



# Arizona Pediatric Psychiatry Access Line

SUPPORTING ARIZONA'S FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CARING FOR CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PATIENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONCERNS

## CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH NEED

### NATIONWIDE

**#2** Suicide is the second leading cause of death in individuals 10-24 years old.<sup>2</sup>

**20%** of youth live with a mental health condition, and only 10% of 3-17 year-olds receive any treatment or counseling from a mental health professional.<sup>3</sup>

**40%** of high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for more than two weeks severe enough to inhibit usual activities.<sup>4</sup>

### IN ARIZONA

**24%** of high school students seriously considered attempting suicide, higher than 20.4% nationally.<sup>4</sup>

**91%** of communities do not have enough mental health providers according to federal guidelines.<sup>2</sup>

**55%** of adolescents who needed mental health care reported difficulties getting the care they needed.<sup>5</sup>

## AN INCREASE IN PEDIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS

has become a major public health issue, complicated further with an ongoing national shortage of professionals trained to meet the needs of this unique population.

The negative consequences of untreated mental health disorders in youth are well known, and include higher rates of juvenile incarcerations, school dropout, substance use, and family trauma. In addition, these youth are more likely to experience poverty, social isolation, and poorer health outcomes later in life. Early intervention and treatment can improve these outcomes and has been demonstrated to be closely tied to future success in life.

# #49

Arizona ranks 49 in Youth Mental Health.<sup>1</sup>

## MEETING THE NEED

In response to this urgent need, the Arizona Pediatric Psychiatry Access Line (APAL) was established to serve as a valuable resource for healthcare providers across the state, including Arizona's extensive rural communities.

## NO-COST TELEPHONE CONSULTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

With a dedicated phone line, APAL provides timely access to child and adolescent psychiatrists and licensed behavioral health professionals to provide free case consultations on any pediatric mental health issue. We partner with District Medical Group to provide timely consultations.

## PROVIDER EDUCATION

APAL develops and disseminates comprehensive education, training, and resources on relevant mental health topics to aid and empower healthcare providers caring for this vulnerable population. We are supported in our education mission by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Arizona Chapter.

## RESOURCES

APAL provides clinical toolkits for providers (such as clinical screeners and guidance of care) as well as county, state, and national resources for child and adolescent patients.

## BRIDGING THE GAP

By bridging the gap between primary care and specialized mental health services, APAL is mitigating the profound impact of untreated

mental health issues on Arizona's youth to help foster self-esteem, identity, resilience, and well-being in the face of significant societal challenges.



#### Sources:

1. Mental Health America: Ranking the States; 2022
2. ASFP.org/statistics
3. AACAP Fact Sheet: Improving Access to Mental Health: Reducing Mental Health Stigma; Sep 2019.
4. CDC 1991-2023 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data.
5. ADBHS Adolescent Mental Health Report: Trends in Mental Health, Oct 2024.

The photos used (other than photos of our directors and testimonial author) are stock images intended for illustrative purposes only. Individuals depicted in the photos are models.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE TUCSON

Arizona Pediatric  
Psychiatry Access Line  
[apal.arizona.edu/pediatric](http://apal.arizona.edu/pediatric)

Call APAL: 888-290-1336

Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



# The APAL IMPACT

05/2024 - 01/2025

## SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN MAY 2024, APAL HAS:

- **Assisted over 100 providers statewide** through telephonic consultation.
- **Reached over 50% of Arizona's counties**, including rural areas that have no psychiatrists.
- **Provided Timely Care** Complete consultation calls average under 16 minutes.
- **Over 39% of providers** who use APAL are repeat callers.

## YOUR SUPPORT:

As the only resource of its kind in the state of Arizona, APAL is extremely proud of our accomplishments. However, the need continues with many Arizona children still suffering from the impact of untreated mental health due to continued elevated rates of prevalence, stigma, and lack of access to care.

**With your support we can continue to sustain and expand these essential services and strive to meet the needs of all children, adolescents and their families who continue to struggle with the consequences of untreated mental health disorders.**

## OUR DIRECTORS



### SAIRA KALIA, MD

APAL's Director Dr. Saira Kalia is a clinician, educator, and advocate. She has made significant contributions to the women's reproductive health field and is known for her commitment to patient-centered care and dedication to education. She has a wealth of administrative experience having served as an outpatient medical director. She is a distinguished educator and has won multiple teaching awards. She has launched both the Arizona Perinatal Psychiatry Access Line and the Arizona Pediatric Psychiatry Access Line. Her recognition as a COM-T Women in Medicine Torchbearer underscores her trailblazing contributions to mental health, education, and gender equity.

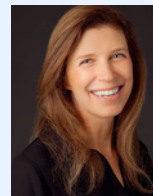


### JACQUE ESQUE, MD

APAL's Co-director Dr. Jacquelin Esque is an experienced child and adolescent (CAP) psychiatrist at the Banner - University Medicine Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine Clinic. Dr. Esque is passionate about increasing access to quality mental healthcare for children and teens. In her clinical practice, Dr. Esque has seen the value of working closely with pediatricians and other primary care providers in the community, to collaborate and help provide education, resources, and treatment ideas. Dr. Esque is thrilled to be a part of APAL to provide this resource for frontline care providers across the state.

*In the past, I have referred out to psychiatric providers knowing that it would be several months before patients would get seen and treated.*

As a general pediatrician in Northern Arizona, I have been feeling the strain of behavioral health appointments in my office. Over the last few years, I have decided to learn more and follow updated guidelines on treatment for ADHD, anxiety, and depression. However, each patient's story is slightly different – and this is still not my specialty – so having the ability to consult a psychiatrist in real time has been a game changer.



It brings me so much confidence and allows for much quicker treatment plans that my patients deserve. My patients have also been happy to know that a child psychiatrist has helped with the plan, and each family is lucky to be getting the best care in the office that they know and trust.

*I have pediatrician friends in other states who use similar programs and I am so happy that Arizona is now offering this to primary care providers. Keep up the amazing work!*

**- LAUREN HAYWARD, MD, FAAP**  
**Mountain View Pediatrics**  
**Flagstaff, AZ**



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