



Your Mental Health Matters

Let's talk about wellness.



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
Early Childhood
Education

Your Mental Health Matters

- *What is Mental Health?*
- *What are the early warning signs of stress and anxiety?*
- *What are wellness techniques to improve your Mental Health?*
- *What Mental Health supports are available to me?*

When you hear the words Mental Health what's the first thing that comes to your mind?



What is Mental Health?

- *Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act.*
- *It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.*
- *Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood, and adolescence through adulthood.*

The Mental Health impact on our State

- According to the 2021 Alabama Children's Policy Council Needs Assessment reports. Mental Health was identified as the #1 pressing issue in the State of Alabama.
- All 67 County CPC's identified Mental Health as the top issue in their reports.

60% of the CPC Needs Assessments identified Children ages 9 to 17 as the population with the greatest mental health needs in the state.

38% of the CPC Needs Assessments identified Adults ages 18 to 54 as the population with the 2nd greatest mental health needs in the state.

2% of the CPC Needs Assessments identified Children ages 1 to 8 as the population with the 3rd greatest mental health needs in the state.

What are the early warning signs of stress and anxiety?



STRESS VS. ANXIETY

Stress

- Stress is a physical or mental tension in response to a trigger.
- Triggers can be something external, like an event that happens to you, or from something internal, like your own thoughts.
- We typically feel stress at a level that's in proportion to the trigger that's causing it

Anxiety

- Anxiety is often a response to fear, uncertainty, or doubts we have about something that's causing us stress.
- Anxiety takes a trigger and turns it into bigger worries.
- Anxiety disorders do not stop when the external stressor stops and may even end up causing additional stressors.



Stress can look like.....

- *Stress- is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand or threat. Whether it's real or imagined. It kicks your body into a fight or flight stress response.*
- *Your heart rate and blood pressure rise*
- *Breathing speeds up*
- *Muscle tension*
- *Lack of sleep- due to alertness*

Anxiety can look like..... Children

- More Clingy
- Rebellious
- Lack of Focus
- Negative thoughts or worries

Difficulty Sleeping

Outburst- Angry or Crying

Avoidance

restless or fidgety



Anxiety can look like..... Adults

- *Unable to enjoy the moment*
- *Obsessively thinking the same thoughts over and over*
- *Stressing for hours on things that take minutes to do.*
- *Feeling overwhelmed by a list of small task*
- *Overthinking your social interactions*
- *Feeling like everything is too much to process.*
- *Nervous habits like biting your lip and nails*
- *Difficulty asking for things.*
- *Worrying over others' feelings when they hurt you.*



What are wellness techniques to improve your Mental Health?

- Get outdoors/exercise/Eat well/Drink Water
- Be present and focus on the moment/Deep Breathing
- Talk about your feelings/ Write your feelings down in a diary/journal
- Learn a new hobby/Do something you are good at/ Draw
- Listen to music/ Read a book/ Take a nap/Take a Break/Vacation
- Play with a pet / Connect with others
- Think Positive/ Be grateful/ Pray
- Watch a funny movie
- Accept who you are – Practice Self Love
- Do something nice for someone else.
- Get professional mental health help if you need it.

What Mental Health supports are available to me?

- *Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority* – has School-Based Mental Health, traditional in-office outpatient programs, care coordination, and in-home services in each of the counties within our service area (Montgomery, Lowndes, Autauga, and Elmore).
- School-Based programs serve every school within Lowndes County Public Schools, Elmore County Public Schools, and Autauga County Public Schools. We serve 21 of the Montgomery Public Schools.
- Those MPS schools served include: Dalraida Elementary, Goodwyn Middle, Carr Middle, Park Crossing High, Davis Elementary, Dannelly Elementary, Fitzpatrick Elementary, McKee Middle, Bellingrath Middle, Brewbaker Middle, Southlawn Middle, Jefferson Davis High, Lanier Sr. High, TS Morris Elementary, Crump Elementary, Chisholm Elementary, Morningview Elementary, Wares Ferry Elementary, Capitol Heights Middle, Carver High, and Robert E. Lee High.
- MAMHA is in the hiring process to begin our School-Based Collaboration with Pike Road Schools.

What Mental Health supports are available to me?

- *Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority continued*
- **Once a school counselor identifies a student who may benefit from screening for mental health services, they speak with parents and ask for consent to submit a referral. In some cases, a student who is age 14+ may not wish for their parent to be involved or knowledgeable of their services.**
- **Alabama law requires that students age 14+ provide their consent for services and, unless in a Crisis situation with imminent danger to self or others, we are required to have a signed release of information from the student to speak anyone else about their services – including parents.**
- **If a parent wishes to have their child enrolled in the school-based program, the parent will need to speak with the school counselor to determine if they would be willing submit a School-Based referral. If a student is interested and does not want their parents involved, they may speak with the school counselor to determine if they are willing to submit the referral.**

What Mental Health supports are available to me?

- **Mental Health Authority Continued**
- The highest level of care that we offer is our In-Home Programs. We have three In-Home Team programs which may be referred to after an intake assessment is conducted or anytime thereafter during mental health treatment when it is determined that this would be the least restrictive level of care and is necessary to prevent out-of-home placement.
- This two-person team is comprised of a Masters level Mental Health Therapist and a Bachelors level Co-Therapist, who work together to treat the child/youth's behavioral needs, address the family's ability to provide effective support for the child/youth and enhance the family's capacity to improve the child/youth's functioning in the home and community. Each In-Home team may not serve more than 6 families at a time.
- These Intensive In-Home services are time-limited (12 – 16 weeks) and are provided primarily in the home and in community areas in which the youth spends much of their time. They provide Individual Therapy, Family Therapy, Psychoeducation, Basic Living Skills, Medication Monitoring, and Mental Health Care Coordination, and have 24-hour availability for Crisis Intervention. Typically, families receive 2-4 visits from the team weekly during the duration of services and regular "check-ins" via telephone.
- Previously, MAMHA In-Home teams were restricted to their own specific counties (Montgomery/Lowndes, Elmore, and Autauga teams), however, to reduce the likelihood of a waiting list for these programs we are in process of receiving approval from the Department of Mental Health to expand the service area to any of the counties within our catchment area. In the meantime, we have successfully received waivers from the Department of Mental Health on a case-by-case basis for children who live in a county whose designated team may be unavailable.
- now have a Certified Level 1 Outpatient Adolescent Substance Use Program, in addition to our two new adult substance use programs.
- MAMHA is in the process of re-branding, with our new name to be revealed soon.
- Jessica Douglas, Director of Children's Services, Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority -334-279-7830

What Mental Health supports are available to me?

- State and Local Resources available:
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- Mental Health Service Coordinators in schools
- Whole Child Wellness Teams Birth – PreK (Mental Health Consultants)
 - For childcare centers call APC and ask for Beth Jones or Rebecca Babineaux 334-271-0304
 - For First Class Pre-K, teachers can ask their coach to request mental health support
- Crisis Centers
 - AltaPointe: 251-450-2211
 - Montgomery Mental Health Authority: 334-279-7830 (MOBILE CRISIS UNIT is in operation now)
 - WellStone: 256-705-6444 (MOBILE CRISIS UNIT is in operation now)
 - Jefferson, Blount, St. Clair Behavioral Services: Will open Summer 2022
- PIRC (psychiatric intake response center): 205-638-7472 – any adult can call concerning a child or adolescent
- Child Parent Psychotherapy Providers (Birth to 6y and families)
 - Call Dallas Rabig at 334-430-9340 for more information on how to locate a provider or to become a provider
- Training on the DC: 0-5 (diagnostic classification of mental health and developmental disorders of infancy and early childhood)
 - Call Dallas Rabig at 334-430-9340
- Parent Support Training
 - Tish MacInnis 334-271-0304
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- Advanced learning career path in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
 - Troy University 800-414-5756 <https://www.troy.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate/counseling-certificates.html>
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- **Scholarships are now available for the FALL 2022 Cohort!!**
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What Mental Health supports are available to me?

- Youth Mental Health First Aid Classes and Certifications are available for adults who work with children.
- Jennifer Bafford - Program Director - 334-262-1629 ext. 1002 or cell 334-573-1508 (COSA - Mental Health First Aid Instructor)



Thank you!

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