

Mental Health Need Definition

Answer “Yes” for Mental Health Need if any of the following are currently present (within 3 months):

- Youth has a mental illness diagnosis according to the most recent diagnostic and statistical manual (DSM-5 or DSM-IV-TR)
 - **Excluding (if it is the youth’s only diagnosis):** Substance-related disorders, Autism-spectrum, Intellectual Disability (IDD), or Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- Youth exhibits serious emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders and who either:
 - Has a serious functional impairment;
 - Is at risk of disruption of a preferred living or child care environment due to psychiatric symptoms; or
 - Is enrolled in a school system’s special education program because of serious emotional disturbance
- Youth has current (within 3 months) suicide attempt or suicidal ideations
- Youth scores Caution or Warning on a subsequent MAYSI-II or other screener
- Youth receives mental health flag on the full PACT assessment Mental Health Domain
- Youth is currently receiving mental health treatment including psychological or behavioral health counseling or crisis intervention services
- Youth is currently taking medication related to a mental health condition
- Youth was exposed to a trauma and is currently experiencing mental health symptoms
 - **Trauma includes but is not limited to:** exposure to war, threatened or actual physical or sexual assault/violence, being kidnapped, terrorist attack, torture, and incarceration as a prisoner of war
 - For children, sexually violent events may include developmentally inappropriate sexual experiences without physical violence or injury
 - **Exposure includes** directly experiencing the traumatic event, witnessing the traumatic event in person, learning that the traumatic event occurred to a close family member or friend, or experiencing first-hand repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event (**not including through media, pictures, television, or movies**)
 - **Mental health symptoms include** re-experiencing the trauma through dreams, flashbacks, etc.; avoidance; negative cognitions and mood such as diminished interest in activities; and arousal such as aggressive, reckless, or self-destructive behavior, sleep disturbances, or hypervigilance
- Youth has a history of mental health needs but is not currently experiencing symptoms nor in need of treatment

A youth’s mental health need will change over time and will require regular updates.