

Getting Help from the Children's System of Care for Your Child

Important information: Services are free and voluntary, there is no income eligibility or criteria, and asking for help does not open a case with the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (formerly DFYS).

Who is eligible?

Children and youth between the ages of 5 and 17 living in the State of New Jersey and who have emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges are eligible for services through the Children's System of Care (CSOC). Special consideration will be given to children under 5.

Also, children and youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities are eligible for services, and **must at least register** with the Children's System of Care prior to their 18th birthday in order to be eligible for adult services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

There are also substance abuse services available through the Children's System of Care.

Young adults ages 18 to 21 are eligible if the youth is actively involved with Child Welfare, Children's System of Care or Juvenile Justice at the time of their 18th birthday and they give their own consent.

If there are any questions about eligibility, call:

Information and Referral Access Line

Toll-free: (877) 652-7624

TDD: (866) 896-6975

Types of Information and Referrals

Behavioral/Mental Health Providers

Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Services

Community Resources

Informational Websites

State Agency Services

Medicaid/NJ Family Care

Family Support Organizations

Care Management Organizations

Resources for Referral

How can CSOC services be obtained for a child?

Call 24/7 at (877) 652-7624. This is a toll-free Information and Referral Access Line. They answer questions and help find services and providers.

They will talk to families regarding their existing insurance plan and any benefits they may be entitled to under CSOC. Families may be eligible for benefits through Medicaid or NJ Family Care, or they may qualify for services and treatment solely through CSOC.

If a family feels that their child may benefit from the services offered by CSOC, they should call the access line for more information. Families should also ask for a provider who understands their culture, speaks their language, and can help with special needs.

What to Expect When You Call for Help

PerformCare is the access point for New Jersey Children's System of Care – toll-free: (877) 652-7624

1. The first person a family will speak with at PerformCare is one of their Customer Service Representatives. This individual will ask some basic questions about the family:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Child's date of birth
- Family's situation
- Child's needs (description of problem or behaviors leading to call)

Once this basic information is collected, the Customer Service Representative will transfer the family to a Care Coordinator. Callers should expect to spend a minimum of 20 minutes on the first call.

2. The Care Coordinator will ask the family questions their situation and their child's needs. If the Care Coordinator determines that the situation requires assistance from the Children's System of Care such as mental health services or case management with supportive services for their child, s/he will give the name and phone number of one or more local mental health providers for the family to call for a Needs Assessment (series of questions about the child's behavior and the family's situation to help PerformCare to determine the type of services that the family will receive). If it is determined that the need does not require services through the Children's System of Care but requires referral and connection to local resources, the Care Coordinator can refer them to services in their local community.

The types of services that a family may receive include:

- Therapeutic behavioral/mental health assistance
- Crisis stabilization services
- Short-term or intensive, team-based case management
- Respite and/or summer camp for youth with intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Substance abuse detox and residential treatment services

All of these services are designed to provide the family with the supports to maintain their child in the home and in school with community-based resources.

The family will be contacted by the case management agency that will be providing assistance.

Is a family having difficulty finding or accessing services or just in need of support?

Families should call Family Partners of Morris/Sussex at (973)940-3194. Family Partners is a private, nonprofit organization working to help make the system family friendly and responsive to needs of children and families. The staff at Family Partners are parents or guardians of children who have experienced emotional, behavioral, or mental health issues. They are an advocate to help families navigate the system and meet the needs of children, and have numerous free services available to support youth and families who are struggling with issues they can't handle alone.