

What papers will the parent/guardian be asked to sign?

- Interagency Team Meeting summary.
- Treatment plan.
- MA97 Waiver, sent to DPW for TSS.
- Release of information, if information is requested to help in coordination of services with other systems/agencies.
- Encounter forms. When a service is given the staff will ask that the parent/guardian sign an encounter form.

A parent/guardian should NEVER sign any form that is not completely filled out and explained to them.

Informed Consent for Release of Information

A parent/guardian SHOULD ALWAYS read any evaluation, discharge report or progress note, anything, that is going to be provided to another agency/school or system on their child and family, and then decide if it should or should not be sent. A parent/guardian needs to understand what information needs to be released, to whom that information is going, the reason for the information to be released, and why it is needed. Remember that there may be some very personal information in the reports that does not need to be shared with anyone beside the therapist for the child to have a good plan.

How long will a child need wraparound services?

The length of wraparound services will depend on the severity of the problem and the response of the child to services. Some children only need help getting through a difficult period, while others require a longer period of time to learn new ways of coping and behaving. If a child shows significant progress and the symptoms have been alleviated, services can be gradually reduced and discontinued. Generally, services will last at least four months.

Who should the parent/guardian contact if there is a problem?

If a parent/guardian feels the wraparound services are not helping the child, they should speak to the child's wraparound staff as well as the behavioral health provider agency. Ideally, an Interagency Team Meeting, which a parent/guardian can ask for, should be requested to discuss the child's current needs and response to wraparound services. A plan for alternative services or adjustments in current services can be made during the Interagency Team Meeting.

The behavioral health provider agency should also give the parent/guardian the name of someone to contact at the agency if they have a problem or question. The provider agency should also give the parent/guardian information about what to do if there is an emergency, or who to contact if there is a problem or a complaint.

If the parent/guardian has difficulty contacting or working with their provider agency, or they need further assistance they should call their County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program (MH/MR) and ask if their county has a family or child advocate who could help them. If not, a parent/guardian should speak to someone at their County MH/MR Program for assistance.

REMEMBER

A parent/guardian is the child's best advocate. Parents/guardians should stay involved, ask questions and understand how the services their child is receiving are provided and monitored. Keep in mind that although everyone, i.e., the family, agency staff, teachers, etc. want the child to be successful, the parent/guardian knows the child best. They should always be an active participant in the planning, implementation and oversight of the child's treatment plan.

A Parent's Guide to Pennsylvania's Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS)/"Wraparound Services" Funded by Medical Assistance

Pennsylvania's Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP)

Pennsylvania's Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) and Principles set the standards for the children's mental health system which offers a full continuum of treatment services and supports for children who have serious emotional, behavioral or mental disorders. CASSP assures that services are provided in a resiliency based system of care for children and their families and that the services are planned collaboratively with the child's family and any other systems/agencies involved.

BHRS/Wraparound Services

Children's mental health treatment services range from outpatient treatment to more restrictive residential treatment services, and BHRS/Wraparound Services are part of that continuum. In this brochure all BHRS will be referred to as wraparound services. While most children's mental health treatment is funded by traditional insurances, the wraparound services are funded only by Medicaid's Early Periodic Screening Diagnoses and Treatment (EPSDT). Under EPSDT, children who are eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) have access to treatment considered medically necessary for physical or mental health problems.

Wraparound services are Therapeutic Staff Support, Mobile Therapy and consultation from a Behavioral Specialist. Wrap-around services are a shift from traditional mental health services provided in a therapist's office, to services where the child normally is and whenever and wherever a child needs assistance.

The wraparound staff works with the family as a team to support the child and help the child follow an individually developed treatment plan. More importantly, the role of wraparound services is to "teach" families how to implement the behavioral techniques and strategies so families can address their child's needs.



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These questions should serve as a general guide to help a parent/guardian in making decisions about Wraparound Services.

What is Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS)?

TSS is a staff person who helps the child and family with their treatment goals by intensively monitoring and reinforcing behavioral strategies to help make positive changes in behavior. It may be provided in the home, school, or other community settings. The TSS should also provide encouragement to the child as well as feedback about how the child's behavior affects others. Most TSS should have a Bachelor's degree in a human service field and have prior experience working with children.

What is Mobile Therapy (MT)?

A MT is a mental health professional who provides therapy to children and their families in their home, school, or community. The MT helps direct the TSS to follow the treatment plan goals.

What is a Behavior Specialist Consultant (BSC)?

A BSC is a person who works with the child, the family, and observes the child's behavior in the child's own setting. The BSC identifies the child's strengths and develops a treatment plan that address the child's behavioral needs. The BSC is at least a Master's level professional and should have a background and expertise in working with children with behavioral health issues.

What is an Interagency Team Meeting?

An Interagency Team Meeting is a prescheduled meeting that serves as the mechanism for family members/guardians to meet with the mental health professionals and others involved with the child in the development of a plan of services and natural supports designed to meet the child's needs. The plan developed must address the concerns and identify the strengths of both the child and the family. Wraparound services require that an Interagency Team Meeting take place prior to the start of these services. **An Interagency Team Meeting is not considered "valid" if a parent or guardian is not present.** Other team members may include mental health staff, school personnel, and any other adults who you think play an important role in the child's life.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to suggest any other participants they would like to have attend, such as a parent advocate. Interagency Team Meetings must occur **at least** every four months to evaluate the appropriateness of wraparound services, although the effectiveness of the treatment plan and services should be ongoing.

How does a child receive wraparound services?

There are 2 steps to receiving wraparound services.

1. A parent/guardian must call a mental health agency that provides mental health services for children/adolescents and ask for an appointment. At the appointment the family can tell the intake therapist their concerns. If the assessment reveals that the child and family needs more intensive treatment than outpatient therapy can offer, the therapist should discuss wraparound services with the parent/guardian. If they do not agree, the parent/guardian can request an evaluation for wraparound. Then the therapist will set up an appointment with a psychiatrist or psychologist for an evaluation for 'medical necessity' as requested for the wraparound services.
2. The child must have or be eligible for Medical Assistance.

Medical Assistance (MA) For a Child

Obtaining MA for a child can happen 2 ways.

The parent/guardian can go to the Social Security Office and see if the child meets the Supplemental Security (SSI) disability standard. If the family's income falls within SSI income guidelines, the child is automatically eligible for MA.

If the child meets the SSI medical criteria for disability, but does not qualify because the family's income exceeds the limit, the child *may still be eligible for MA* due to special Medicaid eligibility rules. The Department of Public Welfare may determine if a child with serious emotional, behavioral or mental disorders is eligible for MA.

How long does it take to get the wraparound services?

Therapeutic staff support needs a 'waiver' approved by the Department of Welfare (DPW) for the service to start. The waiver (MA 97) will be sent to DPW after the child's evaluation and Interagency Team Meeting. The waiver takes approximately 30 days to be approved. (In emergencies a waiver can be 'expedited', or rushed through the system). MT and BSC can start immediately after the evaluation and Interagency Team Meeting, if the child is not receiving other MH services.

Can a child use wraparound services with other mental health services?

The answer is complicated. Some services can be used along with wraparound services, some services cannot, and some services can be used with special permission from the DPW after showing how the wraparound services are essential to the child, such as using a TSS in school with an after school partial hospitalization program. Or, if the child is in a partial hospitalization program during the day, and a TSS is needed in the home at night.

Can the school request wraparound services for a child?

No. A school can tell a parent or guardian the behaviors with which they are concerned and how they have tried to help the child. They can then suggest the child be taken for a psychological evaluation to further help him/her. These wraparound services are not educational services.

What is the parents'/guardians' responsibility having wraparound services?

A family must agree to participate in the wraparound services. Just as in any therapy with a child or adolescent, the family is an important part. If the wraparound services are provided at home, then the family must be present and involved.

Like in any child's treatment, the parent/guardian should help prepare the treatment plan and constantly monitor the plan to make sure the services are doing what the plan recommended.