

Get in Touch

For more information please fill out and mail this form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

I would like: (check all that apply)

_____ more information on the Parent/ Professional Advocacy League (PAL)

_____ to be put on the PAL mailing list

_____ to be put on the PAL Policy e-list (please including email address)

_____ to be referred to a local support group

_____ to start a group in my area

_____ more information about training opportunities

_____ other

Family Voice

Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PAL) promotes a strong voice for families of children with mental health needs through a variety of activities that enable families to live in their communities in an environment of stability and respect.

PAL's multi-faceted approach of support, information and referral, advocacy and training increases the ability of many families

- **to access treatments, services and supports for their children and themselves**
- **to exchange information on services, education, legal and policy issues**
- **to advocate for their children both on an individual basis and in public forums**

We celebrate the strengths of our families and provide the "connectedness" that is often lacking between families experiencing similar situations

As the State Organization of the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, PAL promotes the development of strong partnerships between parents and professionals. PAL believes that collaborative relationships make it possible to provide the most effective mental health treatment for children,

PAL

Parent/Professional Advocacy League

The Massachusetts Family Voice for Children's Mental Health

A statewide network of parents and professionals who advocate on behalf of children and adolescents with emotional, behavioral and mental health needs.

PAL

45 Bromfield Street, 10th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

T: (617) 542-7860

F: (617) 542-7832

www.ppal.net

Toll-free Parent Support & Information:
Parent Resource Network Line
866-815-8122

Facts

- More children suffer from psychiatric illness than from leukemia, diabetes and AIDS combined.
- 1 in 5 children has a diagnosable mental health disorder. 1 in 10 has a serious emotional disturbance that disrupts his or her life.
- In Massachusetts alone more than 110,000 children and adolescents will need mental health services this year.
- 1 in every 33 children and 1 in 8 adolescents has depression. Nationally, 2 million adolescents suffer from depression.
- Once a child experiences an episode of depression, he or she is at risk of having another episode within the next 5 years.
- Anorexia and bulimia have the highest death rate of any childhood psychiatric illness.
- Slightly less than one-fifth of all student in Massachusetts (19%) reported hurting themselves on purpose.
- 50-75% of incarcerated young offenders nationwide are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health disorder. Experts believe that the statistics for Massachusetts are similar.

About Our Children

Like adults, children and adolescents can have mental health needs that interfere with the way they think, feel and act. When left untreated, mental health needs can lead to school failure, family conflicts, substance use disorders, violence and even suicide. These youth face more challenges at school as well. They fail more courses, miss more days at school, are retained at grade level and fail to graduate more than students with other disabilities.

A wide range of therapeutic, educational and support services are essential to address the needs of these children and their families. Many children and adolescents receive services from their schools, through their insurance and from state agencies. A significant number may receive services through the juvenile court.

Mental health needs can be identified and treated. As children and adolescents grow up, access to services and supports can lead to successes and positive results.

About Our Families

Emotional, behavioral and mental health needs in children cut across all income, education, racial, ethnic and religious groups. Children and adolescents with mental health needs live in single parent and two-parent families and in birth, adoptive and foster homes.

Families face many challenges. Often they must learn to cope with the difficult and demanding behaviors of their children and may face staggering costs for special treatment, education or other services.

Families also have many strengths. Numerous families have learned to manage their circumstances very well and have a repertoire of support networks and strategies they can share with others. They also have a unique view of the strengths and weaknesses of the service system.

Parent/Professional Advocacy League

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Boston, MA 02108