

## TIPS

# Where to Start: Navigating the Mental Health Care System

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Navigating the mental health care system can feel overwhelming, but you're not alone. Let's have a heart-to-heart about finding the right support for your child. Remember, persistence is key – sometimes it takes a few calls, but don't give up.

**What to look for:** Keep an eye out for changes in your child's behavior or mood. Persistent worries, school struggles, or mood swings could signal a need for support.

## Understanding the Signs

If you notice your child is **expressing thoughts of harming themselves or others, experiencing severe emotional distress, or engaging in risky behaviors, it's crucial to reach out to the crisis team immediately.** They're trained to provide urgent support and guidance in such situations to ensure the safety and well-being of your child.

**For immediate support:** Advocates Adult & Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention at (800) 640-5432

You can also start by scheduling an appointment with your child's pediatrician or family doctor. They can assess your child's symptoms and provide referrals to appropriate mental health professionals.


### Local Resources



**Holliston Youth and Family Services:** We offer free mental health support and resources exclusively for Holliston residents. Our service navigator helps families access mental health services, guiding you until you find the right fit.



**School Counselors and Psychologists:** Students can seek help from school counselors for support within the school setting. Parents should contact their child's teacher, guidance counselor, nurse or building administrator for help.

 **Care Solace:** Additionally, HPS offers a referral Program to assist students in navigating mental health resources within the community. Contact [Caresolace.com/holliston](https://caresolace.com/holliston) to learn more.



**Hand to Hold Massachusetts:** Find guidance specific to parents in Massachusetts navigating mental health concerns, learn more about different levels of care and how to access a continuum of services.



**Holliston Drug and Alcohol Awareness Coalition (HDAAC):** helps connect individuals and families to substance misuse resources. Visit their website to learn more and reach out for help today.



**Massachusetts Behavioral Health HelpLine (BHHL):** is a resource provided by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) to offer support, information, and referrals for individuals seeking mental health services.

## Conversational Questions for Providers

Using these questions to understand the provider's experience with children and teens can give you confidence in their ability to address your child's specific needs. Inquire about their background, training, and approach to working with young clients.

1. Can you tell me more about your experience working with children/teens?
2. How do you involve parents in the treatment process?
3. Can you explain any acronyms or credentials in your title?
4. What should we expect in terms of frequency and duration of sessions?

Educate yourself about different mental health professionals and their specialties. Remember, it's okay to ask questions and advocate for what your child needs. Persistence pays off – don't give up on finding the right support. For more information or to speak with a someone at HYFS contact us at 508-429-0620 or by email at [winerj@Holliston.k12.ma.us](mailto:winerj@Holliston.k12.ma.us)

