



## ARMOR FOR TEENS PROGRAM

### FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

*The ARMOR program is an opportunity for your teen to learn the skills he or she needs to be more successful in daily life. At times life can become overwhelming; however, with the right tools and support, your teen can overcome and even thrive despite the challenges of life. ARMOR is geared toward teens ages 14-17 whose mental health challenges need more intensive treatment.*

#### **What can I expect for my child in the ARMOR for teens program?**

Through group sessions teens will learn:

- Skills to manage distressing thoughts and situations
- Techniques to be more effective in how they communicate their needs
- Improved ability to maintain healthy relationships and use those relationships for support
- Increased confidence in themselves and in their ability to overcome challenges
- Basic information about the mental health diagnosis they are struggling with
- A more complete healing experience, allowing them to combine the skills learned with faith, if desired

Family sessions will:

- Provide education for parents about the mental health diagnosis their teen is struggling with
- Improve communication between the teen and parents
- Allow for parents and teens to increase their understanding of each other
- Assist parents in identifying ways to help their teen
- Teach parents and teens how to handle conflict in healthy ways

#### **Questions you may have**

- ***How much does it cost?***

Most health plans cover Intensive Outpatient Programs. However, you may have to meet a deductible or pay copays based on your individual plan. Our staff will work with you to help you understand the costs and your insurance benefits.

*more information on back*



- ***How long does the program last?***  
Teens will typically attend three hours per day, four days per week. In addition to the group sessions, the group facilitator may recommend family sessions. This will be determined based on the needs of the individual family system. Each teen's treatment plan will be different, but the average length of time in the ARMOR program is four weeks.
- ***Three hours per day is a long time. What will they do?***  
The schedule is subject to change and will vary by location. However, each day will consist of time to set goals and review progress on goals from the day before. Additional time will be spent processing the previous day's homework. Group discussions and activities will teach new skills and ways of thinking. Staff will also provide education about mental health diagnoses and other topics that may be affecting your teen. Teens may also step out of group to meet with the psychiatrist. A more complete schedule of treatment is in the packet.
- ***Who will be working with my child?***  
Your teen will work with professionals with training in a variety of therapeutic approaches, including Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), and solutions-focused therapy. Your teen may also work with the psychiatrist, who can prescribe any medications that may benefit your teen.
- ***But what about school?***  
We recognize that missing a few hours of school is not ideal. However, we also know that if your teen is struggling emotionally, he or she is likely not reaching his or her full potential at school at this time. The tools that your teen learns in the ARMOR program can help him or her return to school and be a more effective student. Most schools are understanding of a teen's need for this level of care and will work with the student to accommodate the missed time in class. Talk to your teen's school counselor about how this would be done at your teen's school. Our counselors have experience assisting clients with this process, and with your consent, we are happy to advocate for your teen with the school staff as well.
- ***My child has been seeing an outpatient therapist, so why would we participate in this program instead?***  
This program is designed for those for whom sessions with an outpatient therapist once or twice per week are not enough. This may be due to your teen transitioning down from a higher level of care such as an inpatient admission. For others, outpatient counseling has been helpful, but they are having trouble utilizing the skills learned in counseling in their daily lives. We recognize that this program is a significant investment of time for you and your teen, but feel strongly that it is just that—an investment. Participating in this program will teach your teen skills that will make him or her more able to be successful in all areas of life.
- ***My teen already has an outpatient therapist. Will he or she continue to see that therapist while in the program?***  
This will be determined through the treatment plan you and your group facilitator agree on together. Your teen will likely stop seeing that therapist for the time he or she is in the ARMOR program, but can return to the therapist after completing the program. With your consent, our treatment team will work with your teen's outpatient provider to make the transition to our program and back to the provider as smooth as possible.
- ***I've never done group therapy. What are the benefits of it?***  
Group therapy can seem intimidating but is very beneficial for many people. Participating in a group allows people to see that others share similar struggles. It also gives group members the opportunity to practice their new skills in a safe social setting and learn from each other. This can give group members confidence and ability to generalize these skills into other aspects of their lives.