

Mental health support for youth and caregivers



Youth are struggling more than ever before with their mental health and well-being.

Today, nearly half of U.S. youth experience a mental health condition and an estimated 20% live with a with a treatable mental, emotional, developmental or behavioral disorder.^{1,2} These rates have increased year over year for more than a decade to become a mental health crisis.³

This challenge isn't going away. As is widely documented and reported, American youth are increasingly struggling with their mental health and well-being. The U.S. Surgeon General recently issued an advisory calling "for a swift and coordinated response" to this mental health crisis.⁴

Their parents and caregivers are struggling, too. As they try to find their way through the confusing maze of systems to get care for their dependents, caregivers often sacrifice their own physical and emotional needs.

At Optum, we are taking a fresh approach by designing solutions that create pathways to connect and engage youth and their caregivers through the people, places and things they interact with. We're leveraging the results of in-depth research and analysis to provide comprehensive support to address the mental health concerns – including anxiety, depression, and sleep and behavioral challenges – impacting youth and families today.

Available support includes:



Tailored support for families with high-acuity pediatric behavioral health needs



Self-help resources that provide access to cognitive behavioral therapy techniques



Specialized support, including the Substance Use Disorder Helpline



Behavioral health virtual visits



Outpatient behavioral health therapy for adolescents

- **Suicide is the second leading cause of death** among people ages 10-14 and the third leading cause of death among those ages 15-24 in the U.S.⁵
- Up to **1 in 5 children** ages 3-17 in the U.S. have a mental, emotional, developmental or behavioral disorder.⁶
- More than **1 in 3 students** reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.⁷
- **20% of family caregivers** cope with depression, twice the rate of the general population.⁸

Tailored support for complex adolescent behavioral health needs



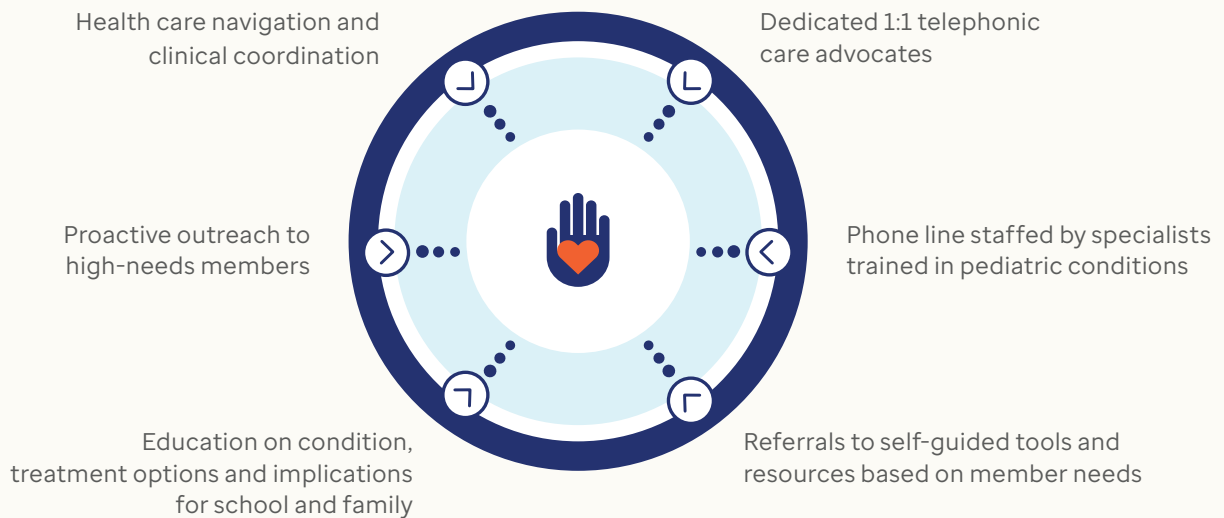
As part of our suite of solutions for behavioral health, the Family Support Program provides pediatric-specific clinical expertise and navigation support to caregivers of children ages 0-17 with complex behavioral health needs. The most common conditions include but are not limited to:

- Autism spectrum disorder
- Major depressive disorder
- Eating disorders
- Substance use disorders
- Psychotic disorder
- Bipolar disorder

The program also supports youth experiencing a crisis or admission to a high level of care due to a behavioral health condition.

Through telephonic case management, master’s-level licensed care advocates tailor support to help address the unique needs of the youth, their caregivers and others living in the home. Care advocates provide clear steps to take, education, information and ongoing support.

Family Support Program capabilities



The Optum® Family Support Program offers end-to-end support for youth with complex behavioral health needs and their families. The program is specially designed to help:



Simplify navigation of the health care system



Improve clinical outcomes



Improve the overall member experience



Shorten time to treatment

The family experience

The program is offered to youth and their caregivers who qualify through the claims processing system at no additional cost. Based on a diagnosis or high-level-of-care admission, caregivers receive proactive phone calls inviting them to engage in the program. In addition, families with pediatric behavioral health needs that call into other member-facing telephonic teams may be warm-transferred to the Family Support Program.

Visit [optum.com/behavioralhealth](https://www.optum.com/behavioralhealth) or contact your Optum representative to learn how the Family Support Program can meet the unique needs of youth and families.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health. Mental illness. Updated January 2022. Accessed November 2, 2022.
2. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. U.S. Surgeon General issues advisory on youth mental health crisis further exposed by COVID-19 pandemic. December 7, 2021. Accessed November 2, 2022.
3. Ibid.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "U.S. Surgeon General Issues Advisory on Youth Mental Health Crisis Further Exposed by COVID-19 Pandemic." Accessed November 22, 2022
5. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Mental health by the numbers. Updated June 2022. Accessed November 2, 2022.
6. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. U.S. Surgeon General issues advisory on youth mental health crisis further exposed by COVID-19 pandemic. December 7, 2021. Accessed November 2, 2022.
7. Ibid.
8. Family Caregiver Alliance. Caregiver depression: A silent health crisis. Accessed November 2, 2022.



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