



**Behavioral Health
Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

WELCOME BOOK

Westchester Medical Center

~Children's Inpatient Unit, A1~



Westchester Medical Center
Behavioral Health Center
100 Woods Road
Valhalla, New York 10595

Telephone: (914) 493-7180
Fax: (914) 493-1158



WELCOME TO A1!

We would like to take this opportunity to **WELCOME** you and your child to A1, the Children's Inpatient Unit at the Behavioral Health Center of Westchester Medical Center. A1 is a multidisciplinary therapeutic milieu.

This means that we have many different types of clinicians and treatment providers that will work with you and your child during his or her stay. We recognize this is a difficult time for you and your child, and hope that this booklet answers many of the questions you may have regarding our program. Our goal is to provide the highest quality of patient and family centered care for our patients, allowing them to work towards returning home and to their community as quickly as possible.

UNIT A1

Our unit is a 15 bed unit, comprised of both boys and girls, ranging from 4 to 13 years of age. There is a dining room on the unit where the children will eat meals and snacks as a group. We also have a large day room where the children participate in many therapeutic activities to learn coping skills, including social play, expressive and recreational therapy groups, and community meetings. We also have books, toys, journals, cards, materials for arts and crafts, and games to use during leisure time. During nice weather, we spend plenty of time on the enclosed playground that is connected to the unit.

Groups and activities occur off unit as well, where we have a separate wing equipped with a full gym, art therapy room, music therapy room, and game room. Your child will be assessed daily in order to determine if he or she is able to attend off-unit activities. In addition, the children attend school for two hours per day, with instruction provided by onsite NYS licensed teachers. Classes are held both on and off-unit.

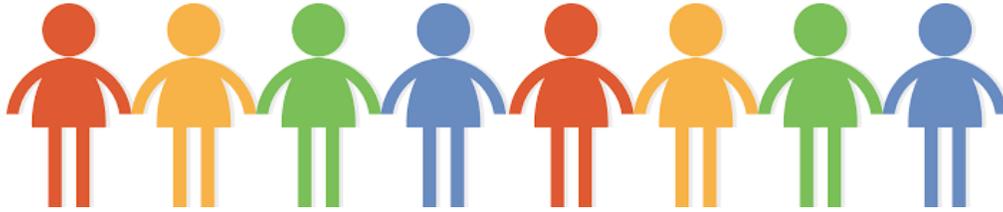
WHAT WE DO: MILIEU THERAPY

What will your child do all day? The milieu (pronounced: mill-you) is the community that your child will be a part of while on the unit. It is a highly structured therapeutic setting that is under direct and continuous supervision by staff.

At the time of your child's admission, he or she will be introduced to the milieu and given a tour of the unit. Your child will also have time to meet his or her staff and peers. Shortly after admission, your child will be seen by the doctors, nurses, social worker, and other members of the Treatment Team for an evaluation. We will also speak with you and other important people in your child's life, such as residential staff members, school personnel, outside therapists and providers, and caseworkers. This is a multi-step process to help us to get to know your child and for him or her to feel more comfortable with us. We will all work together to identify your child's treatment goals and to create a comprehensive treatment plan. You will be asked to review and sign your child's treatment plan, and the treatment plan will be amended as necessary to reflect your child's needs and goals.



OUR TREATMENT TEAM



We are very proud of our highly qualified staff here at the Behavioral Health Center. We have a wide array of educated clinicians involved in your child's care and our staff work diligently together to provide the best treatment available for your child.

Unit Chief: Gony Weiss, MD (914.493.1934)

Dr. Weiss specializes in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and is in charge of the unit. She will assess your child daily and discuss with you the various treatment modalities that your child will benefit from.

Child Psychiatry Fellows and Residents:

Westchester Medical Center is proud to be a teaching hospital and as such, welcomes Fellows and Residents to our programming. Child Fellows are doctors who have completed their Residencies in Psychiatry and have elected to do a two year Fellowship to specialize in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Residents are doctors who have completed medical school and now are training to become psychiatrists. All Fellows and Residents are under the direct supervision of Dr. Weiss.

Registered Professional Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses: (914.493.7180)

Staci is our Head Nurse. She is in charge of all of the nursing staff and PCTs on the unit. Our nurses are highly educated and motivated, with tremendous work experience in the field of child psychiatry. They will assess all children daily, dispense medication, and provide a safe and therapeutic environment in which your child can thrive and improve.

Mental Health Therapist: Vanessa DePuy (914.493.1817)

Our licensed social workers and mental health counselors are called Mental Health Therapists here at BHC. Vanessa works closely with the family, child, and treatment team to ensure that all aspects of treatment needs are addressed. Vanessa will schedule family meetings as soon as possible and provide individual and group therapy, as well as provide ongoing support to your child.

Case Manager: Stephan Stern, BA (914.493.5428)

Stephan works closely with you, your child, and the entire Treatment Team to obtain collateral information and coordinate a safe discharge plan. This includes speaking with you, school personnel, and outside providers to secure continued treatment and facilitate your child's safe return to the community.

Recreation Therapist: Giovanni Mastracchio, MEd, MPH, CTRS
Giovanni is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) who leads daily Recreation Therapy (RT) groups. Examples of RT groups include, anger management, cooperative skills, and social skills group. All groups assist your child to express their feelings, work cooperatively, and learn new social skills while building their self-esteem.

Expressive Therapist: Jacquelyn Shoulders, MS
Jacquie leads daily Expressive and Creative Art Therapy Groups (ET). ET activities include art therapy, journaling, and relaxation groups. Jacquie may also work with your child on an individual basis to help develop his or her expressive and creative talents. The goal of these groups is to provide a safe and alternative means of self-expression.

Patient Care Technicians:
In conjunction with nursing, PCT's provide structure, reinforce expectations of safe and appropriate behavior, and help to maintain a therapeutic environment within the unit. They work closely with all disciplines to provide feedback of their observations. Each PCT wears dark blue scrubs. The Senior PCT or Shift Leader wears light blue scrubs.

Teachers:
Through our partnership with Education Inc., we are able to provide classroom instruction as well as individual tutoring to the children we care for. Our teachers will contact your child's school to help formulate an individualized education plan for your child while in the hospital.

Administrative Assistant: Sherifa Adeleke (914.493.7180)
Sherifa works closely with all staff members and oversees the unit's administrative responsibilities, including managing the unit's medical charts, and coordinating admissions and discharges.

Speech and Language Services:
We have a relationship with the Speech and Language Pathology Department at New York Medical College's School of Public Health. A team of students and their supervisor come weekly to complete assessments with referred children to help them to improve their social skills and receptive/expressive language abilities.

BHC Administration: (914) 493-1149
Division Chief, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Abraham Bartell, MD (914) 493-1818
Director of Nursing: Denise Davis, RN (914) 493-7775
Director of Social Work: Bina Meyers, LMSW (914) 493-7775
Clinical Supervisor: Maria Barreto, LCSW-R (914) 493-6473
Director of Therapeutic Programming: Melissa Nord, PsyD (914) 493-7129
Mental Hygiene Legal Services: (914) 592-4275
Patient Relations: (914) 493-8877
Medical Records: (914) 493-8803



A1 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

TIME	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7:00 AM	WAKE UP	WAKE UP	WAKE UP	WAKE UP	WAKE UP	WAKE UP	WAKE UP
7:30 AM	Vitals, ADLs, Meds, and Breakfast	Vitals and ADLs Meds, Breakfast, and Goals Group	Vitals, ADLs, Meds, and Breakfast				
8:00 AM							
8:30 AM	Goals Group	Recreation Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Journaling Group	Goals Group
9:00 AM	Wellness Group	School	School	School	School	School	Wellness Group
10:00 AM	Journal Group	Recreation Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Expressive Therapy	Journaling Group	Journal Group
11:00 AM							
12:00 PM	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME	LUNCH/ROOM TIME
12:30 PM	Organized Games	Journaling Group	Recreation Therapy	Recreation Therapy	Recreation Therapy	Level A Pizza Party	ET (Dense)
1:00PM							
1:30 PM	Cooperative Skills Group	Cooperative Skills Group	Coping Skills	Spiritual Connection	Coping Skills	Education Group	Cooperative Skills Group
2:00PM							
2:30 PM	Cooperative Skills Group	Nutrition Group	Cooperative Skills Group	Cooperative Skills Group	Cooperative Skills Group	Cooperative Skills Group	Organized Games
2:30 PM							
3:00 PM	GROUP (RT/ET)	Recreation Therapy	RT/ET (on unit)	RT/ET (off unit)	RT/ET (on unit)	Expressive Therapy	Cooperative Skills Group
3:30 PM							
3:30 PM							
4:00 PM	Snack	Leisure Time	Snack and Leisure Time	Snack and Leisure Time	Snack and Leisure Time	Snack and Leisure Time	Cooperative Skills Group
4:30PM	Wellness Group	Wellness Group	Wellness Group	Wellness Group	Wellness Group	Wellness Group	Wellness Group
5:00 PM	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER
5:30 PM	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs	Room Time and ADLs
6:30 PM	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group	Relaxation Group
7:00PM							
7:30 PM	Movie Group	Toy Store	Movie Group	Ice Cream Social and Movie Group	Movie Group	Movie Group	Movie Group
8:00 PM	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs	Snack, Vitals, Meds, Goals Review, & ADLs
9:00 PM	BEDTIME	BEDTIME	BEDTIME	BEDTIME	BEDTIME	BEDTIME	BEDTIME

KEY: Group- PCT Group- MD Group- RT/ET School Group- RN/PCT Miscellaneous

*** Please note, schedule is subject to change.

This is our weekly schedule. Doctors, social workers, nurses, and RT/ET staff will meet with you at different points throughout the day and week. Also, there are often other unit activities that occur during the week and weekend. These may include: gym time, arts and crafts, movies, board/card game tournaments, and sports. You will be seen by a doctor every day, even during the weekend.



CONFIDENTIALITY

For confidentiality purposes, you are NOT permitted to take pictures on the unit (this includes both with cameras and with cell phones). We also ask that you respect the privacy of others. For example, you may see someone you know from your neighborhood- please keep this information to yourself.

Confidentiality also has its limits. All staff members work collaboratively and share information to ensure that we are meeting all of your child's therapeutic needs. Additionally, we will take the necessary steps to protect your child if he or she shares information regarding abuse and potential threat (to self or others).

UNIT RULES AND SAFETY

In order to provide the safest, most therapeutic environment on the unit, we have some basic rules and expectations that all children are expected to follow. Some rules will be familiar to you, such as respecting the rights of others. We have rules against fighting, stealing, destruction of property and harm to self or others. Some rules may be new for your child, such as curfew and meal times. We strongly encourage participation in all aspects of treatment.



Upon arrival to the unit, one of the nurses will meet with your child independently to complete an Individualized Crisis Prevention Plan. This plan helps us to get to know your child and be prepared for difficult situations that may arise. For example, your child and the nurse will discuss triggers and emotional warning signs, as well as the various ways that our staff can provide care and support to your child. The Individualized Crisis Prevent Plan will be utilized throughout your child's hospitalization and helps to maintain the safety of your child and others on the unit.

Our trained staff employs many techniques to assist your child in following unit rules and maintaining good behavioral control. Some examples of these techniques are: verbal de-escalation when they are upset, redirection, distraction, calming techniques, positive reinforcement of healthy behaviors, and use of our "comfort room." Our comfort room is a small room with soft comfort objects that your child may utilize to regain control when they are upset.

PERSONAL ITEMS

We believe that all children do better physically and emotionally when able to have some of the comforts of home with them while in the hospital. If you have specific questions/requests about items not noted here, please feel free to call the nursing station at (914) 493-7180 for further clarification. Note: **laundry** is completed with the help of our PCT staff members.

Allowed



- Play clothes
- Pajamas
- Underwear and socks
- Slippers
- Sneakers
- Favorite book or toy
- Stuffed animal
- Pictures (not in a frame)
- Blanket or pillow

Not Allowed



- Radios, CDs, DVDs
- Electronic devices
- Toy guns/weapons
- Belts
- Sweatshirts/pants with strings
- Sharp or dangerous toys
- Glass bottles
- Plastic bags
- Gum

*This list is intended as a guideline and thus, is not comprehensive. All items brought to the hospital for the each child will be searched and assessed for safety on the unit. Please feel free to call the unit if you have any specific questions regarding items you would like to bring for your child.

*Meals and snacks are provided, but in the event you would like to bring your child a "special treat," you of course may do so. We ask that this be eaten during the time of your visit. Any uneaten or leftover snack is expected to be taken home by you after your visit. There is no food allowed to be stored after visitation on the unit. If there is a particular cuisine needed because of medical, religious, or cultural practices, please bring it to our attention and we will do everything to accommodate your child's needs. Please note that we are a peanut and tree nut-free unit.

DAILY VISITING HOURS

1:30pm - 3:00pm

6:30pm - 8:00pm



We have a few rules about visiting that we would like to share with you:

- All visitors must be 21 years of age or older in order to visit on the unit.
- In the event that parents wish to bring younger siblings to visit, special permission can be given to visit in our playroom just outside the unit. This decision will be determined for each individual case, based largely on safety concerns and must be arranged *24 hours prior* to the planned visit.
- 2 visitors per patient allowed on the unit at any time.
- Due to our highly structured program, we ask that you come during our scheduled visiting hours so as to not disrupt your child's treatment. In the event of extenuating circumstances, please contact your child's doctor *in advance* to discuss this, and every effort will be made to accommodate you and your child.



PHONE CALLS

We encourage your contact with your child during his/her admission. Please keep in mind that your child will be busy with therapy groups and programming throughout the day. For this reason, we ask that you limit your phone calls to 10 minutes so as to assist us in keeping your child engaged in all activities and treatment groups. If he/she is involved in a group when you call, staff will be happy to take a message and your child may return your call when they are free.

If you have any upsetting news to share with your child, please call the nurse's station first so that we can be prepared to provide support to your child should he/she become upset. In addition, if your child shares something with you that you find upsetting or are concerned about, please call us immediately so that we may work to resolve the issue together. The number to the nurse's station is (914) 493-7180.

BUDDY BENCH

The "Buddy Bench" is a chair on the unit that children can choose to sit in when they are feeling lonely or are in need of some extra support. Sitting on the "Buddy Bench" is an easy way to signal to others that you would like to chat, even if you have a hard time saying it or asking for help.



YOU'RE A STAR

Your child will be monitored and given feedback daily on their participation in their treatment. We do this through our **STAR** program, which awards stars to each individual child for accomplished tasks throughout their day. Some examples of how to collect the stars include, attending and participating in groups and school, cooperating with others, using good manners, and managing anger appropriately. This system will allow a child to see his or her progress daily. These stars are added up weekly and children will be rewarded for their successes! The rewards include: being able to attend our "Level A" Pizza Party on Fridays and using their accumulated points from the weekend to go "shopping" on Mondays in our unit toy store. Your child can also become a BUDDY! A peer buddy is someone who is selected to help your newest peer get to know the unit, staff, peers and rules.





Contact Numbers

UNIT A1	
Gony Weiss, MD Unit Chief, A1	(914) 493-1934
Vanessa DePuy, LMHC Mental Health Therapist, Unit A1	(914) 493-1817
Stephan Stern, BA Case Manager, Unit A1	(914) 493-5428
Nursing Station, Unit A1	(914) 493-7180
Sherifa Adeleke Administrative Assistant, Unit A1	(914) 493-7180
ADMINISTRATION	
Abraham Bartell, MD Chief, Child and Adolescent Division	(914) 493-1818
Denise Davis, RN Director of Nursing	(914) 493-7775
Bambina Meyers, LMSW Director of Social Work	(914) 493-7381
Maria Barreto, LCSW-R Clinical Supervisor, Child & Adolescent Units	(914) 493-6473
Melissa Nord, PsyD Director of Therapeutic Programming, BHC	(914) 493-7129
Steven Dickstein, MD Program Director, Child/Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship	(914) 493-7343
BHC Administration	(914) 493-1149
Mental Hygiene Legal Services	(914) 592-4275
Patient Relations	(914) 493-8877
Medical Records	(914) 493-8803

We hope that our handbook has been helpful and answered many of your questions. We are committed to providing you and your child with the best possible patient and family centered care available. Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time with any questions or concerns.