

blueprint

Behavioral Health Screenings

An easy first step toward help

17% of children (2-8 years old) had a mental, behavioral or development disorder and about 36% of high school students report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.^{1,2} Substance misuse and suicide are a great concern in 12- to 17-year-olds. Half of all lifetime behavioral health problems begin during adolescence, around age 14.³

Why is behavioral health screening important?

A screening is a tool that looks at the possibility of a mental health or substance-use problem. It's not a diagnosis. Your behavioral health screening allows for early identification and help from professionals, which makes treatment more effective. Generally, children and youth will receive a behavioral health screening at the doctor's office.

What will be asked?

Behavioral health is a broad term that describes both mental health conditions and substance use problems. Screening questions vary depending on the child's age. In most cases, what's appropriate for a 15-year-old is much different than an 8-year-old.

What happens next?

After completing a screening, a healthcare professional should review and go over the results with the parents. Even if there's no cause for concern, a list of resources or education materials about a possible condition may be reviewed. Sometimes healthcare professionals need

more information, and a referral is made to a mental health professional who is trained to do a formal behavioral health assessment.

Take an online screening

For children ages 11-17, an online mental health screening is one of the quickest, easiest ways to determine if you should seek help for how you're feeling. Mental Health America has dozens of free screenings to start with.

Visit screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/youth/

Need to talk to someone? Call **877-801-1159** to speak with a behavioral health expert at Lucet 24/7. Lucet delivers behavioral health help to Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield members.

We encourage parents to conduct a preventive behavioral health screening annually or when needed for their children to maintain their mental health and overall wellbeing.

¹ Health Care, Family, and Community Factors Associated with Mental, Behavioral, and Developmental Disorders and Poverty Among Children Aged 2-8 Years. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention MMWR.

² Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

³ Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. National Library of Medicine.

