

*The following tips may be helpful to you in navigating the children's behavioral health system successfully:*

**Keep a Notebook** where you record information about your efforts to get the services your son/daughter may need. Your notes should include:

- Name of the person you speak with and the agency they work for
- Telephone numbers
- The date and time you called
- What was discussed
- What each of you agreed to do as a result of the conversation
- Next steps for you

**Keep a File or Three Ring Binder** where you put any written documents that you get or send about your child's need for services and your efforts to obtain services. If you can organize it by the kinds of documents and the dates of documents, it may help you find information when you need it. This binder/file should include:

- Correspondence: letters, faxes, print-outs of emails that are sent to you by any providers, MCO representatives, State or County officials and copies of any letters, faxes, and emails you send
- Evaluations: your child's written evaluations and any other documents or supplements to the evaluation
- Treatment plans
- Progress notes

**Get and Keep the Fax confirmation page if you send a fax.** The confirmation fax states your document went through. Your fax machine may be able to print a log of the faxes sent.

**Do not send your original documents.** Keep the original documents for your records and send copies when information is requested.

**If possible, make your requests in writing.** If you make a request over the phone or in person, follow up with a written request either by email or letter.

**Be prepared.** Carefully read the evaluations, treatment plans and other documents about your child so you are familiar with the content and that they accurately reflect your child.

**Know the beginning and ending dates of your child's authorized services.** If you aren't sure, call your child's provider or the VBH toll-free member services number in your Member Handbook. (This phone number is also included in this packet).

**Know when your child's re-evaluation is due** (when the next psychological or psychiatric evaluation should be completed). Again, if you are unsure, contact your child's provider or the VBH-PA toll-free member services number in your Member Handbook (This phone number is also included in this packet).

**Maintain a calendar or daily planner** and write every doctor appointment, therapy session, evaluation, ISPT meeting, etc. Attending all appointments for your child is very important. Having a place with all of the appointment information is critical in being organized and available for helping your child obtain and keep necessary services.