

# COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE

Member Newsletter | Summer 2024



## STAR+PLUS

**Making a Positive Difference in the  
Lives of Seniors and Adults with  
Disabilities in Our Community**

**Does Your Child Have A  
Health Home?**

**Preeclampsia: Signs,  
Symptoms, And Treatment**

**911 vs. 988: Which One To  
Call In An Emergency**

### MAIN OFFICE

12238 Silicon Drive, Suite 100  
San Antonio, Texas 78249

### COMMUNITY OFFICE AT AVENIDA GUADALUPE

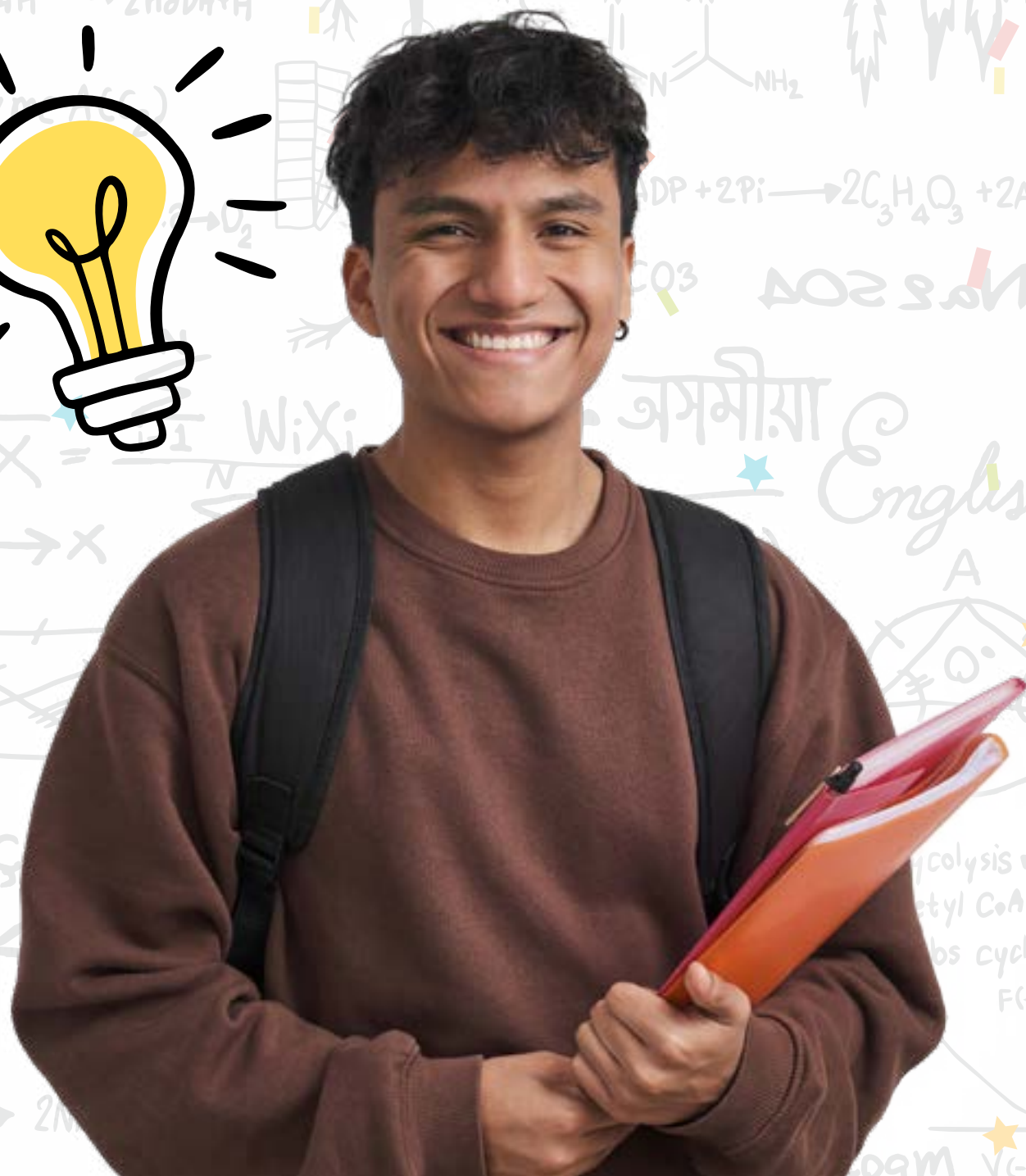
1410 Guadalupe Street, Suite 222  
San Antonio, Texas 78207

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL AT:

CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com  
210-227-2347 or toll-free 1-800-434-2347

# ASPIRE

## Classroom of the Month Awards



*“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.” - Nelson Mandela*

All children have the potential to do extraordinary things! Texas A&M University-San Antonio (TAMU-SA) and Community First recognizes the value of higher education to awaken that potential. Some children face more obstacles than others in reaching their educational goals. **This is why we work with TAMU-SA to sponsor the [ASPIRE Classroom of the Month](#).**

### What is ASPIRE?

ASPIRE is a collaboration between TAMU-SA and seven South Bexar County ISDs (East Central, Edgewood, Harlandale, Somerset, South San Antonio, Southside, and Southwest). This program focuses on opening up the school-to-college pipeline to help more students go to college and earn a degree. Part of the ASPIRE Classroom of the Month strategy is to award \$1,000 cash to outstanding educators who go above and beyond to create a “college-going” culture to invest back into their classes and students.

### What is Classroom of the Month?

The ASPIRE Classroom of the Month program has recognized and celebrated more than 35 ASPIRE elementary and middle school teachers and students. Each month, a winning teacher and their classroom receive a Classroom of the Month certificate, TAMU-SA Jaguar swag, a special message from University leadership, and \$1,000 from Community First.

Recent ASPIRE-winning teachers shared about the program and how the ASPIRE award motivates them to build on college readiness skills and further helps them prepare their students for the future.

**Joseph Rodriguez (April 2024 Winner)**  
**Stonewall Flanders Elementary School, 4th grade**  
“In elementary school, with regard to college readiness, we are in the business of planting seeds. So many of our students would be first-generation college students. It’s important to expose them to the idea of a university education so they can better prepare themselves with as many choices as possible for their young adult lives.”

**Anastasia Uribe (October 2023 Winner)**  
**Harlandale Middle School, 8th grade**  
“Winning the ASPIRE Classroom of the Month Award boosts my motivation to prepare students for their futures, showing them that dedication and hard work are recognized and celebrated. The \$1,000 award from Community First provided valuable resources and materials for my classes, enhancing my ability to create engaging and effective learning experiences.”

### Why is ASPIRE Important?

Education creates better opportunities for students and helps them overcome poverty. A [2021 report](#) by the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics shows that higher levels of education lead to higher income and lower unemployment rates.

- Texas is failing to graduate one out of every five students.
- Texas high schools lost 94,767 students in 2017-18.
- Black and Hispanic students are about twice as likely to leave school without graduating than White students.

Something needs to change. Community First is proud to invest in these dedicated educators and students to encourage them in their educational journeys.

To learn more, please visit [TAMUSA.edu/Aspire](https://TAMUSA.edu/Aspire).



# 24/7

## Nurse Advice Line

**FREE! EASY! PROFESSIONAL!**

**Call 210-227-2347  
or Toll-Free 1-800-434-2347  
to speak to a nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**

Community First has a 24-hour Nurse Advice Line for all Members. A registered nurse can help answer your health and medical questions and instruct you on where to go for care.

Our nurses are bilingual and can help you in English or Spanish or arrange for translation services. Experienced nurses are ready and waiting to help.

Call any time, day or night, 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Examples of questions the Nurse Advice Line can help answer:**

“My foot is swollen. What should I do?”

“My daughter has a fever. Do I need to go to urgent care or the ER?”

“A bee stung my son on the arm. What medicine can I give him?”

*For life or limb-threatening emergencies, always call 911. For mental health emergencies or suicidal thoughts, call 988 to speak with a trained counselor on the National 24/7 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.*

# ALL ABOUT YOUR A1C

**You probably know at least a little bit about diabetes, but what do you know about A1C, the blood test used to diagnose diabetes?**

The A1C test — also known as the hemoglobin A1C or HbA1c test — is a simple blood test that measures your average blood sugar levels over the past three months. It's one of the most commonly used tests to diagnose prediabetes and diabetes and is also the main test to help you and your health care team manage your diabetes if you've already been diagnosed (CDC, 2022).

### **Who should get an A1C test, and when?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2022) recommends that adults over age 45 get a baseline A1C test. Individuals who are under 45 and have one or more of the risk factors listed below should also get a test:

- Are overweight.
- Have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes.
- Are physically active less than 3 times a week.
- Have ever had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or given birth to a baby over 9 pounds.
- Are an African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian, or Alaska Native person. Some Pacific Islanders and Asian American people are also at higher risk.

However, your doctor is the best person to recommend if and when you should get an A1C test.

Also, if you have been diagnosed with diabetes or prediabetes, it is important to get regular A1C tests to ensure your blood sugar levels are well-managed.

### **What is blood sugar?**

Blood glucose, or blood sugar, is the sugar found in your blood. It is your body's main energy source, and it comes from the food you eat. Your body breaks down food into glucose, and then your pancreas produces insulin. Insulin is a hormone that helps glucose get into your cells so it can be used for energy. If your body does not produce enough insulin, glucose builds up in your bloodstream instead of going into your cells, and

your body is unable to use it for energy. This leads to prediabetes (risk for diabetes) and diabetes.

### **What happens if my blood sugar is too high and I don't get treatment?**

High levels of sugar in the blood over a long period of time can damage your eyes, kidneys, nerves, and blood vessels, all leading to serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.

### **Where can I get an A1C test?**

Your doctor's office or laboratory can give you an A1C test.

**Please turn to page 21 to read about joining our no-cost Health and Wellness programs for Members, including “Diabetes in Control: Diabetes Management Program.”**

### *Sources:*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, September 30). All About Your A1C. Retrieved July 15, 2024, from [CDC.gov/Diabetes/Diabetes-Testing/Prediabetes-A1C-Test.html](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-testing/prediabetes-a1c-test.html)*

*American Diabetes Association. (2023). Understanding A1C. Retrieved March 18, 2024, from Understanding A1C | ADA [Diabetes.org/About-Diabetes/A1c](https://www.diabetes.org/about-diabetes/a1c)*





# STAR+PLUS: FOR EVERY NEED

This year, through the STAR+PLUS program, we are expanding our health care services and provider network for adults with special needs and seniors.

Starting September 1, 2024, Community First will provide STAR+PLUS benefits and services for adults with disabilities and seniors in Bexar County and surrounding areas. STAR+PLUS offers qualifying Members access to a large network of providers for acute, urgent, and emergency care, plus Service Coordination, Long-term Services and Supports, Home and Community-Based Services, and Value-added Services.

## What is STAR+PLUS?

STAR+PLUS is a Texas Medicaid-managed care program for adults with disabilities or who are 65 or older. Adults in STAR+PLUS receive Medicaid health care and Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) through a health plan that they choose. With STAR+PLUS, adults with complex medical needs can choose to live and receive care at home instead of a nursing facility. STAR+PLUS also covers Members who need to move into a nursing facility.

## Who qualifies for STAR+PLUS?

Anyone who is 1) eligible for Medicaid and 2) has at least one of these conditions or situations:

- Age 21 or older, getting Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, and able to get Medicaid due to low income.
- Not getting SSI and needs the type of services in STAR+PLUS Home and Community Based Services (HCBS).
- Age 21 or older, gets Medicaid through what are called “Social Security Exclusion programs” and meets program rules for income and asset levels.
- Age 21 or over residing in a nursing facility and receiving Medicaid while in the nursing facility.
- In the Medicaid for Breast and Cervical Cancer program.

## Dual Eligible Members

Medicare Members who also qualify for Medicaid are dual eligible. Dual eligible STAR+PLUS Members receive regular medical care through Medicare and LTSS and Service Coordination through their STAR+PLUS Medicaid health plan.

## Service Coordination

Every STAR+PLUS Member has their own Service Coordinator assigned to them. Service Coordination is a special service that helps Members manage their LTSS, and their physical, behavioral, and social care needs. Service Coordinators work with Members, their caregivers, families, health care providers, and social service and community organizations to build an individual service plan (ISP) to address their needs. This includes:

- Identifying unique health and social needs.
- Ensuring timely and coordinated access to providers and services.
- Coordinating Medicaid benefits with non-Medicaid services and supports as needed.
- Providing access to LTSS.

ISPs are reviewed and updated annually and more often, as needed, to ensure STAR+PLUS Members receive all of the health care and social services they need to live as comfortably as possible.

## Long-term Services and Supports

Long-term services and supports (LTSS) are very important for STAR+PLUS Members. LTSS are benefits that help Members stay safe and independent in their home or community. LTSS can help Members with their everyday needs, like bathing, dressing, taking medicine, or preparing meals. Community First STAR+PLUS Members may be eligible to receive LTSS, including:

- Personal Attendant Services (PAS)
- Day Activity and Health Services (DAHS)
- Home and Community Based Services (HCBS or the STAR+PLUS Waiver).

The STAR+PLUS HCBS Waiver includes services and equipment, such as adaptive aids, medical equipment, assisted living, employment assistance, respite care, physical/occupational/speech therapy, and minor home modifications.

## Value-Added Services

STAR+PLUS Members may be eligible for extra benefits, called Value-added Services, including:\*

- Health & Wellness programs, including classes, education, plus gift cards and other rewards.
- Home-delivered meals after a hospital stay, in-home respite care, and access to rapid response services.
- Foot care, diabetes care, and asthma support.
- Extra vision and/or dental benefits.
- YMCA programs to support specific health needs.
- Transportation assistance to non-medical appointments.
- And much more!

*\*Effective September 1, 2024. Limitations or restrictions may apply. Call 210-358-6055 or email [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com) for more information.*

With nearly 30 years of experience and as our area's only non-profit health plan provider, Community First is honored to begin serving adults with special needs in Bexar County and surrounding areas through the STAR+PLUS program.

To learn more about STAR+PLUS, visit [CommunityFirst STARPLUS.com](https://www.CommunityFirstSTARPLUS.com) or call Community First STAR+PLUS Member Services at 1-855-607-7827.





# UNDERSTANDING UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT

Utilization Management (UM) is a process that evaluates the treatments, services, and procedures provided to our Members on a case-by-case basis.

When Community First receives a service request from your Provider, we use current medical evidence and clinical criteria to make a decision. We consider your best interests and apply criteria fairly and consistently. Community First then approves or denies services based on whether they are medically necessary and covered by the plan. If you wish to review the criteria used in making a decision, it is available upon request.

### Service Review

A service review for authorization will occur before you receive care. Our experienced clinical staff reviews all requests. Physician staff members review requests for services that do not meet standard guidelines and criteria for coverage and medical necessity.

Whenever you receive emergency care without prior authorization (for emergency services), Community First will conduct a service review before processing a claim. Please note that a service review after receiving emergency services does not guarantee payment of claim.

Generally, your Provider will request prior authorization from Community First before you receive care. You have a responsibility to follow Community First's rules for receiving care.

### PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Community First is committed to ensuring that your personal health information is secure and private. Our doctors and other providers are committed to the same standards.

Your personal health information will only be used by Community First to manage your health plan and to meet state and federal requirements. We will not share it with anyone else nor release it to anyone without your written approval.

For more information about privacy and confidentiality, please review your Member Handbook. You can also view a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices on our website at [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Privacy-Policy](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Privacy-Policy).

### Out-of-Network Care

Requests for out-of-network services involve an evaluation of whether the necessary and covered services can be provided on time by a network Provider. Community First does not cover out-of-network care without prior approval.

### Hospital Care

Community First also reviews the care our Members receive while in the hospital. We assist the hospital staff in making sure our Members have a smooth transition home or to their next care setting.

### Appeals

You, your representative, or a Provider acting on your behalf may appeal a decision denying a request for services. You can file an appeal through the Community First appeals process.

### More Information

To obtain more information about UM criteria used to make decisions about your health care, contact Population Health Management. Call 210-358-6050 and press "3" for authorizations, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

You are also welcome to contact us if you have questions regarding the processing of a request for services. Any communications or calls received after business hours will be addressed the next business day. If our staff contacts you regarding a service issue, they will provide you with their full name and title at Community First.

# CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Case Management services help patients move smoothly through the health care system. Community First Case Managers work closely with patients, their family members, their caregivers, and their health care team to improve their health and quality of life and take control of their own health and well-being.

Community First Case Management services are available to ALL Community First Members at no cost. Our Case Management teams look at each Member's mental, social, and physical well-being and provide help and guidance from experienced professionals, including:

- Nursing
- Social work
- Home health care
- Mental health care

Case Management teams also provide the Member with resources to help them get the best care possible, connecting them to the right providers in the right setting at the right time.

Members who need Case Management have access to a full Case Management team and their own dedicated Case Manager. Case Managers are the first point of contact for Members. The relationship between Member and Case Manager is built on trust, mutual respect, and good communication.

Depending on the Member's needs, the Case Manager may also work with the Member's doctors, caregivers, family, and other health care team members. The team communicates with each other and works together to improve the Member's overall health.

If you would like to learn more about Case Management services, call Community First Population Health Management at 210-358-6050 or email [chelp@cfhp.com](mailto:chelp@cfhp.com).



# Preeclampsia

## Signs, Symptoms, & Treatment

If you are pregnant, you need to know the signs and symptoms of preeclampsia and work with your doctor to take action. Preeclampsia is serious, but regular checkups during pregnancy can help manage the condition to protect you and your baby.

### What is preeclampsia?

Preeclampsia is a serious condition that only occurs during pregnancy or shortly after your baby is born. Preeclampsia causes high blood pressure and can cause damage to organs, like the kidney and liver. It is very important to manage preeclampsia to prevent it from turning into eclampsia, which can be life-threatening to you and your child.

Preeclampsia happens in about 5% to 8% of pregnancies, almost always after the 20th week of pregnancy. While doctors do not know what causes preeclampsia, they can monitor and, if necessary, provide treatment.

### Signs and symptoms to watch for

In early preeclampsia, you may not notice any symptoms, but there are telltale signs your doctor will look for, including:

- High blood pressure
- Rapid weight gain (2-5 lbs. a week)
- Excess protein in your urine
- Swelling of the hands and face

Later stages of preeclampsia can cause many health complications, including:

- Bad headache
- Pain on the right side of your body
- Belly pain
- Urinating less often
- Seizures
- Dizziness
- Impaired vision

- Kidney or liver damage

### Preeclampsia diagnosis

Preeclampsia is usually diagnosed during a routine prenatal visit. It is important to go to all of your prenatal doctor visits. At each prenatal visit, the medical staff will weigh you and take your blood pressure. High blood pressure is often the first sign of a problem.

If you are at high risk for preeclampsia, you may get other tests, such as blood tests and a test to check for protein in your urine. Factors that can increase your risk include:

- High blood pressure or preeclampsia in an earlier pregnancy
- High blood pressure or kidney disease before pregnancy
- Obesity
- Age (women older than 40 are at higher risk)
- Multiple gestation (twins or triplets)
- African American ethnicity
- Family history of preeclampsia

If tests suggest that you have preeclampsia, your doctor will test you regularly for the rest of your pregnancy and closely watch your baby's health. They may ask you to come in for testing more often.

### Treatment

For mild preeclampsia, you'll go to your doctor's office often for tests and to check on your baby's health. Your doctor may show you how to check your blood pressure at home. Watch carefully for signs of more severe preeclampsia, such as a terrible headache, dizziness, or vision changes. If your preeclampsia gets worse, your doctor may prescribe bed rest, meaning you will be limited in activity in order to keep your baby safe.

If it is a severe case, you may need to stay at the

hospital, where your medical team can closely monitor you and your baby. Your doctor may prescribe you medicine to lower your blood pressure and prevent seizures. You may also get medicine to help prepare your baby's lungs for birth. Your doctor will try to deliver your baby when your baby has grown enough to be ready for birth, but sometimes early delivery is needed to protect your health and your baby. If this happens, your baby will get special care for premature babies.

### Preeclampsia after your baby is born

Preeclampsia often goes away after delivery. However, some women develop preeclampsia or eclampsia after they deliver their babies. Because postpartum preeclampsia and eclampsia can progress quickly and have serious effects, it is important to get treatment immediately if you experience headaches, vision changes, nausea, or abdominal pain, especially in the first few days after giving birth.

### Resources & Support

Community First offers expectant moms resources and support through our **Healthy Expectations Maternity Program**. To join, please visit [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Health-and-Wellness-Programs](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Health-and-Wellness-Programs) to take our Pregnancy Health Assessment, call 210-358-6055, or email [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com).

### Sources

[NICHD.NIH.gov/Health/Topics/Preeclampsia/ConditionInfo/Risk](https://NICHD.NIH.gov/Health/Topics/Preeclampsia/ConditionInfo/Risk)

[NICHD.NIH.gov/Health/Topics/Preeclampsia/ConditionInfo/Treatments](https://NICHD.NIH.gov/Health/Topics/Preeclampsia/ConditionInfo/Treatments)

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## PREPARING FOR A TRANSITION OF CARE: ADOLESCENT TO ADULT

Many pediatricians only see patients up to the age of 18. If your child's 18th birthday is coming up and you have not yet chosen an adult primary care provider (PCP) for them, Community First can help.

- Call Member Services at the number on your child's Member ID card. One of our Member Services Representatives can help you choose a new PCP.
- Request a new PCP through our secure [Member Portal](#).
- If you'd like to review PCPs in our network located near you, visit our online Provider Directory at [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com). Just click on "Find a Provider" and select your child's plan.

We are here to assist you as you prepare for this important transition in your child's health care.

**Do you need help making an appointment or getting a ride to your doctor's office or pharmacy?** Please call 210-358-6055 or email [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com). We're here to help!







# A Healthy COMMUNITY

**A healthy community is a community where local groups and organizations work together to prevent disease and connect people to options for healthy living. At Community First, we are proud to do our part in contributing to a healthy community by putting YOU at the center of all health care decisions.**

Improving the health of your community also starts at home. Here are a few things you can do to get healthy and stay healthy.

## **1. Concentrate on your own health and the health of your family.**

Take action to keep yourself healthy and strong. Eat well, wash your hands frequently to prevent illness, get regular checkups and vaccinations, and stay physically active. If you take care of your body now, you will be more prepared to handle stress and physical demands during a medical emergency.

## **2. Use technology to improve communication between you, your Provider, and your health plan.**

Did you know that most Providers can communicate with you via email, text, and even video message? Avoid long wait times on the phone and see what other communication options are available to you as a valued patient.

Additionally, Community First's [Member Portal](#) can help you take better control of your health. The portal is a secure online space filled with YOUR information, including benefits, Member ID card, and much more. All Community First Members are encouraged to sign up for the [Member Portal](#). It's a great tool available in English and Spanish and can be used on any device.

While you're logged in to the Member Portal, be sure to explore the tools and resources available there, including our Health Assessment. Take the Health Assessment to see if you could benefit from one of our no-cost Health & Wellness Programs designed for Members with long-lasting conditions like asthma, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Each program is provided at no cost to Members and

includes incentives, giveaways, education, and support. You may also be eligible to receive a gift card just for taking the Health Assessment.\*

## **3. Visit our website, read our blog, and connect with us on social media.**

Our website, [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com), is a great source of important information about your health plan. Visit us online to find a health care provider, review your Member Handbook, download forms and new Member documents, and more.

Our website is also home to our blog which features health and wellness articles plus community news and events.

Social media is another place where our team shares helpful videos, event announcements, health news, and community resources available to you as a Community First Member. Follow us to connect and keep up with the latest.



@CommunityFirstHealthPlans



@CFHealthPlans



@CFHealthPlans



@CommunityFirstHP

*\*Limitations and restrictions apply. To find out more, contact a Community First Health Educator at 210-385-6055 or [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com).*

Sources:

*The Five Pillars of Population Health Management. (Nandini Rangaswamy, MBA Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer, ZeOmega Chairman of the Board. Copyright 2015 ZeOmega, Inc.)*

[Blogs.CDC.gov/PublicHealthMatters/2015/09/A-Healthy-Community-Is-a-Prepared-Community/](https://blogs.cdc.gov/PublicHealthMatters/2015/09/A-Healthy-Community-Is-a-Prepared-Community/)

# 911 vs. 988

911 and 988 are both easy to remember 3-digit numbers that connect you to crisis and other lifesaving services. But when there's an emergency, which one is the right number to call?

## 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

*When to call/text:*

- Suicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Violent or abusive behavior
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Mental health crisis
- Emotional distress, feeling out of touch with reality

## 911 Emergency

*When to call:*

- You see a fire, explosion, or smell gas
- Someone is threatening to harm you or other people
- You see a crime occurring or suspicious activity
- Someone is unconscious, not breathing, experiencing chest pain, or bleeding heavily

**Remember, there is no shame in seeking help, you are not alone, and support is available.**

**COMMUNITY FIRST**  
HEALTH PLANS



## Mental Health Care:

### When and How You Need It

Accessing mental (behavioral) health care when you need it, or when your child needs it, is super important. The sooner you can get help, the better. All Community First Members have direct access to mental health care and substance use resources. This means you do not need a referral from your primary care provider (PCP) to get these services.

### Emergency Mental Health Care

- Call the Community First 24/7 Behavioral Health Hotline toll-free if you have an urgent problem.
  - » STAR Kids and STAR+PLUS: **1-844-541-2347**
  - » All other health plans: **1-877-221-2226**
- Call or text the national **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** for a suicidal or urgent mental health crisis for yourself or a loved one, or go to the nearest emergency room. This call/text is toll-free.
- Go directly to a psychiatric hospital for a crisis assessment if there are no medical concerns.
- Call **911** for emergency services if someone is becoming violent or their life is in immediate danger.
- Make an appointment directly with a behavioral health provider. You can find a list of providers on the Community First Member Portal or on our website at [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Find-Provider](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Find-Provider). You can also call your Service Coordinator or Case Manager directly, or Member Services at **1-800-434-2347** for help making an appointment.
- Talk about your mental health concerns with your PCP. They can help you find a doctor and additional resources if needed.

### Virtual Mental Health Care

Sometimes it can be difficult to get a ride to your appointment or find a time or date that works for you. Many of our providers offer telehealth services, including counseling and psychiatric care. When you call to schedule an appointment, ask if they offer telehealth.

- » Community First STAR, STAR Kids, STAR+PLUS and Medicare Advantage and D-SNP (HMO) Members can also get no-cost transportation to health care appointments. Schedule online at [MedicalTrip.net](https://MedicalTrip.net) or call **1-888-444-0307 (TTY 711)**.

We take mental health seriously and can help you get mental health care when you need it.





## NEW ASTHMA ACTION PLAN NOW AVAILABLE

Asking your doctor to create an Asthma Action Plan for your child is a great first step toward managing their asthma. Every child deserves the opportunity to live a healthy and active life.

The South Texas Asthma Coalition (STAC) has released a new, updated [Asthma Action Plan](#) for 2024. ALL children with asthma should have an Asthma Action Plan filled out by their health care provider.

### What's New?

The new Asthma Action Plan is now a fillable form (PDF) your doctor can fill out electronically. It includes dropdowns for medications and a required field where doctors must include their recommendations for medication self-administration before they're able to sign the form.

### Why is an Asthma Action Plan Important?

An Asthma Action Plan includes:

- **Identifying Triggers:** Things that make your child's asthma worse.
- **Medication Management:** Medicines your child takes to treat their asthma and when to take them.
- **Symptom Monitoring:** Symptoms that indicate worsening asthma.
- **Emergency Response:** Telephone numbers for an emergency contact, your child's healthcare provider, and the local hospital.

### Who needs a copy of my child's Asthma Action Plan?

Share the Asthma Action Plan with your child's primary caretaker, daycare provider, school nurse, coach, after-school coordinator, and anyone else in charge of your child's care. Ensure that they are

familiar with the plan and can respond accordingly. Make the plan part of your child's daily routine. Ensure they take their medication as prescribed and stay aware of any changes in their symptoms.

### Next Steps

Start by talking to your child's doctor. Tell them you want an updated STAC Asthma Action Plan for your child. They can fill out the Asthma Action Plan electronically and print copies for you to give to your child's school nurse and other caretakers. Community First Members who join our [Asthma Matters: Asthma Management Program](#) will also receive an Asthma Action Plan in the mail with instructions for your doctor to complete it.

### Questions?

If you have a question about your child's Asthma Action Plan or need help finding a doctor, making an appointment, or getting a ride to a health care appointment, please call a Community First Health Educator at 210-358-6055 or email [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com).

As a reminder, by participating in Asthma Matters, you may be eligible to receive:\*

- \$80 in gift cards for completing San Antonio Kids BREATHE home visits
- \$10 gift card for getting a flu shot
- Mask with aerosol chamber
- Allergy-free pillow protector
- \$10 gift card for completing required asthma education

*\*Limitations or restrictions may apply. Please call 210-358-6055 or email [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com) to see if you qualify.*

## YOUR PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS

Your prescription drug benefits depend on your health care plan. Navitus Health Solutions is the Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) for Community First. Navitus is responsible for delivering your pharmacy benefits.

### How can I review my prescription drug benefits?

Sign up for an account on the Navitus Member Portal\* to review your benefits. Registration is simple.

1. Visit [Navitus.com/Members](https://navitus.com/members).
2. Click "Login to the Member Portal" and then "Register Now."
3. Enter the information requested as printed on your Community First Member ID card.

*\*The Navitus Member Portal is different than the Community First Member Portal.*

Once you register, you can find the following information on the Navitus Member Portal:

- A list of covered medications (also known as a formulary) and other information, including drug tiers (how prescription drugs are divided into different levels of cost) and quantity limits (the highest amount of a prescription drug that can be given to you by your pharmacy in a period of time).

- Updates to the formulary.
- Prior authorization forms and clinical criteria used for certain medications.
- Information on how to request a formulary exception (a type of coverage determination).
- A list of network and specialty pharmacies.

### How can I best manage my medications?

Maintain a list of your prescriptions and any over-the-counter medications you are taking, including vitamins, supplements, and herbal remedies. Take this list to all appointments and review with your Provider at least once a year. Keeping an updated medication list is an easy way to ensure your health and safety.

### Where can I find more information?

Community First Medicaid Members can review the Preferred Drug List (PDL) at [TXVendorDrug.com](https://txvendordrug.com). The PDL is published every January and July and includes preferred covered medications and requirements for non-preferred medications (specialty medications not included in the formulary).

Navitus Customer Care can also answer questions about prescription drug benefits for all Community First Members. Call the toll-free pharmacy number on the back of your Member ID card or call 844-268-9789.

## MEMBER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Did you know that as a Member of Community First, you have certain rights and responsibilities?

Information about Member Rights and Responsibilities can be found in your Member Handbook. To view your Member Handbook, visit [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Members](https://communityfirsthealthplans.com/members) and select your health plan.

You can also call Community First Member Services at 210-227-2347 or toll-free at 1-800-434-2347 to request a printed copy. We'll mail one to you for free within five business days.



# The Importance of a Medical or Health Home for Your Child

Every Community First STAR Kids and STAR Medicaid Member with Special Health Care Needs (MSHCN) should have a medical or health home.

## What is a medical or health home?

A medical or health home is a consistent source of health care, combined in one place, that your child receives through their primary care provider (PCP). The PCP works with your child's assigned Community First Service Coordinator to manage and coordinate all health care services. Your child's PCP can also create a personalized Medical Home Services Model for a health home that provides integrated primary care for your child.

All your child's health care providers will make up their health home support team. You, their PCP and their Service Coordinator are the most important members of that team, ensuring the best possible care and health outcomes. The team might also include other doctors, and nurses, therapists, dentists, pharmacists, community health workers, school staff, friends, neighbors, other family members, and anyone who cares for your child.

The PCP and Service Coordinator will work together to develop a Service Plan (SP) or Individualized Service Plan (ISP) that includes health care service delivery options for the Member or their legally authorized representative or guardian.

## What is Service Coordination?

Service Coordination is provided by a nurse, social worker, or experienced clinical professional through your health plan. Your Community First Service Coordinator will help you and your child identify, select, coordinate, and use covered services and supports. Service Coordination can improve their well-being, independence, participation in the community, and potential for living a better life.

Community First Service Coordinators can also help with these tasks:

1. Conduct a complete, person-centered evaluation of your child with your family in your home to evaluate your child's individual needs and preferences. Your Service Coordinator will use this information to develop your child's comprehensive person-centered service plan (SP) or individual service plan (ISP).
2. Educate and help provide health-related information to you, your child, and others in your child's support network.
3. Help identify your child's physical, behavioral, functional, and psychosocial needs.
4. Involve you, your child, and other caretakers in developing your child's service plan.
5. Connect your child to covered and non-covered services to meet their needs.
6. Regularly check in to ensure your child's access to covered services is timely and appropriate.
7. Coordinate covered and non-covered services.
8. Contact care providers on your child's behalf with your consent and approval.

Community First Members can log in to the Member Portal to find the name and phone number of their assigned Service Coordinator. If you do not know who your child's assigned Service Coordinator is, call Community First Member Services at 1-855-607-7827. You can also ask your child's PCP to help connect you with their Service Coordinator.

## How exactly can a health home help my child?

A medical or health home is not a building or a place you visit. It's a person-centered way to provide comprehensive care for your child. By working with your health home, you work with health care experts to find and access all the medical and non-medical services your child needs. Community First provides

access to a health home to all STAR Kids Members and any Member who would benefit from care coordination.

Your Service Coordinator will ensure that the health home provides more services and supports than your child's PCP can offer alone. Your PCP or a specialist may be the health home at the center of your child's care team. They will help you and your child access services easily with coordination between all providers and a higher quality of care.

Health home services are delivered in a person-centered way to address the complete needs of a child with multiple chronic or complex conditions or a single serious and persistent mental or physical health condition.

Health home services must include:

1. Member self-management education.
2. Member-centered and family-centered care.
3. Evidence-based models of care.
4. At least the minimum standards of care.
5. Member and family support, including authorized representatives.

## What if my child doesn't have a health home?

Ask your Service Coordinator for help. You can contact them directly or call Community First Service Coordination at 1-855-607-7827.

You can also take these steps to set up a health home for your child:

1. Select a PCP or specialist you trust to care for your child.
2. Work with your PCP and Service Coordinator to develop a written care plan that coordinates the full range of services your child needs. Your Service Coordinator will work with you to create a comprehensive ISP each year. With your permission, the ISP is posted in the Community First Provider Portal, where your child's PCP or specialist can view and access it.
3. Keep a folder to organize all the important information you need about your child's physicians and specialists, appointments, hospitalizations, therapies, medications, allergies, emergency plans,

and more. Take this information to all medical appointments and share it with your whole care team.

4. Ask questions and communicate. Let your nurse, doctor, or Service Coordinator know if you don't understand something or need extra help for your child or your family. Your medical care team will help you find resources.
5. Around the time your child turns 12 years old, help them understand their care plan to prepare them for the transition to adult care. Teenagers should become more informed and responsible for their care. Help your teen understand their care folder and learn to advocate or speak up for themselves to address their needs.

Another resource that can help is the [Parent \(TxP2P\) Medical Home Toolkit](#). TxP2P empowers families to be strong advocates through parent-to-parent support, resources, referrals, and education. The Medical Home Toolkit explains what a medical home is and how to get one. It is free and available to download on their website.

A medical home is the end result of parents and health care professionals acting as partners. After all, you both want the same thing, right? Healthy children and families who are able to achieve their maximum potential.





# The Right Care

At The Right Place, At The Right Time

## Don't know where to go?

Follow this guide to get the care you need.



### DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Go to your primary care provider (PCP) for routine care and when you're feeling sick.

- Checkups and vaccinations
- Treatment of chronic illnesses, like asthma and diabetes
- Prescription refills
- Health screenings, like blood pressure checks and blood work
- Fever, flu, sore throat, cough
- Minor injuries, cuts or burns

Your PCP's name and phone number is on your Member ID card. If you don't know who your PCP is, log in to the Member Portal or call **210-227-2347**.



### URGENT CARE / WALK-IN CLINIC

Go to urgent care when your doctor's office is closed and you have an urgent medical issue.

- Cuts requiring stitches
- Flu, high fever, bad colds
- Sprains/muscle pulls
- Shortness of breath
- Diarrhea and vomiting
- Ear infection/eye injury
- Abdominal pain

If you need help deciding where to go to get non-emergency care, call the 24/7 Community First Nurse Advice Line at **1-800-434-2347** to speak with a registered nurse.



### EMERGENCY ROOM

Dial 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room if your life is in immediate danger.

- Bleeding that will not stop
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizure
- Fainting
- Chest pain
- Serious accident

If you may have been poisoned, call the Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222**. They may suggest you go to the ER.

# Health & Wellness PROGRAMS FOR ALL

*Did you know that Community First has six dedicated health and wellness programs that can help you and your family stay healthy, manage a chronic medical condition, or help you experience a healthy pregnancy?*

#### Our family of Health & Wellness Programs includes:

1. Asthma Matters: Asthma Management Program
2. Diabetes in Control: Diabetes Management Program
3. Healthy Expectations Maternity Program
4. Healthy Mind: Behavioral Health Management Program
5. Healthy Living: Healthy Lifestyle Management Program
6. Healthy Heart: Blood Pressure Management Program

We are proud to offer our Members the highest quality services, including these programs designed to help you live your best life. You can learn more about each no-cost program, including how to join and the benefits of each by visiting [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Health-and-Wellness-Programs](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Health-and-Wellness-Programs). You can also contact our Health Educators at 210-358-6055 or via email at [healthyhelp@cfhp.com](mailto:healthyhelp@cfhp.com) for more information.

#### Health & Wellness Program Spotlight Healthy Heart: Blood Pressure Management Program

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a condition that often goes unnoticed. It can, however, raise the risk of serious health problems like heart attack, stroke, heart failure, and renal disease.

[Healthy Heart](#), our blood pressure management program, can teach you how to control your blood pressure by properly taking your medication and making healthy lifestyle choices. Participation in Healthy Heart can also reduce hospitalization or emergency room visits.

#### Program benefits include:\*

- One-on-one contact with a Health Educator
- Educational materials
- Care Management (for Members with severe blood pressure management issues)
- Assistance finding community resources providing food, shelter, education, and more.

*\*Limitations and restrictions apply*

Source: [CDC.gov/HealthyWeight/Index.html](https://CDC.gov/HealthyWeight/Index.html)



# ONE COMMUNITY ONE TEAM

## SAFC PARTNERSHIP

We are proud to be local and proud to be the official jersey and health insurance partner for the San Antonio Fútbol Club! We are so excited to come together with our local soccer team to bring inclusive experiences for SAFC fans of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

As part of our partnership and commitment to making the SAFC games at Toyota Field even more welcoming to all, Community First is sponsoring the ADA seating areas at Toyota Field and the SAFC's first-ever sensory area pod, a quiet, calming space for those with sensory sensitivities. We are also sponsoring a breastfeeding pod where mothers can breastfeed or pump privately and safely.

To share the love for fútbol in the community and help keep kids busy and active, Community First will also sponsor five youth soccer clinics and the SAFC Micro League. The SAFC Micro League is a recreational and instructional soccer league with the goal of teaching the value of leadership, teamwork, and positive decision-making while learning to play "the beautiful game."

We love how soccer unites people from around the world and across San Antonio. SAFC brings people together from all walks of life to cheer on our local team. We look forward to working to make our local SAFC games even more accessible to everyone in our community.







# Find Care Faster with Our Community Health Partners

**dispatch**health®  **charlie** health



Scheduling doctor's appointments and traveling to see a doctor or specialist can be hard. We want to make it easier for our Members to get care when they need it. Our care partners can help you travel to a medical appointment, bring medical services to you, or provide virtual mental health counseling. We want you to be able to find care when you need it most.

### DispatchHealth: At-Home Urgent Care

DispatchHealth is our partner in care for in-home urgent care services. Sometimes medical care cannot wait until your doctor can see you. DispatchHealth has a full medical staff ready to provide care in your own home on the same day (in most cases). Avoid the waiting room and don't worry about finding a ride.

DispatchHealth can treat these and other conditions:

- Falls
- Migraines
- High fever
- Dehydration
- Strep throat/flu
- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Minor cuts and burns
- Sprains/fractures/broken limbs

To make an appointment, call 210-245-7210 or go to [Request.DispatchHealth.com](https://Request.DispatchHealth.com).

### Betty's Co. Mobile Clinic: Gynecology, Wellness, and Mental Health Care

Young women often don't know where to turn for health care specific to them and their bodies. They need a professional they trust. Betty's Co. offers women ages 13-40 gynecology and other wellness services through their traveling mobile women's care clinics conveniently stationed or scheduled to appear throughout San Antonio and surrounding areas.

Betty's Co. addresses the three most commonly requested services young women ask for help with and information about:

1. Gynecology care, including well woman exams, period care, sexual health, and more.
2. Mental Health counseling to help with anxiety, stress, depression, eating disorders, trauma, relationships, sexual abuse, and gender identity.
3. Wellness Services to advise on nutrition, exercise, and overall wellness.

Call 210-572-4931 or go to [BettysCo.com](https://BettysCo.com) to find a map of their pop-up locations, or make an appointment.

### Virtual Intensive Mental Health Care: Charlie Health

Community First partners with Charlie Health to provide virtual intensive outpatient treatment (IOP) to Members ages 11-33 who need immediate, more intense mental health care and treatment. Young people face unique mental health challenges, including finding a trusted adult to talk to and getting transportation to therapy or counseling. Charlie Health offers easy-to-schedule, virtual one-on-one, or group support for mental or behavioral health conditions.

Charlie Health offers these care services:

- Appointments available online within 24 hours
- Individual, group, and family therapy
- Professionals specially trained to support young people
- Flexible scheduling, with morning, afternoon, and Saturday hours
- Talk therapy, plus other therapies, like art, music, and other non-traditional forms of healing

Charlie Health is available to give counsel for all mental and behavioral health disorders and conditions, including anxiety, depression, self-harm, trauma, and substance-use disorders. To learn more about Charlie Health or schedule these services, call 1-866-935-3297 or go to [CharlieHealth.com](https://CharlieHealth.com).

**DispatchHealth, Betty's Co., and Charlie Health are all in-network providers with Community First. This means they are contracted with us to provide services to our Members.**

We listen to our Members and are always looking to find community partners to help you get timely health care customized for you.



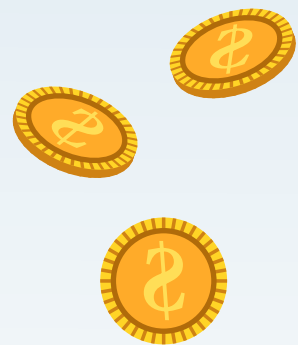
## HELPING MEMBERS ON THEIR PATH TO FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Worrying about money creates stress and anxiety. More stress and anxiety can make your health worse because stress affects us physically, mentally, and emotionally. Community First works to help our Members stay healthy in every part of their lives. We are proud to partner with Credit Human to offer our Members a series of no-cost financial wellness classes, both online and in person.

Part of the problem so many of us face with finances is that we never learned the basics growing up, like how to create a budget based on our income or stretch a dollar, much less how to save or invest our money. **Take the first step to financial control by signing up for one or more of our financial wellness classes.** Members who participate will have the chance to win gift cards worth up to \$50 from major retailers.

It makes sense to watch your (dollars and) cents!

Learn more and register today at:  
[CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Financial-Wellness](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Financial-Wellness).



## VACCINES FOR CHILDREN: WHY YOUR CHILD NEEDS IMMUNIZATIONS

Whether you're becoming a parent for the first time or you've been here before, your baby's birth is an exciting time. This is also the first time your infant will be vaccinated – your first opportunity to protect your child from serious diseases. Getting vaccinated is the best way your child can start on a lifelong journey to good health!

Making sure your kids get their vaccinations on time throughout their childhood is essential. Vaccinations help provide immunity for your children before exposure to potentially dangerous or deadly diseases. Prevention is the best medicine! Stop diseases in their tracks before they have the chance to make your child sick.

Vaccines have been around for a very long time, and the reduction in deadly diseases around the world is proof that they work. The vaccines your child needs have been thoroughly tested to ensure they are safe and effective for children to receive at the recommended ages. These vaccines protect against serious diseases such as diphtheria, measles, meningitis, polio, tetanus, and whooping cough, to keep your children safe during their early years and beyond.

**Be a strong advocate for your children's health.** If you have questions, discuss the vaccinations with your child's pediatrician. You should follow the CDC-recommended Immunization Schedule.

Here are six good reasons to follow the **CDC-recommended Immunization Schedule:**

- 1. Ideal timing:** The CDC has carefully designed their immunization schedule to protect children at exactly the right time.
- 2. Preventing complications:** While babies are born with some immunity from their mothers, they have not yet built up all of the necessary defenses against the diseases that vaccines can prevent.
- 3. Early protection:** It can take weeks for a vaccine

to help your baby make protective, disease-fighting antibodies. Some vaccines require multiple doses to provide the best protection.

- 4. Best protection:** Children won't have the best protection from vaccines until they get all the recommended doses of each vaccine.
- 5. Long-term protection:** The protection (antibodies) you passed to your baby before birth will help protect your little one from disease in the first months of their life. However, your baby's immune system will soon need to be able to fight disease itself. Vaccines help protect your child even after your maternal antibodies have begun to weaken.
- 6. Not spreading illness:** Refusing or forgetting to vaccinate your child on time can make them and other people sick, which can be dangerous for immunocompromised people whose bodies cannot fight illnesses well.

Call your child's primary care provider (PCP) today to schedule their well-child visit or Texas Health Steps checkup where they can get recommended vaccines at no cost. Vaccines help keep everyone in our community healthier.

### Sources

[CDC Immunization Schedules](#)

[Reasons to Follow CDC's Immunization Schedule](#)

[Talking with Parents about Vaccines for Infants](#)



# Brighton Center for a Brighter Future: Community Outreach



**The Brighton Center supports thousands of children with developmental delays or disabilities, their families, and educators who work with these special children.** Community First is honored to sponsor the excellent, community-minded work of this incredible, inclusive preschool and early childhood center.

### About the Brighton Center

The Brighton Center uplifts our local children, families, and educators. Community First is proud to sponsor them through our community outreach. The Brighton Center delivers early childhood preschool on-site, home-based therapy, parent trainings, and individualized support for 4,000 children with disabilities or delays in the San Antonio area. They focus on children from birth to age 8 and their families.

Brighton is also the largest non-profit provider

of direct early intervention and education in San Antonio for children with disabilities and delays. They provide direct developmental and educational services to children at their most critical developmental stages and the support parents need to learn to advocate for their children.

### San Antonio Families in Need

Children with disabilities and delays often need more support in the early stages of their development. Without the right help at the right time, these children end up falling behind their peers.

By the numbers:

- **40,071** children ages 0 to 17 in Bexar County (8%) have some level of disability.
- **44,396** children are in special education classes in Bexar County.
- Only **34%** of children in special education classes in Texas graduate with a high school diploma.

### Community First Impact

In 2023, Brighton Center held three Inclusive Education Conferences, made possible through Community First sponsorship. They were able to train 158 childcare educators from 50 childcare centers at these conferences.

The Brighton Center reports, “It is because of Community First that Brighton Center expanded the efforts to train other centers working with children with disabilities/delays and inclusive early childhood education. These programs help increase developmental skills and ensure children are prepared to enter Kindergarten.”

After the conferences, participating educators noted these benefits:

- 95% said they learned new skills for serving kids with special needs.
- 99% plan to use the information from the conference in their classroom.
- 100% said the training improved their knowledge of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI).
- 95% said they feel more comfortable accessing services in the community.
- 98% reported that they would recommend the training to a colleague.

### Special Education Support Services Project

In 2024, Community First is sponsoring Brighton’s Special Education Support Services (SESS) Program that provides 500 services to parents of children with disabilities/delays, ages 3-8, who are struggling to get their children the education they deserve. SESS teaches families of children with special needs about special education laws and how to better advocate for their children. The children at Brighton Center have special needs that may include developmental delays, sensory processing disorder, ADHD, speech disorders, Down syndrome, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), among others.

SESS includes classes, videos, and trainings for teachers and other education professionals. Brighton’s SESS consultants also meet with individual families prior to their Admission Review and Dismissals (ARD) meetings with their children’s schools and support these families at school meetings.

Community First support will help Brighton Center’s hundreds of families of children with disabilities and delays through the SESS Program. Measurement tools including class surveys, advocacy action plans, and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), report that our sponsorship is estimated to have the following impact:

1. 500 services to parents, including education on Special Education laws, their rights within the system, and one-on-one advocacy support.
2. 95% of parents will increase their knowledge of how to advocate for their child in the school system.
3. 95% of parents will develop an action plan to set and achieve goals for the ARD meetings.
4. 90% of parents will actively engage in advocating for their child to gain additional resources and services and/or improve their child’s academic success.

Educational services are free, and the Brighton center offers individualized support at a discounted rate because these families often experience additional financial hardships. Thus, Brighton relies on community support to fill in the funding gaps to allow for these critical services to be provided.

Community First is proud to partner with such a necessary organization that is improving the lives of local children, families, and educators. We understand that investing in education helps lift up our entire community. We are proud to be local and honored to be able to serve the greater good in San Antonio and surrounding areas.

Learn more about Brighton Center and their work at [BrightonSA.org](https://BrightonSA.org).

### Additional Sources

[Bexar County Community Health Needs Assessment Report, 2022](#)

[TEA Special Education Reports, 2021-2022](#)

[43rd Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2021](#)





# Baby Blues OR Postpartum Depression

How to Get Help

## Depression is common in new moms.

Having a baby can be a stressful experience, no matter how much you love your child or have looked forward to becoming a parent. Considering the loss of sleep, intense new responsibilities, and having no time for yourself, it's no surprise that many new moms feel like they're on an emotional rollercoaster. In fact, mild depression and mood swings are so common in new mothers that it has its own name: **The Baby Blues**.

## Is it the baby blues or postpartum depression?

The majority of women experience at least some symptoms of the baby blues immediately after childbirth. The sudden change in hormones after delivery, plus stress, isolation, no sleep, and fatigue, can cause strong feelings, even sadness. You may feel more tearful, unprepared, and emotionally fragile than normal. Generally, these feelings start in the first couple of days after delivery, peak after one week, and then begin to fade by the end of the second week postpartum.

The baby blues are perfectly normal, but if your symptoms don't go away after a few weeks or get worse, you may be suffering from postpartum depression. **You may need to ask for help, and that is perfectly normal.** You are not alone. Help is available.

## Signs and symptoms of postpartum depression

In the beginning, postpartum depression can look like normal baby blues. In fact, postpartum depression and the baby blues share many symptoms, including mood swings, excessive crying, sadness, insomnia, and irritability. The difference is that with postpartum depression, the symptoms are more severe and may even include suicidal thoughts or the inability to care for your baby. Unlike the baby blues, postpartum depression is a serious problem—one that you shouldn't ignore. Here are a few signs and symptoms of postpartum depression to be aware of:

- You avoid your partner or push them away.
- You feel unable to emotionally connect with or feel close to your baby.
- Your anxiety is out of control, which prevents you

from eating well or sleeping, even when your baby is asleep.

- You experience powerful feelings of guilt or worthlessness, begin to be preoccupied with thoughts of dying, or even wish you were not alive.

**If you think you may have postpartum depression, or if your partner or family members are worried that you do, contact your OB/GYN or another health care professional as soon as possible and make an appointment to see them. DO NOT WAIT until your postpartum checkup. The sooner you call, the sooner you can get help.**

**For an urgent problem related to postpartum depression, call immediately for free help, 24/7:**

- **National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline 988**
- **Community First Behavioral Health Hotline 1-877-221-2226**

## Case Management

Community First offers Case Management services to help Members suffering from postpartum depression and other complex and chronic conditions. Case Management services include:

- Help getting the care you need quickly
- Help coordinating care between doctors and other health care providers
- Help understanding your condition and treatment

As a reminder, Community First Members can make an appointment with any network Behavioral Health Services Provider without a referral.

If you would like to learn more about Case Management or need help finding a provider, call 210-358-6050.

## MEMBER HANDBOOK

Community First provides all Members with a printed copy of their health plan's Member Handbook in both English and Spanish. Each Member Handbook contains detailed information about how your specific health plan works. Your Member Handbook, along with a New Member Guide and other important information, is mailed to you shortly after you join Community First.

If you did not receive a Member Handbook or need a new printed copy, call Member Services toll-free at 1-800-434-2347 to request one, and we'll mail you one at no charge within five business days. You can also view your plan's Member Handbook online. Just visit [CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Members](https://CommunityFirstHealthPlans.com/Members) and select your plan name.





# Unique Health Needs of Black Americans: How to Advocate for Your Health

Black Americans face unique health challenges due to many different factors, such as less access to quality health care, bias in the health care system, and lack of resources such as affordable housing, healthy food options, and education. African Americans also face higher rates of obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, and colorectal cancer. Death rates from these conditions, as well as the rate of pregnancy and childbirth-related deaths, are also higher.

Health care providers need to understand these issues and work toward more equity for all. Black Americans also need to speak up for themselves and their families to ensure their doctors are meeting their needs.

### Advocate for Yourself

Here are a few tips on how to become a better advocate for your own health and wellness:

- **Get regular checkups:** Take control of your health by having an annual visit with your primary care provider (PCP), even when you feel well. This preventive visit creates an opportunity for your doctor to know your health history and discuss the screening tests and immunizations needed for early detection and prevention of common illnesses.
- **Share your health history.** Be honest with your doctor. Understanding your personal and family's

health history empowers you and your doctor to monitor and prevent diseases and conditions that may be inherited, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, and certain types of cancers.

- **Get routine screenings:** You should have screenings for certain conditions based on your age, gender, medical history, risk factors, and family history. Most women should get their first mammogram at age 40, and most people should get a colonoscopy at age 45.
- **Know your body:** Discuss any new symptoms with your doctor even if it does not seem serious to you. Clear communication with your doctor allows for potential issues to be addressed promptly .
- **Go to follow-up visits:** It is important to attend follow-up visits after a new diagnosis or treatment. This gives your doctor the chance to monitor your response to treatment and address any new symptoms.
- **Research your doctors:** Select a doctor you have confidence in and can communicate with effectively. Remember, you can request a different provider in your network if you choose.
- **Bring a trusted friend or family member with you.** If you are nervous or afraid to visit the doctor or if it's hard to understand or remember what your doctor tells you at your appointment,

ask someone you trust to come along with you.

- **Ask questions about your health or medicines:**
  - » What patient resources are available to me?
  - » Can we discuss (description of new pain, symptoms, allergic reactions, mental or physical changes) if this is normal or if I need medication, treatment, or screenings for this?
  - » Can we schedule a follow-up visit to discuss (results of tests, chronic condition, new symptoms)?
  - » Would you recommend a second opinion?
  - » Do I need further screenings?
  - » What are my treatment options for my condition or disease?
  - » What do I need to do to improve my health?

### Pay Attention to Your Mental Health

Your mental health is as important as your physical health, and Black Americans are more likely to experience several unique stress factors that can negatively impact their mental health.

The [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI) reports that only 31% of the Black community with mental illnesses or issues go to therapy. A recent [research study](#) (Perzichilli, 2020) also reported that, when it comes to mental health care, compared to white Americans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are:

- Less likely to have access to mental health services.
- Less likely to seek treatment.
- Less likely to receive needed care.
- More likely to receive low-quality care.
- More likely to stop treatment early.

### What to Do If You Have a Problem

- **Get a second opinion:** If you are a Community First Member and you need help finding another doctor for a second opinion, please call Member Services.
- **Change doctors:** You should feel comfortable discussing your health and wellness with your PCP, and you should feel that they are listening to you. If you feel your PCP is not meeting all of your needs, you have the right to change PCPs

at any time. You can do this by calling Member Services or through the Community First [Member Portal](#) online.

- Make a complaint. If you still are not satisfied after speaking to your doctor, you can call your health plan to file a complaint. Member Services will help you file a complaint and provide information about the next steps.

### Take Control

Remember, you deserve access to quality medical and mental health care when you need it. It is your responsibility to seek out routine, acute (short-term), or ongoing care for yourself. Knowledge is power and for Black Americans, it is especially important to advocate for yourself and your family.

### Sources

[Health Disparities in the Black Community: Conditions, Causes](#), Healthline, 2023

[Racial health disparities are rampant in hypertension](#), American Medical Association, 2018

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[Disparities in Health and Health Care Among Black People](#), KFF, 2022

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[Minority health: 9 questions BIPOC patients should ask a doctor](#), Single Care, 2020

[Black/African American Health](#), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2023

[Racism and Health](#), CDC, 2023

[5 Ways to Advocate for Yourself at the Doctor's Office](#), Black Doctor, Inc., 2024

[How Black women can advocate for their health](#), The Washington Post, 2022

[Mayo Clinic expert discusses ways to reduce healthcare disparities in Black and minority communities](#), Mayo Clinic, 2023

## Non-Discrimination Notice

Community First Health Plans, Inc. (Community First) complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Community First does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Community First provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with our organization, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, and other written formats)

Community First also provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, please contact Community First Member Services at the number on the back of your Member ID card or 1-800-434-2347. If you're deaf or hard of hearing, please call 711.

If you feel that Community First failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation, you can file a complaint with Community First Executive Director of Compliance & Risk Management by phone, fax, or email at:

**Kethra Barnes**  
**Executive Director of Compliance & Risk Management**  
Phone: 210-510-2607 | TTY: 711  
Fax: 210-358-6014  
Email: [DL\\_CFHP\\_Regulatory@cfhp.com](mailto:DL_CFHP_Regulatory@cfhp.com)

If you need help filing a complaint, Community First is available to help you. If you wish to file a complaint regarding claims, eligibility, or authorization, please contact Community First Member Services at 1-800-434-2347.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at: <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>.

You may also file a complaint by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Phone: 1-800-368-1019 | TTY: 1-800-537-7697

Complaint forms are available at:  
<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/filing-a-complaint/complaint-process/index.html>

## Aviso sobre no discriminación

Community First Health Plans, Inc. (Community First) cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad, sexo, identidad de género, u orientación sexual. Community First no excluye o trata de manera diferente a las personas debido a su raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad, sexo, identidad de género, u orientación sexual.

Community First proporciona asistencia y servicios gratuitos a personas con discapacidades para comunicarse efectivamente con nuestra organización, como:

- Intérpretes calificados de lenguaje de señas
- Información escrita en otros formatos (letra grande, audio, formatos electrónicos accesibles, y otros)

Community First también ofrece servicios gratuitos lingüísticos a personas cuyo idioma principal no es el inglés, como:

- Intérpretes calificados
- Información escrita en otros idiomas

Si usted necesita recibir estos servicios, comuníquese al Departamento de Servicios para Miembros de Community First al 1-800-434-2347. TTY (para personas con problemas auditivos) al 711.

Si usted cree que Community First no proporcionó servicios lingüísticos gratuitos o se siente que fue discriminado/a de otra manera por motivos de su raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad, sexo, identidad de género, u orientación sexual, usted puede comunicarse con la directora de calidad y cumplimiento por teléfono, fax, o correo electrónico a:

**Kethra Barnes**  
**Director ejecutivo de cumplimiento y gestión de riesgos**  
Teléfono: 210-510-2607 | Línea de TTY gratuita: 711  
Fax: 210-358-6014  
Correo electrónico: [DL\\_CFHP\\_Regulatory@cfhp.com](mailto:DL_CFHP_Regulatory@cfhp.com)

Si usted necesita ayuda para presentar una queja, Community First está disponible para ayudarlo. Si usted desea presentar una queja sobre reclamos, elegibilidad o autorización, comuníquese con Servicios para Miembros de Community First llamando al 1-800-434-2347.

Usted también puede presentar una queja de derechos civiles ante el departamento de salud y servicios humanos de los Estados Unidos de manera electrónica a través del portal de quejas de derechos civiles, disponible en: <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>.

También puede presentar una queja por correo o por teléfono al:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 509F, HHH Building  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Teléfono: 1-800-368-1019 | Línea de TTY gratuita: 1-800-537-7697

Los formularios de queja están disponibles en:  
<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/filing-a-complaint/complaint-process/index.html>.

## Language Assistance

ENGLISH: ATTENTION: Free language assistance services are available to you. Call 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

SPANISH: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, usted tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

VIATNAMESE: CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

CHINESE: : 注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務. 請致電 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

KOREAN: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711)번으로 전화해 주십시오.

ARABIC: اس م لا قدع وغ ل لا ة ى وت ت ف ك ل . ن اجم ل اب ل ص تا ر ب م ق 1-800-434-2347 م ق ر تاه مص لا لا او: 711 : قظوح ل م اذ تن ك ثدحت ت ر كذا،ة غ ل لا ن ف تامدخ

URDU: و ب ے ل، ى ھ و ت پآ و ک نا بز ى ک ددم ى ک تامدخ تف م ى م باى ت س د ى ھ ل لا ک 1-800-434-2347 رب خ : راد ر گا پآ را ود

TAGALOG: PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

FRENCH: ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-800-434-2347 (ATS: 711).

HINDI: ध्यान द: यद आप हदी बोलते ह तो आपके लिए मुफ्त म भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध ह। 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711) पर कॉल कर।

PERSIAN: ناگىار تروصب ى نابز تالى هست ،دىنک ىم وگتفنگ ى سرا ف نابز هب رگا : هجوت اب . دش اب ىم هه ارف 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711) دىرى گب سامت امش ىارب

GERMAN: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).

GUJARATI: ધ્યાન દે: યદ આપ હદી બોલતે હૈ તો આપકે લિંૅ મુફ્ત મેં ભાષા સહાયતા સેવાૅં ઉપલબ્ધ હૈ। 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711) પર કૉલ કરૈ।

RUSSIAN: ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-800-434-2347 (телетайп: 711).

JAPANESE: 注意事項: 日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711)まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

LAOTIAN: ໂປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າ ທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາ ລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສັຽຄ່າ, ແມ່ນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທ 1-800-434-2347 (TTY: 711).



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