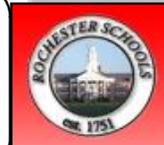


## **Mental Health and Schools Together Seacoast NH (MAST-SC NH)**



# **Frequently Asked Questions About Community Partners Behavioral Health Center**

### **Why are you suggesting that I take my child to Community Partners?**

*There are times when school supports are just not enough to help a child achieve social, behavioral or academic success. When we are concerned that our supports aren't helping enough, we have found that acting quickly and early can turn things around for some children and families. Community Partners has been an excellent community resource for many children and families in the Rochester area.*

### **Why would my child and family go to Community Partners?**

*Community Partners helps families find successful ways of dealing with a variety of problems including behavior and social problems at school, home or in the community, childhood fears and anxieties, relationship difficulties with parents, teachers or peers, and childhood depression.*

### **How can this help my family?**

*Community Partners helps families find solutions to problems. Mental or behavioral health services can improve your child's ability to handle transitions, improve relationships, increase ability to make and keep friends, better manage feelings and emotions, and improve behavior at home and school.*

### **Do I have to go?**

*No, participation in mental or behavioral health services at Community Partners is voluntary. We do find that when emotional issues are addressed early many positive changes can occur for both child and family.*

### **How are services paid for?**

*Many of the services offered by Community Partners are covered by health insurance. Community Partners works with many insurance companies, including managed care companies and Medicaid. Community Partners also can reduce fees for qualified families without health insurance.*

### **What can I expect when I contact Community Partners?**

*At Community Partners, trained clinicians will meet with you and your child, gather information, make an assessment, and then offer suggestions regarding types of services that may be helpful.*

### **How long does treatment usually take?**

*If treatment at Community Partners is suggested, and if you are in agreement, the length of services will depend on the intensity of the problems. Children and families are engaged in treatment on average between 4 and 12 months.*

### **Will I (parent or guardian) be involved in treatment?**

*Community Partners believes strongly that parents must be involved in their child's treatment. Parents are the experts on their child and Community Partners believes in developing a partnership with parents in order to reach the goals of treatment.*

**Will my child have to go on medication?**

*Community Partners believes that every child and family can solve problems and that therapy and supportive services can often help without the use of medication. As a result, many children never have to go on medication. Medication therapy, when necessary, is an option -- but only after careful and thoughtful consideration of the positives and negatives of using medication. Community Partners employs knowledgeable psychiatrists and therapists who can help families make careful decisions about the use of medication.*

**Will the therapists at Community Partners understand families like mine?**

*Community Partners treats over 1000 children and families each year. Their Youth & Family Department is well trained and highly skilled in all areas of mental and behavioral health for children and families. While each family we work with is unique, Community Partners is committed to understanding every family and providing support that will work for each family's needs.*

**How long will I have to wait to get an appointment?**

*At Community Partners, the wait time for a first time appointment varies, so it is best to call as soon as services are wanted. Emergency services for children who present a safety concern are always available immediately. If there is a longer wait time for services than usual, we are able to refer you to resource materials that may help.*

**Will I have to take my child out of school?**

*In order to meet your child's needs quickly, you may need to take your child out of school for the initial meeting and treatment sessions. As treatment continues, we are usually able to work out times that will not conflict with school or work. Community Partners offers early morning appointments and appointments until 8 pm on weekdays.*

**Who can give consent for services?**

*The legal guardian(s) of the child is the only person (s) who can give consent for treatment. For parents who are divorced and share guardianship, Community Partners must have consent from both parents before treatment can start.*

**Who will know our private information?**

*Community Partners respects each family's right to privacy. As the parent or legal guardian, you have full control over the information contained in your child's treatment record. Only the parent or legal guardian is able to decide who Community Partners will share information with. Community Partners will not share information with ANYONE unless authorized by you.*

**Will Community Partners communicate with the school?**

*Only the parent or legal guardian is able to decide whether Community Partners will share information with your child's school. If you give consent, Community Partners will communicate with your child's school to help everyone work together to meet your family's needs. You will decide with us about the type and frequency of communication between home, school and Community Partners.*

**What would tell me that Community Partners is a good fit for my child and my family?**

*As with any behavioral or mental health support, you should feel that our staff and clinicians listen to you and understand. You and your child should feel comfortable talking with us and you should feel that you are making progress toward the goals that you've determined with us.*

**Are there alternatives to Community Partners?**

*Yes. There are many other agencies and mental health providers and it is most important to find the best match for you and your child. The advantage of a community mental health center like Community Partners is that many services and areas of expertise are available in one location.*