

Child Health Plus and Behavioral Health Services

Can I access mental health and substance use disorder services with Child Health Plus?

If you or your child receives health insurance coverage through Child Health Plus (CHP), you should be able to access mental health and substance use disorder services with this coverage. If you are enrolled in a managed care plan, you can contact your health plan or its Member Services division to learn more about your coverage for these services.

If you need further help to confirm that you or your child is enrolled in CHP, you can contact [the New York State of Health](#) or call 1-800-698-4KIDS (1-800-698-4543) and ask about Child Health Plus. If you are hearing impaired, you can call the TTY number, 1-877-898-5849.

New York State and federal laws require most comprehensive health insurance plans to cover medically necessary mental health services and manage your mental health or substance use benefits as they manage medical and surgical benefits, without additional limitations. This is called “mental health parity” and requires that rules about copayments, number of visits and pre-authorizations should be similar for accessing mental health and substance use disorder services as they are for physical medical care. The [NYS Office of Mental Health](#) provides more information on mental health parity for New Yorkers.

What type of mental health and substance disorder services can I get with Child Health Plus?

Your managed care plan should provide you with a Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) in clear and accessible language that describes what is covered under your specific health plan. An example of the [SBC](#) is available on [healthcare.gov](#). The SBC will show you the costs and

services associated with your health plan, including information about mental health and substance use disorder services in a section titled “Types of Medical Events”. You can learn more about the SBC on [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

If you do not have your SBC, you can request it from your health plan using the phone number provided on the back of your health insurance card or you can call 1-800-698-4KIDS (1-800-698-4543) to get more information about how to get your SBC.

The managed care plans that provide CHP coverage must offer prevention services that can help you address behavioral health issues, such as behavioral assessments and screenings for autism, developmental, and depression for both child and mother, which can support health and wellbeing. You can learn more about the preventive services that are required for most insurance coverage on [healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

Will I need a referral or prior authorization to get mental health and substance use disorder services through Child Health Plus?

Depending on your health plan, you may need to get prior authorization or a referral from your primary care doctor before you can receive the mental health or substance use disorder services you might need. You should check your SBC or contact your health plan to confirm whether a referral or prior authorization is required.

If you don't need a referral from your primary care provider, you can use the NYC Well website to find a mental health professional. Visit [NYC Well](https://www.nycwell.org) or call the NYC Well Hotline at 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355) and indicate that you need to find a mental health provider who accepts Child Health Plus.

Additional Resources Regarding Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

If you need help finding a mental or behavioral health provider

Call 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355) or visit [NYC Well Find Services](#)

If you want to learn more about Child Health Plus benefits:

Call the New York State of Health at 1-855-355-5777 or TTY at 1-800-662-1222 or **visit** [NYS Department of Health Child Health Plus](#)

Visit [NYC Health Insurance Link](#)

Download [Child Health Plus at a Glance](#)

Download [CHP Benefits](#)

If you have been denied mental health services

Depending on your insurance, you may be protected by Mental Health and Addiction Insurance "Parity" law.

Health plan members are also entitled to request and receive a copy of the most recent comparative analysis performed by their health insurance plan to assess compliance with federal parity laws and regulations. If your health insurance plan refuses to provide this information to you, you can call the Consumer Assistance Unit of the NYS Department of Financial Services at 1-800-342-3736 to get assistance. The [New York State Office of Mental Health \(OMH\)](#) provides additional information about mental health parity.

If you need help navigating the health care system

Contact [Community Health Advocates](#) (CHA), a program of the Community Service Society, for free help on how you access the health care you need. You can call the CHA Helpline at 1-888-614-5400.

Important Note: This information is compiled from government handbooks and webpages and relies on them for accuracy and is current as of December 17, 2021. It is provided here for your assistance and should not be taken as legal advice.