

**Question: My husband lost his job along with the family's health insurance. Our 8-year-old son's behavioral problems are out of control. Is there some help available for our family?**

Many families in our community have been affected by layoffs and the consequences that come along with finding one's self out of work. Loss of health insurance usually is one of the first benefits to go due to families re-thinking every expense in their household budget.

We all know a child's behavior can be disruptive and difficult at times. But for some children, serious behavior problems develop into a pattern that can include acting impulsively, reacting with aggression, refusing to follow reasonable directions and defying adult authority. Children who behave in this way may disrupt family relationships and usually have trouble with making and keeping friends. These patterns of behavior can interfere with the child's academic development often leading to social isolation and the child not feeling connected at school. Children also are more likely to experience low self esteem and, for some children, signs of depression.

The good news is, there is assistance for your child and family. For children who meet eligibility requirements, there is the SED (Serious Emotional Disturbance) Waiver. The SED Waiver is a federal Medicaid waiver program for children 4-18 years of age who experience serious emotional/behavioral disturbance which places them at risk. Local Community Mental Health Centers such as COMCARE of Sedgwick County assess for eligibility into this program and provide the more intensive services. Eligibility for the program is based on the child's financial resources and certain assessments to determine clinical need for services. COMCARE enlists a broad range of natural supports and professional services to help the youth reach their treatment goals. In this program, the parents and child are actively involved in planning for these services. If you believe your child would benefit from the services provided by the SED Waiver, please call COMCARE of Sedgwick County at 660-7540. Help is available.



Jody Patterson LCP is the Director of COMCARE's Children's Services. Jody has been involved with children's mental health programs and services for over 17 years. She is dedicated to helping children live healthy and productive lives in the community. In addition, Jody is involved in a number of local and state workgroups focused on improving the quality of life for children experiencing mental health disorders and their families.