



## School Based Mental Health Services Frequently Asked Questions

### How will these services help my child?

Children may need this type of support for a number of reasons, such as:

- Experiencing a scary event
- A recent loss of a family member or friend
- Difficulty adjusting to a life change
- Not knowing how to express what they are feeling

Counseling services can be a positive support to all students with a wide range of needs. Over time, these services can help students:

- Cope with their feelings which should lead to fewer calls home
- Understand why they are having difficulty and learn better ways of responding
- Improve focus in the classroom
- Maintain better relationships with family, friends, and school staff

We also have **Community Behavior Specialists** that help teach skills students can use when they get upset or “act out” at school. With this added support, students can learn how to use their words instead of fighting, stop talking back or practice how to make friends.

### What should I expect?

- An initial 1-2-hour intake appointment at the school to learn about your child’s history, current needs and strengths. Afterwards, a plan is developed outlining goals for your child.
- The therapist will have counseling sessions with your child at school. Sessions are usually once a week and can range from 20-45 minutes depending on the age and need of the child.

### What is my responsibility?

- Participate in the intake appointment at the school.
- Participate regularly after the intake appointment by having at least monthly “check-ins” with the therapist, and family therapy sessions as clinically indicated/recommended.
- Communicate with the therapist during the monthly check-ins and discuss how your child is doing at home and share any concerns you may have. The therapist will update you on your child’s progress and if needed, share tips and strategies that can be used at home.

### How long will it take?

Counseling services are not “one size fits all” and there is no way to know upfront how long your child will be recommended to participate in services. There are many factors that impact how long it will take and the therapist will discuss this with you during your regular check-in meetings/calls.

### “Who is CHRIS 180?”

These services are provided through our partnership with CHRIS 180, a non-profit organization with 38 years of experience helping children and families. CHRIS 180 has been providing school-based services since 2014 and have worked with the following school systems: Atlanta, Clayton, DeKalb and Fulton. If you want to learn more about CHRIS 180 and their school-based services, check out their webpage at [chris180.org/schoolbasedservices](http://chris180.org/schoolbasedservices) or email them at [schoolbasedservices@chris180.org](mailto:schoolbasedservices@chris180.org).