



HELP US HEAL THE HURT



DIRECTIONS
For Mental Health, Inc.
Press Kit



Healing the Hurt

Directions for Mental Health, Inc., established in 1982, is a non-profit organization committed to helping heal the hurt in the lives of thousands of Pinellas County residents suffering from-or at risk of-mental illness. With nationally accredited programs, Directions sets the standard for best practices in mental health treatment, while making mental health care affordable and accessible to individuals and families, and building a safer, healthier community. Serving more than 8,000 people per year, Directions is dedicated to developing innovative programs that change lives, while reducing crime, homelessness, drug abuse and child abuse.

Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life of individuals, families and our community by providing a wide range of high quality behavioral health services for all ages, from the prevention of problems by building upon our clients' strengths to the effective treatment of mental illness.

Vision

To be an outstanding behavioral health organization characterized by high consumer satisfaction, demonstrated effectiveness of services, and innovation. We intend to be an indispensable asset to our community and our neighbors

Locations

Main Office

(Outpatient & Outreach)
1437 South Belcher Road
Clearwater, Florida 33764
(727) 524-4464 Fax (727) 524-4474

Oakwoods Office

(Outreach & Prevention)
8823 - 115th Avenue North
Largo, Florida 33773

Safe Children Coalition Office

(Child Welfare)
6451 - 126th Avenue North, Suite 300
Largo, Florida 33773

Website:

www.directionsmh.org or www.healthehurt.org



Selected programs at Directions for Mental Health, Inc. were accredited by CARF - The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission

Healing the Hurt

Serving Children

- By the time homeless children are eight years old, one out of every three has a severe mental illness.
- Fully half of the youth in Florida's juvenile justice detention facilities have a diagnosed severe mental illness.
- Child abuse makes suicide attempts 12 times more likely.

Imagine a society in which half of the children with cancer are in jail because cancer treatment is unavailable. Just like cancer treatment, mental health treatment does work, and it can be made available if we choose.

- \$50 per month provides seven sessions of professional counseling services to a homeless mother and her children to help them solve their problems and achieve stable housing and employment.
- \$100 per month provides a full 15-session course of scientifically supported effective treatment to a child suffering from post-traumatic stress after abuse.
- A half-million dollar one-time endowment donation would enable the organization to provide about \$20,000 of the above services year in and year out.

Directions for Mental Health reached 3,585 children last year in Pinellas County with services ranging from prevention of emotional and behavioral problems to early professional intervention to school based and outreach programs. Child psychiatric treatment is offered to families and children with more severe problems. These services can prevent children from living a life of involvement with the criminal justice system, substance abuse and school failure. Selected children's programs at Directions for Mental Health Inc. have been nationally accredited by CARF and are highly effective.





Healing the Hurt

Serving Adults

- Persons with severe mental illness die 25 years younger than the general population on average.
- One out of every eight people with major depression will die by suicide.
- Mental illnesses together account for more disability in the United States than any other disease category including heart diseases.
- Persons with potentially disabling illnesses are extremely unlikely to be able to afford the treatment they need to recover.

Despite the tremendous human cost of mental illness in America, only about half of those with mental illness receive professional help. Imagine a society in which half of the people with an often-fatal disease do not receive treatment. We can choose not to be that society.

- \$50 per month provides a seven-session course of crisis intervention treatment, enabling a person to weather a life crisis.
- \$100 per month provides psychiatric evaluation and follow-up for an adult leaving residential services and moving into our community.
- \$10,000 provides psychiatric treatment and state-of-the-art medicines to control major mental illness for four adults for one year, enabling them to lead a normal, productive life.
- A half-million-dollar one-time endowment donation would enable the organization to provide about \$20,000 of the above services year in and year out.

Directions for Mental Health provided a wide range of treatment and recovery services to 5,031 adults in need in Pinellas County last year. More than three-fourths of the persons served by Directions have poverty-level incomes. All adult programs at Directions for Mental Health Inc. have been nationally accredited by CARF and are highly effective.

Services to Meet the Needs

Outpatient Treatment is the service most people think of when they think of mental health treatment. The great majority of new requests for service are for outpatient treatment. Individual family and group therapy and psychoeducational groups are offered through these services. Families are also seen in their homes when indicated. In order to provide efficient treatment, clinicians utilize a variety of evidence-based treatments for mental health and/or substance use disorders. For children and adults with more severe problems requiring psychiatric medication, our staff psychiatrists and masters-prepared nurses provide evaluation and medication monitoring. For adults, resources are prioritized to help those coping with severe and persistent mental illnesses.

Early Childhood Services provides early intervention through in-home parenting skills training, on-site training for child care personnel, and parenting classes. The program has enhanced its effectiveness by training all personnel in an evidence-based parent training curriculum and improved access by increasing outreach and engagement to low-income families

Healthy Start Services provides a mental health assessment and treatment to expectant mothers, and to mothers with infants, who are referred by the Health Department Healthy Start Case Managers. Services are provided in the office and in the community.

Safe Children Coalition Case Management coordinates care, identifies services and monitors safety for children who have been victims of abuse or neglect. Case managers work to maintain and strengthen the family, arrange alternative solutions for the child's stability (e.g. adoption), and work closely with personnel within the legal system (e.g. attorneys, protective investigators, judges) on issues related to legal rights of both the child and the parents.

Directions is one of only two partners in Florida of the **National Child Traumatic Stress Network**. Directions continues to participate in the mission of the network to improve treatment for children and youths who have been victims of violence, witnesses to violence or suffered a traumatic loss. To this end, staff have provided specialized trainings to foster parents, child welfare parents, staff and school personnel and provided advanced supervision in highly effective treatments to 35 clinicians.





Services to Meet the Needs

Kid Connection provides parenting education, consultation, prevention and early intervention using evidence-based models for individual, group and family services. Program staff work collaboratively with children, their families, school personnel and community members in 13 elementary schools with high service needs.

Child Development/Community Policing is a partnership between children's therapists and law enforcement officers aimed at early identification and intervention for children affected by violent crime either directly or as witnesses.

The TANF Program provides therapeutic services to families transitioning from welfare to work, or working to avoid removal of a child due to allegations of abuse or neglect. This program addresses mental health and/or substance use issues in order to help families become self-sufficient.

Case Management provides recovery-oriented and individualized supports for those persons with a severe and persistent mental illness and/or substance use disorders through assessment, planning, linkage, advocacy and monitoring. This service is offered for children and adults. A supported living component makes it possible for adults coping with very severe problems to maintain their independent living situations.

Substance Abuse Prevention/Intervention offers a variety of counseling and psychoeducational activities to children, families and homeless adults who need to address their lifestyles related to the use of alcohol and other psychoactive drugs. Specialized services for at-risk youth are provided, both in-school and after school, using scientifically proven prevention programs.

Services to Meet the Needs

Residential Treatment Partnership for persons with co-occurring disorders is a partnership with a local substance abuse residential center to provide mental health treatment and medication management for those that have been homeless or incarcerated and suffer from a severe and persistent mental illness with substance abuse issues. These persons also have criminal justice system involvement.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services offers a daily structure of recovery oriented counseling, therapy and socialization skills for rehabilitation following hospitalization, or to prevent hospitalization for persons with severe and persistent mental illness and/or substance use disorders.

Homeless Outreach and Community Transitions help homeless adults and families by assessing them for mental health and/or substance use disorder needs and linking them with counseling services and resources for their everyday survival needs. Previously homeless adults and families are also assisted in their quest for independence through in-home counseling, support and substance abuse relapse prevention. Homeless Street Outreach is a new partnership between behavioral health professionals and local law enforcement providing outreach, assessment and linkage to community resources for persons who are homeless.

Focused Outreach and Intervention, in partnership with other mental health organizations, reaches out to adults whose problems bring them into frequent contact with the criminal justice system - but who need mental health treatment.

Crisis Response Team (CRT) is a short-term program that responds to people in the community who are in mental health crisis but do not fully meet the Baker Act criteria. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week with a centralized crisis telephone line for referrals that come from law enforcement, hospital emergency rooms, family members and the people in crisis themselves.





About Mental Illness

- An estimated 22.1 percent of Americans ages 18 and older—about 1 in 5 adults—suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year.
- Approximately 18.8 million American adults, or about 9.5 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year, have a depressive disorder.
- Nearly twice as many women (12.0 percent) as men (6.6 percent) are affected by a depressive disorder each year. These figures translate to 12.4 million women and 6.4 million men in the U.S.
- The World Health Organization has reported that four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the US and other developed countries are mental disorders. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.
- Without treatment the consequences of mental illness for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives; The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than 100 billion dollars each year in the United States.
- The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.
- Ten million children and adolescents suffer from a diagnosable psychiatric disorder. Serious emotional disturbance affects 1 in every 10 young people, but an estimated two-thirds are not getting the help they need.
- Only one out of every five children with a psychiatric disorder gets treatment.
- More children suffer from psychiatric illness than from leukemia, diabetes and AIDS combined.
- Between 1980 and 1996, the suicide rate among children aged 10-14 years increased by 100%. Suicide is the sixth leading cause of death for 5 to 15-year-olds and the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24-year olds.
- An incident of child abuse is reported, on average, every 10 seconds. More than 2.9 million reports were made in 2003; the actual incidence is presumed to be much higher.

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Contact Information



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www.directionsmh.org or

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Directions is a private non-profit corporation and contributions are tax deductible to the full extent the law allows.

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