

Supporting Yourself While Supporting Your Child

Caring for yourself while your child is away is a good way to make sure they keep up the great work when they come home. Below are ideas that may help you better assist your child.

Parenting Classes and Support Groups. When life gets hard sometimes we forget the little things that might make it easier. Parenting classes and support groups give helpful tools to manage the little things before they become big again.

Individual Counseling for You. Sometimes just talking about how hard it's been can make all the difference in how you feel.

- Talk about what it has been like for you at home.
- Talk about your concerns about your child returning home.
- Talk about ways to deal with hard times before they come up.

See Your Doctor. Feeling better physically will help you feel better mentally. Call your Primary Care Doctor and make an appointment for a check up. Call the number on your health insurance card to get a list of doctors near you.

Family Therapy. Be an active part of the residential placement therapy. Talking together while living apart starts the healing.

- Learn the same skills your child is learning so you can help them when they come home.
- Join a support group. You can call Magellan and speak with a Family Support Coordinator to help locate one near you.

Find activities your child can participate in when they come home.

- Call the school and ask about after school activities.
- Talk to the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) about mentoring and other services that they can fund.
- Call your local Community Services Board (CSB) for mental health services and case management.
- Call Magellan and ask about mental health service providers to get phone numbers to call when your child comes home.
- Contact community activity places like the YMCA, girl/boy scouts, clubs, and camps for program information before your child comes home.

Treat mental health or substance use. Other parents wish they had sought services for themselves while their child was in treatment. Now is the time for wellness and recovery for the whole family. Contact your local Community Services Board for help. A list of phone numbers is located at <http://dbhds.virginia.gov> under “Individuals and Families” or call Magellan at 1-800-424-4046 and ask for the phone number to your local Community Services Board.

Create a crisis plan. It is always good to be prepared in an emergency. A Crisis/Emergency Plan might include the following, among other things:

- Who to call
- Where to go
- Childcare information for siblings
- Medication or a list of medications
- Hospital appropriate clothes and shoes

Create a Relapse Plan. A relapse plan is as important as a crisis plan when your child returns home. This plan should include a list of symptoms and behaviors to alert you to an illness reappearing before it becomes serious. It would also have actions and contacts to make if this happens.

Knowledge is Power. Find what you need to make life easier.

Information on parenting classes, parent support groups, financial assistance, employment, housing, food, child care, community resources, etc. can be located at www.211virginia.org or by calling 211 and asking to speak with a support specialist.

To get assistance finding a mental health provider for you or your child call Magellan at 1-800-424-4046 or the number on the back of your health insurance card.