

South Dakota Counseling Association

Facts: Mental Health Counselors

What is a Mental Health Counselor?

A mental health counselor is a master's level, licensed therapist who assists families, couples and individuals in developing the skills necessary to live a happy and healthy life.

Why Might Someone See a Mental Health Counselor?

People see mental health counselors for many reasons, some might be to:

- Adjust to a life changing event
- Cope with grief and loss
- Manage mental illness
- Develop life skills
- Cope with abuse
- Improve marital relationship
- Strengthen family relationships
- Manage ADHD and other disorders of childhood

Where do Mental Health Counselors Work?

Mental Health Counselors work in several different settings. You will find them employed by Community Mental Health Centers, Private Counseling Centers, hospitals, and in private practice.

Search for a counselor in your area by visiting:

<http://www.sd counseling.org>



The South Dakota Counseling Association is a professional organization for counselors in South Dakota. Counselors hold a professional responsibility to be members of a local or national professional association in order to stay up-to-date with current trends in the mental health field.

The mission of the South Dakota Counseling Association is to enhance the quality of life by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, practicing to promote respect for human dignity, and supporting cultural diversity.

SOUTH DAKOTA COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

PO Box 49

Castlewood, SD 57223

(605)670-2650

<http://sd counseling.org/>

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The South Dakota Counseling Association is one of 56 chartered branches of the American Counseling Association. There are five areas of Specialty and nine chapters of the South Dakota Counseling Association.

Areas of Specialty:

South Dakota Mental Health Counselors Association

South Dakota School Counselors Associations

South Dakota Indian Counselor Association

South Dakota Association Counselor Education and Supervision

South Dakota Rehabilitation Counseling Association

SDCA Chapters:

Central

Cornbelt

Coteau

Interlakes

Lewis & Clark

North Central

Palace/Pheasant

Sioux

West River

What is Licensure About?

You want a counselor who:

Is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) or a Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health (LPC-MH)

Benefits of Seeing a Licensed Professional Counselor:

Licensed counselors have completed a vigorous master degree program completing between 54 and 60+ credits of graduate course work. Course work generally includes theory, diagnosis, family systems, and therapy practice courses to name just a few.

Licensed Counselors have a minimum of 2000 hours of supervised counseling practice prior to licensure.

When counselors are licensed they must keep current on new developments in the field as part of the licensed renewal process.

Licensed counselors are required to adhere to a professional code of ethics and the licensing body provides a check and balances system in order to make sure clients receive the highest quality of service.

Third Party Payment:

Most insurance companies will at least partly cover a visit to see a licensed counselor. You will want to check with your insurance as many have a listing of service providers.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) will often include provisions for counseling services. Each EAP is different but should include a list of licensed providers.

Challenges to Third Party Payment:

Counselors are currently working with legislatures to change Medicaid coverage to include LPC's and LMFT's. Presently only LPC-MH counselors are covered under Medicaid.

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