

# Questions



## ABOUT THE IDAHO SYSTEM OF CARE

### Q. What is the Idaho System of Care?

**A.** Let's start by defining a system of care. A system of care is an effective way of helping children with serious emotional disturbances. It pulls together all the services and support available in a community and then helps the family come up with the treatment plan that's in the best interests of the child and the family. The Idaho System of Care includes agencies like the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and local children's mental health councils. Two things are important to remember about a system of care: (1) it's all about the child; (2) parents make all the decisions about the child's treatment.

### Q. Who else is part of the Idaho System of Care?

**A.** The Idaho System of Care is made up of caring people representing organizations, agencies, and professions associated with children and children's mental health. The exact makeup of a system of care will differ from community to community, but generally you will find teachers, councilors, members of the local children's mental health council, someone representing juvenile justice, and — of course — families. It's very much a team approach designed to come up with the best possible treatment for the child and the family.

### Q. How do I contact a system of care partner in my area?

**A.** The easiest way is to pick up a phone and dial 211 — the toll-free Idaho CareLine number. A CareLine representative will give you a phone number for the Idaho System of Care contact in your area or you can click here for a list of contact names and phone numbers in communities throughout the state of Idaho.

### Q. Are there other Idaho families I can talk to about this system of care?

**A.** Of course. In fact, families and family advocates — people who speak out in support of families — are an important part of the Idaho System of Care. You can locate a family in your area by going through the Idaho System of Care contact provided by the CareLine representative. Or you can contact the Idaho Federation of Families, a support organization made up of families that have children with serious emotional disturbances, at 1-800-905-3436.

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**Q. My child is having problems at home and at school, but I'm not sure the Idaho System of Care is the answer. How do I find out?**

**A.** If your child's behavior is affecting his or her ability to function in the family, school, or community call 211, the toll-free Idaho CareLine number, for help. The CareLine representative will put you in touch with someone who can provide you with the information you need to decide what's best for your child and your family. Remember, the Idaho System of Care is all about helping you make the right decisions for your child.

**Q. Once we get involved, are we obligated to stay with the Idaho System of Care?**

**A.** No — families decide when to get involved and they decide when to end that involvement. A system of care is always child centered and family driven.

**Q. I think my child needs help, but I don't have insurance and I really can't afford to pay for expensive treatments. Can the Idaho System of Care still help me?**

**A.** The Idaho System of Care is dedicated to helping children with serious emotional disturbances and their families. This includes identifying the means to cover the costs of services and support. Depending on your financial status, you may qualify for state and/or federal assistance. Your local system of care representative will be able to advise you regarding the options that are available.

**Q. Has the system of care approach proven to be a better way to help children with serious emotional disturbances and their families?**

**A.** Yes. While the system of care approach is relatively new here in Idaho, it has been available in other states long enough to evaluate the results. A recent study of 30 communities in these other states reveal that caregivers were pleased with their child's progress after one year in a system of care. In fact, 75 percent rated services as "good" to "excellent." Many other studies indicate that children in a system of care do better at home, school, and in their community.



BUILDING ON EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS.

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**For more information about the Idaho System of Care and services and support available in your area, call the Idaho CareLine by dialing 211 or 1-800-926-2588.**

**You also can contact the Idaho Federation of Families, an Idaho-based support organization for families with children affected by SED, on the Web at [www.idffcmh.org](http://www.idffcmh.org) or by calling 1-800-905-3436.**