

NAVIGATING FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN AR

The ethical standard of clinical practice for mental and behavioral health services is least restrictive environment for intervention. Funding sources follow this standard of practice in establishing medical necessity for service coverage. With the policy (January 1, 2014) that a Court can no longer find a Youth a Family of One in Need of Services for purposes of treatment, staying abreast of a Youth's funding options will help insure access to services. This document does not guarantee coverage but serves as a guide to help navigate funding and accessing services for mental/behavioral health in the State of AR.

- ✓ **Insure that the Youth has health insurance.** If they do not have health insurance:
 - Health care coverage can be obtained through a private insurance options (BCBS, etc) via the Guardian's place of employment or through non-employer options which can be compared and applied for at Arkansas Health Connector (<https://myarinsurance.com>).
 - If a family's income meets eligibility requirements, they may apply for the federally funded State insurance coverage for Youth (<http://access.arkansas.gov>).
 - ❖ There are two types of coverage of the federally funded State insurance coverage for Youth:
 - ARKids A is also known as Medicaid and covers more services than ARKids B. It does not require a co-pay. AR Kids A typically covers both acute psychiatric hospitalization and residential (RTC) / subacute treatment but has strict criteria regarding having failed consistent, outpatient services in the last 90 days and/or had three acute hospitalizations in the last year. Residential treatment (RTC) / Subacute treatment requires a letter completed by the licensed, outpatient mental health provider to assist with establishing attempts at a lesser restrictive intervention prior to more intensive services.
 - ARKids B is also known just as ARKids and may have more limited coverage than ARKids A. It does have a co-pay. Changes in 2015 resulted in AR Kids B typically covering both acute psychiatric hospitalization and residential treatment (RTC) / subacute treatment and, like AR Kids A, has strict criteria regarding having failed consistent outpatient services in the last 90 days and/or having three acute hospitalizations in the last year. Residential treatment (RTC) / Subacute treatment requires a letter completed by the licensed, outpatient mental health provider to assist with establishing attempts at a lesser restrictive intervention prior to more intensive services.
 - Most services covered by ARKids A and B require a PCP (primary care physician) referral. PCPs can be obtained or changed by calling ConnectCare or by going to [ConnectCare](#)
 - ConnectCare Helpline Call Center at 1-800-275-1131 or 501-614-4689 (TDD: 1-800-285-1131). Hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

NAVIGATING FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN AR

- ConnectCare Dental Helpline Call Center at 1-800-322-5580 or 501-614-5933 (TDD: 1-800-285-1131). Hours of operation are 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday
 - ARKids A will pay for transportation to covered medical (including mental health) appointments. See <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/medical-services/healthcare-programs/net-non-emergency-transportation/>
- If a Youth has a developmental disability (Intellectual Disability, [Autism Spectrum Disorder](#), Cerebral Palsy etc), the Youth may be eligible for Developmental Disability Services (DDS/CES WAIVER), which will not only include Medicaid insurance coverage but services beyond at age 18 years old to assist with housing, rehabilitation, supportive services, special therapy, respite, aides, etc.
 - Families can make application for DDS/CES Waiver at: <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/developmental-disabilities-services/ces-waiver/>
 - To assist families with making referrals to AR [DDS services](#), utilize the online [Referral Intake \(site.com\)](#) or call Intake and Referral team at 501-683-5687 to start the process.
 - Families can apply for disability services for their child at [Disability services](#)
 - Educational resources:
 - AR Support Network Family Support Program may be a resource in helping to advocate with the school to best meet Youth's needs. <https://supports.org/programs/family-support-program/>
 - Disability Rights of AR Parent Guide – an excellent resource regarding Youth's rights in accessing a free and appropriate education <https://disabilityrightsar.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/A-Parents-Guide-DRA-.pdf>
 - AR Department of Education Parent Resources – governing body who oversees that Youth's needs are met <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/special-education/parent-and-family-resources>
- If a Youth has a mental health diagnosis or developmental disability and the family is over income for ARKids A or B, the family can apply for **Tefra Medicaid** <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/medical-services/healthcare-programs/tefra/how-to-apply-for-tefra-coverage/>, which is SECONDARY insurance with monthly premiums and co-pays to help cover the cost of healthcare services, not covered by primary insurance. Coverage is the same as AR Kids A.

NAVIGATING FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN AR

Youth who have AR Kids A or B or Medicaid services can access clinical services. Any PASSE member is eligible for any service based upon medical necessity determination.

- [PASSE – Provider-Led Arkansas Shared Savings Entity](#) is a program that services Medicaid clients with complex behavioral health, developmental, and intellectual disabilities.
 - For PASSE Assignment, the Youth’s outpatient provider will refer them for an IA [or Independent Assessment of Functioning with Optum Health](#) to determine their Tier level 1-4 (Tier 4 for Youth who have complex issues).
- If Youth have AR Kids A or B and have had an Independent Assessment of Functioning with Optum Health and have not [been assigned to a PASSE](#), to identify the PASSE, or to change a PASSE, please call 1.833-402-0672.

✓ **Help the Youth navigate the level of care:**

- **Outpatient Services (OP)** – May include individual, family, group therapy, substance abuse, case management, psychological, and psychiatric services. Frequency can range from once a month to weekly and occur in an office, school, home, or other setting, depending on medical necessity.

For state health insurance coverage, to find out if a provider is in a [PASSE’s](#) network, check the PASSE’s network list on the PASSE’s website for [contact information](#) or call to ask them.

Arkansas Total Care	Arkansas Total Care’s Network List	1-866-282-6280
Empower Healthcare Solutions	Empower’s Network List	1-866-261-1286
Summit Community Care	Summit’s Network List	1-844-405-4295
Care Source	Care Source Network List	1.833.230.2005

- **Intensive Outpatient Services (IOP)**- May include individual, family, group therapy, substance abuse, case management, psychological, and psychiatric services. Frequency can range from two to three times a week to daily and occur in an office, school (Therapeutic Day Treatment – TDT), home (Intensive Family Services – IFS), or other setting (eg Drug Court, etc).
- **Intensive Family Services / Family Centered Treatment (IFS / FCT)** – an evidence based, collaborative, intensive trauma treatment model of home based family services, that works to develop functional solutions to maladaptive behaviors, through four phases of programming, implemented by case managers or “clinicians”, who are trained and certified in the model. This model differs from family therapy, which can be accessed with licensed mental health providers / MHPs (LAC, LPC, LMSW, LCSW, LMFT, etc), at the outpatient and intensive outpatient levels of care.

NAVIGATING FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN AR

- IFS / FCT Providers include Youth Villages, [St Francis Ministries](#), Youth Advocate Programs, Impact Counseling, Centers for Youth and Families, The Guidance Center, Connected Families, SPARC
- **Acute Hospitalization** – Includes crisis intervention and stabilization for Youth who are an imminent danger to themselves or others (emergency room care for mental health), generally defined as experiencing suicidal or homicidal ideation, with or without psychosis or may include psychosis, with or without suicidal or homicidal ideation. Frequency of acute hospitalization can range from 3- 21 days and occurs in a psychiatric hospital. ARKids A and B and many private insurance programs cover this level of care or partially cover this level of care. However, it is unethical for an acute hospital to deny services due to a lack of funding. Three acute hospitalizations within a calendar year may qualify a Youth for subacute/RTC, even if they have not had the documented outpatient services. Acute hospitalization may be accessed by:
 - Presenting at the acute psychiatric hospital, 24/7, for an assessment
 - Utilizing hospital mobile assessors from the psychiatric hospital, to assess in community, JDC, school, or office.
 - Utilizing mental health provider, at local emergency room, for assessment and possible ambulance transport.
 - Utilizing / requesting a Single Point of Entry (SPOE) through the Community Mental Health Center to assess in community, JDC, school, or office – this one is helpful if Youth do not have health insurance, as CMHC receives state dollars to address needs <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/CMHC-Directory-02082022.pdf>
- **Subacute / Residential Treatment Center (PRTF)** - May include individual, family, group therapy, substance abuse, case management, psychological, and psychiatric services. Frequency can range from three to nine months and can occur in a hospital or other therapeutic setting (eg Ranch style, etc). Subacute treatment is for Youth who present as chronically acute. Residential treatment is for Youth who need a higher level of care, often after “failing” outpatient services. Youth who have state health insurance coverage must be assigned to a PASSE to access subacute or residential treatment services.
 - Medical necessity for Youth who have state funded insurance typically mandates that outpatient services are mandatory weekly for the last 90 days (minimum of 12 sessions), prior to a referral for RTC/subacute treatment for mental and behavioral health. A letter of referral will need to be made by the treating outpatient therapist. If a Youth keeps eloping or there are other significant factors effecting a Youth not receiving outpatient services, an RTC/subacute program can ‘make a case’ to bring a Youth into treatment without the outpatient services (on rare occasion) . Both ARKids A and B, with a PASSE assignment and many private insurance programs cover this level of care or partially cover this level of care, when medical necessity is established.

NAVIGATING FUNDING FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM IN AR

- For a Youth, who has state health insurance coverage, to access subacute / residential treatment, medical necessity must be established, via
 - PCP REFERRAL TO FACILITY OF CHOICE
 - LETTER FROM OUTPATIENT THERAPIST RECOMMENDING RTC / SUBACUTE
 - PASSE COORDINATOR CONSULTED / PASSE TO PRE-CERTIFY FUNDING (IF APPLICABLE)
 - For private health insurance, please see Youth's insurance provider.
- **Intermediate Care Facility (ICF)** – Facilities that specialize in providing services to developmentally disabled individuals.
 - Small ICFs do not require DDS/CES Waiver
 - Large ICFs, including HDCs or Human Development Centers do require DDS/CES Waiver
- **Substance Use Rehab** - May include individual, family, group therapy, substance abuse, case management, psychological, and psychiatric services. Frequency can range from 30-45 days and occur in a non-secure inpatient setting. Unfortunately, there are currently no inpatient substance use programs in the State for adolescents. Outpatient services do not need to be obtained for funding but they are not funded by insurance unless they are a dual diagnosis program in which case they are funded by insurance and the substance use diagnosis cannot be the primary diagnosis. Otherwise, these programs are private pay or have State funded beds. <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/aging-adult-behavioral-health-services/about-daabhs/>
 - For Youth in Northwest AR, please contact the Ozark Guidance Center Substance Abuse and Recovery Program at 479 750-2020 to access state funding for substance use services.
- Arkansas State Hospital (ASH) – <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/aging-adult-behavioral-health-services/arkansas-state-hospital/>
- National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI)

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