

Mental Health Q&A

Q: My child is having trouble making friends. How can she learn to adjust socially?

A: **Get your child involved! As a parent there are several steps in helping your child get through a difficult social time.**

Join a Group: Focus on your child's strengths, interests, and capabilities, and find a group that fits her needs. Whether its dance, sports, cards or checkers, it's an opportunity to make a friend.

Set up play dates: Plan activity-based play dates to assist with creativity and social guidance. If your child is anxious about the play date, role play to calm her nerves.

Respect your child's personality: Find a group or another child that compliments your child's needs or interests. Don't force an activity or relationship if your child can not be true to herself.

Seek Help: Your child's teacher may have details about bullying, exclusion or interpersonal skills within the classroom, which can help in determining a specific social deficit. If your child's social skills continue to cause distress or academic issues, be sure to seek professional help.

At PFCS, we offer [social skills groups for children](#) struggling to find a sense of belonging and connectedness to kids their own age. Children are placed in groups that are appropriate for their needs and learn basic skills of setting boundaries and all aspects of relationship building. Our groups provide:

- Emotional awareness and self-regulation
- Positive verbal and nonverbal communication skills
- Healthy behavioral skills
- An accepting environment

For more information or to make an appointment, please call us at 845-225-2700.

Q: What are the different types of Mental Health Professionals?

A: At PFCS, we employ several types of Mental Health Professionals, each qualified to assist with different aspects of treatment and recovery.

Psychiatrist: Medical doctor who specializes in preventing, diagnosing, and treating mental illness. Licensed to write a prescription and monitor the effects of mental illness on other physical conditions

Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Licensed Mental Health Counselor: Have different licenses, but both are qualified to evaluate, diagnose and treat people by providing individual, family, and group psychotherapy.

Psychiatric Nurse: Evaluate people for mental illness, provide psychotherapy, and monitor health-related conditions. PFCS also employs Nurse Practitioners who are licensed to write prescriptions.

Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC): Trained in diagnostic assessment, evaluation, intervention, referral, and Alcohol/Substance abuse counseling for both individuals and groups affected by chemical dependency.

Peer Specialist: Person with lived experience of mental illness or chemical dependency who is trained to help others experiencing these difficulties.

PFCS staff can assist with all aspects of mental health and chemical dependency treatment. For more information or to make an appointment, please call us at 845-225-2700

[Source: Mental Health America]

Q: What do I say to a friend experiencing mental health issues?

A: When someone you know is experiencing mental health difficulties, kind words can make all the difference...but the wrong words can make everything worse. Here are some tips for what to say...and what NOT to say.

Words that Help	Words that Hurt
I know you have a real illness, and that's what's causing these thoughts and feelings.	It's all in your head.
<i>Validate what your friend is experiencing, instead of dismissing it as something he or she can change with a simple attitude adjustment.</i>	
I may not understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help.	We all go through times like this.
<i>Everyone experiences strong emotions, but sadness, for example, isn't the same as depression. Acknowledge the intensity of your friend's feelings and volunteer your support.</i>	
You are not alone in this. I'm here for you.	Quit worrying. You'll be fine.
<i>Continue to treat your friend with caring and compassion. The most important thing you can do is just offer to be available</i>	

Whatever you choose to say, try to listen without interruption to dispense advice or make judgments. Ask if your friend is receiving treatment and volunteer to help him or

her find the right care. Above all, let your friend know that you are there to help in any way possible and that you still care.

PFCS provides assessment and individual, group and family counseling to people experiencing issues of mental health. If you would like to speak with someone about a friend's problem – or your own – please call us at 845-225-2700.

[Sources: University of Michigan Depression Center; PsychCentral.com]