

Mental Health Support

We are pleased to be able to support both the physical and mental health of our patients. In addition to our general pediatric providers, we have a robust mental health support team.

This document outlines our behavioral health evaluation process and explains the roles of each team member.



The evaluation process

Mental health issues are complicated and require multiple visits. Initially, our team takes a comprehensive history and decides what the validated screening questionnaires indicate. Often these are filled out by the patient, a parent/guardian, and sometimes the child's teachers so we can assess behavior across multiple settings.

A thorough evaluation is necessary before initiating medications, such as anti-depressants, anti-anxiety medications, and ADHD medications. We understand the concerning behaviors may have been going on for a while by the time of the appointment. However, we need to properly assess your child before making medication recommendations which requires time and information gathering.



Confidentiality

Mental health issues may involve divulging private and sensitive information to our providers. We must build a trusting relationship with your child/adolescent to help them effectively. Therefore, we must maintain the confidentiality of these visits. Furthermore, we may need to quickly act upon information disclosed if we are concerned for the safety of your child/adolescent. It may require a prompt evaluation by a psychiatrist or developmental pediatrician and sometimes a referral to an emergency room or law enforcement. Our primary purpose is the continued health and safety of our patients. We take this responsibility with the utmost seriousness it deserves.



Meet Our Mental Health Team

Tara Lefenfeld, MD

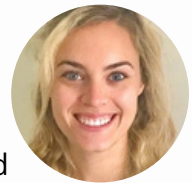
Dr. Lefenfeld completed her internship and residency at North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, NY. She received her medical degree from the Sackler School of Medicine in Tel Aviv, Israel. She received her undergraduate diploma from the University of Pennsylvania with a major in Biology. Dr. Lefenfeld is licensed in General Pediatrics and will be focusing on Pediatric and Adolescent Mental Health.



Madalyn Pinto, Social Worker

Madalyn is a licensed social worker. She works with families in our practice on a myriad of concerns, including family dynamics and behavior challenges; school-related issues, including peer interactions, bullying and social media; and life changes requiring adjustments like new siblings, divorce, and grief.

Her focus is to provide a sounding board for families, help children articulate their feelings, and learn coping strategies. She does not provide long-term therapy but will meet with you long enough to begin the diagnostic evaluation and provide behavioral techniques to alleviate symptoms. She will then refer your child to a longer-term therapist or one of our other practitioners if appropriate. She will help families decide what type of long-term intervention is needed. She also works alongside our other providers to round out some of the interventions they are providing. She does not prescribe medication.



Jessica Rough, Developmental Pediatrics Nurse Practitioner

Jessica splits her clinical time between Orangetown Pediatrics and the developmental pediatrics division of BCHP in Westchester.

Jessica works with children from the toddler years through age 12. She manages developmental issues like autism spectrum disorders, developmental delays that require school accommodations, and behavior issues affecting home and school functioning. She works with our school-age groups on ADHD, anxiety, and depression. Jessica can help your family with education plans and with medication when appropriate. Her evaluations are comprehensive, and it may take several visits and screening questionnaires before she makes a diagnosis and plan.



Erica Wengenosky, Adolescent Medicine Nurse Practitioner

Erica offers adolescent medicine and mental health visits to our patients 12 years of age and older. She also provides adolescent gynecology services. Her expertise spans child and adolescent mental health issues, including peer interaction conflicts, bullying, and social media-related difficulties. She also addresses ADHD, anxiety, and depression. She is not a psychiatrist but can prescribe medication. Erica's evaluations are also comprehensive, and it may require several visits and screening questionnaires before she makes a diagnosis and plan. In certain instances, Erica will refer patients to her psychiatrist colleagues for more specialized care if the situation requires it.

