Children and adolescents in foster care
Understanding children’s needs, support and treatment
Helpful information

Mercy Care RBHA Member Services
602-586-1841 or toll-free 1-800-564-5465
Hearing impaired (TTY/TDD) 711
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
24-hour nurse line: 602-586-1841 or 1-800-564-5465

Mailing address
Mercy Care
4755 S. 44th Place
Phoenix, AZ 85040

Online:

www.Facebook.com/MercyCareAZ
@MercyCareAZ
@MercyCareAZ

Emergency call: 911

Behavioral Health Crisis Line:
602-222-9444 or toll-free 1-800-631-1314
Hearing impaired (TTY/TDD) at 1-800-327-9254

Contract services are funded under contract with the State of Arizona.

www.MercyCareAZ.org
Mercy Care Foster Care/Child Welfare web page:
www.mercycareaz.org/members/rbha-formembers/child

CRN Foster Care Hotline for DCS Rapid Response Assessment or DCS Stabilization Referrals:
602-633-0763

Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) physical health plan:
www.azdcs.gov/CMDP or call 602-351-2245.

Teen Lifeline:
https://teenlifeline.org
602-248-8336 (TEEN)
800-248-8336 (TEEN)
https://twitter.com/602248TEEN

Birth to Five Helpline (877) 705-KIDS
www.birthtofivehelpline.org
# Contents

**Helpful information** ................................................................. 2

**Introduction** ............................................................................... 6

**Understanding children’s needs** .................................................. 6
   Emotional and behavioral needs .................................................. 6
   How parents/caregivers can help ............................................... 8
   24-hour Behavioral Health Crisis Line ....................................... 9

**Support** ...................................................................................... 9
   Connecting you to the right care .............................................. 9

**Navigating the behavioral health system** .................................... 10
   Caregiver support .................................................................. 10

**Respite care** .............................................................................. 11

**Mercy Care Primary Provider Service Agencies serving children, youth and their families** .............................................................. 11

**Treatment** ............................................................................... 17
   About the Child and Family Team (CFT) ................................. 17

**Community resources** .............................................................. 19
Introduction

Mercy Care wants to ensure that all children and adolescents in foster care in Maricopa County get the behavioral health services they need, when they need them. We provide this support by connecting children and adolescents to high-quality care. We’re also here to support you - their families - in this journey. We know that opening your homes and hearts to children in need of temporary care can be both gratifying and, at times, challenging.

This brochure will help find the right behavioral health support and care.

Understanding children’s needs

Emotional and behavioral needs

Being removed from their home and placed in foster care is difficult and can be a traumatic experience for any child. Many children are placed in foster care due to some form of serious abuse or neglect. Research tells us that children in foster care often have emotional, behavioral or developmental problems. Physical health problems are also common. These problems and behaviors can appear suddenly or occur over time. If you notice a child in your care showing any of these behaviors, he or she may need professional
behavioral health support. It’s important to report any of these behaviors to your behavioral health provider and Department of Child Safety (DCS) Specialist.

Children suffering from traumatic stress symptoms generally have difficulty regulating their behaviors and emotions. They may be clingy and fearful of new situations, easily frightened, difficult to console, and/or aggressive and impulsive. They may also have difficulty sleeping, lose recently acquired developmental skills, and show regression in functioning and behavior.

In regards to forming healthy attachments, traumatized children feel that the world is uncertain and unpredictable. Their relationships can be characterized by problems with boundaries as well as distrust and suspiciousness. As a result, children that have experienced trauma can become socially isolated and have difficulty relating to and empathizing with others.

Common emotional, behavioral and physical problems of children in foster care:

- Poor verbal skills
- Poor appetite, low weight, and/or digestive problems
- Stomachaches and headaches
- Poor sleep habits
- Nightmares or sleep difficulties
- Wetting the bed or self after being toilet trained or exhibiting other regressive behaviors
- Memory problems
- Difficulties focusing or learning in school
- Learning disabilities
- Poor skill development
- Displaying excessive temper
- Demanding attention through both positive and negative behaviors
- Behavior that is indicative of a younger age
- Acting out in social situations
- Imitating the abusive/traumatic event
- Verbally abusive
- Screaming or crying excessively
- Startle easily
- Unable to trust others or make friends
- Fearing adults who remind them of the traumatic event
• Fear of being separated from parent/caregiver
• Anxious and fearful and avoidant
• Irritability, sadness, and anxiety
• Acting withdrawn
• Lacking self-confidence
• Believing they are to blame for the traumatic experience

For older children and adolescents:
• Engaging in more risky behaviors
• Sense of isolation and not belonging
• Negative self-esteem related to feelings they don’t understand
• Intrusive thoughts of self-harm
• Substance abuse

It’s important to note that with the right support and care, most children show extraordinary resiliency and determination. They can and do get better with treatment and go on to live fulfilling lives.

**How parents/caregivers can help**
Research on resilience in children demonstrates that an essential support need for children to develop self-care skills and confidence is the reliable presence of a positive, caring, and protective parent/caregiver, who can help shield children against difficult experiences. They can be a consistent resource for children in their care, encouraging them to talk about the
experiences. And they can provide reassurance to the children that the adults in their life are working to keep them safe.

24-hour Behavioral Health Crisis Line
For behavioral health emergencies, contact your provider (if you have one) or the 24-hour Behavioral Health Crisis Line at 1-800-631-1314 (TTY 1-800-327-9254). The Crisis Line is available at no cost, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to anyone in Maricopa County. **If a situation is life threatening, always call 911.**

Support

Connecting you to the right care
The foundation of our children’s system of care is based on the Arizona Vision and 12 Principles The Arizona Vision states: *In collaboration with the child and family and others, Arizona will provide accessible behavioral health services designed to aid children to achieve success in school, live with their families, avoid delinquency, and become stable and productive adults. Services will be tailored to the child and family and provided in the most appropriate setting, in a timely fashion and in accordance with best practices, while respecting the child’s family’s cultural heritage.*

We’re here to help you and the children in your care. Our behavioral health services are designed to meet your child and family’s needs. To help the child and the whole family thrive. We believe that treating the whole child is one of the keys to achieving that goal. Mercy Care allows you and your child to choose your health care providers. We work with you and your child to find someone who fits your health and wellness goals.

Physical health care needs
The Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) provides physical, dental, and vision healthcare coverage to children in Department of Child Safety out of home care. To learn about the benefits available to you, to find a provider, or to discover more about coverage through CMDP, you can visit [www.azdcs.gov/cmdp](http://www.azdcs.gov/cmdp) or call 602-351-2245. Mercy Care partners with DCS/ CMDP to provide behavioral health services.
Navigating the behavioral health system

When children first enter into the DCS system, a Rapid Response behavioral health service provider will come to the child’s placement to enroll the child in behavioral health services, assess their immediate behavioral health needs, provide valuable information to their placement and connect them to services through a Primary Provider Service Agency. If a child in DCS custody is not currently receiving behavioral health services, then the child should be enrolled with a behavioral health provider.

To find a behavioral health provider for a child not enrolled with a provider agency, the DCS Specialist or foster care provider assigned to the foster child should call Mercy Care RBHA Member Services at 602-586-1841 or toll-free 1-800-564-5465 (TTY/TDD: 711). You can also search our Provider Directory online at www.MercyCareAZ.org/find-provider. A Primary Provider Service Agency will be assigned by Member Services depending on the guardian’s preference and area of residence.

Once the Primary Provider Service Agency has been contacted, an intake should be scheduled within 7 days of the call to a provider. An initial intake appointment will include gathering information for an assessment from the guardian, the child and the child’s DCS Specialist, as well as available family and other supports. Information about the child’s family, educational, behavioral and medical history should be brought to the intake appointment to assist in quickly meeting the child’s individual needs and coordinating care. Any medical or behavioral service provider information and a list of current medications should be provided to assist in developing an Individual Service Plan (ISP).

If you have questions or concerns about the behavioral health system, you can contact us by email at DCS@MercyCareAZ.org.

Caregiver support
Caring for children who have experienced disruption in their lives, although oftentimes rewarding, can be challenging. Community-based services, such as respite care, direct supports, counseling, case management and family support can be provided to support not only the child, but some of the caregiver needs. Behavioral health providers are often aware of services and supports in the community outside of the behavioral health system that can be engaged to support the caregiver, as well as the child. Additionally,
caregivers often need additional natural supports, such as scheduling personal time, talking to trusted friends, exercise, and involvement in relaxing or fun activities to regularly focus on themselves.

**Respite care**

It’s important that caregivers also take care of themselves.

Respite services are available to give caregivers for a temporary break. Taking breaks helps keep caregivers healthy. And, time to rest and recharge will help keep their relationships with the children in their care strong and lasting.

Services may be on a short term basis, like for few hours during the day. Or, they can be for longer periods of rest or relief. Respite services are designed especially for the member and their caregiver. Caretakers of someone receiving behavioral health services can use a maximum of 600 hours per year per enrolled member. The actual number of hours is based on the member’s needs. To get connected to respite services, start by asking a member of your clinical team for a referral. You can also call Mercy Care RBHA Member Services at 602-586-1841 or toll free 1-800-564-5465; (TTY/TDD) 711.

**Mercy Care Primary Provider Service Agencies serving children, youth and their families**

Mercy Care works with a network of qualified service providers in the community to provide youth and children the best possible care. Providers have sites across the valley to ensure youth and children and their families can conveniently access services.

**A New Leaf**

www.turnanewleaf.org  
8581 N. 61st Ave.  
Glendale, AZ 85302  
623-934-1991

1655 E. University Dr.  
Mesa, AZ 85203  
480-969-6955
# Arizona Children’s Association

**Arizona Children’s Association**  
www.arizonaschildren.org  
11321 W. Bell Rd., Ste. 401  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
602-234-3733  

2066 W. Apache Trail, Ste. 101  
Apache Junction, AZ 85120  
602-234-3733  

375 E. Elliot Rd., Ste. 11-13  
Chandler, AZ 85225  
602-234-3733  

111 E. Monroe Ave., Ste. 102  
Buckeye, AZ 85326  
623-889-0091  

3636 N. Central Ave., Ste. 300  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
602-234-3733  

7910 W. Thomas Rd., Ste. 103  
Phoenix, AZ 85033  
602-234-3733

---

# Arizona Youth and Family Services (AYFS)

**Arizona Youth and Family Services (AYFS)**  
www.azyfs.org  
3707 N. 7th St., Ste 200  
Phoenix, AZ 85014  
602-277-4833  

---

# Bayless Health Care Group

**Bayless Health Care Group**  
www.baylesshealthcare.com  
1345 E. Main St., Ste. 104  
Mesa, AZ 85203  
602-230-7373  

3033 N. Central Ave., Ste 700  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
602-230-7373  

77 Columbus Ave., Suite 210  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
602-230-7373  

---

# Black Family & Child Services

**Black Family & Child Services**  
www bfcsfamily.org  
1522 E. Southern Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
602-243-1773  

---
Child and Family Support Services
www.cfss.com
10439 S. 51st St., Ste. 100
Phoenix, AZ 85044
480-635-9944

Chicanos Por La Causa
www.cplc.org
6850 W. Indian School Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85032
623-247-0464

Devereux Arizona
www.devereuxaz.org
11024 N. 28th Dr., Ste. 110
Phoenix, AZ 85029
602-944-6222

Easter Seals
www.easterseals.com/
blakefoundation
1115 E. Florence Blvd., Ste. A
Casa Grande, AZ 85122
520-723-4429

Ebony House Inc.
www.ebonyhouseinc.org
1616 E. Indian School Rd., Ste. 100
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-254-6137

Empact Suicide Prevention Center
www.lafrontera-empact.org
4425 W. Olive Ave., Ste. 194
Glendale, AZ 85302
480-784-1514

www.lafrontera-empact.org
618 S. Madison Dr.
Tempe, AZ 85281
480-784-1514
11519 E. Apache Trail, Ste 129  
Apache Junction, AZ 85120  
480-784-1514

2472 E. Hunt Hwy., Ste. 0002-100  
San Tan Valley, AZ 85143  
480-784-1514

**PSA Epicenter**

www.imhrepicenter.org  
1415 N. 1st St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
602-595-5447

**Jewish Family & Children’s Service**

www.jfcsaz.org  
Administrative office  
4747 N. 7th St., Ste. 100  
Phoenix, AZ 85014  
602-279-7655

5701 W. Talavi Blvd., Ste. 180  
Glendale, AZ 85306  
623-486-8202

1255 W. Baseline Rd., Ste. B258  
Mesa, AZ 85202  
480-820-0825

3001 N. 33rd Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85017  
602-353-0703

1840 N. 95th Ave., Ste. 146  
Phoenix, AZ 85037  
623-234-9811

**MIHS First Episode Center**

www.mihs.org/behavioral-health/outpatient-services/first-episode-center  
(For ages 15-25)  
10550 W. Mariposa St., Ste 3  
Phoenix, AZ 85037  
623-344-3701

**Native American Connections**

www.nativeconnections.org  
4520 N. Central Ave., Ste. 120  
Phoenix, AZ 85012  
602-424-2060
Open Hearts Family Wellness

www.openheartsaz.org
4414 N. 19th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85015
602-285-5550

3280 S. Country Club Way, Ste. 110,
Tempe, AZ 85282
602-285-5550

PSA Behavioral Health Agency

www.azpsa.org
8152 N. 23rd Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85021
602-242-1238

3271 E. Queen Creek Rd., Ste. 101,
Bldg. 2
Gilbert, AZ 85297
480-550-3193

Rio Salado Behavioral Health Systems

www.riosaladobhs.org
1308 W. Camelback Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85013
602-252-9048

Southwest Behavioral Health Services

www.sbhservices.org
2632 E. Thomas Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85210
480-671-3032

4420 S. 32nd St.
Phoenix, AZ 85040
602-268-8748

26428 W. US Hwy 85
Buckeye, AZ 85326
623-882-9906

1255 W. Baseline Rd., Ste. 138
Mesa, AZ 85202
480-820-5422

11221 N. 28th Dr., Bldg. E
Phoenix, AZ 85029
602-997-2233

Southwest Human Development

www.swhd.org
2850 N. 24th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85008
602-200-0434
Southwest Network

www.southwestnetwork.org
2444 E. University Dr., Ste. 150
Phoenix, AZ 85034
602-304-0014

9051 W. Kelton Ln., Ste. 13
Peoria, AZ 85382
623-815-5700

Terros Health

www.terros.org
12835 N. 32nd St.
Phoenix, AZ 85032
602-992-7521

1111 S. Stapley Dr.
Mesa, AZ 85204
602-302-7900

Touchstone Health Services

www.touchstonehs.org
15648 N. 35th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85053
623-930-8705

15810 N. 35th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85035
602-999-4591

2150 S. Country Club Dr., Ste. 35
Mesa, AZ 85210
480-456-9800

12409 W. Indian School Rd., Bldg. E
Avondale, AZ 85392
602-999-4591

3602 E. Greenway Rd., Ste. 102
Phoenix, AZ 85032
602-953-9070
Treatment

At the child’s first appointment, the guardian/caregiver helps identify service providers to join you and the child to serve on the child’s Child and Family Team (CFT) team. You will also help decide who else will be on the CFT. The CFT is based on a clear vision and set of principles designed to allow everyone on the team to have a voice and choice when deciding on what services and supports will best meet the needs of the child, family and caregiver.

About the Child and Family Team (CFT)

• The CFT includes, at a minimum, the DCS guardian and the behavioral health professional. Additional members are:
  – The child (as deemed appropriate)
  – The child’s parents or previous guardian
  – The child’s foster parent or kinship family
  – Anyone who is important in the child’s life that is identified and invited to participate by the child and family. This may include:
    • Teachers
    • Extended family members
    • Friends
    • Family support partners
    • Case managers from the state Department of Child Safety (DCS) or Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
• All current behavioral health providers
• The Team works together on your child’s goals. This includes assessments and service planning.
• The amount of the team’s involvement may depend on:
  – Objectives set for the child
  – Needs of the family in providing for the child
  – Resources needed to develop an effective service plan
• The CFT membership can change as needed to help the child be successful.
• As your child approaches adulthood, the CFT can help smooth the transition to adult behavioral health services.

You will be working closely with your child’s clinical team to assess how things are going. The clinical team is the behavioral health team. The clinical team includes the behavioral health professionals from the agency providing the behavioral health services.

These can include the high-needs case manager (HNCM), the targeted case manager, the clinician, the clinical director and the treating psychiatrist.

This allows you and the CFT to regularly review the child’s progress. The CFT can identify gaps in care or unmet needs. The CFT may develop a crisis plan that will assist the CFT in anticipating crises and identifying appropriate responses and supports. You and the team will decide which services are needed so the child gets the best possible care.

There are many services available to youth in foster care. These services may also be available after a child is adopted from foster care. Here are some examples:
• DCS Rapid Response
• DCS Stabilization Teams
• High-needs case management
• Direct support services (includes rehabilitation services)
• Psychiatric services
• Individual and family therapy
• Specialty treatment services

A list of available services is on our website at [www.MercyCareAZ.org/members/mmic/benefits](http://www.MercyCareAZ.org/members/mmic/benefits). You can also find a list of services in the member handbook. If you’re unsure whether a service is covered, check with your
Community resources

AHCCCS resources for foster/kinship/adoptive families
AHCCCS is committed to providing comprehensive, quality health care for children in foster/kinship/adoptive care. Foster children are eligible for medical and dental care, inpatient, outpatient, behavioral health, and other services through the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) and the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs). Adoptive children are typically AHCCCS eligible and enroll in a health plan/RBHA or CRS similar to any Medicaid eligible child.

www.azahcccs.gov/Members/AlreadyCovered/MemberResources/Foster/

Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents
The Arizona Association for Foster and Adoptive Parents is a non-profit, statewide organization serving families who adopt children and provide foster and kinship care. The association supports, educates and provides a unified voice for Arizona’s foster and adoptive families, with the goal of increasing the well-being and stability of Arizona’s most vulnerable children.
2320 N. 20th St., Phoenix, AZ 85006-2059
602-884-1801
www.azafap.org

Family Involvement Center (FIC)
Family Involvement Center (FIC) is a non-profit, family-run organization that supports parents and caregivers raising children with emotional, physical and/or behavioral health needs. FIC provides direct support services to parents and youth (for those enrolled in public behavioral health services), resources and assistance with health services and children’s systems, support groups, education and training.
5333 N, 7th St., Ste. A100, Phoenix, AZ 85014
602-288-0155 or 1-877-568-8468
www.familyinvolvementcenter.org

Raising Special Kids
Raising Special Kids provides support and information for parents of children, from birth to age 26, with a full range of disabilities and special health care
needs. Programs are offered at no cost to families, and are available in English and Spanish.
5025 E. Washington St., Ste., 204, Phoenix, AZ 85034
602-242-4366 or 1-800-237-3007
www.raisingspecialkids.org

Reach Family Services, Inc./Alcanza Servicios de Familia
Assisting families who are raising children with behavioral health and emotional challenges.
3535 W. Southern Ave., Ste. 128
Phoenix, AZ 85041
602-512-9000
www.reachfamilyservicesinc.org

MIKID
MIKID is a non-profit, licensed outpatient clinic and family-run organization that contracts with all the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs) in the state to provide behavioral health services. MIKID offers in-home and community supports across the state. MIKID is the State Chapter of the Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health.
2642 E. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-253-1240
www.mikid.org

Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)
CWLA is a coalition of hundreds of private and public provider agencies partnering to advance policies, best practices and collaborative strategies that result in better outcomes for children youth and families that are vulnerable.
202-688-4200
www.cwla.org

National Child Traumatic Stress Network
Established by Congress in 2000, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) brings a singular and comprehensive focus to childhood trauma. NCTSN’s collaboration of frontline providers, researchers, and families is committed to raising the standard of care while increasing access to services.
Birth to Five Helpline (877) 705-KIDS
Southwest Human Development’s Birth to Five Helpline is a free resource for anyone who has questions or concerns about young children ages birth to 5. Our bilingual (English/Spanish) specialists are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Common topics include sleep, health and nutrition, safety, challenging behaviors, feeding and eating, potty training, fussiness/colic, as well as general child development and parenting questions. 877-705-KIDS (5437)
www.birthtofivehelpline.org

Fostering Advocates Arizona
Fostering Advocates AZ is an advocacy group run by young adults who aim to ensure that all foster kids have the information, resources and support needed to transition to a new life.
www.fosteringadvocatesarizona.org/

Arizona Family Resources
AZ Family Resources offers resources for foster and kinship resources such as general information about foster care, education, legal, emergency, medical, aging out of foster care and additional local resources.
www.azfamilyresources.org/

Find Help Phoenix
Find Help Phoenix provides information on local AHCCCS-registered, low-cost and sliding-scale services. This includes resources for AHCCCS eligibility and health insurance, mental and behavioral health, physical health, domestic violence, parenting and childcare, dental, foster parent services, birth to five services, food and clothing, disability services, housing, transportation, education, jobs and legal resources.
https://findhelpphx.org/

More resources are available online at www.MercyCareAZ.org

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on your ID card or 1-800-385-4104 (TTY/TDD 711).
Si necesita un intérprete calificado, información escrita en otros formatos, servicios de traducción u otros servicios, comuníquese con el número que aparece en su tarjeta de identificación o 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).