



Connecting Schools to Care IV Students: School Mental Health Resource and Support Guide

Connecting to Care is a partnership that focuses on coordinating access to quality care through a youth-guided and family-driven approach. To improve behavioral health outcomes for children in Connecticut, Connecting to Care seeks to change the way the system operates so that all children have the opportunity to thrive.



connectingtocarect.org
plan4children.org

Partner Organizations



About This Toolkit

Connecticut has been working diligently over the last decade to build a robust behavioral health system to support youth and families in need. Each child in our state is unique, and therefore when they are experiencing a behavioral health need, services cannot be one-size-fits-all. Often, **discovering and accessing the appropriate behavioral health services takes time and effort.**

Given the number of services regionally and statewide, we have put together this toolkit for all 201 school districts across the state of Connecticut to help school staff, youth, and families increase their awareness of these services. This toolkit can **serve as a resource for your district** when you encounter a student in need of behavioral health support and you are not sure where to start.

Another important purpose of this toolkit is to **provide resources for families** to strengthen their understanding and knowledge of the CT behavioral health system, while also offering **opportunities for training and education.**

There is so much to know and learn about this ever-changing system, and we hope that school staff and families can use this toolkit to learn more about resources within their region.

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Resources to Help Navigate CT's Behavioral Health System

Various resources are available online to connect families and youth to appropriate behavioral health treatment and supports in CT. While not exhaustive, the following resources may be of assistance to school staff, families, and caregivers.

Children's Mental Health Resource Lists *by Region, in Multiple Languages*

Community-based supports and service lists are available by region. Regional lists include mental health evaluation and treatment resources, along with related supports and services. **These lists include community-based care coordination.**

Resource lists:

www.connectingtocarect.org/supports-services/find-services/

Community-based care coordination:

www.connectingtocarect.org/supports-services/wrapct/care-coordination/

Connect4Families Toolkit

This toolkit simplifies access to behavioral health services and provides guidance on collaboration among families, providers and schools, including tips from parents/caregivers and youth for school, behavioral health and pediatric practitioners.

Where to find it? plan4children.org/resources/toolkit/

Other Key Resources:

- Crisis Resources for Children, Youth and Families:
[988](#) [Urgent Crisis Centers](#) [Mobile Crisis](#)
- [Youth Substance Use Intervention Services](#)
- [Assisted Intervention Matching \(AIM\) tool](#): This tool will guide you through a series of questions to help you find services well-matched to the specific behavioral health needs of a child (mental health and/or substance use) or parent-focused services to promote child wellbeing.

Carelon Behavioral Health (formerly Beacon Health Options)

Child and Family Division Resources

The Carelon Behavioral Health, Child and Family Division can be your first point of contact for connection to mental health, substance use, and parenting services in CT. Carelon BH CT connects families to the range of existing community programs and services needed to build a youth and family-driven, trauma-informed, resilience-focused system of care. The Child and Family Division programs are available for all families, regardless of insurance.

Find information about all programs within the Child and Family Division:
www.carelonbh.com/ctcfd

Community Pathways: [Click here for more information.](#)

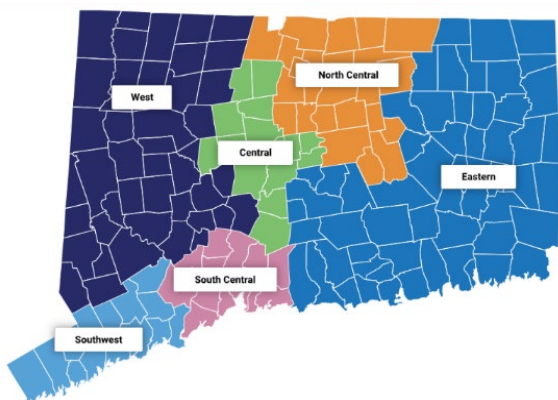
What is it? A non-emergency, warm line that can help connect families to supports for children up to age 18, including mental health services, substance use treatment, in-home supports, and parenting assistance. This is a resource for all families, **regardless of insurance**.

How do I use it? Between 8:30am-5:00pm, M-F, dial [877-381-4193](tel:877-381-4193), option 1 to connect, or email [referral form](mailto:referralform@carelon.com) to [CPathways@carelon.com](mailto:referralform@carelon.com) or fax it to [860-707-1003](tel:860-707-1003)

Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership (CTBHP)

To find mental health, substance abuse, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) providers who accept HUSKY, visit www.ctbhp.com.

Connect with your Network of Care (NOC) Manager for additional assistance!



Region	NOC Managers
1. Southwest	Mai Kader (mai.kader@carelon.com)
2. Southcentral	Mikhela Hull (mikhela.hull@carelon.com)
3. Eastern	Drew Lavallee (andrew.lavallee@carelon.com)
4. Northcentral	Lisa Palazzo (lisa.palazzo@carelon.com)
5. Western	Jules Calabro (julie.calabro@carelon.com)
6. Central	Stephanie Joanis (stephanie.joanis@carelon.com)

Resources to Educate and Empower Youth and Families

FAVOR, Inc.

FAVOR is a statewide, family-led nonprofit organization that is committed to empowering families as advocates and partners in improving educational and health outcomes for our children. FAVOR offers a single place for families with children who have medical, mental, emotional, and behavioral health challenges to find information, assistance, and training.

FAVOR offers the following trainings and resources for families:

- The **FAVOR Family Peer Support Program** provides direct peer support services to families with children who have medical, mental, or behavioral health challenges to **empower and help them** participate fully in the development of their child's care planning and implementation.

For more information regarding our family peer support program and how to access it, scan the QR code below!



A family or provider can also submit a referral directly using this form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/uLG2nW9c8T>



- **FAVOR's Learning & Leadership Academy** is a learning collaborative designed to provide an infrastructure to guide and mentor youth and family champions interested in developing their leadership and peer support skills.

Trainings offered include:

- **How To Be Your Child's Best Advocate**
- **Agents of Change**
- **CONNECTing Youth**
- **Understanding Your Child's IEP**
- **Support Group Facilitation Training**
- **Redefining Self Care**
- **Persuasive Storytelling**
- **What's Your Story?**

To register for a training, visit [FAVOR's website](#) or reach out to your region's Family Systems Manager or Family Peer Support Specialist (contact info below)

Region	Family Systems Managers	Family Peer Support Specialists
1. Southwest	Keisha Martin-Velez (kmartin-velez@favor-ct.org)	Renee Wright (rwright@favor-ct.org) Louarna Kalten (lkalten@favor-ct.org)
2. Southcentral	Kristin Graham (kgraham@favor-ct.org)	Amy Hilario (ahilario@favor-ct.org)
3. Eastern	Lisa Girard (lgirard@favor-ct.org)	Shannon Ozkan (sozkan@favor-ct.org)
4. Northcentral	Paul Guerrero (pguerrero@favor-ct.org)	Maria Soto (msoto@favor-ct.org)
5. Western	Patricia Gaylord (pgaylord@favor-ct.org)	Coreen Herman (cherman@favor-ct.org) Zosh Flammia (zflammia@favor-ct.org)
6. Central	Dreau Foster (dfoster@favor-ct.org)	Lynda Bolton (lbolton@favor-ct.org)

How to Get Additional Support for Your School!



If you are interested in receiving **free technical assistance, training, and support** in how to utilize these resources, **Connecting to Care** is currently recruiting K-12 schools and districts across Connecticut to participate!

This initiative is offered at **no cost** to your district and includes training, technical assistance, evaluation, and support.

On the following pages, you will find examples of the support your school can receive by participating in the initiative. As a reminder, these supports are in addition to the resources described above, which are always available to all 201 school districts in the state.

For more information, please reach out to: Sarah White | swhite@chdi.org

**We look forward to
“CONNECTing” with you!**

Connecting to Care Components

Students Supporting Students Peer Support Program

The Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) has developed the **Students Supporting Students Peer Support Program**. This program trains middle and high school students to become part of a peer support team with the help of trusted adults in the school setting. Peer team members receive training to recognize mental health signs and symptoms in peers, reduce stigma around asking for help, and encourage help-seeking to trusted adults within the school.

School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation System (including CARE Assessment)

The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System is a **public-access, web-based** platform



that offers schools, districts, and states a workspace and targeted resources and assessments to support **school mental health quality improvement**. (To learn more, visit the [SHAPE](#) website).

Of particular importance when integrating equity more effectively in schools is the **Culturally Responsive, Anti-Racist, and Equitable (CARE) Assessment**.

Culturally Responsive, Anti-Racist,
and Equitable (CARE) Assessment



Schools participating in the **Connecting to Care initiative** will have the benefit of receiving a **unique implementation plan** that intentionally integrates their SHAPE results, along with the school's specific goals and desires. The plan will provide **specific action steps** the school team can take to improve their school's overall culturally responsive anti-racist, and equitable practices.

For more information regarding these programs, please contact:

Sarah White | swhite@chdi.org



Build and strengthen your school's behavioral health supports and connect with community-based services



Schools or districts who are interested in participating in this multi-year opportunity can apply to participate at three different levels, based on their need and capacity.

What can schools expect from participating?

Level 1 schools will receive:

- A School Mental Health Needs Assessment (SHAPE)
- SHAPE Results Review
- Training for school staff, youth, and families in Community Behavioral Health Supports, Trauma-Informed Practices, and Educational Equity
- Training for parents/caregivers in FAVOR's Learning and Leadership Academy and the Family Peer Support Program

Level 2 schools will receive:

- All Level 1 components
- An implementation plan with unique goals based on SHAPE results review
- Access to participate in regional learning communities
- Technical assistance and support to establish educational safe spaces in schools and implement school climate activities

Level 3 schools will receive:

- All Level 1 and 2 components
- Monthly technical assistance and support to help with implementation plan
- Quality improvement and evaluation support
- Technical assistance and support to implement behavioral health screening
- Technical assistance and support to implement a student peer support program (for middle and high school students only)



If you are interested in applying to participate, please contact: Sarah White | swhite@chdi.org

CHDI serves as the Coordinating Center + technical assistance provider for CONNECT IV.



connectingtocarect.org
plan4children.org

Partner Organizations



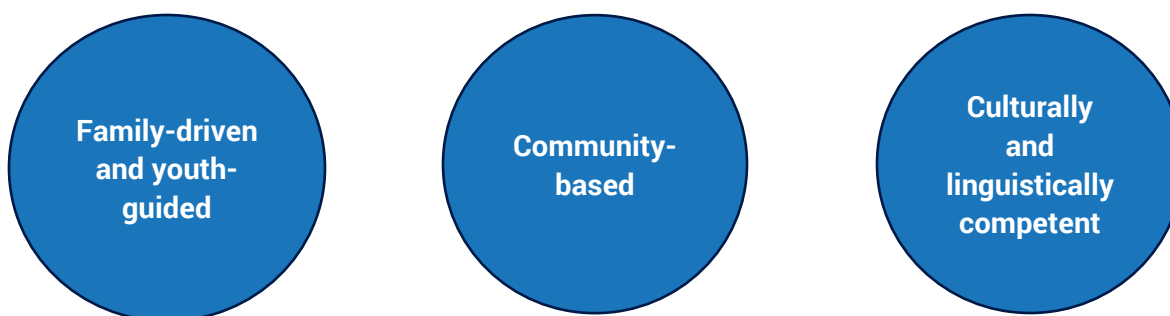
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Strengthening Schools as a Component of the System of Care

All the resources included in this guide are a vital component of a system of care. A **System of Care (SOC)** can be described as a **variety of effective, community-based services and supports** for children and youth with (or at risk for) mental health or other challenges - and their families.

The SOC approach encompasses a collection of child-serving services and supports, including **school mental health, individual therapy, medication therapy, inpatient psychiatric services, and residential treatment**. *Schools are a vital part of that system of care!* We hope these resources give you a better understanding of the SOC approach and how it can empower children and their families to thrive.

Systems of Care are...



Connecticut's Mission

Following the Newtown tragedy in 2012, Connecticut began working to better integrate care coordination efforts across the state. This tragedy highlighted a need to expand our infrastructure and service delivery system in Connecticut through expansion and integration of **trauma-informed comprehensive school mental health supports** within the existing **community-based network of care**.

We hope that this toolkit can assist school staff, young people, and their families when they are searching for behavioral health resources in our state and not sure where to begin. This toolkit can serve as an easy entry to find the right care.