



*Connect. Improve. Achieve.*

# GUIDEBOOK

STUDENT AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
2021

8050 W. Rifleman St., Suite 100

Boise, ID 83704

[BPAHealth.com/SFAP](https://BPAHealth.com/SFAP)

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## Welcome

BPA Health would like to welcome you to the Student and Family Assistance Program (SFAP). BPA Health staff look forward to supporting you and your family in gaining access to this unique program that promotes your academic success and resiliency.

We believe a healthy home and family life can nurture academic excellence. To promote healthy homes, minds, and families, your school is proud to offer the Student and Family Assistance Program. Our staff are trained, dedicated, and understand the importance of providing positive professional support to students and families accessing SFAP.

It is our hope that you find our processes easy to navigate, and our staff willing and ready to assist you.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this journey.

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

The BPA Health Team

### Contact Us:

Address: 8050 W. Rifleman St., Suite100  
Boise, ID 83704

Website: [BPA Health.com/SFAP](http://BPAHealth.com/SFAP)

Email: [sfap@bpahealth.com](mailto:sfap@bpahealth.com)

Phone: 208-935-3816 Local  
1-833-935-3816 Toll Free

Fax: 208-344-7430

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-6:00 pm, Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm.

*Note: we will be closed on State and Federal Holidays*

## About the Student and Family Assistance Program (SFAP)

The Student and Family Assistance Program (SFAP) is a service funded by your school district that assists students and their families with personal problems and family issues that may impact student attendance, performance, health, mental and emotional well-being.

Based on your need, this program will:

- 
- Connect you (or your family) with a licensed, professional counselor who will consult with you
- Connect you (or your family) with community resources that can address your situation
- Assist with an insurance or community-based referral if your situation requires further treatment or additional resources.

All services are completely confidential. No information about you or your family situation will be shared with school personnel without your permission.

### Why SFAP?

Your mental health encompasses your social and emotional well-being. Taking care of your mental health is important for a variety of reasons. Students with good mental health often:

- Feel happier and more positive about themselves and enjoy life
- Bounce back from upsets and disappointments
- Have healthier relationships with family and friends
- Have better physical health
- Get involved in activities
- Have a sense of achievement
- Have better participation in the classroom
- Can get restful sleep
- Feel like they belong to their school/community

With the challenges facing today's students, it's critical that students have access to services that aid their mental health and well-being like the SFAP.

### When to Use the Program

Throughout a student's academic career, they may be faced with a variety of stresses, situations, and traumas that can impact their ability to be present and successful in their education. The SFAP is designed to provide short-term, problem-focused counseling to address these types of challenges. Generally speaking, if you find yourself or an immediate family member experiencing a problem or issue that interferes with your normal activities, is taking time and attention away from more important things, and persists for more than a couple of weeks, the SFAP can offer help!

More specifically, examples of short-term, problem-focused issues include (but are not limited to):

- Academic pressures
- Drug and alcohol issues
- Emotional (depression, anxiety, grief, etc.)
- Relationship (romantic, familial, friendship, etc.)

- Behavioral
- Stress
- Parenting
- Anger management
- Adjusting to change
- Other personal problems

Identifying mental health problems can be difficult for students, their parents and teachers. It's normal for children and teens to occasionally experience low mood, lack of motivation or trouble sleeping. Signs of struggles with mental health can include (but are not limited to) the following in school age children, adolescents and teens:

- Persistent sadness
- Decrease in school performance
- Ongoing worry and fear
- Changes in appetite including decreased appetite or being picky about food
- Struggles with fitting in at school or getting along with other students
- Sleep disturbances, including nightmares
- Trouble coping with everyday activities
- Sudden change in behavior, seemingly for no obvious reason
- Absenteeism
- Overly anxious about weight or physical appearance
- Avoiding friends

Many of these issues can be addressed with the help of a licensed counselor and resolved within the allotted SFAP sessions. For any students or family member(s) who have emotional or behavioral issues outside the scope of this program, referrals to community supports available through your individual health plan are available.

Issues that do not meet the intent of the SFAP include (but are not limited to):

- Diagnosing mental health disorders
- Treatment for mental health disorders such as Serious Emotional Disturbance or Serious & Persistent Mental Illness
- Special education programs
- Medication management
- Individualized Education Programs

If you have questions about what types of issues are appropriate for the SFAP or limitations of the program, please contact BPA Health at **1-833-935-3816** or [sfap@bpahealth.com](mailto:sfap@bpahealth.com).

## How it Works

Under SFAP, students and their families have access to five free counseling sessions, per student, per program year, per issue. These five free sessions can also be utilized by the student's family members, including siblings and stepsiblings under the age of 26 and parents or legal guardians.

For example, if a student's family were experiencing a stressful event such as the loss of a loved one, the student and their family would have access to five counseling sessions to split among them to address that specific problem or issue. For families with multiple children enrolled in a participating school district, the family has access to 5 sessions per child, per incident.

BPA Health maintains a robust network of licensed, specialized clinicians across the state of Idaho. The BPA Health team provides linkages to these approved providers to students and their families after a quick and confidential intake phone call. Participating counselors are available in the geographic area of the school or available via secure video counseling so BPA Health can ensure the needs of the student and/or family are met.

Clinically licensed mental health counselors in BPA Health's network use appropriate therapy methods, tailored to the individual. Clinicians will work to develop a plan to address the individual's issues or concerns, and referrals to higher levels of care will be provided for any issues that are outside the scope of the SFAP.

## How to Access Services

BPA Health makes accessing services through the SFAP simple and easy. A quick phone call to BPA Health to initiate services is the first step. It's important to be aware that students who are under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian's consent to access services before they can be authorized. The parent or legal guardian will contact BPA Health's team at **1-833-935-3816** to consent to services and the BPA Health team will take care of the rest including providing a referral to a counselor in the student's area or to a counselor available for secure, confidential video counseling.

Any minor-aged students contacting BPA Health to access services without a parent or legal guardian available to consent will be referred back to their school counselor so attempts to engage parents/legal guardians for consent to authorize services.

As well, family members of students wishing to access SFAP will contact BPA Health to request and initiate services. It's that easy!

Call our toll-free number at **1-833-935-3816** to get started.

## Choosing a Provider

When contacting BPA Health to request or set-up SFAP services with a parent or legal guardian present, you will be assisted in selecting a clinically licensed, specialized counselor of your choosing. Providers represent a variety of different specialties, and the BPA Health team can help you in selecting the right provider to meet your need.

BPA Health maintains a robust network of providers across the state of Idaho. You may access providers in your geographic area if you wish to access your counseling via face-to-face visits or you may choose virtual counseling with an approved provider. All virtual counseling is conducted via a secure video platform and can be accessed from your home with internet connection.

## Costs and Other Considerations

Your school district's participation in the SFAP ensures that students and their families will not be financially responsible for services or resources provided under this program. If it is determined that the student and/or family may need a higher level of care or services, all efforts will be made to provide appropriate referrals to providers in your individual health plan.

Licensed clinical providers in the BPA Health SFAP network will not bill students and/or their family members for any eligible sessions attended and will work directly with the provider to ensure

payment for services rendered is arranged. A pre-authorization from BPA Health is required before the first session and our team will take care of ensuring the provider has this information.

The member is responsible for any costs incurred that are outside the scope of the SFAP program. This includes but is not limited to:

- Additional sessions beyond the authorized five sessions not approved by BPA Health
- Medications or medication management
- Diagnostic services
- Services provided by clinicians not in the BPA Health provider network
- Therapies that exceed the cost of a typical SFAP/EAP session or not deemed to be an evidence-based best practice (EMDR, equine therapy, etc.)

## Additional Program Details

In addition to five free counseling sessions through a network of clinically licensed mental health professionals specialized in counseling, students and their families also have access to the following:

- 24/7 Crisis Line – This line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to students and their family members if they are in crisis and need to speak to a licensed professional immediately. Students or families in crisis can contact 1-833-935-3816 to access confidential crisis counseling at any time.
- Legal and financial consultation available
- Specialized website with access to health and wellness articles and webinars, legal forms, seminars, budget planning, financial calculators, and budget seminars, and other resources for families. Families can also access a multitude of other resources at their fingertips via this website.

## Confidentiality

The Student and Family Assistance Program is 100% confidential and complies with all state and federal confidentiality laws that govern the release of information about behavioral health. Our records consist only of the information you share with us as part of the screening process. In this regard, BPA Health staff and counselors participating in the SFAP will maintain the privacy of your records with the following exceptions:

- There are concerns about or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child or a dependent adult;
- There are allegations or concern about the safety of a child or dependent adult;
- There are allegations or concerns about self-harm or harm to a child or dependent adult;
- There are other health or safety concerns that lead BPA Health to believe that the child or family is at risk because of an inability to care for the child or to care for themselves.

In all instances where a BPA Health staff person has any of the concerns listed above they will discuss them with a supervisor and if warranted, make a report to the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and/or to law enforcement authorities.

All information shared with the School District as part of this program is de-identified and for the purpose of determining program usage and identifying member needs. BPA Health will never share personally identifiable information collected as part of the screening process without the member's express written permission.

## Satisfaction Surveys, Complaints, & Grievances

Students and families accessing services through SFAP are encouraged to complete an anonymous satisfaction survey to allow BPA Health the opportunity to improve the quality of services provided. Surveys will be sent out quarterly via email or USPS and results will be shared with the school district.

BPA Health believes that anyone has the right to lodge a complaint or express a concern about our programs and services. BPA Health will accept complaints from anyone via phone, fax, email, or, US mail. A student or their family member may designate a representative to submit a complaint on their behalf. BPA Health welcomes complaints and views them as valuable opportunities to learn, adapt, and improve the services we provide. BPA Health will not retaliate or take discriminatory action against any individual, facility, or organization in response to filing a complaint.

Anyone may submit a complaint via phone, fax, email, or US mail.

- Phone BPA Health at **1-833-935-3816**. Any staff member can receive a complaint.
- Mail written complaints to: BPA Health **8050 W. Rifleman St., Ste 100, Boise, ID 83704**
- Fax to **(208) 344-7430**
- Email to **sfap@bpahealth.com**
- Submit one via our website at:

## SFAP Highlights and Considerations

BPA Health makes every effort possible to ensure we have a robust, fully trained, specialized network of clinical providers statewide, Idaho is a federally designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for mental health providers. This means the entire state of Idaho does not have sufficient mental health providers to meet statewide need. BPA Health has dedicated resources to ensuring our provider network is sufficient but it's important to remember when scheduling sessions with your provider of choice that they may not be able to get you seen right away. It may take days or weeks for a provider to have an opening in their schedule to fit you in. If you are experiencing a crisis, the SFAP provides access to a 24/7/365 staffed, crisis line (**1-833-935-3816**) available to callers in crisis who may not be able to be seen immediately.

If you are struggling to get an appointment with a provider in a timely manner, the following are considerations that make scheduling easier:

1. **Consider Video Counseling.** Video counseling is also an ideal option for students and/or their family members. Video counseling promotes time efficiency by eliminating a commute to and from the appointment. Further, you have access to all network providers in Idaho who are available to you via video, but may not necessarily be in your geographic area. Additionally, it promotes another level of confidentiality since you can speak to a counselor from the privacy of your home or any other safe location.
2. **Make your appointment a priority.** The majority of behavioral health providers work a normal business week (Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM), trying to schedule appointments outside of normal business hours limits the number of providers available. Make arrangements with the school or your work where appropriate to be excused to attend services.
3. **Give BPA Health a Call.** If you are unable to be seen in a timely manner, it's important to contact BPA Health. We can assist you in finding another provider or potentially escalating



your need to ensure you are seen in a timeframe consistent with your level of urgency. BPA Health can be reached at **(833)935-3816**.

When calling for an authorization, be sure to have your parent or legal guardian present to provide consent for services when you call BPA Health. If you cannot obtain parent or legal guardian consent to access services, it's important to notify your school counselor to see what assistance may be available to you within your school.

**Are you eligible for Medicaid?** Families who have exhausted their 5 sessions, per incident, per student, and do NOT have health insurance, are encouraged to apply for Medicaid. Medicaid benefits provide coverage for certain behavioral health services including counseling. Your chosen therapist may even be a provider in the Medicaid network. To determine if you are eligible for Medicaid, please call **877-456-1233**, email [MyBenefits@dhw.idaho.gov](mailto:MyBenefits@dhw.idaho.gov) or visit the website at <https://idalink.idaho.gov/>.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **Will anyone at my school be informed of my participation in SFAP?**

No. All services are provided with 100% confidentiality. Your school will not be given any information about you personally or whether or not you have accessed services.

### **What if I don't need to see a counselor but someone in my household could benefit?**

The SFAP is designed to provide support to you the student and your family. Eligible household family members are able to access your 5 free counseling sessions if needed. Eligible household members are your parents or legal guardians and any siblings or step-siblings under the age of 26. Every enrolled student in your school district has access to the 5 free counseling sessions so if any of your siblings are enrolled in your school district, you get 5 sessions per enrolled student.

### **What if multiple members of my household need counseling for one shared issue?**

Members of the same family experiencing issues related to one issue such as death in the family or divorce, the 5 sessions, per student, can be divided between family members. For example, if there if parents are divorcing, they may split sessions between them and their child/student.

### **What does "per incident" mean?**

Per incident, in this context, means the general issue or incident that prompted the student and/or their family to seek assistance through the SFAP. For example, if a family experienced a death and wanted to access their SFAP benefits to address it, they would have up to 5 sessions to do so. These 5 sessions may be split between family members to address the issue.

If families have multiple children enrolled with the school district, they may have up to 5 sessions, per child, for each individual incident. Those sessions are then split between the family or shared in the event that someone other than the enrolled student is using the benefit.

### **What does "per program year" mean?**

For the purposes of this SFAP, the program year is defined as September 1 through August 31. This allows students to have access to the SFAP program and benefits throughout the summer months.

### **Do I or any of my eligible family members need a referral from my school to begin accessing services?**

No. You do not need a referral to contact BPA Health to get set-up with services. When you call, be sure you have your parent or legal guardian present to consent to services. This is a requirement and must be obtained before you can select a counselor and begin.

### **What if I still need help after my 5 free sessions?**

The SFAP is designed to provide short-term, problem focused care for students and their families. That means that the issues you meet with a counselor about should be able to be resolved in the allotted 5 sessions. If not, your counselor will work with you to identify options through your family's health plan (insurance), Medicaid, community resources, or out-of-pocket.

### **How do I get started with my counseling?**

Getting started is quick and easy. Start by calling BPA Health for a short-screening with your parent or legal guardian present. The BPA Health team will ask you a few questions and then help you select a counselor of your choice. You can request in-person counselor or video-counseling. Once a provider has been selected, BPA Health will send a pre-authorization and then you may begin counseling. It's important to remember that counselors are very busy, and it may be a few days or even weeks before they can get you in for your appointment. If you need immediate help, you can contact our 24/7/365 crisis line at **1-833-935-3816**. Also, consider video counseling. Counselors providing video services may be available in other parts of the state and may have more appointment availability.