# Mental Health

1. **I can’t afford counseling/therapy or I don’t have insurance. Can I still get help?**

There are options for you available. If you are in crisis, please call the emergency crisis line at **218-850-HELP** or **1-877-380-3621**. If you want to talk to a peer, and not a professional, call the peer support network at 1-877-404-3190 or **text “Support” to 85511**.

If you are seeking professional counseling and are not in crisis then there are a few options. If you are employed you can ask your HR department or employer if you have an employee assistance plan (EAP). Many EAP’s offer free counseling through their employment. If you have insurance, you should call your insurance company on the back of your card and ask which organization is in network for you, and if they have options to subsidize the cost of counseling or therapy.

If you do not have insurance or an EAP you can call an organization that provides a sliding fee scale or income based services. Two organizations that currently offer a sliding fee on mental health services are Lakeland Mental Health (218-847-1676) and Lakes Crisis and Resource Center (218-847-7446). You can also check the directory on this website to find any other organizations that utilize a sliding fee.

1. **How do I know if counseling will be helpful to me? Do I need therapy?**

If you are feeling stressed, depressed, anxious, unable to do the things you once enjoyed, are using drugs or alcohol often, or are unable to sleep then counseling might be right for you. You can take a free screening online anonymously to see if this might be helpful. There are many different types of therapy to help in a variety of situations. You can call any organization that provides outpatient services to explain your problem, and they will let you know who might be right for you. Also, building a relationship is important, so if one counselor doesn’t work for you try another one as each of us connects differently and professionals have different areas of expertise. Click here to complete an online screening to see if counseling would be helpful: <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/lakeland>

1. **What kinds of things do people see counselors/therapists for?**

There may be other reasons to seek counseling, but here are a few common reasons:

* Worried about my drinking habits
* Worried about gambling behaviors
* Feeling sad, down, or empty
* Troubled by past shocking, painful events
* Mood changes from very high to low, or somewhere in between
* Concerned about my child’s mental health
* Constantly worried, nervous, stressed
* Difficulty controlling my substance use
* Uncontrollable urges
* Flashbacks of traumatic experiences or nightmares
* Uncontrolled anger, violence or inability to control reactions
* Inability to concentrate
* Loss of interest in meaningful activities
* Trouble sleeping

If you are bothered by these symptoms you should consider seeking counseling.

1. **I am concerned for a family member or my child. What should I do?**

If a friend or family member is showing [signs of a mental health problem](https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health#early) or reaching out to you for help, offer support by:

* Finding out if the person is getting the care that he or she needs and wants—if not, connect him or her to help
* Expressing your concern and support
* Reminding your friend or family member that help is available and that mental health problems can be treated and are very common
* Asking questions, listening to ideas, and being responsive when the topic of mental health problems come up (listen more, give advice less)
* Reassuring your friend or family member that you care about him or her
* Offering to help your friend or family member with everyday tasks
* Including your friend or family member in your plans—continue to invite him or her without being overbearing, even if your friend or family member resists your invitations
* Educating other people so they understand the facts about mental health problems and do not discriminate
* Treating people with mental health problems with respect, compassion, and empathy

1. **How do I talk to my child or family member about mental health issues?**

Try leading with these questions and make sure to **actively listen** to your friend or family member's response.

* I've been worried about you. Can we talk about what you are experiencing? If not, who are you comfortable talking to?
* What can I do to help you to talk about issues with your parents or someone else who is responsible and cares about you?
* What else can I help you with?
* I am someone who cares and wants to listen. What do you want me to know about how you are feeling?
* Who or what has helped you deal with similar issues in the past?
* Sometimes talking to someone who has dealt with a similar experience helps. Do you know of others who have experienced these types of problems who you can talk with?
* It seems like you are going through a difficult time. How can I help you to find help?
* How can I help you find more information about mental health problems?
* I'm concerned about your safety. Have you thought about harming yourself or others?

When talking about mental health problems:

* Know how to [connect people to help](https://www.mentalhealth.gov/get-help) (see the list of resources)
* Communicate in a straightforward manner
* Speak at a level appropriate to a person's age and development level (preschool children need fewer details as compared to teenagers)
* Discuss the topic when and where the person feels safe and comfortable
* Watch for reactions during the discussion and slow down or back up if the person becomes confused or looks upset
* Listen more than you talk

1. **Can I force my child to go to therapy/counseling?**

As the parent or guardian you have the right to make medical decisions for your child, and you can force them to attend therapy or counseling. However, they may be resistant or uncooperative. If a child/teen is forced, they may not benefit and not want therapy ever again. Compromise can be helpful. Here are some things you can try to help them:

* Consider a combination of treatment including therapy or counseling and a medication if appropriate
* Try a different therapist. Your child may not like their therapist, and making a connection is critical.
* Lead by example: consider family therapy or individual therapy for yourself. Show your child that it is nothing to be afraid or ashamed of.
* Find the Best Timing: Think about your child’s schedule and make sure that their schedule is in alignment with them being able to relax and focus on the task at hand.
* Reinforcement: A positive reward such as an “I’m proud of you”, “thank you for taking care of yourself” or just an ice cream cone after therapy can help.

1. **I have questions. Who can I call?**

If you have questions on general information on mental health resources or treatment you can call the SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline at **1-877-726-4727**. You can also see the resource guide/directory on this website for local resources, information, and treatment options.