

## **Screening, Assessment, and Support Services (SASS) for Children and Adolescents**

### **What is SASS?**

Screening, Assessment and Support Services (SASS), is a crisis mental health service program for children and adolescents who are experiencing a psychiatric emergency. SASS agencies provide intensive mental health services for eligible children and youth who may need hospitalization, or community based mental health care. SASS services are available by calling the CARES line.

### **Who Can Receive SASS Services?**

Any child or youth in a mental health crisis who may need public funding through the Illinois All Kids Program or Medicaid may receive SASS services. A parent/guardian may check to see if their child can receive SASS services, by calling the:

**CARES Crisis Line: 1-800-345-9049 (Voice), 1-773-523-4504 (TTY).**

### **What is CARES and When Should CARES be called?**

CARES stands for Crisis and Referral Entry Services. CARES is a telephone response service that handles mental health crisis calls for children and youth in Illinois.

You should call CARES when a child is at risk to himself or others and any time you or others think a child is having a mental health crisis. If a child is not experiencing a mental health crisis, contact your local community mental health services provider on the IDHS website at: [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?module=12)

### **What is the Purpose of CARES?**

The purpose of CARES is to ask questions of the child's parents, caregivers, or other callers about the child's behavior. CARES will then either send the local area SASS agency to see the child and guardian, or refer the child and guardian to community mental health or other services.

**If the child is eligible for SASS services:**

- SASS will work with the guardian and child for at least 90 days.
- If the child is hospitalized, SASS will join the hospital team to care for the child.
- SASS will help the hospital team plan for the child's return home and will provide services when the child is home.
- If the child is not hospitalized, SASS will provide mental health services and supports to help the child stay at home.

**How will Families be involved in their Child's Care?**

Families/parents/guardians play a major role in making a plan for the child's treatment. SASS will work closely with families to learn about the child's problems and strengths.

**Other Links**

[www.allkidscovered.com](http://www.allkidscovered.com)

[www.HFS.illinois.gov](http://www.HFS.illinois.gov)