



Transitions Counseling and Consulting

Pre-Adolescent and Adolescent IOP Welcome Packet

Thank you for choosing Transitions Counseling and Consulting! We are honored to support you and your family and are committed to providing a great treatment experience.

Below please find some information about the program, resources you can access anytime, and ways you can communicate with your team here at Transitions.

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How to Stay in Touch with Us

Individual Therapy

Your individual therapist will be your primary contact and will provide you with their contact information. They can assist with any scheduling or rescheduling needs, provide referrals, and help with resources. You can communicate with them through the secure patient portal in the Kareo system. You are also welcome to contact the front office at (602) 363-0629 at any time for assistance!

Group Therapy

Prior to the first day of group, the lead facilitator will email you with their contact information as well as details about the group. Please feel free to communicate with the lead therapist any time through the patient portal in the Kareo system. They are available to support any needs of the group member and can help with scheduling. You can also give the administrative team a call for assistance during business hours at (602) 363-0629.

Medication Management & Psychiatry Services

We offer telepsychiatry and medication management through our psychiatry providers. If you are interested, please call us to make an appointment.

Adolescents ages 13+ can complete a psychiatry assessment at any point during care and your therapist may recommend it as a means of supporting improvement of symptoms – particularly if they are significantly impacting daily life. For many mental health conditions, the combination of therapy and medication is more effective than either treatment by themselves.

There is no pressure to take medications. Our psychiatry providers will provide feedback on medication options that may be helpful and will discuss potential risks and benefits so you can make an informed decision.

Our psychiatry providers and our administrative team work closely together to ensure timely responses to any questions or needs you might have. We recommend calling the administrative team at (602) 363-0629 for assistance including for help with rescheduling, medication refill requests, or questions about medications.

Anybody enrolled in one of our PHP groups will be seen by a psychiatry provider once per week.

Important Contact Information

Please feel free to email or call us with general questions about billing, office hours, etc.

- Transitions team main phone number: (602) 363-0629
- Billing Questions: billing@transitionscounselingandconsult.com
- Administrative Questions: help@transitionscounselingandconsult.com



How to Access the Kareo Patient Portal

There are two ways to access the Kareo Patient Portal:

1. Go to our website at www.transitionscounselingandconsult.com then click on the green "Patient Portal" button on the upper right-hand side of the screen (or the top of the screen if you're using your phone).
2. Go directly to the Kareo Patient Portal Link: <https://portal.kareo.com/app/new/login>

Our Main Website and Social Media Pages

We'd like to invite you to visit both our webpage and our Facebook page – we regularly post updates, resources, and articles that many of our clients and their families find helpful!

Transitions Counseling webpage: www.transitionscounselingandconsult.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/transitionscounselingaz

Instagram: www.instagram.com/transitionscounselingaz

Although our webpage and social media pages have messaging features, please only use the Kareo Patient Portal or our main phone number for any non-emergent communications that are related to your mental health care. ***If you are in crisis or have a mental health emergency, please call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 988. If an emergency occurs, please call 911 immediately. Please also note that email and social media should never be used for urgent or emergency issues.***

What is an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)?

IOP stands for Intensive Outpatient Program. IOPs meet three days a week for 2 ½ hours each day. Our 8–12-week IOP focuses on helping group members develop and practice evidence-based skills to help them to cope with very painful thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations in a healthy way. In terms of hours, it's like attending a year's worth of traditional outpatient therapy in the span of 2-3 months.

The skills we teach are grounded in two approaches to therapy called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). We've provided links in the resources section for more information on these treatments. Each has been demonstrated to be effective via high-quality scientific studies and are the gold-standard in mental health care.

These skills focus on handling thoughts and feelings in a new way, so they take practice to learn. We believe it's worth the time and effort to learn them because they can be used now and throughout your life. An IOP can be the ideal setting for gaining these skills because the program provides structure, dedicated time, expert guidance from a clinician, and social support from peers to stick with it.

This treatment works for a great many people and is effective with a variety of concerns including anxiety, depression, coping with difficult school and/or family challenges, low self-esteem – and even self-harming behavior and suicidal thoughts.

While in an IOP, Transitions recommends that group members also work with an individual therapist. The group focuses on mastering skills in a supportive environment, while individual



therapy is a place to work in detail on concerns that require greater privacy, time, and focused treatment. If the group member doesn't have a current individual therapist, our administrative team can help you to schedule an appointment.

What is a Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)?

PHP stands for Partial Hospitalization Program. The name can be a misleading because there is no hospital stay involved. Rather, it's a specialized 4–6-week program that offers a focused course of treatment like a hospital, but participants return home every evening and on the weekends. This group meets 5 days each week for 4-5 hours per day. The goal of the program is to support long-term improvement of severe mental health symptoms.

This type of treatment is particularly helpful for those who have recently left hospital-based care as it serves as the first step in a gradual "step down" in treatment. This planned step-down helps to avoid an abrupt reduction in supportive treatment (which can result in the need for returning to the hospital shortly after leaving).

While participating in PHP, clients will meet with a psychiatry provider weekly. There is no pressure to take medications if you do not wish to do so. The meeting is to confirm that this type of specialized care is still the best fit for your needs. However, you can discuss medication at that session if you choose.

During the PHP, we focus on two approaches to therapy called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). We've provided links in the resources section for more information on these treatments. Each has been demonstrated to be effective via high-quality scientific studies and are the gold-standard in mental health care. The group is designed for daily opportunities to practice and develop mastery in these key skills for long-term wellness.

Getting Ready for Group

Once a start date is confirmed, the lead therapist will email you information about the group including dates, times, and locations. We invite you to respond to that email both to confirm that we have your correct contact information and for the facilitator to provide you their direct contact information. This information can be helpful in the future to report any absences, ask any questions, and to schedule midpoint session, discharge session, and/or individual appointments. Our team also provides regular updates on progress in treatment, and we want to be sure they reach you!

What can my child expect on their first day of group?

The therapist greets group members in the lobby shortly before the start time and escorts them to the group room.

Once in the room, group members place any electronic devices into a container (to limit distraction and for confidentiality purposes), take a check-in sheet, pen, and clip board, and take a seat. Each group member is invited to use the check-in sheet to communicate how they are feeling and how the group can help them support them that day. The check-in sheet includes evidence-based screening measures that can help the therapist to assess safety and track progression of symptoms.



The therapist will introduce the group and any new members and will go over the guidelines for the group, which we've included below. Each group session will include an activity or lesson plus opportunities for each member to share. Group members will have a 10-minute break for a snack and restroom break. We have snacks available (crackers, cookies, chips, etc.) but you are also welcome to bring your own if you'd like.

Midpoints and Discharge Sessions

A midpoint session is scheduled with the lead therapist with the goal of meeting with you and the group member to discuss the treatment plan, progress, and any feedback.

We will also discuss an approximate discharge date and begin creating an aftercare plan to support the group member following their graduation from the group. The discharge session mimics the midpoint session, confirms the discharge date, and provides future treatment recommendations and/or referrals.

Safety Concerns During Treatment

You should know that the therapists and interns at Transitions Counseling and Consulting are considered mandated reporters by the state of Arizona. This means that we are required to tell the appropriate authority if we receive information that suggests that a child under the age of 18 might be experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any kind. Making a report does not automatically mean that such abuse or neglect is happening. Reports will be reviewed by the Arizona Department of Child Services and the process is meant solely to keep children safe.

You should know that we are also required to disclose when there are indications that a client may be a danger to themselves or to another person. These types of safety concerns are assessed at each group session during the daily check-in process. This includes asking clients if they have experienced any urges to harm themselves, engaged in self-harming behaviors, or experienced thoughts of ending their own life or another person's life.

If a group member reports they have experienced any of these safety concerns facilitators will take the following steps to make sure you are informed:

- After the first safety concern is reported, the therapist will communicate with you directly what has been reported and discuss a plan with you for ensuring safety.
- Sometimes, group members have experienced suicidal thoughts for a long period of time before starting treatment and will continue to do so across weeks or months while actively learning new coping skills in therapy. We've received feedback from some families that they find it unhelpful when the therapist reports these thoughts every week. We invite you to communicate with us openly about concerns of this type so that we can arrive to a helpful, safe solution.
- Whenever a plan and/or intent to act to harm oneself or another is reported, the facilitator will communicate this concern with you, create and complete a safety plan, and discuss any additional treatment that might be needed emergently.



Attendance & Safety

Please notify the facilitator if a group member will be absent. This can be done via email with the facilitator or by calling the administrative team at our main phone number. As there is often a wait to enter these specialty groups, after three absences we will invite a waiting client to take your place in the group. We fully support and welcome your return in the future when your schedule permits attendance.

Illegal substances (nicotine, drugs, alcohol, etc.) are prohibited in group. Please refrain from bringing lighters, matches, and vaping devices. Group members under the influence of any substance may not attend group. No weapons are allowed.

For safety purposes, once a group member enters the building, they may not leave the building until group is dismissed unless their parent or guardian permits their departure.

Adolescent Group Guidelines – Review as a Family

Confidentiality

- *Most* of what said in the group remains confidential indefinitely, which means that what was discussed in the group will not be shared anywhere else. However, it's ok for you to share what you learned in group!
 - There are a few specific things that therapists must tell others if we learn about them. These include:
 - Any thoughts, plans, or attempts to hurt yourself or someone else.
 - Any indication that you are being harmed or that your basic needs (food, water, shelter) are not being met.
 - When we say “tell others” that includes your parents or guardian and may include other professionals like therapists, emergency room staff, police officers, etc. We will only tell them the minimum amount of information needed to keep you safe.
- At times, it's helpful to share other information about your treatment – but we will meet with you and your family to ensure everyone is aware of what that will include. Each person is unique in what they would like to share so it's best to have a conversation just with you and your family, so we are all on the same page.
- If you see one of the therapists in a public place, we will not interact with you unless you choose to say hello to us first. We do this to protect your privacy because you might not want to discuss how you know us – and it's your right to choose to tell others or not.

In-Group Expectations

- We collect phones at the beginning of each group to make sure the group is private and to help limit distractions.
- Group is a judgment-free zone. Try not to use terms such as “good” or “bad” when talking about yourself or others. Instead, try using words such as “healthy” or “adaptive.”



- It's tough to start sharing in group – but it's worth it! The more you share, the more we can offer support and feedback. Group is a safe place to practice healthy and effective relationships.
- Feedback is used to support and relate to each other. Our goal isn't to "fix" anyone. We want to understand and support each other. One way to help is to share things that worked for you in the past such as by saying, "when I experienced that, this helped me" to offer support.
- If you experience moments of strong, painful thoughts or feelings during group, first use your skills to help tolerate the distress until it lessens. If needed, you can signal to the group leader that you'd like to step out of the room to practice using a coping skill until it improves. As we practice healthy relationship skills together, we encourage group members to actively set boundaries around difficult topics. For instance, it's ok to ask, "Can we change the subject?" There is no pressure to share why you need to set that boundary.
- Be aware of language, tone of voice, and graphic details that might be upsetting to others. This includes discussing inpatient/residential treatment experiences, use of curse words or inappropriate language, or other potentially triggering content.
- Tissue rule – feel your feels. In therapy we encourage you to feel your feelings. It's a safe place. Tissue boxes are placed strategically around the room.

Parent Group

Transitions offers a weekly Parent Group as part of the pre-adolescent and adolescent IOP and PHP programs, although all parents of Transitions' clients are welcome to join. The group provides a glimpse into the skills and activities that are presented in detail during our IOP and PHP programs. Each session includes a check-in, which focuses on your child's progress, followed by an opportunity to learn the skills that your child is also learning and practicing. These skills include communication styles and tools, boundaries, and coping with painful thoughts and feelings.

Parents that participate have let us know that the group provides a place of support for them, and they are also better prepared to help their child practice skills introduced in group while at home.

The group meets every Wednesday, from 5:30 pm – 7 pm via Zoom. We will provide you with the login information.

Additional Resources

Videos

- An Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUOaHsxe8OQ>
- An Introduction to Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)



- Marsha Linehan Channel, founder of DBT - 4 Skill Modules of DBT
 - [Dr. Marsha Linehan: The 4 Skills Modules of DBT - YouTube](#)
- The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain
 - [Dan Siegel - Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain \(Family Action Network\) - YouTube](#)
- An Introduction to Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT)
 - Dr. Russ Harris Channel, founder of ACT
 - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-sMFszAaa7C9poytIAmBvA/videos>

Websites: General Resources

- I Am Teen Strong: [Arizona and Colorado Comprehensive Resource Guide for Teen Girls](#)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): [NAMI Homepage](#)
- NAMI: Kids, Teens, Young Adults Resources: [NAMI Kids Teens Young Adults](#)
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine: [Mental Health Resources for Adolescents](#)
- National Institutes of Mental Health: [NIMH Mental Health Resources for Mental Health](#)

General Reading

- [The Mindful Teen](#)
 - Dzung X. Vo, MD FAAP
- [The Body Keeps the Score](#)
 - Bessel van der Kolk
- [Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training with Adolescents](#)
 - Jean Eich
- [Raising An Emotionally Intelligent Child](#)
 - John Gottman, PhD., Joan DeClaire, and Daniel Goleman
- [12 Principles for Raising a Child with ADHD](#)
 - Russell A. Barkley, Ph.D.

Phone Applications

Virtual Hope Box - Free

- Apple: [Virtual Hope Box on Apple](#)
- Android: [Virtual Hope Box on Android](#)
- Function: Provides simple tools to help clients with coping, relaxation, distraction, and positive thinking when painful thoughts or feelings arise.

Headspace – Free Trial

- Website: [Headspace Meditation App](#) (Available on both Apple and Android)
- Function: Guided meditation and focusing exercises for kids, teens, and adults.



Tactical Breather - Free

- Apple: [Tactical Breather on Apple](#)
- Android: [Tactical Breather on Android](#)
- Function: Guides users through breathing exercises to promote relaxation.

Calm - Free

- Website: [Calm Meditation and Sleep App](#) (Available on both Apple and Android)
- Function: Guided meditation and soothing sounds to support relaxation and sleep.