The Complete Guide to Mental Health Therapy
Kids, in general, have their ups and their downs. School and social pressures with which children must contend can drain a lot of the fun out of childhood and make it really tough. Whether it is moodiness, declines in their performance in school, or trouble with their peers or being the target of a bully, being a child comes with plenty of challenges. And sometimes the problems that children grapple with are far more serious. Research consistently shows that the rise in childhood anxiety and depression continues unabated. Behavioral problems, ADHD, anxiety and depression disorders left untreated can often become a recipe for substance addiction, self harm, and in the most severe cases even suicide.

The question is, “How do you know if there is an underlying problem that could be more serious?” To put another way, “When should you explore the option of seeking out a professional?”

To adequately address these and other similar critical questions, it is necessary to be aware of the signs that a child may be exhibiting that indicate the cause for concern, such as:

1. Experiencing problems in different areas of life such as academically, with friends, or family relationships
2. Displaying a noticeable decline in effectiveness or confidence
3. Feeling bad about herself for no apparent reason
4. Worrying excessively about the future
5. Expressing helplessness or hopelessness
6. Steadily withdrawing from activities, friends or family, she always enjoyed
7. Observing changes in appetite or sleeping habits that are significant
8. Negative behaviors becoming more frequent
9. Self-destructive behaviors such as a picking skin or repetitively pulling out hair
10. Either threatening or engaging in self-harm
11. Comments such as, “Nobody cares if I ran away” or “I don’t want to be here”
12. Speaks about suicide in explicit terms

If you see a child is presenting any of these behaviors, an evaluation by a mental health professional may be advisable. Trained and experienced therapists have the tools to uncover core problems that are often the cause of your child’s distress, and when necessary, work with your child to alleviate symptoms and promote healing.

There Aren’t Enough Onsite Mental Health Therapists

Unfortunately, there are two disturbing trends currently growing in the world of mental health care. On the one hand, the demand for health care is rapidly on the rise. According to a recent report found in the Journal of the American Medical Association, practically 20% of the population in the United States is suffering from some mental health condition.

At the same time, the pool of mental health care providers is barely able to maintain itself. A report from the Health Resources and Services Administration in 2016 projected that by 2025, the shortfall of mental health providers would be approximately 250,000.

And the pain is already being felt. As a result of the worsening shortage, schools are increasingly unable to provide sorely needed mental health therapists for their students. Inflated costs press upon already overstrained budgets, and school personnel is forced to devote inordinate amounts of time and effort hunting down scarce resources.

However, let’s suppose for a moment that there was no mental health therapist shortage. Let’s even imagine that there was a healthy surplus. Would that make the problem disappear? The answer is no! That’s because of an equally imposing hurdle—money, or not enough of it!

Aside from budget shortfalls, there are the higher recruitment fees charged by staffing agencies to find “distant and elusive” mental health therapists, and then once the mental health therapist is found, those mental health therapists must be reimbursed for their transportation expenses inflating the cost of services. The heartbreaking reality is this: there isn't enough money available to provide the children with the needed therapy.

Further exacerbating the problem is that these shortages
are geographically unequally distributed. The problem in rural areas is even worse than in the rest of the country. Salaries aren’t competitive, and the rural regions are far from urban cultural centers and universities, which often prohibits therapists from participating in training and development programs that would enhance them professionally.

The growing mental health therapist shortage means higher caseloads for therapists in rural districts which results in inferior therapy sessions for the children, leads to mental health therapist burnout on an unprecedented scale, causes unexpected recruiting and turnover expenses, and students are making slower—or no—progress against their IEP goals.

What’s more, attrition of mental health therapists in rural districts can be two to three times the national average. Turnover is especially acute among professionals who travel long distances from site to site on an itinerant basis to serve students with disabilities. Many therapists reportedly resign due to the isolation of their social and cultural lives.

The Collateral Damage From Too Few Therapists

But don’t think that the problem is limited to just being denied adequate Mental Health Therapy. There are many more dangerous consequences to this silent but tragic problem that is mushrooming in Rural America.

LOW SELF ESTEEM
A child who is suffering from a mental health problem and not receiving adequate therapy is almost guaranteed to be plagued by low self-esteem. Although the child can’t explain what is wrong or even correctly understand it, she knows that something is amiss. And as time goes by, the problem, unattended, will undoubtedly undermine the child’s confidence.

ACADEMIC STRUGGLES
If a child is suffering psychologically, she will be unable to concentrate and focus the same way as the other children in the class. She’s so busy with what is going on inside of her that she can’t absorb what is going outside of her. This inability to fully participate during class is bound to adversely perform and will compromise the foundation for future academic success.

SOCIAL ANXIETY
Sometimes the cause of the mental health problem is the anxiety of being in an uncomfortable social situation. Social Anxiety Disorder is the most diagnosed mental disability identified in children under age six. Until the source of the anxiety is addressed, the child will continue to experience discomfort within a critical arena of development.

What will become of the growing numbers of children, predominantly in Rural America, who have no access to the mental health therapy they so desperately need?

Online Mental Health Therapy: The Obvious Solution

Enter online mental health therapy. Online mental health therapy is the online delivery of mental health therapy services. Online mental health therapy sessions are very similar to traditional mental health therapy sessions with one major exception. Instead of sitting in the same room, students and therapists interact via high-resolution live video conferencing. And as the preponderance of telemedicine continues to rise, the online mental health therapy is becoming commonplace.

During therapy sessions, the student and therapist can see, hear, and interact with a mental health therapist in real time, using webcams, headsets, and a live, synchronous online learning environment. Most people are already using similar technology.

The distinct advantage of online mental health therapy is that now any school anywhere can access top-quality therapists at competitive rates and ensure that their students will receive excellent uninterrupted services. Geography, mobility, and time have ceased to be the barriers they once were.
By extending top-quality clinical services to remote, rural, and underserved populations, online mental health therapy holds the promise of reducing the harmful consequences of the mental health therapist shortage, alleviating severely strained school budgets, and helping the children who so much need the services.

Best of all, online mental health therapy is highly engaging for today’s students. By utilizing fun and employing digital technology, online mental health therapy is exceptionally kid-friendly. Today’s children are comfortable with computers and love game-based activities such as video interactions and digital learning.

**TOP BENEFITS OF ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY**

**NO MORE HEADACHES** Districts no longer need to depend on local therapy agencies, worry about interruptions in therapy when mental health therapists are absent, are on vacation, or move away. Instead, they can enjoy “Anytime, Anywhere Access” to licensed, credentialed mental health therapists.

**BUDGET** Online mental health therapy maximizes the therapist’s time by eliminating traveling, which translates into significant savings for the school. What’s more, there are fewer expenditures related to recruitment, screening, contracting, training, and the managing of mental health therapists.

**FLEXIBILITY** Online mental health therapy redefines flexibility and convenience while improving staff efficiency. While traditional face-to-face therapists may lock the school into a rigid schedule, the online delivery model allows for therapy when it is convenient for the student, even outside of school hours.

**TARGETED** Schools have better access to culturally and linguistically diverse therapists as well as clinicians with specialties. Better targeting produces more effective outcomes.

**EXCELLENCE** Online mental health therapy affords schools previously unprecedented access to top mental health therapists, as they are no longer limited to locally-based clinicians, but can draw from an extensive nationwide network of highly qualified, certified and licensed therapists.

**OTHER KEY ADVANTAGES**

**CONSISTENCY** Since the attrition rate of therapists is often linked to travel time, eliminating travel results in a marked rise in the therapist’s success with the child.

**UNINTERRUPTED** Children are guaranteed sessions even when mental health therapists are sick, on vacation, or move away as the agency can draw upon a large pool of therapists.

**AUTOMATION** Scheduling, tracking, reporting, auditing are digitized to bring clarity to the administrator’s fingertips and reduce compliance issues.

**RECORDING** All sessions are recorded for parents to monitor, therapists to review, and administrators to reference if necessary.

**INDEPENDENCE AND PRODUCTIVITY** Therapists enjoy flexible hours from the comfort of their home, increasing productivity and allowing more time with the kids.

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**Online Mental Health Therapy Myths Debunked**

**MYTH #1** Teletherapy is Not an Adequate Substitute for Onsite Therapy

There is a myth that online mental health therapy is somehow inferior when compared to face-to-face mental health therapy. However, there is no evidence in the research supporting this assertion.

On the contrary, over the past twenty years, numerous studies that have been conducted by The Mayo Clinic and Kent State University, have shown that online therapy is on a par with onsite therapy. The American Mental Health Therapy Association supports the online delivery of mental health therapy. Research studies, many of which are listed also indicate that mental health therapy delivered via teletherapy is equivalent to face-to-face care in various settings and an acceptable alternative.

What must be understood is that the online venue and the fantastic digital tools utilized by clinicians aren’t meant to replace the one-on-one therapeutic interaction between clinician and child. They are merely available to enhance it. Mental health therapy was initially designed and is intended to remain within the domain of the therapist working intimately with the child; never to be given over to digital substitutes.
Studies aside, ask the clients, the kids, what they think of online mental health therapy. Having experienced the wonders of digital technology from a tender age, they love online interactions. Their motivation, enthusiasm, and success say it all.

**MYTH #2 The Online Modality Compromises the Client’s Privacy**

There are voices out there complaining that the risk of compromising client confidentiality and their private information undermine the many benefits mentioned above. Their objection goes something like this. “Being that technology in general, and electronic communications in particular, are more vulnerable to be exploited, the privacy of clients is more vulnerable to exposure.”

And the truth is that they are correct. Being worried about privacy leaks and hacks in the online transmission of information is a legitimate concern. Just look at how the field of cybersecurity continues to explode and grow in sophistication. Take something as simple as email. There is no way to ensure complete safety and confidentiality. But to focus on the online venue is to miss the point. To be human practically guarantees that privacy is at risk. People are people, and there are plenty of security breaches out there in the “offline world” as well. It’s always been that way, and it will always be that way. So is it reasonable to institute a standard for the “online world” that is unattainable in the “offline world”?

In other words, the privacy concern isn’t really about “online” but is more about human integrity. It often boils down to adherence to regulations that have been established to protect client privacy. So what is a responsible caring school administrator to do?

The only answer is to work with a high-quality, reputable agency that can assure that all of the industry regulations of privacy are being followed and that everything is being done to satisfy all HIPAA standards ensuring the confidentiality of all mental health sessions and data.

Bottom line, receiving mental health therapy online is no riskier than face-to-face. Both are very confidential; neither is 100% perfect. So when you consider the many benefits of teletherapy and weigh them against your confidentiality concerns, rest assured that you are probably much safer and further ahead than you think engaging mental health therapy online.

**MYTH #3 The Technology is Vulnerable and Untrustworthy**

A significant objection to, or let’s face it, “fear,” of mental health therapy is that since it is computer-based, the entire success or failure of the session rises or falls on the flawless performance of the technology. And many responsible school administrators ask, “How can I take that chance with my students?”

While this fear indeed reveals the concern and profound sense of responsibility of the administrator, at the same time it also exposes a fundamental misunderstanding of the technology itself, as well as an ignorance of the care taken by quality online agencies in ensuring the smooth and uninterrupted delivery of mental health therapy.

Truthfully the technical requirements of online mental health therapy are relatively modest compared to the many other online activities that most of us engage in daily. The only elements of the video communication involved in online mental health therapy are a webcam, video conferencing software, secure web-based programs, a headset or speakers, and an internet connection.

And yet that “fear” often boils down to one thing—connectivity. If anything could jeopardize the session, it is weak or erratic connectivity. To assuage that fear, consider the following in determining an appropriate connection strategy.

If the download speed is calibrated correctly, the connection should be optimal for the session and screen sharing. As a precaution, establishing an alternative connection (e.g., telephone, email) enables troubleshooting the connection or rescheduling the session. Also, a hard-wired connection is optimal in a shared Wi-Fi environment.

**MYTH #4 Online Mental Health Therapy Compromises Client Engagement**

Many schools considering online mental health therapy are scared away by the fear that online mental health therapy will compromise student engagement during the session. Is there a way to ameliorate this concern? More specifically, what can a mental health therapist do to ensure the optimal engagement needed for a high-quality session?

Truthfully many of the problems afflicting client engagement in the online venue are unrelated to the fact that mental therapy is delivered online. They exist even when the therapy is face-to-face. And many of these challenges can be solved by following some simple guidelines that will enhance client engagement.

To name but a few, these guidelines include removing distractions at the outset of the session, taking short
breaks, connecting with the child on a personal level, keeping the activities relevant to the skills being worked on, and supplying heavy doses of positive reinforcement.

Some have mentioned that the lack of direct eye contact is a problem. But it need not be. As long as both the mental health therapist and the client look directly into the camera, there will be a more natural interaction between therapist and client.

On the other hand, the online venue can often help to engage the student. For some kids, it is easier to focus on the computer than when the therapist is in the room. Distractions such as the way the therapist is sitting or peripheral movements don’t exist during when the therapy is delivered online.

Why Global Teletherapy is Your Best Online Mental Health Therapy Option

Over the past few years, Global Teletherapy has played a pivotal role in helping children, regardless of geographic location, who would have no other access to mental health therapists to get the therapy they need to lead successful lives.

Global teletherapy has formed a robust and expanding team of highly qualified mental health therapists, social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists, fully credentialed, and with a minimum of 2 years of clinical experience who deliver top-quality teletherapy in 27 states.

Our therapists conduct IQ, Academic and Auditory Processing assessments. And they are qualified to help children suffering from depression and behavioral issues, and those with ADD/ADHD, Anxiety, Autism Spectrum and Oppositional Defiant Disorders.

We invest much more time and energy than other companies in the field in personalizing each session to ensure your satisfaction. And often that “personal touch” can make all the difference.

**SOME OF THE BENEFITS INCLUDE**

**FOR SCHOOLS**

**EXCELLENCE** The mission of Global Teletherapy is to staff schools with top-quality mental health therapists who will deliver exceptional value through excellent, flexible, and affordable Online Mental Health Therapy. We provide a high-resolution, crystal-clear image, and follow best practices according to the general industry standards.

**COMPLIANCE** All Global Teletherapy all mental health therapists are certified and are seasoned with a minimum of two years of professional experience. They are fully trained in teletherapy techniques before providing services. We maintain complete compliance with federal mandates, including IDEA, which means reduced liability regarding painful punitive legal or financial consequences.

**FULL-SERVICE** Global Teletherapy handles recruitment and management of the mental health therapists and ensures that they are appropriately licensed and credentialed in the school district’s state. Global teletherapy assures that therapists are available when needed and handles session scheduling. The school district provides an onsite paraprofessional to facilitate logistics during therapy sessions.

**SECURE** Global Teletherapy ensures that every mental health session is extraordinarily secure and in compliance with HIPAA guidelines. Sessions are conducted using a trusted technology used by millions of users worldwide with support to ensure the success of every therapy session.

**FOR THERAPISTS**

**SUPPORT** Administrative staff acts as a knowledgeable liaison and advocate for Global Teletherapy clinicians, stewarding the relationship between therapist and school. In an interview that can be found at Glassdoor.com, an employee shared, “Administrative staff within GT (Global Teletherapy) is *phenomenal* at clearly communicating expectations and providing training and *support* for therapist responsibilities.”

**COMMUNITY** While you might deliver therapy in the comfort of your home, you are never alone with Global Teletherapy. We have developed an active work community that encourages mental health therapists to share ideas and troubleshoot problems. Sharing is at the core of our philosophy to provide every student with the best possible mental health therapy experience. Three times a year, mental health therapists join “The Huddle” to
share their knowledge and expertise, share problems, brainstorm solutions, and grow professionally.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT** Utilizing the renowned platform Zoom has many benefits. Zoom has a stellar reputation for being stable and reliable. In the unlikely event, a technical problem arises, the dedicated and professional technical support provided by Zoom is available to you.

**FOR FAMILIES**

**TOP MENTAL HEALTH THERAPISTS** Global Teletherapy ensures that each child will work with a top mental health therapist. They meticulously screen every clinician with a comprehensive interview and an exhaustive review of clinical experience, licenses, and qualifications and assurance that the prospective therapist has all the necessary credentials for your state or region.

**QUALITY CONTROL** Upon acceptance, the therapist is trained in online therapy technology, and every mental health therapist’s subsequent performance is closely monitored. Global teletherapy’s policies promote consistency. Although the flexible nature of online mental health therapy allows for a child to have multiple therapists, every child is assigned to a particular clinician, who assumes responsibility for that child’s therapy.

**RELATIONSHIP** This one therapist per child arrangement promotes continuity and a trusting and consistent relationship between the online therapist, child, parents, and teachers. If the child needs a new mental health therapist for any reason, Global Teletherapy will ease the transition with minimal disruption to the child’s therapy.

**SUPERVISION** Global Teletherapy provides supervision. An onsite paraprofessional (or a parent/learning coach for virtual school students) supervises and handles any hands-on requirements, especially for younger students. Some older students may require supervision as well, depending on the policy of the school.
Experience The Global Difference™

Contact Global Teletherapy to learn more and schedule a demo.