

Behavioral Health: Early Intervention for Youth

Guideline Checklist

Health Plans Level 1



The current state of the issue

Behavioral health encompasses both mental health and substance use disorders. In 2023, 40% of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row. [i] Between 2013 to 2021, rates of youth suicide and attempted suicide in Washington have risen by over 600%. [ii] Not all youth are equally as likely to attempt suicide; youth who identify as female, BIPOC, or LGBTQ+ are more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year. [iii] Co-occurring mental health concerns are common in children. Almost 3 out of every 4 youth with depression also experience anxiety. [iv] Over 1 in 3 youth have a documented need for mental health treatment. [v] Substance use can negatively impact youth development, as well as increase the risk of developing mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and psychosis. [vi] Given the increasing prevalence and serious impact on the health of youth, improving early identification and intervention of behavioral health concerns is vital.

Education/Capacity Building

- Educate members in using a pamphlet on available behavioral health services** available at enrollment and annually
- Inform in-network clinicians/clinics and members:**
 - That there is no increase in cost-sharing (co-pay, deductible) for behavioral health
 - Privacy protocols for billing statements
- Train staff on HIPAA regulations** and any additional state-specific privacy laws pertaining to healthcare records for individuals under 18.
- Train member-facing staff** annually on the following:
 - Stigma and bias towards people with behavioral health concerns
 - Special considerations for communities at risk for behavioral health concerns
- Ensure disclosure of benefit statements** are compliant with state-specific privacy laws referenced above
- Explore ways for school-based health center providers** can be reimbursed for services without being assigned to specific dependents or members, with the purpose of expanding access for students.



Co-management

- Evaluate and expand provider networks** when able to form robust network of primary care and behavioral health professionals both in person and through telehealth.
- Encourage in-network providers** to provide their demographic, cultural, and linguistic information accessible by members to the extent that they are comfortable.

Data & Measurement

- Utilize privacy protocols and secure systems** that restrict access to sensitive information based on state-specific privacy laws.

Resources

- The Bree Report is meant to supplement these resources.
- Full Bree Report: <https://www.qualityhealth.org/bree/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2025/01/BH-Youth-Report-Final-0127.pdf>
- Seattle Children's First Approach Skills Training (FAST) Program: <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/healthcare-professionals/community-providers/fast/>
- WCAAP Supporting Adolescent Patients in Crisis: https://wcaap.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Crisis-toolkit_final56497.pdf
- UW CoLab Value-Based Care Models in Pediatric Mental/Behavioral Health Care Report: [Microsoft Word - VBC100322.docx](https://www.uwcolab.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Microsoft-Word-VBC100322.docx)
- Washington's Mental Health Referral Service for Children and Teens: <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/healthcare-professionals/community-providers/pal/mental-health-referral/>
- SAMHSA Student Assistance: <https://library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/pep19-03-01-001.pdf>

Read the full Bree Report on Behavioral Health Early Intervention for Youth online by scanning the QR code:



Connect with the Bree Collaborative at bree@qualityhealth.org

References: [i] [Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013-2023 \(cdc.gov\)](#) [ii] [Youth Suicide Rates | Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families](#) [iii] [Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013-2023 \(cdc.gov\)](#) [iv] Ghandour RM, Sherman LJ, Vladutiu CJ, Ali MM, Lynch SE, Bitsko RH, Blumberg SJ. Prevalence and Treatment of Depression, Anxiety, and Conduct Problems in US Children. *J Pediatr*. 2019 Mar;206:256-267.e3. doi: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2018.09.021. Epub 2018 Oct 12. PMID: 30322701; PMCID: PMC6673640. [v] [CHILDRENS_BH_DASHBOARD_2023NOV.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#) [vi] National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2020). Common Comorbidities with Substance Use Disorders Research Report. Retrieved from [URL].