



Partnering in Your Child's Behavioral Healthcare

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH?



Families as Allies Overview

Founded in 1990, we are the only statewide organization run *by* and *for* families of children with mental health challenges in Mississippi. We support each other and work together to make things better for our children.

Our *vision* is that all children will have the opportunity to reach their potential and succeed.

Our *mission* is that families are partners in their children's care.





What Does Family Driven Mean?

Family-driven means families have a primary decision making role in the care of their own children as well as the policies and procedures governing care for all children in their community, state, tribe, territory and nation. This includes: Choosing culturally and linguistically competent supports, services, and providers; Setting goals; Designing, implementing and evaluating programs; Monitoring outcomes; and Partnering in funding decisions.





Our Core Values Define Us

- . We value:
 - Every child and family
 - Excellence
 - Partnership
 - Accountability



Our Work is Built on Three Pillars.

We support:

- Families
- Community
- Positive Change





What We Believe About Families

You know your child better than anyone

You are your Child's Strongest Advocate

Systems should follow laws and policies about families and children's rights






Today's Goals

Recognize the importance of families to their children's development.

Give helpful tips on how parents can support their children's behavioral health including during times of crisis.

Give helpful tips about trauma and other issues that can impact children's emotional development.





I was a wonderful parent before I had
children

- Adele Faber

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Nobody feels like an expert – even the experts!



Let's Review.....



m a c m c r a e . c o m



Our brains are part of our bodies and behavioral health is part of health.

IN YOUNG CHILDREN, WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH



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The Goal is for ALL Children to be Healthy



Focusing on Health Rather than Problems is Like Teaching Drivers' Ed instead of Responding to the Scene of an Accident



Driver's Ed

Start Small

Share Your Manual

Teach, Don't Judge

Use your mirrors



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Student Drivers

They may not want to go the same place we do

Their driving styles can help us learn how to teach them

They will be the ones driving the car in the long run

If they have a disability, they may need extra accommodations to drive



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Definition of Behavioral Health

Reaching developmental and emotional milestones at the appropriate times

Learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems

Having a positive quality of life

Able to function well at home, in school, and in their communities.

[Centers for Disease Control](#)





Reaching developmental and emotional milestones at the appropriate times

Educate yourself on what to expect at different stages (see next slide)

Follow your child's lead

Focus on changing to environment, not your child

See challenges as cues for course corrections, not as personal attacks





Places to Get More Information about whether Your Child's Behavior is Typical

Young Children –

[Zero to Three](#) “What to Expect” Chart (birth to 3)

[CDC Birth to 5 Milestones](#) (birth to 5)

Bradley Hospital [Infant and Toddler Modules](#) (birth to 3)

Older Children -

Child Mind Institute [Warning Signs](#) and [Symptom Checker](#) (ages 4 and up)

National Alliance on Mental Illness [Know the Warning Signs](#) (adults and adolescents with separate list for children)

All Children -

The person who provides your child's medical care

Licensed mental health provider

Reliable Internet Sites



Learning healthy social skills and how to cope when there are problems

Model the behavior you want, including when you forget

Notice the behavior you want, but don't overdo it

Label emotions out loud

When problems occur, use responses that decrease rather than increase isolation

- [Time In vs Time Out](#)
- [One Parent's Experience](#)

If a child needs time away, frame it in a helpful way

Having a positive quality of life



Incorporate predictability into the day, even when it's unpredictable

Develop traditions that are meaningful for your family

Focus on "doing", even if it's very brief

Let your child know you appreciate them

Acknowledge difficulties and injustices

Find a balance that works for you between individual and system advocacy





Able to function well at home, in school, and in their communities

Clearly describe the behavior you want

Focus on your child's strengths

Think about who is on your "team" and how you can work together

Find out what's working at school

[Resources from the American Academy Of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#)



Issues that Can Affect Our Children's Mental Health

ATTACHMENT, DISABILITY AND TRAUMA



Attachment

“Building a secure attachment bond depends on the quality of the nonverbal communication that takes place between your newborn and you, their primary caretaker. By understanding and responding to your baby's cues — their movements, gestures, and sounds — you enable your infant to feel secure enough to develop fully and impact how they will interact, communicate, and form relationships throughout their life. ***But building secure attachment doesn't mean that you have to be a perfect parent.***”

[Supporting attachment in babies](#)

[Reactive Attachment Disorder](#)



Disability

Disability can impact behavior

Disabilities can cause a child to learn more slowly, including learning to manage their behavior

Accommodations may be needed, but strive to stay focused on health





Trauma - SAMHSA describes individual trauma as resulting from "an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."

Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope With the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



Excerpts

“Modify your daily activities to meet the current reality of the situation and focus on what you can accomplish.

Shift expectations and priorities to focus more on what gives you meaning, purpose, or fulfillment.

Give yourself small breaks from the stress of the situation.

Attempt to control self-defeating statements and replace them with more helpful thoughts.”

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)



I Feel Like I Caused My Child's Trauma.....



No parent is perfect

Children are resilient

Own what happened without turning in your teacher's license

Seek support from other parents in your shoes

Consider working with a therapist with expertise in trauma informed care

If it fits for your situation, ask the therapist to use their expertise to help others in your child's life understand trauma informed approaches

[More resources: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)





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We did our best and we still had an accident.....



When Accidents Happen....

(aka When your child melts down over being at home and dealing with Coronavirus fallout)

Have a crisis plan with your child and follow it

Stay focused on your long term goals

Other than keeping your child safe, possibly moving to a quieter place and using a calm quiet voice, avoid intervening once the behavior starts

Be careful about thinking that actions that temporarily stop a behavior are teaching a child to control the behavior

Discuss what can be learned from the incident when everyone is calm.





How Did We Do?

Recognize the importance of families to their children's development.

Give helpful tips on how parents can support their children's behavioral health.

Give helpful tips about trauma and other issues that can impact children's emotional development.







Thank You for Joining Us Today

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