

To make a referral or
for further information,
please contact us at
609-599-6430 or 599-6525.



C.A.R.E.S

CHILDREN ARE REALLY EXTRA SPECIAL

Children will thrive when their needs are understood and met.

Our CARES acute partial hospitalization program at St. Francis Medical Center offers children ages 3-14 with an opportunity to improve their quality of life by identifying severe emotional, behavioral, or psychiatric needs where they exist and addressing them through the best possible treatment options. Our mission is to provide high quality mental health diagnosis and intensive compassionate treatment to children who do not require inpatient care but who cannot be managed by community resources alone as their emotional and behavioral difficulties impede their ability to function successfully in a social environment.

CARES is open year round, Monday through Friday, and offers two levels of care to best serve children and their families:

- **Full Day, Partial hospitalization** Children ages 3 through 14 attend the program during typical school hours and receive a complement of intensive therapeutic and academic services. In most cases, door-to-door transportation and meals are provided for our children.
- **Outpatient** Individuals ages 5 through 17 meet with a therapist approximately once a week for individual and /or family therapy to help identify and resolve issues related to home, school, and social situations. Group therapy, monthly medication management, and psychiatric evaluations with a psychiatrist and or advanced practice nurse are also available.

A Child may benefit from CARES if he/she:

- Struggles with keeping focus and attention with or without hyperactivity
- Lacks self-confidence and has poor image of self
- Struggles with anxiety disorders such as social or school phobia, obsessive compulsive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder
- Is suspected of having mood disorders including depression, bipolar disorder, or dysthymia

- Presents with oppositional defiant behaviors- talks back to adults; has little to no respect for authority
- Presents with aggression or abusive behaviors- argues, fights, blames others, gets in trouble at school often
- Presents with emotional problems resulting from abuse, violence, divorce, separation, step-parenting, substance abuse, death, abandonment or other life stressors
- Has suicidal thoughts or self-abusive behavior

Comprehensive Services

SFMC's CARES program with the collaboration of Center for Family Guidance PC provides a variety of services. Each child, along with their family meets with our professional staff to develop a specific treatment plan with reachable goals that will help navigate the path to success. Services include:

- Individual psychotherapy
- Family therapy/ Education
- Group therapy
- Psychiatric Evaluation
- Behavior Modification System
- Medication therapy
- Academic Instruction (Partial program only)
- Treatment Planning
- Discharge planning
- Advocacy referral services
- Collaboration interagency services

Family Involvement

Family participation is crucial to the outcome of the child's growth. Family members are asked and expected to be actively involved in the child's treatment.



Weekly family sessions are scheduled and are mandatory for the full day partial program.

During family sessions, families are educated on various topics such as diagnosis, medication, and strategies to best help their children. Families are also encouraged to implement behavior plans at home.

Discharge planning

In preparation for the child leaving the CARES program, the treatment team works closely with the child and family to coordinate integral services within the community to assure a successful transition back to school or home. Based upon family's requests and treatment teams' recommendations a plan is created that best meets the needs of both the child and the family.

The Treatment Team

Team members of the SFMC CARES program are committed to providing children with the tools they need to cope, and to manage the challenges they are facing in their young lives. In collaboration with the Center for Family Guidance, the treatment team consists of:

- The child
- Family
- Program Director
- Psychiatrist
- Masters Level Therapists
- Counselors (except for Outpatient)
- Academic Instructors (except for Outpatient)
- Registered or Advanced Practice Nurse
- Interagency representatives
- Graduate Interns

Referral Services and How to Get Started

Children may come to the SFMC CARES program from their school, guidance counselor, nurse, child study team, parents, pediatricians, other health care providers, or public agencies, such as the family Court System, and the Division of Youth and family Services. Hospital pediatric inpatient units may use SFMC CARES as a step down to less acute services, and outpatient mental health programs may use the program as a step up to more intense and comprehensive services.

The process begins with a call to the program. At this time, some basic information is gathered and an intake appointment is made. During the intake evaluation, the staff along with the parent determines if admission to the program is appropriate and if so, an admission date is coordinated between the family and CARES program. The average length of stay varies between six to eight weeks based upon individual need. The average length of stay in the outpatient program is based on individual need, as well.

Financial Information

Mental health services are primarily paid for by Medicaid and academic services are typically paid for by the child's referring school district.



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