



CAPITAL AREA HUMAN SERVICES DISTRICT

Information for Parents, Schools, Community and the Media

Identifying and Seeking Help for Children with Emotional Problems

When to Seek Help for Your Child

Parents and teachers are usually the first to recognize that a child has a problem with emotions or behavior. Still, the decision to seek professional help can be difficult and painful for a parent. The first step is to gently try to talk to the child. An honest open talk about feelings can often help. It is important to note that listening to your child is often more important than “talking to” your child. Parents may choose to consult with the child’s physician, teachers, members of the clergy, or other adults who know the child well.

The following may indicate that help from a sensitive and caring licensed behavioral health professional is needed. **It is important to note that sudden or gradual changes in your child’s behavior or mood should raise some level of concern, particularly if these do not resolve within two weeks.**

- Marked decline in school performance
- Severe worry or anxiety, or chooses not to take part in activities that are normal for the child's age
- Frequent physical complaints – stomach ache or headaches
- Hyperactivity, impulsive behaviors
- Changes in sleep patterns, such as difficulty falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much
- Marked changes in eating habits, such as a sudden decrease in appetite or weight loss
- Prolonged sad, negative, or angry moods
- Difficulty with concentration, poor attention, forgetfulness
- Clingy behaviors; difficulty separating from caregivers
- Persistent disobedience or aggressive behavior toward teachers or other adults in authority
- Frequent, unexplainable temper tantrums
- Threatens to harm (self cutting) or to kill oneself or others
- Complains persistently of being bullied
- Displays physically aggressive behaviors, such as fighting or property destruction
- Delinquent behaviors such as truancy, theft, vandalism
- Strange, unusual, bizarre thoughts or beliefs

If problems persist or if others involved in the child's life are concerned, then consider seeking a consultation with a licensed mental health professional, such as a social worker, psychologist or child/adolescent psychiatrist. Your child’s physician or pediatrician can also make a referral for your child.

CAPITAL AREA HUMAN SERVICES DISTRICT
4615 Government St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

REFERRAL PHONE
225-925-1906
800-768-8824

WEB
www.CAHSO.org

What types of treatment are available?

Effective treatment approaches are available. Psychosocial therapies are also called “talk therapies” or “behavioral therapy,” and they can help children and adolescents change behaviors. Play therapy may also be helpful with younger children. Family and parent therapies that teach parents and children coping strategies can also be effective.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of therapy that can be used with children. It has been widely studied and is an effective treatment for a number of conditions and is especially useful when treating depression and anxiety in children and adolescents. Additionally, therapies for Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are numerous and include behavioral parent training and behavioral classroom management.

Some children may benefit from a combination of “therapy” approaches used with medication. A psychiatrist or physician would talk with you about any recommendations for medication for your child. If medication is recommended, he or she would also discuss potential benefits and side effects to help you with your decision.

Where can a parent go for help?

- Capital Area Human Services District (CAHSD) Children’s Behavioral Health Services: (225) 922-0445
 - The CAHSD Children’s Behavioral Health Service provides outpatient services to children ages 6 through 17. A social worker screens, assesses and treats children and adolescents who have an emotional/behavioral or co-occurring disorder. These children are referred to the clinic in Baton Rouge for psychiatric evaluation and medication management.
- Capital Area Human Services District Crisis Line
 - 24-Hour Children’s Crisis Team: (225) 922-0445 or 1-866-392-4692
 - The Child-Adolescent Response Team (CART) at Capital Area Human Services District (CAHSD) is a 24 hour, 7 day a week, 365 day a year mobile crisis response team.
- School Guidance Counselor
- Available on CAHSD website www.cahsd.org
- BR Crisis Intervention Center
 - 24 Hour Crisis Line (225) 924-3900 or (800) 437-0303
- Counseling and Prevention Emergency Referral Guide for Behavioral Health
 - Available on CAHSD website at www.cahsd.org

***Serving the parishes of Ascension, East and West Baton Rouge, Iberville,
Pointe Coupee, and East and West Feliciana***