# Types of Behavioral Health Professionals and Specialty Topics

Behavioral health professionals offer services focused on improving and treating mental health. These professionals have varying levels of education and have completed the required training for a license or credential within their field.

- Addiction and Prevention Counselor – Works with people to prevent or overcome an addiction to drugs or alcohol in individual or group settings. They may also assist families of people with addictions to better understand addiction and how to help their loved one.
- Counselor – Provides "talk therapy" as opposed to medication to help people with their concerns. In the behavioral health setting, counselors can be found providing therapy or case management services.
- Psychiatrist – A physician with additional specialized training in psychiatry. They can prescribe medications and engage patients in therapy.
- Psychologist – Studies the mind and behavior. Can perform evaluations and help in the treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders.
- School Psychologist – Works in the school setting to help individual students resolve learning and behavioral challenges that are affecting academic performance and to help teachers improve the learning process.
- Social Worker – In the behavioral health setting, social workers might provide talk therapy, case management, or connect people to resources.

Behavioral Health Counselors can take additional course work or trainings, and internship to strengthen their skills in a specific area of concern. Some specialized topics in certain topics including:

- Addiction Counseling
- Career Counseling
- Grief Counseling
- Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling
- School Counseling
- Trauma Informed Counseling

Over time, it has been found that different therapeutic approaches can be helpful to people who are struggling with certain issues. To see some examples of more common specialty therapies/types of therapeutic approaches, click here. For some individuals, the specific type of therapy may be a determining factor in choosing a specific therapist. For example, we know that Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy can be helpful for those who have experienced a traumatic event. Be sure to discuss specific types of therapies with your therapist. If finding a specific provider is important to you, research their specialties ahead of time and ask them about their training in providing a certain type of therapy.

Ultimately, finding the right counselor can take time. It is important that a therapeutic relationship is established, and if not, you may want to find another provider.

**Within the 211 Database, you can search for some specialty topics/providers:**

- helplinecenter.org/211database
  - Use the following keyword search terms:
    - CBT (Cognitive Behavioral therapy)
    - DBT (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy)
    - EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy)
    - Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

**Sources:**


- National Alliance on Mental Illness: https://www.nami.org
- Psychology Today: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us

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