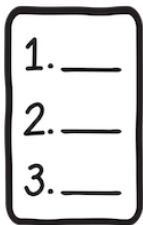




Waiting for your child to get mental health services can be stressful. However, there are things you can do to get ready for the appointment and to help prepare your child.

What can you do while you wait? Some ideas include adding structure to your family's day, listing who to talk to for support and trying some coping strategies at home. By getting your child an appointment with a professional, you've already taken an important step toward better mental health. You can help them prepare for this new experience by using the tips below, which may also help reduce stress for the family.

## Things you can do



**Establish routines.** Adding a structured routine to your child's day can be helpful during times of uncertainty, especially while waiting for mental health services to begin. Download this [sample schedule](#) to help get your routine started.



**Learn skills to try now.** Check out these [coping skills](#) from mental health treatments you can try at home while you wait. These skills are not meant to replace treatment, but they can get you started with changes that may help improve some of their symptoms.



**Build your support network.** Who do you feel can help support you and your child while you wait? Who do they feel comfortable with you talking to and sharing their experiences? Consider talking with your child’s teacher or other school support staff, the pediatrician, or close friends or family (if your child is comfortable with that).



**Keep track of issues.** What are the behaviors that have prompted the need for your child to see a mental health provider? **Take notes** about when you see those behaviors. Include what happened before the issue began, how long it lasted and how/if it was resolved. Having notes like this may help your child’s provider to better understand what you’re seeing at home.



**Talk about your feelings.** You may both be a little nervous before the first appointment. You can share those feelings with your child and remind them that you will be there to help them through this. Take time to hear their concerns, questions and worries. Remind them that mental health treatment isn’t something you can mess up.



### Daily Schedule

#### Weekday Routines

Time	Task
Morning Routine	
Afternoon Routine	
Evening Routine	

#### Tips:

- Consistency is key!
- Add visuals to the schedule.
- Post it somewhere in the home where your child can see it.
- Review expectations every morning.
- Allow your child to pick the activities during play time. It gives them a sense of control over the situation.
- Be flexible! Things will change and that’s okay!

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### WHILE YOU WAIT

Resources to help you while you’re waiting for mental health services for your child

#### Behavior Tracker

When is it happening (date/time)?	What happened right before?	Describe the behavior	How long did it last?	What did you do in response?

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Need help getting started? Download our **Daily Schedule** and **Behavior Tracker** and fill them out together. If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, contact the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988 or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting “LIFE” to 741-741.

Don't forget to share how you're using *On Our Sleeves* resources. Hit the **reply button** to tell us your *On Our Sleeves* story.

Sincerely,  
Wolfson Children's Hospital

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The mission of *On Our Sleeves* is to provide every community in America access to free, evidence-informed educational resources necessary for breaking stigmas about child mental health and educating families and advocates. **For more information, visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://OnOurSleeves.org).**

To access educational resources and revisit the mission of *On Our Sleeves*®, visit [WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves](https://WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves).

Wolfson Children's *On Our Sleeves* is made possible by Robert and Margaret Hill.

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