



# Parent Guide to YES Frequently Asked Questions

## Youth Empowerment Services (YES)

### ABOUT YES

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#### What is YES?

Youth Empowerment Services (YES) is a program (system of care) that helps children and youth under the age of 18 who are identified as having serious emotional disturbance (SED) gain access to the mental health services they need.

#### How is Children's Mental Health changing in Idaho?

There are three main changes coming to Children's Mental Health. These changes are:

- **Improved access to services:** Multiple ways to start services, more access to Medicaid, better information about services offered
- **Improved choice of services:** New services and supports available, more providers trained to provide services
- **Improved quality of services:** Collaborative, strengths-based, family-based, community-based

These improvements are all part of a program called Youth Empowerment Services (YES) which begins in 2018.

#### What is SED?

Serious emotional disturbance (SED) is a legal term that refers to people who have a mental, behavioral or emotional issue that limits their ability to participate in family, school, or community activities.

A person is identified as having SED if they have both a qualifying diagnosable mental illness and a substantial functional impairment. A new tool, the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) will be used in Idaho to measure functional impairment and to help guide treatment planning and measure effectiveness.

#### What is the CANS?

The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) is a tool that looks at different areas of your life, such as:

- Your past experiences
- Individual strengths
- Social and family interactions
- Your emotional needs
- Your activities

The CANS will identify areas where a child/youth shows strength and areas where they need support. This information is then used to create a plan to improve their mental health.

#### What is a Child and Family Team?

After mid-2018, each participant in YES will have a Child and Family Team (CFT) that creates a plan to improve their mental health. Members of the CFT include (at a minimum) the participant, their family, and their mental health providers. Other people may be included who support the participant, such as extended family, neighbors, friends, coaches, and other community members such as faith-based leaders, tribal members, and teachers.

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# ACCESSING THE YES SYSTEM OF CARE

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## How do I know if I qualify for YES?

To qualify for Youth Empowerment Services (YES) a person living in Idaho under the age of 18 must have serious emotional disturbance (SED).

Serious emotional disturbance (SED) is a legal term that refers to people who have a mental, behavioral or emotional issue that limits their ability to participate in family, school, or community activities.

A person is identified as having SED if they have both a mental health diagnosis and a functional impairment as identified by the [Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths \(CANS\) tool](#).

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## How do I pay for YES services?

In 2017 the Idaho Legislature raised the qualifying federal poverty level (FPL) for Medicaid to 300 percent for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED). This means there are higher household income limits for children with SED to qualify for Medicaid coverage.

Before applying for Medicaid under the 300 percent FPL, your child will need to complete an assessment with an independent assessor. Please call 1-877-305-3469 to schedule an appointment for an assessment.

It is anticipated that families whose income is higher than the 300 percent FPL will be able to access YES through a cost-sharing program.

The Department of Health & Welfare currently operates a cost-sharing program for children's mental health for those families whose income exceeds 150% FPL. It is anticipated that this program will be modified to reflect the new 300 percent FPL eligibility limits. Details about this option will be available on the YES website once they are finalized.

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## What if I don't qualify for YES?

If you don't meet the criteria for YES, you will still be able to get mental health care.

There are mental health providers all over the state that can help you. If you are looking for a counselor or other mental health care provider you can:

- Call your local [Children's Mental Health \(CMH\) office](#)
  - Contact [Optum](#) if you have Medicaid
  - Contact the member number or website on the back of your insurance card if you have private insurance
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## What if I have more questions?

Additional information about the YES system of care is available at the website [YES.idaho.gov](http://YES.idaho.gov), and more is being added regularly. In the Parents section of the website — under “Did you Know?” — topics addressed include:

- Understanding the Child and Family Team (CFT) and its role in treatment planning
- Upcoming training for parents and other stakeholders
- Qualifying for Medicaid coverage
- Background and history of the YES system of care



Visit the YES website for more information:

[www.yes.idaho.gov](http://www.yes.idaho.gov)



*Empowering the mental wellness of children, youth and their families.*