in the child's own setting. They identify the child's strengths and develop a treatment plan with the parent that addresses the child's behavioral needs.

**Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS)** A TSS may work with a child and parent in the home or child care center. TSS workers help make positive changes in children's behavior. The TSS also provides encouragement to the child as well as feedback about how the child's behavior affects others.



Wraparound services are only available for children covered by Medical Assistance (MA).



### **HOW DO I GET TREATMENT FOR A CHILD WHOSE NEEDS DO NOT REQUIRE EARLY INTERVENTION OR WRAPAROUND?**

Finding the right behavioral health provider can be confusing. The best way to start is by asking questions. It's important that parents and their child are comfortable with a provider.

#### **Encourage parents to:**

- *Talk with the child's health care provider, who may be able to offer a referral to a children's behavioral health provider.*
- *Talk to friends, co-workers or family members for referrals. Word of mouth is often a good way to get the inside "scoop."*
- *Call the child's health insurance plan to find providers who participate in the plan and work with young children (if a child is insured through Medical Assistance, call Community Care Behavioral Health Organization, (1-866-622-4228). For children enrolled in CHIP or private insurance see p. 19 for a list of phone numbers to contact those insurance companies.*

Parents can also call a behavioral health agency near them (refer to the **yellow pages** for a listing of agencies).

Once they find a behavioral health agency, parents can call the office and ask the following questions:

- *Are they accepting new patients?*
- *Do they accept the child's health insurance?*
- *Do they have experience treating children like your child?*
- *When is the next available appointment?*



# **WHERE TO GO FOR HELP**

A Listing of Behavioral Health Agencies  
For Young Children



[www.pccy.org](http://www.pccy.org)

# WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Name	Phone/Web	Location	Ages	Services
<b>Outpatient/Community-Based Services in Chester County</b>				
Associates of Springfield Psychological	(610) 544-2110 www.springfieldpsychological.com	709 E. Gay St. West Chester, 19380	4+	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F
Child Guidance Resource Center (Core Provider)	(610) 383-5635 www.cgrc.org	744 E. Lincoln Hwy., Suite 420 Coatesville, 19320	3-21	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>
Community Services of Devereux (Core Provider)	(610) 933-8110 http://csd.devereuxbeneto.org	1041 W. Bridge St. Phoenixville, 19460	2-18	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>
Creative Health Services, Inc. (Satellite Office) (Core Provider)	(610) 326-9250 www.creativehs.org	1 Mennonite Church Rd. Spring City, 19475	4-21	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB</b>
Delaware County Professional Services	(610) 892-3800 www.dcpsonline.com	701 E. Baltimore Pike C-1 Kennett Square, 19348	3 +	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F, G
Delaware County Professional Services	(610) 892-3800 www.dcpsonline.com	780 E. Market St. Suite 230 West Chester, 19382	3 +	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F, G
Family Service of Chester County	(610) 696-4900 www.familyservice.us	310 N. Matlack St. West Chester, 19380	Any age	<b>Counseling:</b> F
Family Service of Chester County-Oxford Neighborhood Services Center	(610) 696-4900 www.familyservice.us	35 N.Third St. Oxford, 19363	Any age	<b>Counseling:</b> F
Family Service of Chester County-Phoenixville Office	(610) 696-4900 www.familyservice.us	2140 Kimberton Rd. Kimberton, 19442	Any age	<b>Counseling:</b> F
Family Service of Chester County-Coatesville Center for Community Health	(610) 696-4900 www.familyservice.us	1001 E. Lincoln Hwy. Coatesville, 19320	Any age	<b>Counseling:</b> F
Family Service of Chester County-The Center	(610) 696-4900 www.familyservice.us	106 W. State St. Kennett Square, 19348	Any age	<b>Counseling:</b> F
Holcomb Behavioral Health Systems	(610) 363-1488 www.holcombprevention.org	835 Springdale Dr. Suite 100 Exton, 19341	3-18	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>P</b>
Holcomb Behavioral Health Systems (Core Provider)	(610) 388-7400 www.holcombprevention.org	920 E. Baltimore Pike Kennett Square, 19348	1-21	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>
Human Services, Inc. (Core Provider)	(610) 873-1010	744 E. Lincoln Hwy., Suite 410 Coatesville, 19320	3-18	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>
Human Services, Inc. (Core Provider)	(610) 430-6141	410 Boot Rd. Downingtown, 19335	3-18	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>
Human Services, Inc. (Core Provider)	(610) 869-8557	35 N. 3rd Street Oxford, 19363	3-18	<b>Counseling:</b> I, F <b>CB, P</b>

**Counseling Services Codes** - I - Individual • F - Family • G - Group

SAV&O - Sexual Abuse Victims & Offenders • DC - Deaf Community • DD MH/MR - Dually Diagnosed MH/MR

**Other Services Codes** - P - Psychiatric • W - Wraparound • EI - Early Intervention

CB - Community Based • Play - Play Therapy

# WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Name	Phone/Web	Location	Ages	Services
<b>Specialized Services in Chester County</b>				
Chester County Intermediate Unit	(484) 237-5296 www.cciu.org	455 Boot Rd. Downingtown, 19335	1-21	EI, W
The Network for Behavior Change	(610) 383-1432 www.ibr-pa.org	1850 E Lincoln Hwy. Coatesville, 19320	2-18	W
TW Ponessa	(610) 363-5500 www.twponessa.com	390 Waterloo Blvd., Suite 120 Exton, 19341	1-21	W
<b>Berks County Agencies that Accept Chester County Medical Assistance</b>				
CONCERN Professional Services for Children/Youth	(610) 944-0445 www.concern4kids.org	One W. Main St. Fleetwood, 19522	4-18	Counseling: I, F, G P
CONCERN Professional Services for Children/Youth	(610) 944-0445 www.concern4kids.org	1120-B Hobart Ave. Wyomissing, 19610	4-18	Counseling: I, F, G P
<b>Bucks County Agencies that Accept Chester County Medical Assistance</b>				
Bethanna	(215) 355-6500 www.bethanna.org	1030 Second Street Pike Southampton, 18966	4-21	Counseling: I, F, G CB, P
Lenape Valley Foundation	(215) 345-5300 www.lenapevf.org	500 North West St. Doylestown, 18901	3-21	Counseling: I, F CB, P
Lifepath	(215) 257-0471 www.lifepath.org	2 Life Mark Dr. Sellersville, 18960	All ages	DD MH/MR: CB
<b>Delaware County Agencies that Accept Chester County Medical Assistance</b>				
Building Bridges*	(610) 566-4011 www.buildingbridgesmedia.com	36 & 42 E. Front St. Media, 19063	All ages	Counseling: I, F, G P, Play
Child Guidance Resource Center	(484) 454-8700 www.cgrc.org	2000 Old West Chester Pike Havertown, 19083	3-21	Counseling: I, F CB, P
Presbyterian Children's Village	(610) 525-5400 www.pcv.org	452 South Roberts Rd. Rosemont, 19010	3-21	Counseling: I, F, G CB
<b>Montgomery County Agencies that Accept Chester County Medical Assistance</b>				
Creative Health Services, Inc. (Main Office) (BSU)	(610) 326-9250 www.creativehs.org	11 Robinson St. Pottstown, 19464	4-21	Counseling: I, F CB
Milestones Community Health Care, Inc.-Deaf Services Center	(215) 884-9770 www.salisb.com	614 North Easton Rd. Glenside, 19038	All ages	DC Counseling: I, F, G P, W
Lower Merion Counseling Services	(610) 520-1510	850 W. Lancaster Ave. 2nd Fl. Bryn Mawr, 19010	4-18	Counseling: I, F P
<b>Philadelphia Agencies that Accept Chester County Medical Assistance</b>				
Elwyn, Inc. Child Welfare Division	(215) 895-5663 www.elwyn.org	4040 Market St. Philadelphia, 19104	0-18	Counseling: I, F, G
Joseph J. Peters	(215) 701-1560 www.jjp.org	100 S. Broad Street, 17th Floor Philadelphia, 19110	3-18	SAV&O Counseling: I, G P
*Insurance accepted depends on child's therapist.				



**If you have a young child  
with a behavioral health  
concern and you need help  
getting insurance or finding treatment,  
call PCCY 215-563-5848 x17.**



[www.pccy.org](http://www.pccy.org)

**If parents don't like their child's behavioral health provider, they can always change!** Tell parents to find someone they trust to work with their child.

### **DO CHILDREN EVER NEED MEDICATION?**

***NOTE: As a child care provider or worker, you cannot determine whether a child needs treatment or medication. However, you can encourage and help parents to seek appropriate help when needed.***

In most cases, children do not need medications. Behavior re-shaping and changing the environment should be tried first to help children change their challenging behaviors (such as temper tantrums or sleeping difficulties).

For some children, whose behavioral health issues are severe, medications may be helpful. If this is the case, children should be referred to a behavioral health professional, such as a psychiatrist, or their health care provider, for an opinion about medication. **Parents have the right to agree or disagree to give their children medications.**

If medicine is prescribed, parents should understand the risks and benefits of a medicine. Tell parents to talk with their child's doctor before agreeing to give a drug to their child. Parents also need to make sure they are clear about when and how to give their child medication.

**Encourage parents to ask questions!**

### **HOW LONG DO CHILDREN HAVE TO WAIT TO SEE A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER?**

Behavioral health agencies that accept Medical Assistance are required to offer intake appointments within 1 hour if it is an emergency, within 24 hours if it is urgent and within 7 days for a routine assessment. However, at the printing of this resource guide, some agencies had a delay for a first appointment. If an agency you call has a delay, don't be discouraged. Your child might be able to be seen more quickly at another agency.

If your child is insured through Medical Assistance and you experience a delay in scheduling your child's intake appointment, please report this to Community Care Behavioral Health Organization, (1-866-622-4228) immediately. They will assist you in accessing an intake appointment within the required timeframe.

You can call around to different agencies in your area to see which can give you an appointment first. The table on the **yellow pages** details where many outpatient providers are located.

For children who are insured through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or a private insurance company, the allowable wait times vary among agencies.

### **I HAVE AN UNINSURED CHILD IN MY PROGRAM. WHAT CAN I DO?**

If a child is not insured, don't worry. First, call PCCY at 215-563-5848 X 17, for help applying for insurance for children. If you speak a language other than English, PCCY can still help, by connecting you to an interpreter with "Language Line." The Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County (610- 344-5370) also provides hands-on assistance with completing health insurance applications.

Children and adults who do not have insurance can get treatment at one of the Core Providers in Chester County. These centers will treat any county resident. They provide free or very low cost (depending on the family's income) behavioral health treatment. See the **yellow pages** for a listing of these and other centers that accept uninsured children in Chester County.

Remember - most children in Chester County can get health insurance. If your child does not have health insurance, you can call PCCY's confidential Child Health Watch hotline at 215-563-5848 x17, to apply for insurance over the phone. You can also go to your neighborhood County Assistance Office (welfare office) and apply in person. The Chester County Assistance phone number is 610-466-1000, and it is located at 100 James Buchanan Drive, Thorndale, PA 19372. If you have Internet access you can apply for health insurance on COMPASS at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)

## **What if my Child is Uninsurable?**

Even if your child is uninsurable because of immigration status, Core Providers must treat your child. These services will either be free or very low cost, depending on your income. See the map on the **yellow pages** for a listing of these Core Providers.

If your child is uninsurable, and is experiencing an emergency medical condition, your child may be eligible for Emergency Medical Assistance (EMA). EMA is available to people who, besides their immigration status, would be eligible for insurance through Medical Assistance. Please contact the Pennsylvania Health Law Project at (800)274-3258, for more information and assistance regarding EMA.

**For children with developmental delays, providers and parents can also get help from the following agencies:**

### **For Children Birth – Three years old:**

Chester County Early Intervention Service  
Coordination Unit  
(610) 344-5948

### **For Children Three – Five years old:**

Chester County Intermediate Unit (IU)  
(484) 237-5150 or (484) 237-5183

## **A CHILD'S INSURANCE DOESN'T COVER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES. WHAT CAN I DO?**

Even if a child has insurance, they sometimes have a hard time getting the behavioral health services they need. Don't worry. There are solutions to this problem. If a child has private insurance or CHIP and a serious behavioral health problem, there is a good chance he or she will be eligible for Medicaid. To find out more, call PCCY at (215) 563-5848 x17.

## WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS HELP GETTING TO THERAPY?

All children insured through Medical Assistance can get help with transportation to health appointments. In order to get this service you must have an ACCESS card (a yellow card with blue print, issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare), which you receive when you enroll in Medical Assistance. Through the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP), you can receive free transportation or be reimbursed for travel expenses, to approved medical facilities and treatments.

For more information or to apply for the transportation program, call ROVER Community Transportation at (610) 594-3911 or 1 (877) 873-8415, and tell the person who answers the phone that you want to apply for MATP. To receive transportation you have to complete Section I of the Medical Assistance Transportation Program Application and have your physician complete and sign Section II.



Paratransit service is available in a limited area of the county through the Surrey Club, a volunteer organization providing low-cost transportation. Call (610) 993-9493, for eligibility and scheduling information.

The Chester County Intermediate Unit provides transportation for students who are pregnant or are parents and have children younger than three years old. Eligible students must be enrolled in the Young Parents Program by referrals from their school district. Enrolled individuals can arrange for medical-related transportation with 48-hour advance notice. Contact your school district for more information.

## **CHIP AND PRIVATE INSURANCE: Behavioral Health Insurance Plan Phone Numbers:**

Most children with private insurance or CHIP in Chester County have commercial Magellan as their behavioral health provider, but there may be exceptions. The best way to find your child's behavioral health plan is to look on the back of his/her insurance card where the behavioral health insurance company is usually listed. If you cannot find your child's card, listed below are many health insurance companies that serve Chester County children and the phone numbers for their behavioral health insurance plan. You can call these numbers to request a list of behavioral health providers and services for which your child is eligible.

The **CHIP** insurance companies in this region are Aetna, AmeriChoice and Keystone Health Plan East (which is through Independence Blue Cross' Caring Foundation).

**Aetna:** 1(800) 755-2422

**AmeriChoice (through Magellan):** 1(888) 207-2911

**Keystone Health Plan East:** 1(800) 688-1911

### **Private Insurance:**

If you have private insurance in southeastern PA, you probably use one of the companies below. Here is a list with their most direct phone numbers for behavioral health services:

**Aetna:** 1(800) 424-1580

**Cigna:** 1(800) 926-2273

**Independence Blue Cross  
(Personal Choice):**

(215) 569-8189 (enrollment)

**Oxford:** 1(800) 201-6991

**TRICARE (Health Net):**

1(877) TRICARE,  
(1-877-874-2273)

**United Health Care:** 1(800) 562-2532



## PARENTING CLASSES

*The following agencies offer parenting classes that cover a wide range of issues including early child development, tantrums, limit setting and discipline, etc.\**

### **Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County (MCHC)**

(610) 344-5370

[www.ccmchc.org](http://www.ccmchc.org)

MCHC provides the county's only Spanish-language prenatal education program, called Comenzando Bien (Healthy Beginning). The classes meet weekly for 2 hours over a 6-week period and conclude with a tour of a local hospital's maternity unit. Comenzando Bien is facilitated by a bilingual, bi-cultural nurse who has worked in hospitals in Mexico and the United States. MCHC also offers a very similar program to English speakers.

### **Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance**

1(800)448-4906

[www.pennsylvaniafamilysupportalliance.org](http://www.pennsylvaniafamilysupportalliance.org)

This organization can help connect parents to parenting classes statewide (just tell them your county and they can find a number of classes in your area).

### **YWCA Chester County**

(610) 692-3737

[www.ywcachesco.org](http://www.ywcachesco.org)

123 North Church Street, West Chester, PA 19380

The YWCA offers a variety of classes and workshops for women and children, including a single mother's support group and a workshop for mothers transitioning into parenting.



## PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

*The following is a list of groups and organizations that can support families who have children with developmental, behavioral and/or social-emotional health needs.*

### **Child & Family Focus, Inc.**

(610) 783-1788 x238

[www.childandfamilyfocus.org](http://www.childandfamilyfocus.org)

Among other services, Child & Family Focus, Inc. offers a county funded Family Outreach Program to Chester County families whose children have emotional or behavioral disorders and are involved in any of the child-serving systems. A family mentor helps the family toward self-empowerment to obtain the necessary services for the child; assists the family in working to keep the child safely and productively in the home, school and community or assists the family in transition when a child must go to an out-of-home placement.

### **Children & Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)**

(610) 429-4060 (Chester County CHADD)

[www.chadd.net](http://www.chadd.net)

CHADD is the nation's leading non-profit organization serving individuals with AD/HD and their families. Chapters offer support for individuals, parents, teachers, professionals, and others through group meetings and events.

### **Kennett Square Family Center**

(610) 925-4631

637 Millers Hill, Kennett Square, PA 19348

Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County (MCHC) has established a Family Center in Kennett Square to provide home visiting and parent education to families with young children aged 2-5 years old to promote early childhood development. The Family Center helps families with personal in-home visits, parent education and support groups, health insurance enrollment and resource referrals.

### **NAMI-CAN Support Program for Parents**

(610)293-1422

<http://chester.nami.org/>

NAMI-CAN is a support group for parents of children and adolescents with behavioral health needs. NAMI has a Chester County local housed in West Chester.

### **Parent to Parent of Pennsylvania**

1 (888) 727-2706

[www.parenttoparent.org](http://www.parenttoparent.org)

Parent to Parent is a statewide peer support network for parents and caregivers who are caring for children with behavioral health concerns, physical or developmental disabilities, special health care needs, foster care/adoption and educational issues.

## PARENT RESOURCES

### **The Arc of Chester County**

900 Lawrence Drive, West Chester, PA 1938  
(610) 696-8090

[www.arcofchestercounty.org](http://www.arcofchestercounty.org)

Arc is an advocacy organization that supports families who have family members with intellectual and related disabilities.

Specifically related to children, Arc assists families in navigating the special education system and connects families to peers, supports and recreational activities for their children.

### **The Center for Autism**

3905 Ford Road, Suite 6  
Philadelphia, PA 19131  
(215) 878-3400

[www.autismhelp.org](http://www.autismhelp.org)

The Center provides information and services for families with a child on the autism spectrum. Some of what the Center offers includes Specialized Autism Services (SAS), evaluation services, professional consultation and family support services.



### **Chester County C/FST (Healthchoices)**

930 East Lancaster Ave., Exton, PA 19341  
(610) 594-9740

CST is a team of mental health consumers and family members of consumers who are assessing the quality of mental health care in Chester County. They meet with consumers, providers, Community Care Behavioral Health Organization (CCBH) and the Chester County Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation to share information and make recommendations for improvements.

### **Children & Adult Disability & Educational Services (CADES)**

401 Rutgers Avenue, Swarthmore, PA 19081  
(610) 328-5955

[www.cadeservices.org](http://www.cadeservices.org)

CADES aims to empower people with disabilities to reach their highest potential through disability and educational services like the Linda Joy Gross Center for Child Development. The Center serves children with one or more developmental delays through the Preschool Program for children ages 3-5, and through the Infant-Toddler Program for children ages 0-3. No fees are charged to families for either of these programs.

### **CONNECT Information and Referral Service**

1(800)692-7288

CONNECT Information and Referral Services provides information to parents with concerns regarding a child's development. A list of materials can be obtained by calling the 800 number. Children birth through three years old can be referred to their early intervention agency by CONNECT's electronic mail system. To get information about referring a child over the age of three for an evaluation or to receive information about preschool Early Intervention services, contact Consultline at (800) 879-2301.

### **The Institute for Safe Families**

[www.instituteforsafefamilies.org](http://www.instituteforsafefamilies.org)

The Institute for Safe Families has developed and is piloting and evaluating a curriculum on family safety for early childhood education providers, integrating the curriculum into early childhood education programs, incorporating the curriculum into the core body of knowledge and other credentialing materials, and working with providers to further disseminate information and messages about family safety and family violence in the early childhood education setting.

### **Parent Education Network (PEN)**

1(800)522-5827

[www.parentednet.org](http://www.parentednet.org)

PEN is part of a national system of Parent Training and Information Centers (PTIs), and is made up of professionals and parents of children representing a range of disabilities and ages. PEN provides technical assistance, information, skill development trainings, workshops and referral services to parents to help children reach their full potential in educational, vocational and community settings.

### **RecCare, Inc.**

(215) 886-0880

[www.reccare.com](http://www.reccare.com)

RecCare provides direct care services to individuals with various social, emotional and developmental challenges, chronic conditions or special needs. RecCare also has staff development classes, presentations, and pre-service/in-service trainings available to agencies, providers, caregivers and health and human services workers. The focus of RecCare is to assist clients in their discovery of the use of constructive leisure time and to broaden or develop recreational skills.

## **Southeastern Pennsylvania Autism Resource Center (SPARC)**

(610) 430-5678

[www.wcupa.edu/SPARC](http://www.wcupa.edu/SPARC)

At SPARC, services are available for families with children, adolescents and young adults from 2 to approximately 25 years of age who are diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Families can receive diagnostic services, behavioral therapeutic services, feeding evaluations and treatment, consultative services and peer mentoring through SPARC. All therapeutic services are free for service.

## **HELPFUL INTERNET SITES**

### **Chester County Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation**

<http://dsf.chesco.org/mhmr/site/default.asp>

This link will take you directly to the page where you can connect to the offices of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and to the Early Intervention program.

### **Chester County Intermediate Unit**

[www.cciu.org](http://www.cciu.org)

This website offers information about Chester County's Intermediate Unit services and programs.

### **Child Trauma Academy**

[www.childtrauma.org](http://www.childtrauma.org)

The Child Trauma Academy, a not-for-profit organization based in Houston, Texas, is a unique collaborative of individuals and organizations working to improve the lives of high-risk children through direct service, research and education.



## **Community Care Behavioral Health**

[www.ccbh.com](http://www.ccbh.com)

Community Care Behavioral Health (CCBH) is the contracted behavioral health insurance organization for Medical Assistance clients in Chester County. CCBH, along with parents, county officials and others, has created a Chester County Autism Handbook. For a copy of the handbook please call the Community Care Chester County Customer Service line at 1-866-622-4228.

CCBH has also created an Autism Support Line for families and caregivers. The Autism Support Line can be reached at 1-866-415-1708, and is available to all CCBH members who have questions about accessing services for children with Autism.

## **COMPASS**

<https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/compass>

You can find your way to health and social services in Pennsylvania, in a variety of languages.

## **Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania (DRN)**

<http://drnpa.org/>

DRN strives to advance and protect the civil rights of adults and children with disabilities. DRN works with people with disabilities and their families to ensure their rights to live in their communities with the services they need, to receive a full and inclusive education, to live free of discrimination, abuse and neglect, and to have control and self-determination over their services.

## **Division for Early Childhood- The Council for Exceptional Children**

[www.dec-sped.org](http://www.dec-sped.org)

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) is especially for individuals who work with or on behalf of children with special needs, birth through age eight, and their families. DEC promotes policies and advances evidence-based practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities.

## **Education Law Center**

[www.elc-pa.org](http://www.elc-pa.org)

The Education Law Center is a non-profit legal advocacy and educational organization, dedicated to ensuring that all of Pennsylvania's children have access to a quality public education.

## **Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania (MHASP)**

<http://www.mhasp.org>

MHASP is a citizens' organization that supports education and advocacy programs for children and families with mental illness.

### **National Child Traumatic Stress Network**

[www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)

The mission of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network is to raise the standard of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, their families and communities throughout the United States.

### **Pennsylvania Health Law Project (PHLP)**

[www.phlp.org](http://www.phlp.org)

PHLP provides free legal services and advocacy to Pennsylvanians having trouble accessing publicly funded health care coverage or services.



### **Pennsylvania Yellow Pages for Kids**

[www.yellowpagesforkids.com](http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com)

Find professionals in the fields of education, healthcare, law and advocacy for children with disabilities, on the Yellow Pages for Kids for your state. You will also find special education schools, learning centers, treatment programs, parent groups, respite care, community centers, grassroots organizations, and government programs here.

### **Public Citizens for Children and Youth**

[www.pccy.org](http://www.pccy.org)

PCCY is an advocacy group dedicated to improving the lives of children in Southeastern Pennsylvania. PCCY's Child Healthwatch hotline is a phone line to call for help with applying for Medical Assistance or CHIP, and for help locating health care services whether or not your child has health insurance.

### **Talaris**

[www.talaris.org](http://www.talaris.org)

Talaris is a research institute that provides general information for parents about child development from birth to age five. This website features a research-based developmental timeline organized by the child's age.

### **Zero to Three**

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

Zero to Three is a national nonprofit multidisciplinary organization that conducts research, offers trainings and develops publications to support and inform adults working with infants and toddlers.



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**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**



**Public Citizens for Children and Youth**  
Seven Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Sixth Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215-563-5848  
info@pccy.org / [www.pccy.org](http://www.pccy.org)