

Mental Health and Behavioral Health Services for My Child

Waiting for Services

In most parts of Wisconsin there are not enough mental health providers to serve every child who could benefit from their services. This means that families may experience some wait time before their child can be evaluated or be seen by a mental health or behavior health provider.

What Can Families Do While Waiting for Services?

While waiting for formal services can be frustrating, parents/family members can be actively involved in finding programs and informal services. **You can also advocate for your child and do what you can to get your child off the wait list.** Below are some ideas for families as they wait:

- If you are waiting for an appointment, ask if you can be put on a cancellation list. You should also call back regularly to see where your child is on the wait list. If you are waiting for private therapy, ask about other options like group therapy or support groups.
- Talk to your child's school social worker or school psychologist about incorporating some supports into the school day. School may be able to access a behavioral consultant who can work with your child and their teacher during the school day.
- Look for supports in your community that can help you and your child while you wait for more formal therapy services. The **Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs** or **Wisconsin Family Ties** (see contact information on page 2) can help you find local groups and supports.
- Connect with your **County Human Services Department** to learn about county-based supports, including "wraparound" services or contact **Well Badger Resource Center at 1-800-642-7837**.
- Connect with other families either in person or online. Other families can share their experiences and help you learn about resources, providers and programs. Parent to Parent of WI (P2P) is a statewide program that matches families who have a child with similar needs or who live in the same area. See page 2 for contact information for Parent-to-Parent.

If your child is in crisis there are programs to help your child and family that do not have wait lists. Your child's primary care doctor and clinic can help you find crisis mental health programs.

This fact sheet was developed by Family Voices of Wisconsin - www.familyvoiceswi.org
in partnership with the WI Office of Children's Mental Health - children.wi.gov

What Can Families Do While Waiting for Services – page 2



- Connect with **Mental Health Organizations**. They can provide assistance and connect you with resources, local groups and events. Examples include:
 - **NAMI Wisconsin** - www.namiwisconsin.org or **1.800.236.2988**
 - **Mental Health America of WI** - www.mhawisconsin.org or **1.866.948.6483**

- Connect with **Family Support Organizations**. These organizations are staffed by parents/family members who have children with special needs. They can help you learn about trainings, conferences and listservs so you can stay informed and educated about programs and services for children with special needs.
 - **Wisconsin Family Ties** at **1.800.422.7145** has information and referral specialists as well as parent peer specialists who can meet with a family and provide one-on-one support.
 - **Parent to Parent of WI (P2P)** at **1.888.266.0028** connects parents 1-on-1 who have children with similar conditions or live in the same area. Parent matches can be short term (a few phone calls) or long-term relationships.
 - **WI FACETS** at **1.877.374.0511** provides individual assistance, telephone training workshops and resources for families related to your child's education.
 - **Family Voices of Wisconsin** at **608.220.9598** hosts face-to-face and online training sessions to help families learn about insurance coverage, health care and community supports and services.

If you have questions or need help finding services contact the following agencies:

- **Regional Centers for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs**, a network of five centers dedicated to supporting families who have children with special needs - dhs.wisconsin.gov/cyshcn/regionalcenters.htm
- **Well Badger Resource Center**, a health information and referral resource and hotline, at **1-800-642-7837** or wellbadger.org
- **The Behavioral Health Treatment Locator: 1-800-662-HELP** or findtreatment.samhsa.gov, provides a listing of mental health and behavioral health providers and services in your area.