

## Finding A Mental Health Professional

It is important to ask questions when trying to find a therapist for yourself or your child. The relationship between client and counselor is critical, so finding someone who is compatible and effective is important

### When is it helpful to see a psychologist (therapist)?

At times in life, each of us may feel overwhelmed and need help dealing with problems. When those problems are beyond what you have been able to work through on your own, or with the help of family and friends, it can be a good idea to speak with a professional therapist.

Common reasons children or adults speak with psychologists include: grief and loss; dealing with stress or anxiety; daily living or tasks become overwhelming; depression; burnout; periods of transition; prolonged feelings of hopelessness, sadness, despair; thoughts of suicide or harming oneself, overcome traumas; treatment of phobias;

### Questions to ask when interviewing a psychologist

- Are you a licensed psychologist? How many years have you been practicing psychology?
- I have been feeling (anxious, tense, depressed, etc.) and I'm having problems (with school, my family, eating, sleeping, etc.). What experience do you have helping people with these types of problems?
- What are your areas of expertise — for example, working with children and families?
- What kinds of treatments do you use, and have they been proven effective for dealing with my kind of problem or issue?
- If I need medication, can you prescribe or refer me to someone who does?
- What are your fees? (Fees are usually based on a 45-minute to 50-minute session.) Do you have a sliding-scale fee policy?
- What types of insurance do you accept? Will you accept direct billing to or payment from my insurance company?
- Do you include family members in your sessions?
- How can I be in touch with you between sessions if I have questions?
- What times are available? (evenings? weekends?)
- How many sessions do you think we will need?

### Questions to ask yourself after the first session:

- Did you feel heard by the therapist?
- Did you feel like the therapist respected you?
- Was the therapist condescending?
- Did the therapist seem like a real person or were they playing a role?
- Was the therapist passive or active in the session? What do you like better?
- Does it seem like the therapist will be open to hearing about all your feelings, including frustrated feelings relating to them?
- Did the therapist have a positive outlook on life?
- Did you feel better or worse after the session?
- Did you feel comfortable with the therapist?
- Does this seem like a safe place to express your thoughts, concerns and feelings?

### Resources:

- American Psychological Association <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/choose-therapist.aspx>
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America <https://www.adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/treatment/questions-choosing-your-therapist>
- The British Psychological Society <http://www.bps.org.uk/psychology-public/how-can-psychology-help-you/how-can-psychology-help-you>
- PsychCentral <http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2012/08/14/key-questions-to-ask-when-choosing-a-therapist/>

## Resources in Singapore

The following list of agencies/individuals are provided as an informational resource to the ISS community. ISS does not endorse or recommend any of these agencies/individuals and will not be reliable or responsible for any services provided by them. ISS strongly recommends you do independent research, interviews and background checks on all service providers.

**Asher-Solomon Center for Development** - Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) and comprehensive assessments.

Web: [ashersolomon.sg](http://ashersolomon.sg) Phone: +65 6838 0584

Email: [therapy@ascd.sg](mailto:therapy@ascd.sg)

### Other Resources:

SOS (Samaritans of Singapore) is the only suicide prevention centre in Singapore. It is a secular non-profit organisation which provides 24-hour confidential emotional support to people who have difficulty coping during a crisis, who are thinking of suicide or affected by suicide. 1800-221 4444 or [pat@sos.org.sg](mailto:pat@sos.org.sg)