

Figuring out the right place to refer students to behavioral health services can be a big challenge.

Below are the outpatient behavioral health services for youth in the County of San Diego. There are 7 different ways to access care.

1. SchoolLink (County-Funded School-Based Behavioral Health Services)
2. County-funded Community-Based Behavioral Health Providers
3. Medi-Cal Health Plans
4. Private Insurance
5. Federally Qualified Health Centers
6. Primary Care Providers
7. Special Education Related Services

If a student is experiencing a behavioral health crisis, call 911 or the Access & Crisis Line at 888-724-7240.

Access to Care #1

SchoolLink: County-Funded School-Based Behavioral Health Services

Overview

- Services are provided at no or low cost to the family as authorized by the behavioral health provider's contract with the County of San Diego.
- No one is turned away due to inability to pay.
- Services can be provided during or outside of school hours, on-campus or in a community setting, based on the student's and family's needs.
- Located at schools with a significant number of Medi-Cal and uninsured students.
- Some programs focus on treating substance use disorders as the primary need, while others require that the student has a primary mental health disorder.



Eligibility Criteria

Meets medical necessity criteria for specialty mental health services or Drug Medi-Cal. For more information, go to:

- [Title 9 Medical Necessity Criteria](#)
- [Title 22 Diagnosis Medical Necessity DSM](#)

In a nutshell:

- Student has a mental health or substance use diagnosis
- The behavioral health disorder is or will impair an important area of life functioning
- There is a reasonable expectation that intervention will help
- Medi-Cal enrolled or low income and uninsured or underinsured youth up to 21 years old

How to Access

- Submit [SchoolLink referral form](#) to designated contact on campus.

Access to Care #2

County-funded Community-Based Mental Health Providers

Overview

- Services are provided at no or low cost to the family as authorized by the behavioral health provider's contract with the County of San Diego.
- Services can be provided by an organizational (clinic) or fee for service (private clinician) provider.
- No one is turned away due to inability to pay.
- Services are provided in a community setting.
- Some programs focus on treating substance use disorders as the primary need, while others require that the student has a primary mental health disorder.

Eligibility Criteria

- Meets medical necessity criteria for specialty mental health services or Drug Medi-Cal. For more information, go to:
 - [Title 9 Medical Necessity Criteria](#)
 - [Title 22 Diagnosis Medical Necessity DSM](#)

In a nutshell:

- Student has a mental health or substance use diagnosis
- The behavioral health disorder is or will impair an important area of life functioning
- There is a reasonable expectation that intervention will help
- Medi-Cal enrolled or low income and uninsured or underinsured youth up to 21 years old

How to Access:

Call the **San Diego County Access & Crisis Line** at **888-724-7240** to ask for the closest providers by zip code.

Access to Care #3

Medi-Cal Health Plans



Overview

Medi-Cal health plans can help their members identify a behavioral health provider in their network.



Eligibility Criteria

Eligible services, participating providers, and related co-pays will depend on the Medi-Cal health plan.



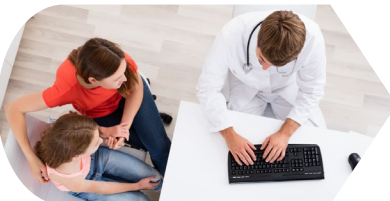
How to Access:

Encourage or help the parent call their child's Medi-Cal health plan. Most Medi-Cal insurance cards list a separate phone number for behavioral health services.

- Aetna: 855-772-9076
- Care1st: 855-321-2211
- Community Health Group: 800-404-3332
- HealthNet: 888-426-0030
- Kaiser Permanente: 877-496-0450
- Molina Healthcare: 888-665-4621
- UnitedHealthcare: 866-270-5785

Access to Care #4

Private Insurance



Overview

Private insurance plans, often provided through a parent's employer, can help their members identify a behavioral health provider in their network.



Eligibility Criteria

Eligible services, participating providers, and related co-pays will depend on the Medi-Cal health plan.



How to Access:

Encourage or help the parent call their child's insurance plan. Most insurance cards list a separate phone number for behavioral health services.

Access to Care #5

Federally Qualified Health Centers

Overview

Many federally qualified health centers (also known as community health centers) provide no or low cost behavioral health services.

Eligibility Criteria

- For Medi-Cal enrolled or eligible youth, services are provided at no cost to the family as authorized by the Medi-Cal managed care plan.
- For uninsured youth, community health centers offer behavioral health services on a discounted sliding fee scale based on the family's income and size.

How to Access

- Search online at: <https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>
- Call 211 San Diego to ask for the closest federally qualified health center with behavioral health services.

Access to Care #6

Primary Care Providers



Overview

Primary care providers can provide behavioral health services and/or refer their patients for care.



Eligibility Criteria

Eligible services and related co-pays will depend on the provider and the students' insurance.



How to Access:

Encourage or help the parent call their child's insurance plan. Most insurance cards list a separate phone number for behavioral health services.

Access to Care #7

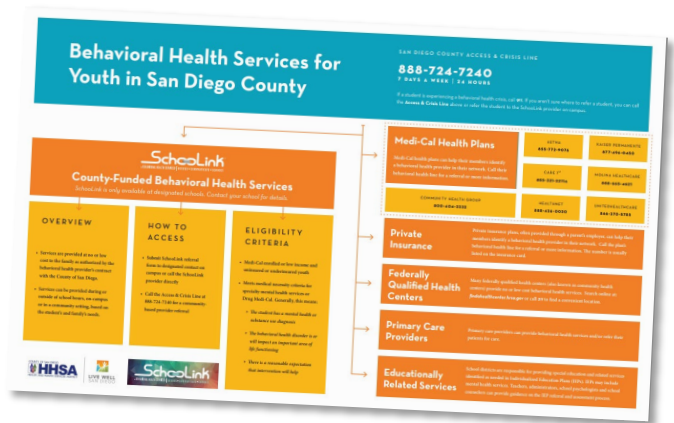
Special Education Related Services

See **Module 8: Special Education**, for eligibility and referral information for special education related behavioral health services.

Behavioral Health Services Posters

Click here for a printable poster that details the ways to access behavioral health services for youth in San Diego County.

For individual posters in each threshold language, please visit the "Resources" page on the website.



Key Point

There are multiple ways students can access behavioral health services, all of which depend on their family income, insurance status, and symptoms. When in doubt, school staff can refer students to a SchoolLink provider on their campus.

They will assess the student and can initiate treatment or coordinate further referrals if needed.

If a school does not have a SchoolLink provider, the family can be referred to the Access & Crisis Line at 888-724-7240 to connect to care.

Resources

- San Diego County Access & Crisis Line at 888-724-7240
- San Diego County Medi-Cal Program website

Key Terms

Behavioral health services: A continuum of prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery support services for mental health and substance use.

County-funded: Services funded through the County of San Diego's Health & Human Services Agency's Behavioral Health Services Division.

Provider: Unless otherwise specified, a County-funded behavioral health provider.

Administrative Information

For administrative information or to provide feedback about the SchoolLink training program, please email BHSContactUs.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov with subject line: SchoolLink or call 619-563-2700 and ask to speak with the Deputy Director of Behavioral Health Services for Children, Youth, and Families.