

PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE

What Is Wraparound?

Understanding Wraparound services — what they are, how they work, and what to expect.

The information in this guide is drawn from the clinical expertise of Dr. John Carosso, Psy.D. and Dr. Robert A. Lowenstein, M.D., current research findings, and authoritative sources including the DSM-5 and the National Institute of Mental Health. It is intended for informational purposes and does not replace a professional evaluation.

What Is Wraparound?

Wraparound is a short-term, intensive mental health service model that provides comprehensive support to a child and their family across home, school, and community settings. Rather than a single program or type of service, Wraparound is a philosophy and a process — an unconditional commitment to meet each child's unique needs, one child at a time.

Primary goals of Wraparound: Prevent out-of-home placement; facilitate successful transition from acute psychiatric hospitalization or long-term residential care back to the home environment; and support the child's stable functioning in their natural community.

Core Principles of the Wraparound Model

Least Restrictive Environment

Children should be treated in their own homes, schools, and communities whenever possible.

Child-Centered and Family-Focused

Services are designed around the child's needs, with parents as vital members of the treatment team.

Strengths-Based

Plans focus on assets and skills, not just deficits and pathology.

Individualized

Services are created to meet the unique needs of each child and family — not based on a categorical model.

Community-Based

Restrictive care is accessed only for brief stabilization periods.

Culturally Competent

The team composition and approach are tailored to the family's culture and community.

Unconditional Care

The team commits to changing services as the family's needs change — not the other way around.

Outcome-Focused

Progress is measured and evaluated regularly throughout the process.

Wraparound Services

Behavior Specialist Consultation (BSC)

Provided in the home, school, or community, BSC services include ongoing assessment of behavioral and emotional needs, development of an individualized behavior management plan, creation of materials for the team, supervision of Therapeutic Staff Support personnel, and participation in treatment team meetings.

Mobile Therapy (MT)

Mobile therapy is provided in the home, school, and community and is designed to stabilize the child's behavior, provide individual and family therapy, offer emotional support and crisis intervention, and continually assess the child and family's response to treatment.

Therapeutic Staff Support (TSS)

TSS services are delivered in the home, school, and community. The TSS worker maintains safety, implements the behavior management plan, models and teaches appropriate social and problem-solving skills, and provides emotional support to the child.

Please note: TSS workers are not permitted to transport the child or parents, and are not permitted to engage in toileting routines. These boundaries exist to protect both families and staff and to maintain appropriate professional ethics.

Expectations of Parents

Wraparound services require active parent participation — both in the home and in the community. Key expectations include:

- Be present and involved during all in-home service sessions
- Participate fully in team meetings, quarterly psychological evaluations, medication monitoring, and interagency meetings
- Implement the behavioral plan consistently and cooperate with your BSC to refine it
- Understand that services are time-limited — the goal is to build your own capacity as a caregiver, not to create dependency on the team
- Continue to assume normal parenting responsibilities (transportation, supervision) that would exist without TSS involvement

Your feedback is essential. Wraparound intervention is not considered successful unless the parent and child say it is. Speak up in team meetings, communicate concerns early, and be honest about what is and isn't working.

Professional Boundaries

Because team members spend significant time in your home, it is natural to feel a bond with them. However, maintaining appropriate professional boundaries is essential — both to protect you as a consumer and to preserve the team's ability to serve you effectively. Please avoid:

- Engaging in personal conversations unrelated to your child
- Leaving your child in the team member's care while you step out
- Inviting team members to personal functions or social events
- Contacting previous staff members for advice after discharge or reassignment

If a Staff Member Is Not a Good Fit

Sometimes a staff member simply doesn't connect well with a child or family. This is common and easily resolved by requesting a replacement — you should not feel guilty for doing so. If a staff member is violating policy (inappropriate dress, asking you to sign blank forms, using inappropriate language, transporting a child without authorization), please notify us immediately.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Wraparound the right first step for our family?

Wraparound services are designed as a higher-intensity level of care. Families are encouraged to first attempt a less intensive level of care — such as outpatient therapy or psychiatric medication management — before implementing Wraparound. If those supports have not been sufficient, or if your child is transitioning from a more restrictive setting, Wraparound may be appropriate.

How long do Wraparound services typically last?

Wraparound is designed as a short-term, intensive service with a clear goal: to build the family's capacity so that the level of support can be reduced over time. Duration varies by family need, but the focus from day one is on eventual transition to a lower level of care. Your team will track outcomes regularly and discuss progress with you.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about my services?

You can contact any of our local offices and speak with the Clinical Supervisor or Coordinator responsible for your case. You may also contact Dr. Carosso or Dr. Lowenstein directly at the number listed below. We are committed to providing you with the best possible team and to addressing concerns promptly.

Ready to take the next step?

Doctors Carosso and Lowenstein and our experienced team are here to help. Contact us to schedule an evaluation or to ask any questions.

P (724) 850-7200 | hello@helpforyourchild.com | helpforyourchild.com