



Providing community-based Behavioral Health, Developmental Services and Substance Abuse Services
Serving Counties of Augusta & Highland and the Cities of Staunton & Waynesboro

When self-care simply is not enough

Given the uncertain climate of our current world, the team at Valley Community Services Board (VCSB) wants to highlight the importance of mental health and wellness for our community. The needs of our community are heavy on our hearts and we want you to assure you that VCSB is here serve you throughout this global pandemic and beyond.

The team at VCSB has worked diligently to adapt our services to meet the COVID-19 recommendations, set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and the Commonwealth of Virginia. While VCSB continues to offer services, we recognize the community is feeling the adverse impacts of COVID-19. What can we do to take care of mental wellness during this unprecedented time?

Self-care

Feelings of stress, anxiety, grief, and others are common during challenging times. So, what should you do if you're feeling overwhelmed? Here are some tips from the World Health Organization (2020):

- Talk to someone you can trust to help you. *If you need help immediately, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.*
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet, sleep and exercise.
- Stay in communication with supports through phone calls, emails, video messaging, text messages, etc.
- Refrain from smoking and using drugs or alcohol to deal with those difficult emotions.
- Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional when you're feeling overwhelmed.
- Get the facts about COVID-19 from credible resources such as the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control, or the Virginia Department of Health.
- Limit the amount of time you spend watching the news or gathering information about COVID-19.
- Use positive coping skills that have help you overcome difficult times in the past.

Beyond self-care

There are times when feelings of stress, anxiety, grief, and others become overwhelming and feel unmanageable. When self-care simply isn't enough, consider reaching out for additional help and support.

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Asking for help is a sign of strength and resilience. How do you engage in services at VCSB? What might that look like? Below is information on our intake process.

How do I initiate services at VCSB during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- If interested in beginning or returning to treatment services at VCSB, call 540-213-7317 to set up an intake.
- Currently all intakes are being completed via telehealth due to COVID-19.
- Internet access is required for a telehealth appointment. If you do not have access to the internet, we are able to accommodate one person at a time on site for an intake. If no internet access or transportation to the agency, the intake can be completed over the phone.
- After calling to request an intake, an appointment will be provided. Often, we are able to provide appointments to complete an intake on the same day.
- The intake will take approximately 2 hours to complete and treatment recommendations will be provided after completion.

What should I expect during an intake?

- Intake will take approximately 2 hours.
- Please have insurance card and driver's license (or ID).
- If you do not have Medicaid or private insurance and have not applied for Medicaid, this will be required
- A sliding scale is for those without insurance. However, it is required to first apply for Medicaid to be considered for the sliding scale.
- The clinician completing the assessment will ask several questions related to reason for referral for intake, mental health, substance use, previous treatment, and goals for treatment.
- All treatment recommendations will be reviewed after completion of the intake followed by completion of referrals.

Frequently asked questions about services at VCSB

We understand that initiating services can be intimidating. We are here to walk you through the process and will do our best to answer any questions you may have. Here are some FAQs that may be helpful:

- *How much do services cost at VCSB?* The sliding scale is completed per person. Services are offered as low as \$10 per service
- *Do I have to have insurance to participate in services?* It is not required to have insurance to receive services at VCSB, however any uninsured person will be required to apply for Medicaid. Assistance with the Medicaid applications is available with needed.
- *What if I'm experiencing a mental health emergency?* In the event of a mental health emergency, the Emergency Services Department can be contacted 24 hours/day 7 days/week at 540-885-0866.

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Reaching out to someone you are concerned about

Often people don't reach out to someone they are concerned about, because they are not sure what to say or do. These are completely normal thoughts and feelings. But how do we overcome this and ensure our loved one gets connected to the help they need? Here are some tips from the Mental Health First Aid (2020):

- Always treat the person with respect and dignity.
- Start the conversation: "How are you doing?" "I've noticed you seem down lately, is everything okay?"
- Listen nonjudgmentally and without interrupting the person.
- Offer consistent emotional support and understanding. In difficult times, we all need additional love and understanding. Remember to be empathetic, compassionate and patient.
- *If the person needs help immediately, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.*
- Have realistic expectations. Accept the person as they are. Tough times can make it harder than usual to do everyday activities like cleaning the house, paying bills or feeding the dog.
- Give the person hope. Remind your loved one that with time and treatment, recovery is possible.
- Provide practical help. Offer help with overwhelming tasks. For example, offer to bring groceries over.
- Offer information. Provide information and resources for additional support, including self-help strategies and professional help (see above).

We are here to help

Valley Community Services Board is here to serve individuals, families, and the community at large. VCSB is the first step in the journey to recovery and wellness. Change is possible.

Additional resources:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

National Helpline – 1-800-662-4357

Resources: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Help line: 1-800-950-6264

Resources: <https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/NAMI-HelpLine/Top-HelpLine-Resources>

Seize the Awkward

<https://seizetheawkward.org/>

References

World Health Organization. (2020). Coping with Stress during the 2019 n-CoV outbreak. Retrieved May 8, 2020 from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/coping-with-stress.pdf?sfvrsn=9845bc3a_2

Mental Health First Aid. (2020, March 20). How to Support a Loved One Going Through a Tough Time During COVID-19. Retrieved May 8, 2020, from https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2020/03/how-to-support-a-loved-one-going-through-a-tough-time-during-covid-19/?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTXpNNEIUTmtaVGxsTnpVMCIiInQiOiJIMUIMTGFnUzF3ZzdqWmw0ZVlYcmRNeDVXSXVVKRmJKU05ubUIzVnhOQjZ0anpDM2hoVU5ZcmNBbjcyZUZqVmtWQ2ppK2djN2hUOEM3RE03TUtnalJOWmFNTmLXRWl3SFNXTzNleHpBUjhlalhHT0MlNGtxREJTxc96aUp5WGJHMEQifQ%3D%3D