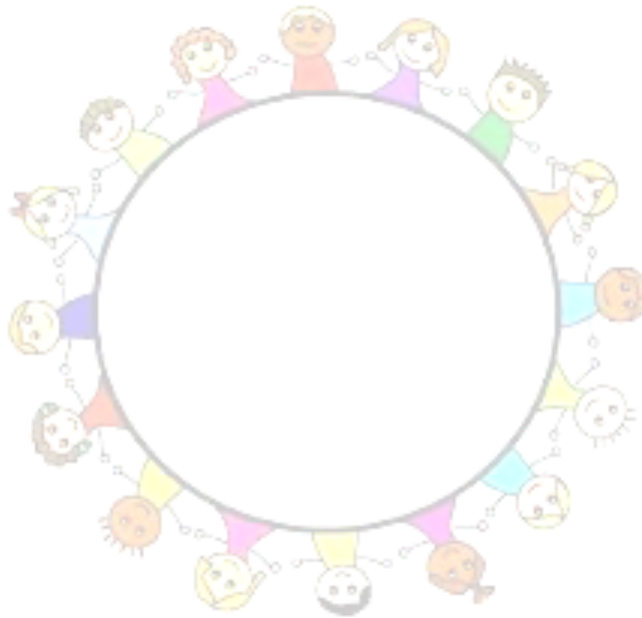




# FAMILY HANDBOOK



**MISSION:** *Astor’s mission is to provide behavioral and educational services in a caring environment where children and their families find strength, healing, hope and trust.*

**VISION:** *Astor’s vision is to see children meet life’s challenges, pursue their dreams, and reach their full potential.*



## ASTOR COUNSELING CENTERS

Astor Services for Children & Families' Bronx Outpatient Clinics are in the Williamsbridge section of the North Bronx and in the Highbridge area of the South Bronx. The Hudson Valley Community Based Programs Counseling Services are located in Dutchess and Ulster Counties, New York and are licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health, and accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. The Astor Counseling Services provides services to children and adolescents (ages 2-21), and their families through outpatient counseling services, psychiatric services, and family advocacy.

The Astor Bronx clinics are licensed under NYS Office of Mental Health and under contract with the New York City Department of Health and Mental health. The Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene and Ulster County Department of Mental Health contracts with the program to provide specialized treatment services to help children reach their highest potential in: family life, school, friendships, and recreation. We do this through an interdisciplinary staff that includes: child psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social workers, mental health counselors, and family advocates. These professionals are committed to using their expertise in the best interest of the children and families they serve.

There are four primary centers and three satellite offices located throughout Dutchess County and three centers in Ulster County in order to make services as accessible as possible to potential clients. The primary centers located in Dutchess County are Beacon, Dover, Poughkeepsie, and Hyde Park. Satellite clinics operate at Mt. Carmel, Probation and Rhinebeck, Premier Medical Group and Children's Medical Group. In addition, we have a school-based clinic in the Pine Plains School District. In Ulster County, the primary centers are located in Kingston and New Paltz and part time in Ellenville.

### Eligibility/Enrollment Requirements

To be eligible for Astor Counseling Services, the youth must:

- Bronx Resident
- Reside in Dutchess or Ulster County (**Hudson Valley Clients**)
- Be between the ages of 2yrs to 21yr. (**Bronx 4yr to 18yrs.**)
- Have a Mental Health concern that interferes with one's own life, the family's life or life within the community.

### TO WHAT TYPE OF PROBLEMS DO THE ASTOR COUNSELING CENTERS RESPOND?

Children and adolescents are referred to the counseling centers with a wide variety of emotional and behavioral problems. These might include: depression, anxiety, trauma, negative self-esteem, academic underachievement, sibling or parental conflict, truancy, hyperactivity, phobias, oppositional behaviors, aggression, and many others.



## **HOW TO OBTAIN AN INTAKE APPOINTMENT?**

Astor Services for Children & Families provides open access for all clients to obtain behavioral health services. Open Access is defined as immediate access to services upon presentation as a new client. A client will be able to access care by “Walking-in” the Counseling Center between the hours of **9:00am-5:00pm** and obtain the next available appointment.

## **WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT?**

On your first visit, there are several forms that need to be filled out and the front office personnel will review the policies and procedures of the Clinic with you. This will take approximately 30 minutes. Then the Therapist will meet with the client and family for approximately 45-90 minutes to understand more fully the presenting problem that the client is experiencing. By the end of this first meeting, the Therapist, in collaboration with the client and family, if under 18, will develop a Treatment Plan and Safety Plan to help deal with the concerns expressed in the initial session. This Treatment Plan will be reviewed with the client and family every 90 days. Initial intake appointments can be split into two 45 min sessions if necessary.

## **WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE COUNSELING CENTER?**

The Astor Counseling Center staff have expertise in a variety of treatment approaches designed to assist children and families. The following is a list of the various treatment approaches available within the counseling centers:

- Comprehensive Assessment
- Family, Individual, and Group Therapy
- Treatment Planning
- Walk-in Crisis Intervention Services
- Safety Planning
- Complex Care Management
- Family Advocacy
- Psychiatric Services and Medication Management
- Health Screening
- Psychological Testing
- Substance Abuse Screening
- Clinical Support Services
- Discharge Planning

During the initial assessment, the Clinician and family complete all required paperwork; engages with the client and family; obtains background information; and facilitates designated assessment scales. The clinician and family develop a treatment plan and safety plan based on the client’s and family’s needs. The clinician and the family/guardian will determine whether the client’s case will be opened during the initial session.



### **Clinical Services:**

The counseling centers use strength based and evidence-based practices to treat children and families. Research demonstrates that specific treatment approaches are effective in improving outcomes for individuals. These evidence-based practices are interventions rooted in reliable scientific inquiry and supported by a body of evidence. They have demonstrated effectiveness in improving outcomes in areas relating to wellness (Physical health, self esteem, symptom management, and behavior management) and community integration (home, school, and extra-curricular activities). Our goal is to help children and families heal pain that has led them into treatment, and help the youth lead a healthy, productive life.

**Family Therapy:** All children receive family therapy as the core treatment modality. Therapeutic change occurs in the context of relationships. Successful outcomes are largely influenced by the parent or guardian participation in the child's treatment. The family is essential for treatment and safety planning, and to help heal pain.

**Individual Therapy:** Individual therapy is utilized in conjunction with family therapy. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) are empirically supported approaches to help youth heal. CBT helps youth learn how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected. Development of core competencies helps them develop pro-social skills, coping skills, self regulation skills, moral reasoning skills, academic skills, workforce development skills, and independent living skills. Through multi-sensory activities youth learn to take responsibility for their behavior, and make more positive decisions.

### **Psychiatric Services and Medication Management:**

Each counseling center offers psychiatric services with a licensed Psychiatrist or a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner.

### **Health Screenings:**

Parents fill out a Health Questionnaire at the first Comprehensive Assessment Appointment. If a youth's case is opened, a psychiatrist reviews the Health Questionnaire and makes appropriate recommendations, such as follow-up medical appointments, a physical exam, or a nutritional assessment. This Health Questionnaire is also reviewed annually.



### **Parent and Child Responsibility in Treatment**

In providing services to our clients, Astor expects that each client and family will also take appropriate responsibility for their treatment so that the best possible outcome will be achieved. Especially, we believe that each parent/guardian and client has the responsibility to:

- ...inform us of changes in address or phone number as soon as possible
- ...keep us informed of a reliable source that can contact them in an emergency
- ...ask us questions when they do not understand something that their child has told them, so that we may clear up misunderstandings or take steps to correct a situation
- ...ask us for more information when they do not understand any communication they receive from us
- ...support us so that we can continue to maintain the safety of everyone here and respect everyone's rights
- ...contribute to the formation of goals in their treatment plan and to work on achieving those goals
- ...give us accurate information on behaviors and issues that arise outside of the program so that we can continue to provide meaningful treatment

### **What are the fees for the services you receive?**

Fees for services provided are billable to your insurance plan, including Medicaid. We will bill all services to your insurance plan, and if Astor is not a participating provider in your plan, we will submit your service claim, and you will receive a bill from Astor and your insurance carrier for any amount your insurance plan deems payable by you.

If a client is uninsured, we will direct you to our client financial specialist, who will initiate and guide you through the insurance coverage application process. We have established relationships with many of our NYS payers, and if qualified, you will obtain coverage for your services.

We also offer many payment options to our Self Pay clients. Our client financial specialist will work with you to establish a comfortable, affordable and scheduled payment plan, as you continue to receive needed services. Self-Pay/Private fees for services are as follows

:

- \$160 Initial Assessment/Intake
- \$120 Individual/Family Therapy
- \$90 Group Therapy
- \$100 Medication Management

Clients can file an application with proof of income for the Sliding Scale Fee Program, it is based on income and family size. Fees for services are based within Federal Poverty Guidelines. Once you are placed on the Sliding Scale Fee program, and your fee is determined (rate of payment will be discussed with you up application completion) you will be responsible to pay this fee at each time of service.



All copayments, co-insurances, Sliding Scale Fee are due at the time of services, unless there is a written signed payment agreement arrangement in place.

- 1) If a client fails to make the required payment at the time of service, they will be seen for the scheduled appointment, and permitted to schedule the next appointment. The client is responsible for this payment and the next required payment at the next appointment.
- 2) If a client fails to make the required payment at the next appointment, they will be seen for that appointment, but they will not be permitted to schedule the next appointment until the balance has been paid. The account will be placed on a schedule hold, until payment is received.
- 3) If the balance is not paid and the client has not been seen in 30 days, the case will be closed.
- 4) Failure to pay outstanding account balances within 60 days will be reviewed for collections, which may result in litigation. When an account is sent to collections, it will be sent with full private fees.

This policy, however, is not to deny admission based solely on the inability to pay. In order to provide the quality mental health services to anyone deemed eligible, revenue needs to be generated and payment expected from a variety of sources.

It is important that a client/family meet the financial commitment so we can continue to provide the highest standards of care. Please understand the counseling centers depend on all sources of revenue in order to operate a service for all people deemed appropriate and in need.

If you have any questions about our policy, please feel free to speak with our billing department @ 845-452-6077 x108.

Please be sure to make the front desk aware of any insurance payer changes, changes to your policy/copayment or address and phone contact information, so we can keep both your financial and demographic record current.





## ATTENDANCE POLICY

With a high demand of clients seeking our services, it is necessary for Astor to be available to our clients who utilize our services according to treatment recommendations. When clients are seen less than the recommended treatment schedule, quality treatment is not occurring. We have therefore adapted the following policy. We value the treatment we provide to the clients and hope that you understand the importance of regular attendance.

- All clients must be seen by their Therapist at least two times per month. Clients not seen within 30 days case can be closed, which will include therapy and psychiatric services
- All clients should arrive **15 minutes** before their scheduled appointments. Clients that arrive *15 minutes or more* after their scheduled appointment time may not be seen.
- A **missed appointment** is not attending OR canceling a scheduled appointment with fewer than 24 hours' notice. **The Front Office is mandated to look for an appointment two weeks from the missed appointment from 9:00am to 2:00pm.**
- Any client who misses 3 scheduled appointments within a 3-month period will have their case closed.
- Clients who are approved to be seen monthly for clinical reasons, cannot miss 2 sessions in a row or three within 3 months or their case will be closed, which includes therapy and psychiatric services.
- If your child's case is closed three times in one year, you will need to wait until the next calendar year to return.

### How to Schedule or Cancel and appointment

Astor outpatient clinics schedule appointments only a week or two in advance.

- You can contact the Front office staff or central scheduler and schedule and schedule an appointment that is most convenient for you and your child, in a time that the therapist has open.
- When you keep your appointment, the scheduler/front office staff will be able to schedule your next appointment right away and you'll have the best chance to get the day and time you want.
- However if you miss the appointment by cancelling or simply not showing up at all you may have to schedule your next appointment at a less convenient time, although we'll work with you to find the best solution.



## **MEDICATION REFILL POLICY**

- All medication refill requests will be submitted to the Nurse. The nurse will be responsible for determining the individual client need and sending the information to the provider. The Nurse will be responsible for communicating with the families the results of the request if needed.
- Medication refill requests **MUST** be requested 5 business days in advance. Requests can take up to 48-72 hours to be completed. Medications requiring prior authorization can take up to 5 business days.
- Client must contact pharmacy directly to determine if scripts have been filled.

## **PROCEDURES FOR CLIENT OR PARENT CONCERNS AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK FORMS**

You or your child has the right to present complaints and positive feedback concerning the quality of care received by Astor staff. The procedure for handling feedback that you or your child might have as follows:

- 1) Concern forms and positive feedback forms are available at each location at the reception desk.
- 2) A process is in place to assure that your concern is taken seriously.
- 3) The concern or positive feedback form is sent immediately to the Program Director who will follow up to discuss the concern.
- 4) The completed forms are sent to the Assistant Executive Director. He/She is required to send a copy to the Quality Assessment & Improvement Coordinator.; or Contact the Associate Executive Director, directly at (845) 452-5952.

In addition to the concern and positive feedback forms that are available at all locations, the counseling centers distribute parent/guardian surveys each year in an effort to assess your satisfaction with our services.

Clients can also contact the following offices to voice concerns or request advocacy:

NYS Office of Mental Health Customer Relations Office  
44 Holland Avenue, Albany, NY 12229  
Telephone 800-597-8481

The Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
Telephone 630-792-5636





## **Procedure for requesting information from your child's record:**

You may request information from your child's record at the clinic, while the case is open.

If the case has been closed, a formal letter requesting release of information should be presented to:

Taisha Johnson  
6339 Mill Street  
Rhinebeck, New York 12572  
Phone: (845) 871-1000  
Fax: (845) 876-2020

**There is a charge of 35 cents per page for copies.**

**Clients have the right to contact The Joint Commission to report unresolved concerns about client safety and quality of care issues. The Joint Commission can be contacted in the following ways:**

By Mail:  
Office of Quality Monitoring  
The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Boulevard  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

By Telephone:  
(800) 994-6610

By Fax:  
Office of Quality Monitoring  
(630) 792-5636

By Email:  
[complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org)

Astor Counseling Centers are programs operated by Astor Services for Children & Families, P.O. Box 5005, Rhinebeck, New York 12572-5005.

Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations  
Licensed by New York State Office of Mental Health



## **Counseling Centers**

### **Administration**

13 Mt. Carmel Place  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Tel: 845-452-6077 Fax: 845-452-6235

Executive Director- James McGuirk, PhD  
Associate Executive Director Clinical Services- Todd Karlin Ph.D.  
Deputy Director Administrative Services Hudson Valley Behavioral Health Programs- Dianne Terpening  
Deputy Director-Michele Kelly, Psy.D.  
Regional Director of Hudson Valley Outpatient Clinics-Amie Adams, LCSW-R  
Regional Director of Bronx Outpatient Clinics-Zory Wentt, LCSW-R

## **Bronx Counseling Centers**

### **Tilden Counseling Center**

Williamsburg Section  
750 Tilden Street  
Bronx, NY 10467  
(718)231-3400 fax (718)655-3503  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/Th 9-8; F 9-5

### **Highbridge Counseling Center**

Highbridge Area–South Bronx  
1419 Shakespeare Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10452  
(718)732-7080 fax (718)732-7090  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/Th 9-8; F 9-5

## **Dutchess County Counseling Centers**

### **Beacon Counseling Center**

223 Main Street  
Beacon, NY 12508  
(845) 838-4920 fax (845)838-4924  
Hours of Operation: M/W/F 9-5; T/Th 9-9  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/TH 9-8; F 9-5

### **Dover Counseling Center**

6423 Route 55  
Wingdale, NY 12594  
(845) 350-3010 fax (845) 350-3013  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/Th 9-8; F 9-5

### **Astor Head Start Wingdale**

6423 Route 55  
Wingdale, NY 12594  
(845) 832-3331



## **Dutchess County Probation Satellite**

50 Market St.  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
(845) 486-2876  
Hours of Operation: M 9:30-4:15, W 1-6,  
TH 9:30-6:30

## **Hyde Park Counseling Center**

4252 Albany Post Road, Suite #2  
Hyde Park, NY 12538  
(845) 233-5935 fax (845) 233-4726  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/TH 9-8, F 9-5

## **Poughkeepsie Counseling Center**

46 Lincoln Ave  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
(845) 471-6004 fax (845) 471-7099  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/Th 9-8; F 9-5

## **Rhinebeck Satellite**

187 E. Market Street  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
Tel: (845) 871-1536 (1535)  
Hours of Operation: M/T 12-8, W 11-8, TH/F 11-5

## **Astor School Based Clinic Satellite**

900 Dutchess Turnpike  
Poughkeepsie NY 12603  
Tel: (845) 486-4840 X 3021

## **Pine Plains School District Satellite**

Cold Spring Elementary School  
Homan Road, Stanfordville, NY 12581  
(845) 868-7451

Seymour Smith Elementary School  
41 Academy Street, Pine Plains, NY 12567  
(518) 398-3000

Stissing Mountain Jr/Sr High School  
3731 State Rte. 199, Pine Plains, NY 12567  
(518) 398-7181

## **ASTOR Head Start**

50 Delafield Street  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Tel: (845) 233-5935

## **Astor Learning Center (ALC)**

6339 Mill Street  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
Tel: (845) 233-5935

## **Premier Medical Group**

1 Webster Avenue #302  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Tel: (845) 233-5935



## **Ulster County Counseling Centers**

### **Ellenville Counseling Center**

50 Center St.  
Trudy Resnick Building  
Ellenville, NY 12428  
(845) 647-3349  
Hours of Operation: T 9-5; W 9-6; Th 9-8

### **Families Together**

YMCA  
507 Broadway  
Kingston, NY 12401

### **Kingston Counseling Center**

239 Golden Hill Lane, Suite #100  
Kingston, NY 12401  
(845) 340-4105  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/TH 9-8; F 9-5

### **Highland Counseling Center**

280 State Route 299  
Highland, NY 12528  
Tel: (845) 419-3535  
Medication Refills: (845) 516-7780  
Fax: (845) 419-0852  
Hours of Operation: M/T/W/Th 9-8; F 9-5

### **New Paltz High School Satellite**

130 S. Putt Corners Rd.  
New Paltz, NY 12561

## **After hours Emergency Phone Numbers:**

For Bronx Residents:

Tilden Clinic Afterhours: (718)231-3400 M-Th after 8pm & Fri after 5pm.

For Dutchess County Residents:

Dutchess County Helpline: (845) 485-9700

Stabilization Center: 230 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

For Ulster County Residents:

Family of Woodstock (Kingston): (845) 338-2370

Family of Ellenville: (845) 647-2443

Family of New Paltz: (845) 255-8801

Mobile Mental Health (1pm-11pm): 844-277-4820