

Where Do I Find A Therapist?

- A. **Insurance** – Contact your insurance’s Behavioral Health benefits office (*on back of insurance card*) to obtain a list of providers that are in-network. Ask for providers with experience with people your child’s age, who are taking new referrals, and with specialty experience if needed (such as eating disorders, substance use, etc). Ask about your copayments, co-insurance, deductibles, and other costs.
- B. **Therapy websites** – filter your search by age, insurance, location, type of treatment, or issue. If you get no results, reduce or change the filters. Some websites with therapy search engines include: Psychology Today (psychologytoday.com), National Association of Social Workers (helpstartshere.org) and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (counselingcalifornia.com).
- C. **Word of Mouth** from friends, school, religious community – make sure you get referrals for therapists licensed by the state of CA and in good standing. Here’s where to check someone’s license status:
 - For Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW), Licensed Marriage Family Therapists (LMFT), and Psychologists (PhD and PsyD), Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors (LPCC) – <https://search.dca.ca.gov/>. The Board will be Behavioral Science or Psychology depending on the credential.
 - For psychiatrists (MD) prescribing psychiatric medication – California Medical Board at http://www.mbc.ca.gov/Breeze/License_Verification.aspx

What Will My Insurance Cover?

In Network – the therapist has a contract with your insurance company to provide services, and negotiated a lower rate than a private pay/self-pay client would pay. You are still responsible for deductibles and copays. Check with your insurance first.

Out of Network – the therapist has not contracted with your insurance company, but may negotiate with the insurance to provide services at a private pay/self-pay rate. The insurance pays for part of the cost and you pay part of the cost.

Superbill – you pay the “self-pay” or “private pay” cost to the therapist, get a receipt called a Super Bill, and submit it to your insurance to see if the insurance will reimburse you part of the cost. Check with your insurance first about the process and how much they would reimburse.

How Do I Get An Appointment?

Once you have a list of therapists, follow these steps to get an appointment:

- 1) Look up the therapists’ personal websites, policies, and fees. Get a feel for them.
- 2) Pick several therapists, call and leave a message with your contact information and what you’re looking for (child’s age, issues of concern, available days).
- 3) If you don’t hear back in a week, leave another message requesting a return call.
- 4) If there’s a wait list, put your name on it! You can always cancel later if needed.

It’s ok to meet with a couple of therapists to find a good fit and then decide.

View the full webinar recording at:

sutterhealth.org/pamf-find-a-therapist