



YBGR School Based Services Information Handout for Parents



School Based Services (SBS) are mental health services delivered by a licensed mental health center in partnership with a public school. It includes having two mental health staff, one master's level (therapist) and one bachelor's level (behavior specialist) working with an average caseload of 10-15 students in up to two schools.

♦ **What does that mean for you as a parent/guardian?**

Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch (YBGR) and the school your child attends have agreed to house a therapist and behavior specialist at the school. The therapist will work with your child's teacher to schedule times to meet your child for individual and group therapy. The therapist and behavior specialist will work with you to schedule time for family therapy. The behavior specialist will work with teachers to schedule time in the classroom, recess, lunch etc. to provide behavior intervention to your child as needed.

The **therapist** is similar to a school counselor or school psychologist. However, the issues addressed by the therapist can often be more in depth than the school counselor and more intensive than a school psychologist. Also, the caseload for the SBS staff is approximately 10-15 kids, instead of dozens/hundreds.

The **behavior specialist** works with teachers to identify areas where your child needs more support. Perhaps, your child struggles during reading or math. The teacher may recognize that if this student has additional structure your child will be successful. Your child may struggle at recess or during lunch, the SBS staff can work this time into their schedule and offer support during these unstructured times, such as modeling and teaching coping skills to kids. Behavior Specialists are not tutors nor may they offer educational assistance to your child. Their role is to provide emotional and behavioral guidance and structure. Therapists can also provide this guidance.

♦ **What are the benefits of having SBS staff work with your child?**

The therapist and behavior specialist individualize a program that meets the needs of your child. They provide additional therapeutic support to your child by identifying areas of concern and developing a program that addresses these areas based on the needs of your child. These two staff provide a comprehensive overview of what is going on in the home, school, and community that may be affecting the child. The SBS staff can then work with teachers, parents, and professionals to provide comprehensive school and community treatment.

♦ **What do SBS teams need from parents/guardians?**

SBS staff need **INVOLVEMENT** and **PARTICIPATION** from the parents/guardians. You know your child better than anyone. The SBS staff need your participation in the child's treatment to work towards a successful outcome. Participation from caregivers increases the success of kids in an SBS program.

SBS staff need a **TEAMWORK** approach. As mental health workers, SBS staff are required to complete quarterly treatment plans for each identified child. They will be asking for your input and need your willingness to offer support. In addition, they will need you to cooperate with a yearly clinical assessment and signing of releases of information every 6 months. This relationship is reciprocal. A parent's input is valuable and necessary during treatment. SBS staff are willing to give feedback and help in brainstorming ideas on how to best address the child's needs.

◆ **How does a child qualify for SBS?**

There are two qualifying factors for SBS: meeting mental health criteria and funding. SBS staff are trained to determine these two factors. SBS staff work with parents and guardians to determine eligibility.

Students and parents/guardians will participate in a mental health assessment with the therapist to determine qualification for the program. Students do not have to be identified as meeting the requirements for Special Education services to receive SBS.

Students on Medicaid are eligible for SBS services. In addition, our staff follows up on any insurance benefits that may be available to pay for SBS. SBS staff also offers a sliding fee scale to parents/guardians who may be interested in services but do not have Medicaid or private insurance benefits and cannot pay out of pocket for services.

◆ **Do schools pay for SBS staff to be on school campuses?**

Schools do not pay a direct cost for SBS staff to be in your school. However, there are in-direct costs such as space, office supplies, and telephones that are provided by school districts.

◆ **What are the goals for the partnership between the school, parents, and YBGR?**

The primary goal is to help high-risk students be successful behaviorally, socially, emotionally, and academically. This program is an intervention to provide preventative services to youth and maintain them in their current home/school/community setting.

◆ **How do parents access crisis assistance for a SBS client?**

The SBS staff are available during school hours to parent(s)/guardian(s) for crisis assistance. They can be contacted at the school or via cell phone. During evenings, weekends, or other non-school days, the child and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) may

contact the YBGR-CBS Emergency On-call phone number – 406-670-2213 or 1-866-412-4400 for emergency crisis assistance.

For more information contact your site SBS team. Additional information about mental illness is available on our website at www.ybgr.org

Or contact:

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