

Jr's Heart SAVES Intake Criteria

Crisis Disclaimer

Jr's Heart SAVES counseling services are not a 24-hour crisis or emergency service. Individuals experiencing a mental health emergency, suicidal thoughts, or immediate safety concerns should contact 988, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency room. Clients may also be referred to higher levels of care if clinically indicated.

Scope of Services

Jr's Heart SAVES provides trauma-informed counseling, psychoeducation, and supportive mental health services. Services are not intended to replace psychiatric care, medical treatment, or court-mandated therapeutic programs when those services are required by law or clinical necessity.

Mandatory Reporting

All counselors and staff are mandated reporters under Georgia law. Any suspected abuse, neglect, or threats to the safety of a child or vulnerable person may be reported to appropriate authorities, including DFCS or law enforcement.

Confidentiality

Client information is kept confidential in accordance with ethical and legal standards. However, confidentiality may be limited in situations involving risk of harm to self or others, suspected abuse or neglect, court orders, or other circumstances required by law.

Minors

Clients under the age of 18 must have consent from a parent or legal guardian to participate in services unless otherwise permitted by Georgia law.

1. Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for free counseling or support services through Jr's Heart SAVES, applicants must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- **Victims or survivors of child abuse, neglect, or domestic violence** (including adults with a history of childhood abuse).
- **Parents or caregivers** actively involved with **DFCS/CPS** or other child welfare agencies.
- **Children of court-involved parents**, such as those in DUI, Drug, Family, or Veterans Accountability Court programs.
- **Youth or families referred by partner agencies**, schools, or community organizations.
- **Individuals or families with demonstrated financial hardship**, verified through brief income screening or referral letter.

2. Residency

- Must be a Georgia resident, with priority given to individuals residing within Coweta county; services extended to surrounding counties (Carroll, Troup, Heard, Meriwether, and Fayette Counties).

3. Referral Pathways

Clients may enter services through:

- Direct self-referral or guardian referral
- Agency or court referral (including DFCS, school counselors, or community partners)
- Referral from affiliated counseling practices or mental health providers

4. Service Types Covered

Free services may include:

- Individual counseling (child, adolescent, or adult)
- Group therapy and psychoeducational programs (e.g., *Children's Resilience Support Program*, *Roots of Healing – Parenting Through Trauma*)
- Case management and resource linkage
- Crisis intervention and advocacy support

5. Documentation & Intake Requirements

Before beginning services, clients must:

- Complete an intake application and consent forms
- Provide proof of residency and income (if applying under financial hardship)
- Sign confidentiality and release-of-information forms (as needed)
- Participate in an initial assessment session to determine service fit and treatment goals

6. Exclusions / Limitations

Free counseling services are **not available** for:

- Active perpetrators of abuse or individuals with pending abuse charges (may be referred for specialized intervention elsewhere)
- Court-ordered therapy unrelated to child abuse prevention or family healing programs
- Clients requiring inpatient, detox, or intensive psychiatric care

When a client's needs fall outside the scope of services offered, Jr's Heart SAVES will assist with referrals to appropriate community providers whenever possible.

7. Duration & Review

Services are provided based on funding availability, clinician capacity, and program guidelines. Jr's Heart SAVES reserves the right to modify service availability as program resources change.

- Services are typically provided for a designated period (e.g., 6-8 sessions), with extensions possible based on ongoing need and funding availability.
- All clients will participate in progress reviews to ensure appropriate service utilization and therapeutic benefit.

8. Attendance Expectations

Clients are expected to attend scheduled sessions and notify staff in advance of cancellations when possible. Repeated missed appointments may result in reassignment of services so that other community members can access care.

9. Priority Populations

Given the mission of Jr's Heart SAVES, priority is given to:

- Children and families affected by child abuse and neglect
- Survivors navigating healing and trauma recovery
- Households impacted by court involvement or family systems stressors