



## PHP / IOP GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

Our program is specifically designed to provide extensive mental health therapeutic support and education to youth between the ages 9 to 17 with emotional and behavioral problems and their families. Our programs are currently located in Central California's, Kern and Tulare Counties.

We, the staff of the Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP) and Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), place a strong emphasis in treating the youth and their families in a safe environment where a team of qualified professionals provide education and therapeutic treatments with the goals of restoring a sense of hope, bringing balance to the family unit and providing a tailored treatment plan based on the individual's specific needs.

This level of assistance is appropriate for someone who needs support to manage a crisis, prevent the need for hospitalization, or transition from an inpatient setting (or whom traditional outpatient counseling has been ineffective?). Our program offers a variety of support services to help youth and their families receive "intermediate" care when needs are too complex to be effectively managed in an office outpatient setting.

We expect you and your child to take an active part in their treatment and to make use of the therapeutic, supportive, and educational services the program provides. Your child will be responsible for knowing the goals for their treatment plan, following treatment recommendations, taking prescribed medication, and interacting constructively with staff and other patients. We, the staff will support strengths and capacity for health and growth. Together we will work to increase your child's sense of innate health and eventual independent functioning at home, school, and the community.

### SOME OF THE REASONS TO CONSIDER ADMISSION

---

Aggressive behavior  
Anxiety  
Depression  
Drug/Alcohol Use  
Identity problems  
Runaway episodes  
Self-mutilation  
Severe family conflict  
Social isolation

Anger/Rage Episodes  
Defiant behavior  
Domestic Violence  
Grief, loss, or abandonment  
Legal problems  
School problems/truancy  
Self-esteem issue  
Sexual abuse/assault  
Suicide threats/attempts



## PHP / IOP RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICYS

---

The time your child spends in PHP/IOP is an opportunity to focus on their needs to improve their lives. **It is important that you encourage your child to attend to their needs not the needs of others in the group.** Group is a very unique experience and it is often that children relate to the stories of others which is a good thing. The natural desire to *care* for others is very different than *caretaking* of others. To care is to believe the best in others ability while being the best you, you can be. The influences of others is no different in group than it is any other place. Our staff can redirect inappropriate behavior that is discussed and provide feedback. Due to the small size of the group your child will learn faster than in a large school setting where feedback is not often provided until it is too late. Think of PHP/IOP as a micro version of the culture your child is submerged in all day. On this small scale, interventions are easier to recognize, behavioral change is taught more effectively and your child will experience positive support with peers they have grown to trust.

Some of these rules are rules your child can adopt for other areas of life and some are already required at school. We have found that replicating rules already found in other settings and having rules read before each group allows for little question of what is expected.

Rules are reviewed at the start of each group.

- **NO electronic devices.** Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, or cameras are not permitted on the grounds of PHP/IOP due to confidentiality and privacy laws. These devices will be collected and held by staff if found. Please do not allow your child to bring these to group. These devices can become very distracting if not addicting. We want to encourage live human interaction, not an electronic simulation.
- **Maintaining appropriate conduct.**
  - **Appropriate encouraging language.** Cursing, yelling, or discriminatory remarks will not be permitted. How you present your thoughts is very important.
  - **Be courteous and respectful.** “Please” and “Thank You” will go a long way toward impacting others. Be understanding of where others might be coming from. This understanding does not mean they are right and you are wrong. Everyone has different thoughts, therefore we will all have different views. Understanding this is very respectful.
  - **Personal space.** There will be no unwanted/inappropriate touching. Violence of any kind will be grounds for dismissal.



- **Dress Code.** The following items are not permissible to wear to group: Bandanas, pajamas, sagging pants, short shorts, short skirts, bare midriffs, low-cut tops, see-through tops, halter tops, tube tops, backless tops, single-shoulder tops, chains of any type, spiked jewelry/accessories **or any item that is disruptive/dangerous to the learning environment is prohibited.** Clothing and accessories (including backpacks) that depict sex, drugs, guns, knives, gangs, violence, tobacco, alcohol **or any item that is disruptive/dangerous to the learning environment is prohibited.** If the child does not have alternate clothing available, PHP/IOP will provide a clean alternative if available. If not, a parent/guardian will have to make arrangements to bring proper clothes or take their child home.
- **Participation.** Participation is one instructional strategy used in group — easy to use, straightforward, expected, and often quite successful at accomplishing a number of learning goals. Participation adds interest, engages participants, provides leaders feedback, helps control what is happening in group, can help balance who is contributing and how much, encourages dialogue of group members and provides insights from different vantage points. Please encourage your child to participate and remain attentive while in group.
- **Listen.** Be respectful of others who are sharing by listening to what is said. Ask for clarification before you start talking. Try to best hear from their point of view. Talking is very easy and common. Listening is a skill you will never be an expert at. Wait your turn to share.
- **Contraband, Alcohol, Weapons.**
  - **NO weapons** (knives, handguns, etc.) allowed on premises.
  - **NO smoking, drugs, or alcohol** (possession of or use of un-prescribed or illegal drugs, or consumption of alcohol will not be tolerated and may lead to grounds for discharge).
- **Maintain confidentiality within the group.**

Group is a community of individuals who have come together to share in a safe encouraging environment. The environment that is created is because of the good feelings everyone has knowing that what is shared, will not go beyond the group.

  - **Do not discuss personal things with people outside the group.**
  - **Do not talk about other people who are in the group with you.**



## Frequently Asked Questions

---

### ***How do I know my child needs to be in PHP/IOP?***

Your child may need PHP/IOP if any of these apply: 1). There is a persistent symptom or symptoms that are interfering with their ability to function in their daily life 2). To reduce frequency of inpatient psychiatric hospitalization 3). If the level of need is greater than what weekly counseling can help with 4). If weekly counseling has failed to assist in relief of distressing symptoms.

### ***How do I schedule an assessment for my teen?***

To schedule an assessment, call PMC appointment desk at (661) 834-7564 or (855) 454-7628. You will meet with a PHP/IOP counselor who will determine if your child is appropriate for either PHP or IOP and then will contact your insurance for approval from an insurance case manager. **PMC does not ultimately determine if your child will be allowed into the program if you are going to use your insurance. We must abide by the insurance ruling if you wish to use them. Your call to your insurance is your right...you pay their bill and if we work as a team we might be able to influence them of the great need your child has. If you do not want to use your insurance we can make payment arrangements.**

### ***How is PHP/IOP paid for?***

PHP/IOP is covered by most commercial insurance plans. Deductibles and copays may apply and are payable at time of service. If a person does not have insurance, scholarship money is available. Scholarships are given only if the child expresses in writing; a desire to attend, what they hope to achieve and how they will continue to be a “community youth ambassador” of what they have learned. All requests for scholarship will be reviewed and amount of scholarship will be determined by the executive staff of PMC.

### ***How long will my child stay in the PHP/IOP?***

PHP and IOP length of stay is based on the need that each child may have. Insurance companies monitor length of stay through case management with PMC staff. **We do not have the ability to request continued stay if parents do not provide feedback of continued need.** Insurance companies can deny admission due to their clinical requirements but parents are always given the right to appeal to their insurance. Insurance companies do not necessarily give advance notice of discharge. We will do all we can to communicate with them and your help is always appreciated. It is our desire that every child stay as long as progress is being made and there is sustained relief in order to transition out.

### ***Why is a group setting beneficial?***

Group has proven to be a powerful way for a child to make positive improvements in a relatively short period of time. Many children have reservations about attending a group session, but once they have experienced the supportive atmosphere of our PHP/IOP, they feel comfortable and confident about their choice to attend. Learning from peers who have been in the program and



who have seen the benefit of a change of mind is usually more effective than learning from adults who children do not believe understand what it is like to be them. This is positive peer encouragement.

***How are parents involved?***

Parents are an integral important part of the process. With guidance and support, families can and do heal together. Parents attend a parent support group once a week. We have seen that lasting change occurs in children who have parental involvement. If we can teach you as a parent how we are working with your child, then the growing can continue at home as new habits of interacting are learned by everyone in the family.

***But... my child doesn't want to go!***

The saying "old habits die hard" is true. Your child has learned habits of interacting that are not getting them the best possible outcome. Even though they are not the best, to your child they are habits they may not even see as problems. It is rare for a child to voice a desire for PHP/IOP treatment. It is typical for them to be resistant to the idea. Understandably, they do not want to give up their after-school activities, even if only for a month. Other times, they say they do not have a problem. Rest assured that children still benefit from this program even when they are angry or reluctant at first about starting. We find that when parents take a clear, unyielding stance that the program is required, children usually comply. It is that your child will do what you believe is best for their mental health and the health and happiness of your family, in the long run. Unfortunately, when important issues are not addressed, they tend to grow into even more serious problems in the future. Seeking care through our program can turn a difficult situation around in the right direction and you will see old habits do change to healthy habits for life.

***What about aftercare?***

PMC is invested in a continuum of long term care solutions. After your child graduates from PHP/IOP we have community support groups as well as counselors who provide one on one or family counseling for those who wish for more intensive work.

We at PMC are very actively involved in the community and want to see children and families heal. We will work with your child's school, primary care physician or others who may be able to assist in their well-being. We approach helping as a treatment team utilizing all resources to ensure lasting healthy families. Thank you very much for the opportunity to work with your family.