



Child & Adolescent | *Tip sheet*

What are Levels of Care in Mental Health?

Levels of care describe the different types of mental health services a person may need. Each level is based on **how intense the care is, how often you receive it and how long it lasts.**

Inpatient Care

This is the **highest** level of care.

It is for people who are in a crisis and need help right away.

Staff watch you closely to keep you safe.

Care often includes group therapy, medications and planning for safe follow-up care.

Most inpatient stays last **7–10 days**.

Residential (RTC)

This level is for people who need **longer-term care** but are **not** in a crisis.

You live on a campus-like setting with access to outdoor and group activities.

Care includes group therapy, one-on-one therapy and family sessions.

Many programs focus on specific needs, such as trauma, depression or substance use.

Stays usually last **30, 60 or 90 days**.

Partial Hospitalization (PHP)

PHP is a **step down** from inpatient or a step up from outpatient care.

It provides more support and structure than weekly therapy.

People attend care **5 days a week** for **5–6 hours a day**, then return home at night.

PHP includes group and individual therapy in small, focused groups.

Most programs last **1–2 months**.

More on Next Page

What are Levels of Care in Mental Health?

Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)

- IOP offers support with **less time** in treatment than PHP.
- Care includes group therapy and some individual sessions.
- People attend **3 days a week** for **3 hours each day**.
- Many programs offer morning or evening times and many are available online.
- Most IOP programs last **6 weeks to 3 months**.

Outpatient Therapy (OP)

- Outpatient care is regular **talk therapy**.
- Sessions may be weekly, every other week or monthly.
- It is for people who are **not** in crisis.
- Outpatient therapy helps you manage symptoms, work through life challenges and support personal growth.
- You and your therapist decide how often to meet.

Outpatient Medication Management

- This is a visit with a psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse practitioner or physician assistant.
- Appointments are usually **monthly or bimonthly**.
- The provider checks how your medications are working, reviews side effects and writes prescriptions.

School-Based Counseling

- Counselors meet with students **at school** during the school day.
- This gives students easy, frequent access to support.
- Students may still see an outpatient therapist if they have extra needs.

Reviewed by Care Manager, Clinical Operations, LCSW

Let's connect you to better care, today.

Lucet's team of health care professionals are here to help you navigate your wellness journey with confidence. Whether you are looking for immediate care or do not know where to start, we will guide you through every step.

To learn more, visit [LucetHealth.com](https://www.LucetHealth.com)