

T ERMS USED IN VIRGINIA’S MENTAL HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM

504 Plan – An individualized plan developed for a student with a disability that specifies what accommodations and/or services they will get in school to “level the playing field” so that they may derive as much benefit from their public educational program as their nondisabled peers. The plan follows from the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Act also applies to extracurricular activities and non-student situations such as employment. Section 504 applies to all public entities receiving federal monies or federal financial assistance. Students with disabilities that qualify them for an [individualized education program](#) (IEP) under the [Individuals with Disabilities Act](#) (IDEA) cannot also have a 504 plan.

acetylcholine – Often abbreviated *Ach*, this chemical compound is one of many [neurotransmitters](#).

acute – Refers to an intense illness or affliction of abrupt onset.

adjustment disorder – A disorder that occurs when a child experiences emotional and behavioral symptoms of [depression](#) and/or [anxiety](#) that is clearly in response to an identifiable stressor or stressors. The diagnosis of adjustment disorder is most appropriate when the child is experiencing distress above what might be expected in response to a stressor and/or when the stressor causes school grades to drop or impedes daily activities. See “[Adjustment Disorders](#)” section.

affective disorder – A type of mental disorder that is not caused by detectable organic abnormalities of the brain; that is characterized by a consistent, pervasive alteration in mood; and that affects thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

agoraphobia – An extreme or irrational fear of crowded spaces or enclosed public places.

anecdotal evidence – An informal account of evidence, often in the form of hearsay. For instance, when a patient reports he or she feels better after taking a drug, this is anecdotal evidence that the drug is effective. Anecdotal evidence has less authority than scientific evidence and is not used to support [evidence-based](#) medicine.

anhedonia – Inability to experience pleasure from activities and play.

anticonvulsant – A drug designed to prevent the seizures or convulsions typical of epilepsy or other convulsant disorders. Anticonvulsant medicines are also used to treat [bipolar disorder](#) and other disorders.

anxiolytic – Any drug used in the treatment of anxiety.

anxiety disorders – Disorders characterized by worries or fears that cause significant impairment in the child’s functioning. When fears do not fade and begin to interfere with daily life and activities, an anxiety disorder may be present. See “[Anxiety Disorders](#)” section.

anorexia nervosa – An eating disorder characterized by low body weight (less than 85% of normal weight for height and age), a distorted [body image](#), and an intense fear of gaining weight. See “[Feeding and Eating Disorders](#)” section.

antidepressants – Medications used in the treatment of [depression](#), as well as other psychiatric disorders. Includes [SSRIs](#), [SNRIs](#), and [tricyclic antidepressants](#).

antipsychotics – Medications used to treat **psychotic** symptoms such as **hallucinations**, bizarre behavior, and **delusions**. There are two classes of antipsychotics: **neuroleptics** and atypical antipsychotics. Atypical antipsychotics usually have fewer side effects and are sometimes used in an **off-label** capacity to treat nonpsychotic symptoms such as aggression.

Asperger's syndrome – A type of **pervasive developmental disorder** (PDD) characterized by problems in development of social skills and behavior. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV)* defines Asperger's syndrome on the basis of the presence of impairments in social interaction like those observed in **autism**, but without the significant delay in language or cognitive behavior. In May 2013, the American Psychiatric Association released the *DSM-5*, which acknowledges that all categories of autism are on a spectrum, thus eliminating the diagnosis Asperger's syndrome and replacing it with autism spectrum disorder. Research studies and clinicians may still use the term Asperger's syndrome. See "*Autism Spectrum Disorder*" section.

assessment – A professional review of a child's and family's needs conducted when they first seek services from a health care professional. It typically includes a review of physical and mental health, intelligence, school performance, family situation, **social history**, and behavior in the community. The assessment identifies the strengths of the child and family. Together, the caregiver and family decide what kind of treatment and supports, if any, are needed.

assessment tool – A standardized and scientifically validated tool (such as a questionnaire) used to assist a health professional in diagnosing disorders during the assessment process. Some assessment tools are completed by the patient, while others are completed by the health professional. Many assessment tools require specific training in order to be conducted and scored correctly. Assessment tools usually have formal titles, such as the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q).

assistive technology – Any item, piece of equipment, or product that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. Wheelchairs, hearing aids, and computer screen readers are all examples of assistive technologies.

attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) – A **neurodevelopmental disorder**, usually first diagnosed in childhood, that is characterized by inattention, impulsivity and, in some cases, hyperactivity. See "*Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder*" section.

autism spectrum disorder (ASD) – A lifelong **neurodevelopmental disorder** that typically appears during the first three years of life. A child with ASD appears to live in his/her own world, shows little interest in others, and has a lack of social awareness. Children with ASD often have problems in communication, avoid eye contact, and show limited attachment to others. No known factors in the psychological environment of a child have been shown to cause ASD. See "*Autism Spectrum Disorder*" section.

autonomic nervous system – The autonomic nervous system controls involuntary actions, such as heartbeat and the widening or narrowing of blood vessels.

autosomal dominant disorder – A genetic defect; specifically, a disorder caused by a dominant mutant gene on an autosome. See "*Motor Disorders*" section.

behavior modification therapy – A form of **psychotherapy** in which a therapist analyzes a person's problematic behavior in terms of what reinforces or punishes that behavior. The behavioral therapist will systematically alter the reinforcers or punishers to help the person to change his or her behaviors. Behavior therapy has been adapted over the years into a type of therapy called **cognitive behavioral therapy** (CBT), which looks at the role of both thinking (cognition) and behavior in the context of human problems.

behavioral classroom management (BCM) – Teacher-implemented behavior modification strategies, including reward programs, point systems, and time-outs.

behavior intervention plan (BIP) – In educational settings, a formalized plan designed to address a student's problem behaviors by teaching and rewarding positive behaviors (if possible). BIPs are usually appended to a student's [individualized educational program](#). A public school must attempt such a plan before changing a student's placement to a more restrictive environment (unless there is an emergency situation). A BIP should also detail the environmental or proactive changes the staff will make to decrease the likelihood of the undesirable behavior or symptom. BIPs should be preceded by a functional behavioral [assessment](#).

behavioral health authorities (BHAs) – Agencies functioning in the same capacity and operating under the same requirements as [community services boards](#).

behavioral parent training (BPT) – A technique for teaching management and discipline skills to parents so that treatment can continue in the home.

beta-blocker – a type of medication that inhibits the action of beta-adrenergic receptors, slowing cardiac and respiratory functions and constricting blood vessels. Beta-blockers are of value in the treatment of hypertension, cardiac arrhythmias, and migraine. In psychiatry, they are used in the treatment of aggression and violence, anxiety-related tremors, [lithium-induced tremors](#), [social phobias](#), [panic](#) states, and alcohol withdrawal.

binge eating disorder (BED) – A disorder resembling [bulimia nervosa](#) that is characterized by episodes of uncontrolled eating (or bingeing). It differs from bulimia, however, in that its sufferers do not purge their bodies of the excess food. See "[Feeding and Eating Disorders](#)" section.

biofeedback – A technique for learning to consciously control bodily functions that are usually thought to be involuntary. The procedure uses electronic equipment to monitor some feature of physiological response (e.g., heart rate, breathing, muscle tension) and convert the measurement into a signal that a person can easily perceive, usually via a computer monitor. The person can then attempt to use conscious control to alter the signal.

biological factors – In the context of mental health disorders, biological factors include factors such as genetics or the physical functioning of the brain.

bipolar disorder – A mood disorder causing a person's moods to swing between states of [depression](#) (low mood and energy) and [mania](#) (heightened mood and energy). See "[Bipolar and Related Disorders](#)" section.

body-focused repetitive behavior – Recurrent actions that cause physical damage to oneself, or unintentional and compulsive actions that serve to relieve anxiety. Includes [excoriation](#) and [trichotillomania](#). See "[Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders](#)" section.

body image – One's sense of one's own body, which can be linked to one's sense of self-worth.

borderline personality disorder (BPD) – A pattern of behavior characterized by impulsive acts, intense but chaotic relationships with others, identity problems, and emotional instability.

broadband tool – See [screening tool](#).

bulimia nervosa – A pattern of behavior in which the individual eats excessive quantities of food and then purges the body by using laxatives, enemas, diuretics, vomiting, and/or exercising. See "[Feeding and Eating Disorders](#)" section.

case management – A service that assists children and their families in identifying and accessing services that meet their individual needs. The primary purpose of case management is to ensure that the needed services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner. The activities of a case manager may include identifying and reaching out to individuals in need of assistance, assessing needs and planning services, linking the individual to supports and services, coordinating services with other providers, monitoring service delivery, and advocating for these children in response to their changing needs. Case management services are typically provided by [community services boards](#), private clinics, and social services agencies.

case manager – A health care professional who works directly with clients, coordinates various activities, and acts as the clients' primary contact with other members of the treatment team. Case managers are often social workers.

catatonia – A cluster of motor features that includes rigid posture, fixed staring, and stupor. Catatonia manifests in a variety of mental health disorders.

catatonic – A person who has features of catatonia.

causal relationship – See [correlation vs. causal relationship](#).

cerebral cortex – The outer layer of the brain. The cerebral cortex plays a key role in thought, planning, memory, attention, perceptual awareness, language, and consciousness. Also referred to as the cortex.

children's advocacy center – A facility used in the investigation of child abuse cases and treatment of victims. A children's advocacy center is a child-friendly and safe environment designed to be supportive of children who are victims of child abuse.

Children's Services Act (CSA) – Formerly the Comprehensive Services Act, a Virginia law that created a collaborative system in which state and local agencies work together and draw on the same pool of funds to plan and provide services for at-risk youth. The purpose of the Act is to provide high quality, child-centered, family-focused, cost effective, community-based services to high-risk youth and their families. The two primary teams that operate under the CSA are [Family Assessment and Planning Teams \(FAPTs\)](#) and [Community Policy and Management Teams \(CPMTs\)](#).

chronic – A term used to describe long-term persistence. In some mental health disorders, chronic is specified as persisting for six months or longer.

clinical trials or studies – Research studies designed to test how well new medical approaches work and to answer scientific questions about better ways to prevent, screen for, diagnose, or treat a disease. They may also compare a new treatment to a treatment that is already available. Every clinical trial has a protocol, or action plan; the plan describes the trial's goal and how it will be conducted. An independent committee of physicians, statisticians, and members of the community must approve and monitor the protocol and ensure that risks are worth the potential benefits. Most clinical trials are double-blind studies,

cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) – A form of [psychotherapy](#) that helps people learn to change inappropriate or negative thought patterns and behaviors. The goal is to recognize negative thoughts or mind-sets (mental processes such as perceiving, remembering, reasoning, decision making, and problem solving) and replace them with positive thoughts or thoughts that better reflect reality, which can lead to more appropriate and beneficial behavior. For instance, cognitive behavioral therapy tries to replace thoughts that lead to low self-esteem (“I can't do anything right”) with reality-based positive expectations (“I do many things right and can do this right, too”).

cognitive impairment – A term that describes poor mental function that affects the ability to think, concentrate, formulate ideas, reason, and remember. It is distinct from a learning disability insofar as cognitive impairment may have been acquired as a result of an accident or illness.

community-based care – Care and support rendered outside the institutional setting. Treatment is provided where the child lives, goes to school, and plays.

community policy and management teams (CPMTs) – These are teams that operate under the [Children's Services Act](#) to coordinate agency efforts, manage available funds, and see that eligible youths and their families get the assistance they need. CPMTs coordinate long-range, community wide planning that ensures that resources and services needed by children and families are developed and maintained in communities. CPMTs establish policies governing referrals and reviews of children and families to the [Family Assessment and Planning Teams](#) (FAPTs). Each CPMT establishes and appoints one or more FAPTs based on the needs of the community. CPMTs also authorize and monitor the use of funds by each FAPT. The CPMT includes a representative from the following community agencies: [community services boards](#), [Juvenile Court Services Unit](#), Department of Health, Department of Social Services, and the local school division. The team also includes a parent representative and a private provider organization representative for children or family services, if such organizations are located within the locality.

community services boards (CSBs) – These agencies serve as the single point of entry into the publicly-funded mental health system. They provide comprehensive mental health, intellectual disability, and substance abuse services. There are 39 CSBs throughout Virginia. Because these agencies are affiliated with local governments, there is tremendous variation in the number and types of services offered by each. However, CSBs usually provide certain core services: [crisis intervention services](#), local [inpatient services](#), [outpatient services](#), [case management](#), day support, [residential services](#), and [early intervention services](#).

comorbidity – A condition in which an individual is diagnosed with more than one disorder at the same time. When those disorders are related to mental health, the terms *co-occurring disorder* or *dual diagnosis* are sometimes used, especially if the patient has a substance-related disorder and a mental health disorders (e.g., opioid use disorder and [depression](#)) or a [neurodevelopmental disorder](#) and a mental health disorders (e.g., [ADHD](#) and [bipolar disorder](#)).

complex trauma – See [trauma](#).

compulsion – In terms of children's mental health, a compulsion is a repetitive behavior (such as hand washing) or mental act (such as praying or counting) that a child is driven to complete. Compulsive acts are often used to reduce anxiety or distress, though there is no connection between the act and the distress.

conduct disorder (CD) – Children with CD exhibit persistent and critical patterns of misbehavior. These children may indulge in frequent temper-tantrums like children with [oppositional defiant disorder](#) (ODD); however, they also violate the rights of others. See "[Disruptive, Impulse Control & Conduct Disorders](#)" section.

contamination obsessions – [Obsessions](#) characterized by intrusive thoughts about catching a disease from touching a surface, which can lead to compulsive grooming or hand-washing.

contingency management strategies – Strategies that use reward systems designed to provide reinforcements to increase desired behaviors, such as following directions or taking turns.

continuum of care – The delivery of healthcare provided over a period of time. Continuum of care typically describes the process of guiding the patient through various stages of care and tracking and managing needs and progress.

contraindicated – To indicate the inadvisability of a medical treatment.

co-occurring disorder – See [comorbidity](#).

coprolalia – Vocal [tic](#) activity that usually involves loud grunting, but may also include word shouting, with the words sometimes being obscenities. Coprolalia is a symptom of [Tourette disorder](#). See “[Motor Disorders](#)” section.

cortex – See [cerebral cortex](#).

correlation vs. causal relationship – These terms are used in scientific research to describe the relationship between variables. When two variables have a causal relationship, research has shown that one variable causes the other. When two variables have a correlation, research has shown that they tend to occur together, but that one does not necessarily cause the other. For instance, research has proven that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer (causal relationship). Studies have also found a correlation between lung cancer and poverty. This does not mean that poverty itself causes lung cancer, only that those living in poverty are more likely to develop lung cancer.

cortisol – A hormone produced in the presence of stress.

counseling – A service that incorporates care consultation, evaluation, and outpatient treatment to those experiencing concerns about their mental health.

court service units (CSU) – Local agencies operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice that serve as gatekeepers for children and families served by the local Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. These units are responsible for handling petitions, intakes, investigations and reports, custody investigations, and probation supervision.

CREB – A gene linked to alcohol addiction, as well as anxiety-like behaviors.

criteria – A specific [symptom](#) or characteristic used to diagnose a mental health disorder. Also known as a specifier.

crisis intervention (emergency) services – 24-hour services that may be provided in either residential or nonresidential settings. These are short term interventions designed for children and adolescents who experience periodic crisis or [acute](#) episodes that require special services. The underlying goal of these services is to assist the child and family in resolving the situation so that [inpatient hospitalization](#) is unnecessary. Nonresidential crisis services include telephone hotlines, walk-in crisis intervention services, mobile crisis outreach services, and intensive [home-based interventions](#). Residential services include runaway shelters, crisis stabilization units, and temporary placements in programs such as [therapeutic foster care](#) and crisis [group homes](#).

cultural competence – A term that refers to improving the effectiveness of services through being sensitive and responsive to the cultural norms of the client. Culturally competent service providers are aware of the impact of their own culture and possess skills that help them to provide services that are culturally appropriate in terms of the values, customs, and beliefs of their client's culture. (A person can identify with a culture based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, class, and so forth.)

cycling – A repeated, sequential event that can increase or subside. This term is often used in reference to mood swings. A patient who is experiencing rapid cycling has had at least four [manic](#), [hypomanic](#), or major [depressive bipolar](#) mood episodes in the previous 12 months. Full or partial remissions must occur for at least two months between episodes unless there is a change in polarity (i.e. from a manic to a major depressive episode). See “[Bipolar and Related Disorders](#)” section.

cyclothymic disorder – A mild form of [bipolar disorder](#) that causes emotional ups and downs.

daily report card – One strategy of [behavioral classroom management](#) that provides feedback to parents and/or the therapist about a child's progress in achieving target behaviors.

day treatment services – See [therapeutic day treatment](#).

day support waiver – See [Medicaid Waiver Program](#).

delusion – A fixed false belief that is resistant to reason or confrontation with actual fact. Delusions can be either bizarre (a belief that cannot possibly be true) or non-bizarre (a belief that could be true in other circumstances).

Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) – DBHDS is the governmental entity in Virginia that administers services for individuals with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, or addiction issues. Formerly the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS), the Department's name was changed by the 2008 Virginia General Assembly.

depression – Depression is characterized by extreme and lasting feelings of sadness, lack of self-worth, irritability, fatigue, and other emotional and physical symptoms. See "[Depressive Disorders](#)" section.

developmental disability – A disability that originated at birth or during childhood that is characterized by a disruption of normal development. When development of the brain or central nervous system is affected, these disabilities are referred to as [neurodevelopmental disorders](#).

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Official manual listing psychiatric and psychological disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association and recognized by both mental health professionals and the insurance industry as the primary authority for the diagnosis of mental disorders. The latest revision was the *DSM Fifth Edition (DSM-5) (2013)*, which replaced the *DSM Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR) (2000)*.

diagnostic assessment – See [assessment](#).

dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) – A cognitive-behavioral treatment approach with two key characteristics: a behavioral, problem-solving focus blended with acceptance-based strategies, and an emphasis on dialectical processes. "Dialectical" refers to the issues involved in treating patients with multiple disorders and to the type of thought processes and behavioral styles used in the treatment strategies. DBT emphasizes balancing behavioral change, problem-solving, and emotional regulation with validation, mindfulness, and acceptance of patients.

dietary supplement – A product taken by mouth that contains an ingredient intended to supplement the diet. Ingredients may include, but are not limited to, vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and substances such as enzymes. Dietary supplements are placed in a special category under the general umbrella of foods and are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.

disassociation – A mental process in which a person consciously or unconsciously detaches (or disassociates) his or her thought processes about an experience from the emotions those experiences provoke. Disassociation can be an unhealthy coping strategy for dealing with [traumatic experiences](#) and/or a symptom of a mental health disorder.

discharge plan – A document that summarizes information pertaining to a person's stay in a health care facility and identifies what needs to occur post-discharge.

disinhibition – A lack of restraint with impulsivity driven by current thoughts or feelings without regard to consequences. Unconscious disinhibition can be a symptom of a mental health disorder.

disruptive disorders – These disorders are the most common reasons children are referred for mental health evaluations and treatment. Disruptive disorders include mental health problems with a focus on behaviors that both identify emotional problems and create interpersonal and social problems for children and adolescents in the course of their development. [Conduct disorder](#) and [oppositional defiant disorder](#) are two classes of disruptive disorders. See “[Disruptive, Impulse Control & Conduct Disorders](#)” section.

disruptive mood dysregulation disorder – A new diagnosis to the *DSM-5*, this disorder applies to children up to age 18 who exhibit persistent irritability and frequent episodes of extreme inability to control their behavior.

dopamine – A [neurotransmitter](#) associated with attention, learning, and pleasure.

double-blind study – A scientific study in which neither the researchers nor the participants know details about the treatment received, including which participants received placebos. The goal of a double-blind study is to prevent bias or other factors to affect results.

dual diagnosis – See [comorbidity](#).

dysfunction – Abnormal or impaired functioning, especially of a bodily system or social group.

dyslexia – A type of learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.

dysphoria – Intense depressive and discontented feelings, often coupled with indifference.

dysthymia – See [persistent depressive disorder \(dysthymia\)](#).

early intervention services – Services intended to improve functioning or change behavior in children identified as experiencing problems, symptoms, or behaviors. The goal is to improve the child's behaviors in order to prevent a future need for more extensive treatment. This approach also includes infant and toddler intervention, which provides family-centered, [community-based](#) early intervention services designed to meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers and their families to enhance the child's development and to prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delays. These types of services are most often provided by social service agencies, [community services boards](#), pediatricians and nurses in health clinics, and schools.

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) – Medicaid's comprehensive and preventive child health program for individuals under the age of 21. The EPSDT program covers screening and diagnostic services to determine physical or mental defects in recipients and health care, treatment, and other measures to correct or ameliorate any defects and chronic conditions discovered. Services include health and developmental history screening, immunization, nutritional status assessment, vision and hearing testing, dental services for children three years and older, and visual treatment including eyeglasses.

eating disorders – Refers to a variety of life threatening mental health disorders characterized by abnormal eating behaviors. See “[Feeding and Eating Disorders](#)” section.

echolalia – The involuntary parrot-like repetition (echoing) of a word or phrase spoken by another person. Echolalia is a feature of disorders including [schizophrenia](#), (especially the [catatonic](#) form) and [Tourette disorder](#).

echopraxia – The involuntary imitation of the movements of another person. Echopraxia is a feature of disorders including [schizophrenia](#), (especially the [catatonic](#) form) and [Tourette disorder](#).

efficacy/efficacious – Producing, or capable of producing, a desired effect.

electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) – A treatment usually reserved for very severe or [psychotic depressions](#) or [manic](#) states that are not responsive to medication treatment. A low-voltage electric current is sent to the brain of an anesthetized patient to induce a convulsion or seizure, which has a therapeutic effect.

emotional lability – Emotional instability; intense and easily aroused emotions out of proportion to circumstances.

empirical – Capable of being verified or disproved by observation or experiment.

enuresis – Bed wetting.

epigenetics – The study of changes in organisms caused by modification of gene expression rather than alteration of the genetic code itself. Epigenetics describes how genes can be turned on or off when an organism (such as a human being) is exposed to various environmental factors.

ethnopharmacology – Treatment that acknowledges that people may have different reactions to medications based on their racial or ethnic background. For instance, Asian and Hispanic children with [schizophrenia](#) may require lower doses of [antipsychotics](#) than Caucasians to achieve the same blood levels. Although knowledge in this area is scant, cultural patterns should be considered in prescription practices.

etiology – A process that describes how a problem or diagnosis developed to its current condition.

evidence-based – Treatments that have undergone scientific evaluation and are proven to be effective.

excoriation (skin-picking) disorder – A new *DSM-5* disorder characterized by recurrent skin picking resulting in skin lesions. See “[Obsessive-compulsive and Related Disorders](#)” section.

executive functioning – An umbrella term for the cognitive skills involved in mental control and self-regulation.

exposure therapy – A form of [psychotherapy](#) in which a patient is deliberately exposed, under controlled conditions, to the problem or event that triggers psychological problems with the aim of reducing the impact of the triggering event.

Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) – Virginia's Title XXI Plan that helps families provide health insurance to their children.

family assessment and planning teams (FAPTs) – Local teams that operate through the [Children's Services Act](#). The purpose of the team is to assess the strengths and needs of troubled youths and families who are approved for referral to the team and identify and determine the services that are necessary to meet these unique needs. They are responsible for developing an individual family services plan (IFSP) for appropriate and cost-effective services, and for monitoring the child's progress under this plan.

family preservation services – See [home-based services](#).

family support services – Services that are designed to assist families in dealing with the pressures and demands of raising children with severe emotional disturbance. A variety of services are provided to assist families in achieving balanced lives, including [respite care](#); family [self-help](#), support, and advocacy

groups; and assistance with financial or family survival needs (food, housing, transportation, home maintenance). Family support services may also include providing caregivers with the necessary education, information, and referrals to ensure that they are informed decision-makers. These services are typically provided by social service agencies, [community services boards](#), and private agencies and organizations.

familial – Tending to occur in more members of a family than expected by chance alone.

family systems therapy – A form of [psychotherapy](#) that focuses on how a child interacts with his/her most important social environment, the family. The underlying premise of the therapy is that the child's problems are best understood by observing how they fit into the larger scheme of relationships among the members of the family group.

fetal alcohol syndrome – A condition affecting the children of mothers who consume large quantities of alcohol during pregnancy; it can involve [cognitive impairment](#) or delays, attention difficulties, and physical and emotional disability. Deficits range from mild to severe, including growth retardation, brain damage, [intellectual disability](#), anomalies of the face, and heart failure.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) – A statutory requirement that children with disabilities receive a public education appropriate to their needs, at no cost to their families.

functional family therapy (FFT) – A family-based prevention and intervention program that combines and integrates established clinical therapy, empirically supported principles, and extensive clinical experience.

generalized anxiety disorder – A mental disorder characterized by chronic, excessive worry and fear that seems to have no real cause. Children or adolescents with generalized anxiety disorder often worry a lot about things such as future events, past behaviors, social acceptance, family matters, their personal abilities, and/or school performance. See "[Anxiety Disorders](#)" section.

group homes – See [therapeutic group homes](#).

habit reversal therapy – Includes awareness training, competing response training and social support. See "[Motor Disorders](#)" section.

halfway houses – See [therapeutic group homes](#).

hallucinations – A strong perception of an event or object when no such situation is present; may occur in any of the senses (i.e., visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, or tactile).

health maintenance organization (HMO) – A medical care organization organized to deliver and finance health care services through a network of participating providers. An HMO provides comprehensive health care services to its members for a fixed prepaid premium. A primary care physician must provide or authorize all services provided to members. Members must use in-network physicians.

heritability – Measure of the degree to which the variance in the distribution of a phenotype is due to genetic causes or non-genetic factors.

hoarding disorder – The ongoing inability to discard or part with possessions, regardless of the value attributable by others. Hoarding may cause emotional, financial, legal, and physical harm to the affected individual as a result of the disorder. See "[Obsessive-compulsive and Related Disorders](#)" section.

home-based services (family preservation services) – Services typically provided in the residence of an individual who is at risk of being moved into an out-of-home placement or who is being transitioned back into the home from an out-of-home placement. The treatments are family-focused and involve working

within the home environment to preserve the family structure. The services may include crisis treatment, intensive [case management](#), individual and family counseling, skill building (life, communication, and parenting), 24-hour emergency response, and assisting in obtaining and coordinating needed services, resources, and supports. Services vary based on the goals of the program and the needs of the family. The services tend to be of short duration (1 to 3 months) but highly intensive (5 to 20 hours per week). They are usually provided only when other interventions have proven unsuccessful. They are typically offered through child welfare agencies, [community services boards](#), mental health centers, hospitals, juvenile justice agencies, or [private providers](#).

hypersexuality – Being excessively interested or involved in sexual activity.

hypersomnia – Excessive sleepiness.

hypervigilance – Watchfulness or awareness of one's surroundings over and above what is normal.

hypomania – A mild form of [mania](#), marked by elation and hyperactivity. See "[Bipolar and Related Disorders](#)" section.

hypoxia – Lack of oxygen supply.

independent living services – Programs specifically designed to help adolescents make the transition to living independently as adults. They provide training in daily living skills (financial, medical, housing, transportation) as well as vocational and job training. They are offered by [therapeutic group homes](#), [residential treatment centers](#), [day treatment programs](#), [community services boards](#), and private clinics.

individualized educational program (IEP) – A plan developed by parents, teachers, school administrators, and the student to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). The plan should describe the services that are to be provided by the school system within the context of the educational program and contain specific objectives and goals. Students with an IEP cannot also have a [504 Plan](#).

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) – Federal law mandating that a free and appropriate public education be available to all school-age children with certain disabilities. Students covered under IDEA must develop an individualized educational program (IEP) to receive services. Also known as Public Law 105-17.

inpatient hospitalization – Services provided on a 24-hour basis in a hospital setting. Tends to be reserved for children with difficult and ongoing problems. Inpatient hospitalization programs use a variety of interventions, including individual, group, and family therapy, medication management, and [behavior modification](#).

institute for mental disease (IMD) – A residential facility with more than 16 beds that specializes in psychiatric care.

intellectual disability – Previously termed *mental retardation*, intellectual disability is characterized both by a significantly below-average score on a test of mental ability or intelligence and by limitations in the ability to function in areas of daily life, such as communication, self-care, and getting along in social situations and school activities. See "[Intellectual Disability](#)" section.

intellectual disability waiver – See [Medicaid Waver Program](#).

interpersonal rejection sensitivity – Hyper-alertness to the social reactions of others, often characterized by anxiously expecting and rapidly perceiving and overreacting to social rejection.

intervention – An action intended to modify a negative state with the goal of improving it. For instance, [psychotherapy](#) is one intervention for a mental health disorder.

intensive outpatient therapy (IOP) – A form of [partial hospitalization](#) that is more intense than regular once-per-week outpatient therapy and less intense than full [inpatient hospitalization](#). Patients often participate in therapy several days per week for several hours at a time. This type of treatment is typically shorter in duration than most partial hospitalization programs.

intermediate care facility – An institution that provides health-related care and services to individuals who do not require the degree of care provided by hospitals or skilled nursing facilities as defined under Title XIX ([Medicaid](#)) of the Social Security Act.

intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICF/MR) – Facilities providing a community-based residential setting for individuals with [intellectual disability](#) who also have severe medical needs. They offer rehabilitative services designed to maximize independence and enhance the resident's quality of life. They provide residential care, skilled nursing, and specialized training, and may include training programs in language, self-care, independent living, socialization, academic skills, and motor development. While ICF/MRs most often serve adults, adolescents can sometimes be placed in these programs.

interpersonal therapy – A form of [psychotherapy](#) that focuses on improving interpersonal skills by exploring the relationships that the patient has with others. Patients learn to evaluate their interactions with others and to become aware of self-isolation and social difficulties.

intrusive aversive therapy – A formal behavior management technique designed to reduce or eliminate severely maladaptive, violent, or self-injurious behavior by using negative stimuli when problem behaviors are exhibited. It does not include verbal therapies, seclusion, physical or mechanical restraints used in conformity with the applicable human rights regulations, or [psychotropic medications](#).

juvenile correctional centers (JCCs) – Secure residential facilities operated by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. Juvenile offenders are committed to JCCs by the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts and Circuit Courts for rehabilitation and confinement. These facilities provide programs to address the treatment, disciplinary, medical, and recreational needs of the juveniles.

juvenile sex offender – Juvenile perpetrating sex offense(s) by committing any sexual act against the victims' will, without consent, or in an aggressive, exploitive, or threatening manner. See "[Sexual Offending](#)" section.

labile moods/mood lability – See [emotional lability](#).

license/licensure – Permission granted to an individual or organization by a competent authority (such as state government) to engage lawfully in a practice, occupation, or activity. Licensure is usually granted based on examination and/or proof of education rather than on measures of performance. A license is usually permanent, but may be conditioned on annual payment of a fee, proof of continuing education, or proof of competence.

limbic system – A group of interconnected brain structures, common to all mammals, which support a variety of functions, including emotion, motivation, and behavior.

lithium – A type of mood stabilizing medication.

major depressive disorder – A disorder characterized by one or more major episodes of [depression](#) without a history of [mania](#). See "[Depressive Disorders](#)" section.

mandated – In terms of children's mental health, required by law. This designation can refer to children receiving funding under the [Children's Services Act](#). State and local governments are required by law to appropriate sufficient funds for services for these youth. Children and adolescents who fall within this category are generally those who receive individualized services from the education and foster care systems.

mania – A distinct period of abnormally and persistently elevated, expansive, or irritable mood. *See* "[Bipolar and Related Disorders](#)" section.

massed negative practice – One of the most frequently used [behavioral therapy](#) techniques in the treatment of children with [tic disorder](#) in which the individual is asked to deliberately perform the tic movement for specified periods of time interspersed with brief periods of rest.

Medicaid – The federal program (Title XIX of the Social Security Act) that pays for health services for certain categories of people who are poor, elderly, blind, disabled, pregnant, or caretaker relatives of children under the age of 18 and who meet financial eligibility criteria.

Medicaid Waiver Program – In Virginia, the Medicaid Waiver Program provides services to individuals with disabilities. Includes the Intellectual Disability Waiver and the Individual & Family Development Disabilities Support Waiver. Also includes the Day Waiver Program, which provides services such as day support, pre-vocational services, and supported employment for individuals on the waiting lists for the intellectual disability and developmental disability waivers.

Medicare – The federal health insurance program for people who are 65 or older.

mental retardation – *See* [intellectual disability](#).

mentorship services – Individuals who serve as role models and caring adult support figures outside of the immediate family, and often serve a [protective role](#) in the lives of at-risk youth. They can be citizen volunteers or paid paraprofessionals. Their primary role is to assist the youth's development of social support and social skills, competencies and confidence, and to provide school support. Some specific activities include crisis intervention and problem solving, academic assistance, vocational support and recreation, and most importantly, developing a supportive and helpful relationship with the child. This is accomplished through regularly scheduled contact, which is often daily. These types of services may be provided by [community services boards](#), social service agencies, private clinics, and volunteer agencies.

methadone detoxification and maintenance – Services that combine outpatient treatment with the administering of methadone as a substitute narcotic drug, in decreasing doses, until the individual reaches a drug-free state. These treatments usually do not last longer than 180 days. They are typically provided by substance abuse treatment centers.

modality – A therapeutic treatment or agent.

mood disorders – Category of mental health problems that result in elevating or lowering an individual's mood.

mood stabilizer – Medication used in the treatment of [bipolar disorder](#) to suppress swings between [mania](#) and [depression](#). Lithium is a commonly-used mood stabilizer.

multidimensional family therapy (MDFT) – An outpatient, family-based treatment for teenagers with serious substance abuse issues. This approach views drug use in terms of network of influences (individual, family, peer, community) and encourages treatment across settings in multiple ways. Sessions may be held in a clinic, home, court, school, or other community locations. *See* "[Substance Use Disorders](#)" section.

multimodal – Having or involving several types of therapies or treatment approaches.

multisystemic therapy (MST) – An integrative, family-based treatment with focus on improving psychosocial functioning for youth and families so that the need for out-of-home placements is reduced or eliminated.

narrowband tool – See [screening tool](#).

neurobiology – The branch of biology that deals with the anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the nervous system.

neurodevelopmental disorders – A group of disorders in which the development of the brain or central nervous system has been disturbed in early development. This disruption causes impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas; may impact day-to-day functioning; and can cause [developmental disabilities](#) that can last throughout a person's lifetime.

neuroimaging – Use of various techniques to either directly or indirectly image the structure or functioning of the brain.

neuroleptics – A term that refers to older (typical) [antipsychotic medications](#). Neuroleptic drugs reduce confusion and agitation and [psychotic](#) symptoms such as [hallucinations](#) and [delusions](#).

neurological – Pertaining to the brain and nervous system.

neuropsychiatry – A branch of medicine that deals with mental disorders attributed to diseases or disorders of the brain and nervous system, including [neurodevelopmental disorders](#).

neurotransmitters – In the brain, these chemicals transfer messages from one nerve cell to another and affect mood.

non-mandated – In children's mental health services, not required by law. This designation is given to youths who are referred for services under the [Children's Services Act](#) for which the Commonwealth is not required to provide complete funding. Children and adolescents who fall into this category are generally referred for treatment by the juvenile justice or mental health systems.

norepinephrine – A [neurotransmitter](#) that regulates blood pressure by causing blood vessels to narrow and the heart to beat faster.

nucleus accumbens – The key structure of the brain responsible for reward, motivation, and addiction. Substances such as cocaine and nicotine trigger the release of [dopamine](#) in this region.

nystagmus – Rapid eye movement that may be used by physicians to diagnose intoxication and/or signs of substance use.

obsession – Unwanted ongoing urges or thoughts that cause anxiety and stress. Some individuals try to ignore or suppress obsessions by completing another thought or action.

obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) – A disorder in which a person has an unreasonable thought, fear, or worry that he/she tries to manage through a ritualized activity to reduce the anxiety. Frequently occurring disturbing thoughts or images are called [obsessions](#), and the rituals performed to try to prevent or dispel them are called [compulsions](#). See "[Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders](#)" section.

off-label use – The legal practice of prescribing a medication in a way that was not originally intended by the manufacturer.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) – A federal agency within the U.S. Department of Justice that coordinates and provides resources to state and communities pertaining to juvenile justice system.

operant conditioning – A process of [behavior modification](#) in which the likelihood of a specific behavior is increased or decreased through positive or negative reinforcement, so that the subject comes to associate the pleasure or displeasure of the reinforcement with the behavior.

oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) – An enduring pattern in children of uncooperative, defiant and hostile behavior to authority figures that does not involve major antisocial violations. See “[Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders](#)” section.

outpatient psychiatric services – Services provided to individuals, groups, or families on an hourly schedule. Outpatient services are the most frequently used treatment method for children, and may either be provided for a short term (6 to 12 sessions) or a longer duration (a year or longer). Services are generally provided on a weekly basis, if not more often, depending on the individual needs of the child and family. However, under managed care and most insurance plans, brief therapy is likely to be mandated. It is the least restrictive form of service for children and families, and it is provided in a number of settings, including [community services boards](#), outpatient psychiatry departments of hospitals, and private offices. It is most often provided by psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and counselors. Treatment efforts may include diagnosis and evaluation, intake and screening, counseling, [psychotherapy](#), [behavior management](#), psychological testing and [assessment](#), and medication management.

panic attack – A distinct period of unexpected terror. Symptoms like shortness of breath, pounding heart, and fear of losing control may accompany the attack, which may be expected or a surprise. Panic attacks are sometimes mistaken for heart attacks or other health problems by the person experiencing the attack.

panic disorder – A disorder characterized by recurrent, unexpected panic attacks. Panic disorder is separate from [agoraphobia](#) in the *DSM-5*.

parent – A parent, a guardian, or a person acting as a parent in the absence of a parental guardian. The term *parent* also means a surrogate parent appointed pursuant to Virginia regulations.

partial hospitalization – A form of [therapeutic day treatment](#) that is based in a psychiatric hospital. It provides the use of a psychiatric hospital setting during the day, with children returning to their home each night. It is frequently used for those children who are being released from a psychiatric hospital and must transition back into the community and the school system. It is also used to assist youths at risk of [inpatient hospitalization](#).

pathological – Related to or caused by a mental health disorder or disease.

persistent depressive disorder (dysthymia) – A form of chronic [depression](#), in which an individual has a persistent depressed mood for more days than not for at least one year, when symptom-free intervals last no longer than two consecutive months. Symptoms of persistent depressive disorder typically are not as severe as those relating to [major depressive disorder](#). See “[Depressive Disorders](#)” section.

pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) – These disorders can usually be identified in the early years of a child’s life. Children with PDD have difficulty in areas of development or use of functional skills such as language, communication, socialization, and motor behaviors. In May 2013, the American Psychiatric Association released the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*, which recategorizes pervasive developmental disorders under the umbrella term [autism spectrum disorder](#). Research studies and clinicians may still use the term pervasive developmental disorder. See “[Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)” section.

pharmacology – The study of the nature, actions, and uses of drugs.

pharmacotherapy – In mental health, an intervention that involves prescribing [psychotropic medications](#). See [psychopharmacology](#).

phobia – An uncontrollable, irrational, and persistent fear of a specific object, situation, or activity. Fear and anxiety related to a phobia is out of proportion with any actual danger related to the object or situation. Also called *specific phobia*. See “[Anxiety Disorders](#)” section.

physiological response – Related to the physical changes in the body that follow a stimulus.

placebo – A pharmacologically inert substance (such as saline solution or a starch tablet) that replaces a pharmacologically active substance. People can experience a reduction of symptoms or a measurable improvement in health after taking a placebo. This phenomenon is referred to as the placebo effect. Placebos are usually used as part of a [clinical trial](#) or double-blind study to help measure if a particular drug outperforms the placebo.

plan of care – A treatment plan that identifies the child and family’s strengths and needs, establishes goals, details appropriate treatment and services.

positive behavior support – Re-directive therapy used in the home or school environment that has the goal of helping the youth strengthen communication, social, and self-management skills.

post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – A debilitating condition that often follows a [traumatic](#) physical or emotional event causing the person who survived the event to have persistent, frightening thoughts and memories, or flashbacks, of the ordeal. See “[Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders](#)” section.

practice guidelines – Refers to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) practice guidelines that prescribe treatments and include resources and tools to assist practitioners and provide [evidence-based](#) recommendations for the [assessment](#) and treatment of psychiatric disorders.

premonitory urge – A term commonly used to describe early, minor symptoms that precede a major health problem.

premorbid – Preceding the occurrence of disease.

prognosis – The expected outcome or course of a disease, which includes the patient’s chance of recovery.

protective factor – See [risk and protective factors](#).

prevalence – The number of afflicted persons present at a particular time in relation to the size of the population.

prevention services – Services that promote families, communities, and systems working together to reduce the incidence of mental illness and substance abuse disorders and improve the quality of life for those who experience [intellectual](#) or other [neurodevelopmental disabilities](#). Emphasis is on the enhancement of [protective factors and reduction of risk factors](#). Activities may include information dissemination, prevention education, and problem identification and referral. Services are most often provided by social service agencies, [community services boards](#), pediatricians and nurses in health clinics, and schools.

private inpatient units – Privately-owned hospitals that offer inpatient psychiatric and/or substance abuse services to individuals with severe, [acute](#) disturbances. They are licensed as hospitals under state regulations.

private providers – Mental health professionals who provide services in private offices or within the context of private mental health centers. The services that they provide are not publicly-funded, and therefore treatments are usually paid for either through private insurance, [Medicaid](#), the [FAMIS](#) program, or through contracts with public agencies.

private residential units – Privately-owned [residential facilities](#) that provide intensive treatment services to children and adolescents with emotional or mental disorders. They are somewhat less restrictive than [private inpatient units](#), but still tend to be highly structured and secure, and should be reserved for children and adolescents in crisis. However, the level of security and restrictiveness tend to vary across facilities.

psychoeducational services – The process of providing information to parents, children, and teachers about the features of the child's diagnosis, the most effective management strategies, and the services available to provide the necessary treatment.

psychological evaluation – A clinical examination conducted by a mental health professional that is used to determine the nature of a child's psychological difficulties. It often includes an analysis of components of the child's life such as his/her development, behavior, education, medical history, and family and social relationships. An evaluation usually requires several hours to complete and is often best performed over several sessions, including sessions for the child and parents separately and together. In addition, a full evaluation usually requires the collection of information from a variety of outside sources, such as the school, child's pediatrician, psychological testing, and social service agencies. Psychological evaluations are typically more involved than mental health [assessments](#).

psychopathology – The science that studies mental disorders.

psychopharmacology – The use of medication to treat mental disorders. These medications work to control the symptoms of mental illness by correcting or compensating for some malfunction in the body. Medications do not cure mental illness; instead they reduce the burdensome effects.

psychosis – A disruption of thinking that impairs an individual's perception of reality. Psychosis is frequently associated with the diagnosis of [schizophrenia](#).

psychotic – A person experiencing psychosis, or a break with reality. Although a person who is psychotic may also be agitated or aggressive, the term does not imply that the affected person is violent.

psychosocial – Involving aspects of social and psychological behavior.

psychosocial treatments – Services that focus on the relationship between psychological, environmental, and social factors. They include certain forms of [psychotherapy](#), as well as social and vocational training, and they are intended to provide support, education, and guidance to people with mental illnesses and their families. A psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or counselor typically provides psychosocial treatments.

psychostimulant – See [stimulant](#).

psychotherapy – An intervention that involves regularly scheduled sessions between a patient and a mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric social worker, or psychiatric nurse. The goal of this treatment is to help patients understand why they are acting and thinking in ways that are troubling or dangerous to themselves or others so they have more control over their behaviors and can correct them. It is commonly used in the treatment of children and youth with emotional and behavioral problems, either in conjunction with or in place of prescribed medications. This kind of therapy has many forms, including psychodynamic, [behavioral](#), [cognitive-behavioral](#), [interpersonal](#), [supportive](#), and [family systemic](#).

psychotropic medications – Prescribed drugs that affect an individual's mental state. Psychotropic drugs are prescribed to reduce the symptoms of biologically based psychological disorders.

purging – A destructive pattern of ridding the body of excess calories (to control weight) by vomiting, abusing laxatives or diuretics, taking enemas, and/or exercising obsessively. Occurs most frequently in individuals suffering from [bulimia nervosa](#). See *“Feeding and Eating Disorders”* section.

pyromania – A disorder characterized by an irresistible impulse to start fires. See *“Disruptive, Impulse Control & Conduct Disorders”* section.

randomized trial – A type of [clinical trial](#) in which the participants are assigned randomly (by chance alone) to different treatments.

rapid cycling – See [cycling](#).

reactive attachment disorder – A disorder characterized by serious problems in emotional attachments to others that usually presents by age five and that can be caused by [trauma](#) and/or neglect. See *“Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders”* section.

regression – A partial or symbolic return to earlier patterns of reacting or thinking.

reinforcement – The strengthening of a response by using a reward or a punishment. Reinforcement is central in [operant conditioning](#).

residential services – Services that provide overnight care in conjunction with intensive treatment or training programs. They are typically provided in psychiatric hospitals, residential treatment centers (RTCs), and [therapeutic foster homes](#).

residential treatment center (RTC) – 24-hour facilities providing short-term intermediate care, crisis stabilization, and intensive mental health treatment programs. They are not licensed as hospitals and serve as an alternative to [inpatient psychiatric hospitalization](#). The settings vary, with some highly structured like psychiatric hospitals, while others are similar to [group homes](#) or halfway houses. They also vary in the range of services they offer, as some offer a full range of treatment services while others are more limited or specialized. While these facilities were originally designed to serve as long-stay institutions, under managed care they are serving youth for periods as brief as one month, serving only as a source for intensive evaluation and stabilization.

respite care – A type of [family support service](#). Parents are given relief from childcare by either placing the child with another family or bringing a caretaker into the home for a few days. This service is usually provided on a planned basis under circumstances in which either there has been a prolonged crisis in which the child has exhausted the family resources, or there has been another family crisis, such as illness or death of another family member. This service may be provided by [community services boards](#), social service agencies, or private clinics.

risk and protective factors – Factors that either increase or decrease an individual's likelihood of developing a disorder or disease. Risk and protective factors are determined through population studies. Exposure to risk or protective factors does not mean that any one individual will definitely contract or avoid contracting a particular disorder or disease.

satiation – The practice of repetitively lighting and extinguishing fire. See *“Juvenile Firesetting”* section.

schizoaffective disorder – A mental health disorder characterized by recurring, alternating episodes of elevated or depressed moods with distorted perceptions.

schizophrenia – A severe, chronic, and disabling disturbance of the brain that causes faulty perception, inappropriate actions and feelings, withdrawal from reality and personal relationships into fantasy and delusion, and a sense of mental fragmentation. See “*Schizophrenia*” section.

screening tool – A brief [assessment tool](#) used to identify symptoms of a disorder or other problem. Screening tools can be broadband tools, which detect a large number of disorders, or narrowband tools, which are specific to a disorder. They can be conducted by health professionals during the assessment process or can be self-administered (in the form of a questionnaire).

secure treatment service – Provision of services for people with mental disorders or serious mental health problems who, based on clinical [assessment](#), require treatment in a closed setting to ensure the safety of the person, the staff, and the community. Three levels of treatment are provided: acute inpatient secure treatment, extended secure treatment, and high security treatment.

sedatives – A group of drugs used to produce sedation (calmness). Sedatives include sleeping pills and anti-anxiety drugs.

selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) – A class of drugs commonly prescribed for treating [depression](#). SSRIs work by stopping brain receptor cells from absorbing [serotonin](#), an action that allows more of this [neurotransmitter](#) to be available to be taken up by other cells. SSRIs can improve mood.

self-help and support groups – Groups designed for people and families dealing with life difficulties such as mental illness or substance abuse. Typically, they are not led by a professional therapist. However, these groups may be therapeutic because members give each other ongoing support and share experiences and coping mechanisms.

self-harm or self-injury – Also known as deliberate self harm, self-inflicted violence, self-injurious behavior, or self-mutilation, self-harm is a deliberate, intentional injury to one's own body that causes tissue damage or leaves marks for more than a few minutes. Self-harm is often done to cope with an overwhelming or distressing situation. See “*Nonsuicidal Self Injury*” section.

self-report measure – When a person is asked to report his or her own behavior or mental state. Self-report measures can be formal [assessment tools](#) or [screening tools](#), such as questionnaires.

separation anxiety disorder (SAD) – Excessive worry and fear about being apart from family members or individuals to whom a child is most attached. Children with separation anxiety disorder fear being lost from their family or fear something bad happening to a family member if they separated from them. See “*Anxiety Disorders*” section.

serious emotional disturbance (SED) – SED in children ages birth through 17 is defined as a serious mental health disorder that can be diagnosed using *DSM-5* criteria. Many of these disorders are discussed in the *Collection*.

serotonin – A [neurotransmitter](#) that is thought to affect mood and social behavior, appetite and digestion, sleep, memory, and sexual desire and function.

serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs) – A class of drugs commonly prescribed for treating [depression](#). SNRIs work by stopping brain receptor cells from absorbing both [serotonin](#) and [norepinephrine](#), an action that allows more of these [neurotransmitters](#) to be available to be taken up by other cells and affects mood.

social anxiety disorder (social phobia) – Persistent fear or [phobia](#) of social situations that involve interacting with other people; fear of being negatively judged and evaluated by others in social situations. Formerly termed *social phobia* in the *DSM-IV*. See “*Anxiety Disorders*” section.

social history – When children and adolescents become involved with the juvenile justice system, a social history is performed by personnel of the [court service unit](#). The social history describes the social adjustment of the person before the court, which is used to help the court to select the most appropriate disposition for the case. The social history is also used by the court service unit to develop appropriate services for the juvenile and the family. A social history may also be conducted by other health care providers for purposes of conducting a mental health [assessment](#).

social modeling – A tool that integrates the cognitive modeling approach (which stresses how beliefs are formed and drive behavior) with social studies (which stress how relationships and informal practices drive behavior). The intent of social modeling in treatment is to present positive models for change.

somatization – The process of experiencing mental and emotional stress in a way that manifests as physical symptoms (such as stomach aches or headaches).

special education – Specially designed instruction that adapts, as appropriate, to the needs of a disabled child. Such education must ensure access for the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards that apply to all children. This education is to be provided at no cost to the parents and is implemented under the guidelines of the [Individuals with Disabilities Act \(IDEA\)](#), which requires school to identify children with disabilities in need of special education.

special education day schools – A form of [therapeutic day treatment](#). These are schools that are specially designed to meet the needs of children with severe behavior disorders who are unable to function at an age-appropriate level in the regular school system. The programs allow for collaboration between teachers and mental health professionals, and provide low student-teacher ratios and additional family services with the ultimate goal of returning the child to the regular school setting.

specific phobia – See [phobia](#).

specifier – See [criteria](#).

spectrum – A condition that is not limited to a specific set of values, but that can vary within a continuum.

standards of learning (SOLs) – The outline of the basic knowledge and skills that Virginia children will be taught in grades K-12 in the academic subjects of English, math, science, and social studies.

state mental health facilities – State-run facilities providing a range of psychiatric, psychological, rehabilitative, nursing, support, and other necessary services for children and adolescents with significant and [acute](#) psychiatric concerns. One facility in the Commonwealth is designated for children and adolescents: the Commonwealth Center for the Treatment of Children and Adolescents.

stimulant – Drugs that raise levels of physiological or mental activity in the body.

stuttering – Speech characterized by abnormal hesitations, prolongations, and repetitions that are developmentally inappropriate for the age or mental ability of the speaker.

substance abuse medical detoxification – A form of [inpatient services](#) in which doctors and other medical personnel use medication to eliminate or reduce effects of alcohol or other drugs in the patient's body. These services are available in local hospitals or other emergency care facilities.

suicidal behavior – Actions taken by one who is considering or preparing to cause their own death. May include a suicide attempt, which is an act focused on taking one's life that is unsuccessful in causing death. See "[Youth Suicide](#)" section.

suicidal ideation – Persistent thoughts of suicide or wanting to take one's life. See "[Youth Suicide](#)" section.

suicide – The intentional taking of one's own life. See "[Youth Suicide](#)" section.

supportive therapy – [Psychotherapy](#) focusing on the management and resolution of current difficulties and life decisions using the individual's strengths and available resources.

symptom – A reported feeling or specific observable physical sign of a patient's condition that indicates a physical or mental abnormality.

syndrome – In most cases, the term refers to a grouping of signs and symptoms and not to the underlying disease or disorder that causes them, which is unknown in some cases.

system of care – A method of delivering mental health services that helps children and adolescents with mental health problems and their families get the full range of services in or near their homes and communities. These services must be tailored to each individual child's physical, emotional, social, and educational needs. In systems of care, local organizations work in teams to provide these services.

tardive dyskinesia – An involuntary movement disorder caused by the long-term use of [antipsychotic](#) drugs.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – A block grant program designed to make welfare recipients self sufficient and turning welfare into a program of temporary assistance. TANF replaced the national welfare program known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the related programs known as the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program and the Emergency Assistance (EA) program. TANF recipients are usually eligible for full Medicaid benefits and include children younger than 18 (or expected to graduate from high school by age 19). One of the child's parents must be dead, absent, disabled, or unemployed.

therapeutic camp services – A special form of therapeutic group care in which youth and staff live together in a wilderness environment. The nature of the living situation requires that participants demonstrate responsible and independent behavior in order to take care of the basic necessities of living, including food and shelter. The primary emphasis of the treatment is the encouragement of each participant to be a contributing member of the group. The goal of this form of treatment is to build skills in dealing with immediate situations of both a social and nonsocial nature.

therapeutic day treatment – An outpatient treatment program that serves children with diagnoses that range from severe emotional disturbance to developmental delay. These services provide an integrated set of psychoeducational activities, counseling, and family treatments that involve the young person for several hours each day. Services typically include [special education](#), individual and group counseling, family counseling and training, [crisis intervention](#), skill building, [behavior modification](#), and recreational therapy. However, the nature of these programs may vary widely due to factors such as setting, the population being served, the intensity of treatment, the theoretical approach, and the treatment components. The integration of this broad range of services is designed to strengthen both individual and family functioning and to prevent a more restrictive placement of the child. The child is able to receive the benefits of a structured setting while being able to return home at night and continue involvement with family and peers. These services may be offered in regular school settings, [special education day schools](#), [community services boards](#), and hospitals. Currently, Medicaid is the only third party source that routinely covers this service.

therapeutic foster care – The least restrictive form of [residential treatment](#), placing children in private homes with specially trained foster parents. It is typically provided to children and adolescents with emotional or behavioral disturbances. The intent of these programs is to provide treatment within a family

context. Children are placed with foster parents who have been carefully selected to work with children with special needs. These parents receive education and training to assist in working effectively with the child, including topics such as active listening, behavioral management and programming, and age-appropriate behavioral expectations. During these placements, efforts are made to provide the biological family with counseling, support, and other types of assistance so that the child can be returned to the home as quickly as possible. Programs tend to differ in approach, structure, intensity, and type of training. Most serve youth from birth to 18 years, with most youth entering during early adolescence.

therapeutic group homes – Facilities that provide emotionally and behaviorally disturbed adolescents with an environment to learn social and psychological skills. These homes are located in the community, and residents attend the local schools. In Virginia, a group home is defined as a community-based, home-like single dwelling, or its acceptable equivalent, other than the private home of the operator, and serves up to 12 residents. An array of services is provided, such as individual [psychotherapy](#), group therapy, and/or [behavior modification](#). Vocational training and work experiences are typically included as part of the treatment program for adolescents. The amount of structure incorporated into the program varies based on the level of need of the youths served.

tic – A tic is an involuntary, sudden, rapid, recurrent, nonrhythmic motor movement or vocalization. *See “[Motor Disorders](#)” section.*

tic disorder – A type of motor disorder that may be classified as a vocal tic, a motor tic, a simple tic or a complex tic. *See “[Motor Disorders](#)” section.*

Title IV-E – The Federal Social Security Act authorizing financial assistance for foster children and for families receiving adoption assistance.

Title V – Title V of the Social Security Act, which became the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant in 1981.

Title XVIII – Social Security Act Pertaining to Medicare.

Title XIX – Medicaid. A federally aided, state-operated and administered program that provides medical benefits for certain indigent or low-income persons in need of health and medical care. Authorized by Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

Title XXI – The State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), part of the Social Security Act, that authorizes states to provide health insurance coverage to uninsured children up to 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). States may provide this coverage by expanding Medicaid or by expanding or creating a state children’s health insurance program. [FAMIS](#) is Virginia’s SCHIP program.

Tourette disorder – A disorder characterized by multiple motor [tics](#) and at least one vocal tic. *See “[Motor Disorders](#)” section.*

transactional medical assistance – Provides short-term Medicaid coverage for people who lose assistance when they secure a job that does not provide health benefits.

transitional services – Services that help children leave the system that provides help for children and move into adulthood and the adult service system. Help includes mental health care, [independent living services](#), supported housing, vocational services, and a range of other support services.

trauma – Any injury, physical or emotional. A traumatic event is an occurrence that threatens injury, death, or the physical body or that otherwise causes emotional harm to an individual. Traumatic events often cause feelings of shock, terror, or helplessness. Complex trauma refers to multiple traumatic events experienced by a child that occur within the caregiving system, where safety and stability would be

expected. Trauma can cause [post-traumatic stress disorder](#). See "[Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders](#)" section.

trauma informed care – Theory of care in which providers understand that trauma impacts children in a variety of ways, recognize those signs in children and their families, and treat both the trauma and resulting symptoms in a way that prevents additional trauma.

trichotillomania (hair-pulling disorder) – A disorder wherein an individual pulls hairs from the body as a response to a stressor. See "[Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders](#)" section.

tricyclic antidepressants (TCA) – An older class of drugs used in the treatment of clinical [depression](#) and other disorders. Tricyclic refers to the presence of three rings in the chemical structure of these drugs.

typology – The study or systematic classification of types that have common characteristics or traits.

variability – Indicates there is a range of possible outcomes for a given situation.

Virginia Independence Program (VIP) – Virginia's welfare reform program.

Virginia Initiative for Work not Welfare (VIEW) – Work component of the [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families](#) (TANF) program.

waiver – See [Medicaid Waiver Program](#).

wraparound services – Child- and family-driven services and supports that are [community-based](#). They address the child's needs in the home, school, and community, and are developed through collaboration between the child, family, and all of the service providers who provide support to the child. The underlying purpose is to provide services that follow the child as he/she interacts in different environments in the community. The organizations involved in collaboration can include mental health, education, juvenile justice, and child welfare. [Case management](#) is usually necessary to coordinate services.

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COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
AACAP	American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
AAIDD	American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics
ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis
ACT	Assertive Community Treatment
ADA	American Dietetic Association or Americans with Disabilities Act
ADDM	Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring
ADHD	Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
ALF	Assisted Living Facility
ALOS	Average Length of Stay
AN	Anorexia Nervosa
ANRED	Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders
APA	American Psychiatric Association or American Psychological Association
Arc (The)	formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens
ART	Aggression Replacement Therapy
AS	Asperger's Disorder
ASAS	Australian Scale for Asperger's Syndrome
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder or Acute Stress Disorder
ASFA	Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997
ASQ	Ages and Stages Questionnaire
AZT	Azidothymidine
BCM	Behavioral Classroom Management
BED	Binge Eating Disorder
BES	Binge Eating Scale
BH-MCO	Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization
BHA	Behavioral Health Authority
BHO	Behavioral Health Organization
BHRS	Behavioral Health Rehabilitative Services
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
BMI	Body Mass Index
BN	Bulimia Nervosa
BPD	Borderline Personality Disorder or Bipolar Disorder
BPD-NOS	Bipolar Disorder Not Otherwise Specified
BPI	Behavioral Peer Intervention
BPT	Behavioral Parent Training

BT	Behavioral Therapy
BULIT- R	Bulimia Test-Revised
CAPS-CA	Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale for Children and Adolescents
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CBC	Community-based Care
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
CD	Conduct Disorder
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDIs	Child Development Inventories
CFI	Children’s Firesetting Inventory
CHADD	Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorders
CHAT	Checklist for Autism in Toddlers
CHINS	Child in Need of Services
CHINSup	Child in Need of Supervision
CMHC	Community Mental Health Center
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
COBRA	Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
COS	Childhood-onset Schizophrenia
COY	Virginia Commission on Youth
CPMT	Community Policy and Management Team (Virginia)
CPS	Child Protective Services
CSA	Children’s Services Act for At Risk Youth and Families (Virginia)
CSAC	Certified Substance Abuse Counselor
CSB	Community Services Board (Virginia)
CSU	Court Service Units
CSOTP	Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider
CT	Computer Tomography
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DARS	Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services
DBD	Disruptive Behavioral Disorder
DBD-NOS	Disruptive Behavioral Disorder Not Otherwise Specified
DBHDS	Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (formerly DMHMRSAS)
DBT	Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
DCE	Virginia Department of Correctional Education
DCJS	Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
DCSE	Virginia Child Support Enforcement
DD	Developmental Disability or Dually Diagnosed
DHP	Virginia Department of Health Professions
DJJ	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
DMAS	Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services
DMG	Dimethylglycine
DOC	Virginia Department of Corrections

DOE	Virginia Department of Education
DRC	Daily Report Card
DSH	Deliberate Self-harm
DSM-IV-TR	<i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision</i>
DSM-5	<i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition</i>
DSS	Virginia Department of Social Services
DTT	Discrete Trial Teaching
DUI	Driving Under the Influence
EA	Emergency Assistance
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EAT	Eating Attitudes Test
ECT	Electroconvulsive Therapy
ED	Emotional Disturbance or Eating Disorder
EDDS	Eating Disorder Diagnostic Scale
EDE	Eating Disorder Examination
EDED-Q	Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire
EDI-3	Eating Disorder Inventory - Revised
EDNOS	Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified
EEG	Electroencephalogram
EI	Eating Inventory
EOS	Early-onset Schizophrenia
EPSDT	Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment
ERP	Exposure and Response Prevention
ESL	English as a Second Language
FAMIS	Family Access and Medical Insurance Security Plan, Virginia's Title XXI Plan
FAMIS CPU	Application-processing unit for FAMIS (Virginia)
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FAPT	Family Assessment and Planning Team
FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FC	Foster Care
FCT	Family Centered Treatment
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFT	Functional Family Therapy
FIA-C	Fire Incident Analysis for Children
FIA-P	Fire Incident Analysis for Parents
FPL	Federal Poverty Level
FRI	Firesetting Risk Inventory
GAD	Generalized Anxiety Disorder
HRT	Habit Reversal Therapy
HCBS	Home and Community Based Services
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization

Commonly Used Acronyms and Abbreviations

I&R	Information and Referral
ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
ICPC	Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children
ICM	Intensive Case Manager
ICPC	Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children
ID	Intellectual Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Interview for the Diagnosis of Eating Disorders
IEP	Individualized Educational Program
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
IOP	Intensive Outpatient Therapy
IPT	Interpersonal Psychotherapy
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ISP	Individualized Service Plan
IVIG	Intravenous Immunoglobulin
JCC	Juvenile Correctional Center
JCHC	Joint Commission on Health Care
JFNAP	Juvenile Firesetter Needs Assessment Protocol
JLARC	Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission
LCSW	Licensed Clinical Social Worker
LEAP	Learning Experiences: an Alternative Program
LPC	Licensed Professional Counselor
M-CHAT	Modified Checklist for autism in Toddlers
MAEDS	Multiaxial Assessment of Eating Disorder Symptoms
MDD	Major Depressive Disorder
MCO	Managed Care Organization
MDD	Major Depressive Disorder
MDFT	Multidimensional Family Therapy
MH	Mental Health
MHA	Mental Health America
MI	Medically Indigent
MMR	Measles-Mumps-Rubella
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
MSW	Master of Social Work
MST	Multisystemic Therapy
MTFC	Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care
NAMI	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NCMHJJ	National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice
NCSBY	National Center on Sexual Behavior of Youth
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network
NES	Night Eating Syndrome
NICHCY	National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities
NIDA	National Institute of Drug Abuse

Commonly Used Acronyms and Abbreviations

NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health
NOS	Not Otherwise Specified
NSIB	Nonsuicidal Self-Injurious Behavior
OCD	Obsessive-compulsive Disorder
ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
PACCT	Parents and Children Coping Together
PACT	Program of Assertive Community Treatment
PBD	Pediatric Bipolar Disorder
PAIMI	Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illnesses Act
Part C	Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
PCP	Primary Care Provider
PCPID	President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities
PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorder
PDDST-II	Pervasive Developmental Disorder Screening Test-II
PEATC	Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (Virginia)
PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System
PEDS	Parents Evaluation of Developmental Status
PMT	Parent Management Training
POS	Point of Service
PPO	Preferred Provider Organization
PRT	Pivotal Response Training
PTSD	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Intermediate Care Facility for persons with Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
PITS	Psychiatric Institute Trichotillomania Scale
RAD	Reactive Attachment Disorder
RCF	Residential Care Facility
RDI	Relationship Development Intervention
RTC	Residential Treatment Center
SAD	Separation Anxiety Disorder or Seasonal Affective Disorder
SAM	Society for Adolescent Medicine
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SCHIP	The State Children's Health Insurance Program, Title XXI of the Social Security Act
SED	Serious Emotional Disturbance
SEDS	Stirling Eating Disorder Scale
SI	Self-injury or Sensory Integration
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SNRIs	Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors
SOC	Systems of Care
SOLs	Standards of Learning
SP	Skin Picking or Specific Phobias
SPED	Special Education
SRED	Sleep-related Eating Disorders

Commonly Used Acronyms and Abbreviations

SSRIs	Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
VDARS	Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services
VDBHDS	Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (formerly DMHMRSAS)
VDCE	Virginia Department of Correctional Education
VDCJS	Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
VDCSE	Virginia Child Support Enforcement
VDHP	Virginia Department of Health Professions
VDJJ	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
VDMAS	Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services
VDOC	Virginia Department of Corrections
VDOE	Virginia Department of Education
VDSS	Virginia Department of Social Services
VIEW	Virginia Initiative for Work not Welfare
VIP	Virginia Independence Program

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