

Finding a Therapist

Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. *Proverbs 15:22*

Finding a Christian therapist for your teens can be a big step in their mental and spiritual well-being. Begin by reaching out to your church community—they will have valuable recommendations for Christian therapists. Engage in open conversations with teens about their preferences regarding the therapeutic process. Seek recommendations from other parents who may have undergone a similar search. When researching potential therapists, look for those who integrate Christian values into their practice. A good Christian therapist can provide a supportive environment where teens feel understood, not only on a psychological level but also in the context of their faith. Above all, trust your instincts and ask for guidance through prayer in this important decision for your teens' health.

➤ conversation starter

How would you feel about exploring the idea of finding a Christian therapist together? What are your thoughts?

I'm interested in hearing about your experience with the therapist. How did the session go? Did you feel comfortable discussing your thoughts and feelings? Did the therapist incorporate a Christian perspective into the conversation?

➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Explore Their Comfort Level:** Ask teens how they feel about the idea of seeing a Christian therapist. Ensure that they feel comfortable and empowered in the decision-making process. Respect their feelings and concerns.
- **Express Concern and Care:** Start the conversation by expressing your care for their well-being. You might say, "I've noticed that you've been facing some challenges, and I really care about how you're feeling. I want to make sure you have the support you need."
- **Offer Support Throughout the Process:** Let teens know that you are there to support them every step of the way. Assure them that finding a therapist is a collaborative decision, and you are committed to helping them find the right fit.
- **Consult Pastoral Leaders:** Pastors or spiritual leaders within your church may have contacts or recommendations for Christian therapists. They can offer guidance and support in your search.
- **Check Christian Counseling Directories:** Utilize online directories specifically designed for Christian counselors and therapists. Websites such as the American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) or local Christian counseling organizations can be helpful resources.
- **Research Professional Background:** Look into the therapist's professional background, including education, credentials, and experience. Verify that he or she is licensed and has a solid reputation in the field.
- **Inquire About Their Approach:** When contacting potential therapists, ask about their therapeutic approach and how they integrate Christian principles into their counseling. This can help ensure their counseling style aligns with your beliefs.



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- **Discuss Faith Integration:** Clearly communicate your expectations regarding the integration of faith into the counseling process. Ensure the therapist is comfortable and capable of aligning their approach with a Christian perspective.
- **Verify Insurance Coverage:** If you plan to use insurance, verify whether the therapist accepts your insurance and inquire about any potential out-of-pocket costs. Financial considerations are an important aspect of the decision-making process, but don't let it deter you from finding help for your child. If money is a concern, there are often plans and ways to reduce costs or to get help at a discounted rate.

