

The Youth Mental Health Project EMPOWERS families and communities to act with the KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and RESOURCES they need to support the SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, MENTAL, and BEHAVIORAL health of youth.



## MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

**1 in 5** children in the U.S. has a diagnosable mental health condition yet, less than 20 percent of those youth receive the treatment they need.<sup>1</sup>

Early intervention can help children/adolescents develop important coping and adaptive skills (e.g., resilience), allowing them to thrive socially, emotionally, academically, and physically. With proper treatment and support, people with any mental health diagnosis can lead productive and fulfilling lives.

**In fact, 80-90% of people seeking treatment see improvement in their symptoms.**

- **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRISTS** are licensed medical doctors with years of specialized mental health training. They can diagnose mental health conditions, offer counseling, provide therapy, and prescribe and monitor medications.
- **PSYCHIATRIC OR MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONERS (APRNS)** are registered nurses with post graduate education in mental health. Like psychiatrists, they can diagnose mental health conditions, offer counseling, provide therapy, and prescribe and monitor medications. In some states they are required to work under the supervision of a psychiatrist.
- **CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS** are trained to make diagnoses and offer psychotherapy to individuals, families and groups. Some may have additional training in specific forms of evidence-based therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or Dialectical Behavior Therapy. Many are trained to conduct tests, such as personality tests, to help understand a child's patterns of behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.
- **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS** are trained to make diagnoses, provide individual and group therapy and work with parents, teachers and school staff to ensure a healthy school environment. They may also participate in the development of individualized education plans (IEP) to help a child with a mental health condition achieve academic and social/emotional goals within the school environment.
- **CLINICAL THERAPISTS/COUNSELORS** are trained to make diagnoses and provide individual and group counseling, case management and advocacy. Some specialize in marriage and family issues (unlicensed MFTs or licensed LMFTs), on social work (unlicensed MSWs and LCSWs), and on counseling (unlicensed MSC or licensed LNHC). Many have training in specific forms of therapy like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or Dialectical Behavior Therapy, along with other behavioral therapy interventions.

*Please note, the above definitions are from the National Alliance of Mental Illness.*

**For more information:**  
The Youth Mental Health Project  
[ymhproject.org](http://ymhproject.org)  
National Institute of Mental Health  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

<sup>1</sup>. Center for Disease Control