

# Children's mental health

Parent Handbook

Strong connections  
for a better future



# Welcome to Linck!

Welcome! We hope that your experience with Linck will be helpful and rewarding. This Handbook gives you a brief description of our services and important information about how we can work together with you and your family.

## Who we Are

Linck is a non-profit agency that receives local, provincial and federal funding to deliver a variety of Evidence-Based/Best Practiced services to children, youth and their families.

As a multi-service agency, we provide prevention, developmental, mental health and protection services under one roof.

## Our Mission Statement

**Strong connections for a better future.**

## Our Aspiration Statement and Values

Linck is an accredited, multi-service agency that responds to the unique dynamics of our families. We support the well-being and safety of our children and their families through evidence-based practices and collaboration with community partners. Together, Linck's employees strive to foster an environment that encourages positive growth, professional development and progressive change.

Together with our Community, Linck CREATES:

Collaboration

Respect

Equity

Accountability

Trust

Empowerment of families

Support

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Linck Mental Health Services

If you are reading this handbook, you have either expressed an interest in becoming involved with our Mental Health Team or you are already beginning that process. Here is a little more information about what our Mental Health Team has to offer:

Linck is an accredited Children's Mental Health Centre, having met the standards set by the Canadian Center for Accreditation. Our agency was identified as Lead Agency for Child and Youth Mental Health in the Chatham-Kent service area. The Mental Health Team offers individual, family and group counselling to children, adolescents and their families. We are here to help resolve many kinds of emotional, behavioral and psychological difficulties.

### Who Can Use Our Service?

Mental Health services are provided to children/youth up to 17 years old and their families who are residents of Chatham-Kent.

### Is There a Cost?

Our services are offered at no cost to you. The Ministry of Health and Youth Services, the Municipality of Chatham Kent, and The United Way provide most of our funding.

### What Are Our Hours?

Office hours are **8:30am to 7:00pm Monday to Thursday, Friday 8:30 to 4:30.** Appointments are scheduled in consultation with the youth and family.

### Where Are Your Locations?

Service is provided in Chatham, Wallaceburg, Ridgetown, Tilbury and Blenheim. We meet in places that lend themselves to success, like schools and offices. We make every effort to provide services in clinically-appropriate locations that are convenient, comfortable and accessible for you and your family.

### How Do I Get Started?

Call us at **519-352-0440**. Please see next page for [Beginning The Process](#).



## Beginning the Process

Parents and/or youth may call 519-352-0440 directly with questions, concerns or to make a referral. Others involved with your child (e.g. teacher, doctor) can make a referral with your consent. When you call, you will speak directly with a Mental Health and Development intake worker. The intake worker will discuss your concerns, gather assessment information and discuss treatment options. You are welcome to contact us at any time to share additional information or ask questions.

## Consent to Service

Your participation with the Linck Mental Health program is voluntary and you may stop receiving services at any time. A clinician/worker will discuss with you the benefits of services, possible drawbacks, treatment options and any concerns you might have. All assessment and counselling services will be mutually agreed upon by you and your clinician/worker.

## Brief Services

Linck offers brief therapy services such as The Door of Hope Single Session therapy clinic and the Brief in 3 counselling programs. Brief therapies enable children/youth and family members to see trained clinicians at their chosen moments of need and are designed to provide quick access to therapeutic services. Requests can be made by calling Mental Health and Development intake at 352-0440.

## Crisis Services

If your child is experiencing a crisis situation (i.e. harm to self or others) we may be able to offer short-term assessment and treatment services right away. This is usually determined during the first phone call.

## The Counselling /Therapy Program

When a space becomes available, you will be assigned to a clinician/worker who will meet with you. You will have a chance to talk about your rights and sign paperwork as part of the agreement to participate in our services. Your clinician/worker will work with you to develop a plan of service that will be based on the recommendations from the intake assessment, your concerns, needs and strengths.

As you and your family move through the course of treatment, we will monitor and discuss progress towards your goals on a regular basis. Depending on your needs and goals, the clinician/worker may arrange for specialized assessment and/or consultation with other professionals. These reviews and multi-disciplinary input will help to ensure that our work together is progressing, to identify if other services or changes are needed and to let us know when our work together is completed.

## Roles and Partnerships

### The Role of the Mental Health Team

Our clinical team is staffed by qualified professionals who have the skills, expertise and appropriate training to assist you by providing case management, family support, and mental health counselling. They will behave in a professional manner, be on time for appointments and treat you with respect.

We will do our best to notify you in advance of any cancellations or changes to appointments. You will be contacted in a timely manner to reschedule at a convenient time. Staff will listen to you and support your decisions. We will answer any questions you may have about your child, our services or information in general. If we don't have the answer we will guide you to someone who does.

Our role is to provide mental health counselling to children and youth. We do not participate in legal disputes. Your information will be kept confidential (please refer to pg. 7 for exceptions).

If you and your clinician/worker decide to become involved in other programs, either at Linck or in the community, all of our work with you will be integrated and coordinated.

### The Role of Parents, Children and Youth

We view your time at Linck as a partnership between you, your family and your clinician/worker. You will be directly involved in planning and reviewing the service you receive. We encourage you to speak openly about your concerns and ask questions when you feel unsure about something.

We would like you to keep an open mind to new ideas or information that may arise. Many answers to your questions will come from your own thoughts and insights with time, effort and patience.

**Time commitment:** The number of visits will depend on your specific situation and needs. Some situations can be resolved in a few meetings, while others require a longer period of time.

**Cancellations:** Many families want and need our services. If you are not able to keep your appointment, please call us at least 24 hours in advance. Please be present, prepared and ready to participate in each appointment.

The best outcomes are achieved when we are able to meet regularly to work on treatment goals. Please stay in touch with your clinician/worker.

### Ending Services

We will work together to decide when your file is ready to be closed. Typically this happens when your goals have been met or after six weeks of no contact. We will develop a follow-up plan for your family, and will provide you with a copy (if requested) of the closing summary and the intake number for future service.

## Benefits and Risks

Here are some of the benefits and risks of participating in this Mental Health Program. We may find additional benefits and risks when we meet with you, and through discussion and planning will aim to enhance the benefits and minimize the risks.

Benefits	Risks
We focus on individual and family strengths and resources.	Your child may experience anger, a negative view of self or a sense of rejection as a result of the decision to refer for services.
You are part of the “team” and we encourage you to take a leadership role.	At the onset of mental health counseling, a child’s behaviour, mood, negative self-perception, etc. may worsen as they start to deal with difficult issues.
We offer telephone support and regular communication for families.	Parents and children may need to personally challenge or be challenged by staff about difficult treatment issues.
We help you develop a crisis plan.	You and/or your child may feel uncomfortable with suggestion for change, and change may feel uncomfortable.
We help you build positive working relationships in your family, community and school.	Child and family needs may exceed program resources and the program may not address all of the complex issues for some families.
We offer a variety of therapeutic services, group work, psychiatric consultation and psychological testing.	“Long term” involvement may result in the child and or family becoming dependent upon the services.
We develop custom treatment plans and review them on a regular basis. We offer a multi-disciplinary approach. We provide support and guidance to parents.	Client files and/or identifying information may be used outside the confines of the Centre (i.e. court, child abuse investigations as required by the Child, Youth and Family Services Act or as necessary by law).
We offer a safe, therapeutic environment. We give children the opportunity to learn, rehearse and practice appropriate behaviours that lead to positive change. We help children develop problem-solving and coping skills.	Your child may respond and improve at home while continuing to present difficult or challenging behaviours in the community.

## Concerns and Complaints

**We want to provide you and your family with the best possible service.**

If there is a problem, we want to know about it and solve it as quickly as possible. The best way to do this is for you to discuss the problem with your clinician/worker. If you are still dissatisfied, you are welcome to contact your clinician/worker’s supervisor, their Director of Service or the Executive Director. If you are still not happy, you may make a formal complaint. A pamphlet on how to make a formal complaint can be provided for you and is also available at [www.linck.org](http://www.linck.org).

## Confidentiality

*The “Fine Print”*

### Your Privacy is Important to Us

We collect personal health information about you directly from you or from the person acting on your behalf. The personal health information that we collect may include, for example, your name, date of birth, address, health history, record of your visits to Linck and the support you received during those visits.

We may use or disclose your personal health information to communicate with your various health care providers, including your family physician and/or other health care institutions for continuity of care, in order to treat/support and to care for you (unless you tell us otherwise).

Our collection, use and disclosure (sharing) of your personal health information is done in accordance with Ontario law. Please see our PHIPA - Notice of Information Practices under Personal Health Information on our website or you can receive a copy from your clinician/worker. Linck’s privacy designate can be reached by contacting our main office.

## Confidentially and Consent

With very few exceptions, we do not share personal information of our clients or their families with anyone without obtaining consent from the individual to whom the information pertains, or who is lawfully entitled to give, withhold, or withdraw consent on the person’s behalf (e.g. custodial parent, guardian).

**Exceptions only occur when required or permitted by law and ethical standards such as:**

- In situations of suspected child abuse or neglect
- In situations of imminent harm (where there is a clear and imminent risk of serious bodily harm to someone or the possibility of self-harm)
- In the context of legal proceedings (to comply with a summons or subpoena)
- To comply with the requirements of our accreditors and professional regulatory bodies
- To researchers where legislative and specific policies have been met (typically non-identifying information is provided)

Linck is part of the Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) protocol. Personal information shared throughout this process will respect and balance each individual’s right to privacy with the need to ensure the safety of all.

These exceptions are called ‘limits of confidentiality’ and if there are other limits of confidentiality that are identified in a particular situation we would talk to you about them as they arise. Please understand that with today’s technology, specifically social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.), anything you choose to (or agree to) videotape, record, post or otherwise share poses a threat to the privacy and confidentiality of you and your children.

*Linck does not consent to the use of audio or visual recording during interviews with staff.*

## Important Phone Numbers

Emergency (Ambulance/Fire/Police)	9-1-1
Poison Control	1-800-268-9017
Telehealth Ontario	1-866-797-0000
Kids Help Line	1-800-668-6868
Youth Wellness Hubs Chatham-Kent	519-437-6329
Chatham-Kent Women's Centre	519-354-6300
Chatham-Kent Addictions Program	519-351-6144
Humana Community Services	519-354-4095
Canadian Mental Health Association / Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (age 16+)	1-866-299-7447 (24/7 Crisis Line)

## For more information

### **Child, Youth and Family Services Act**

Service Ontario e-Laws: [www.ontario.ca/laws](http://www.ontario.ca/laws)

### **Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario**

2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400, Toronto Ontario, N4W 1A8  
1-800-387-0037 [www.icp.on.ca](http://www.icp.on.ca)

### **Ontario Personal Health and Protection Information Act**

Service Ontario e-Laws: [www.ontario.ca/laws](http://www.ontario.ca/laws)

### **Children's Mental Health Ontario**

[www.kidsmentalhealth.ca](http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca)

### **Canadian Center for Accreditation**

[www.canadiancentreforaccreditation.ca](http://www.canadiancentreforaccreditation.ca)

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