

Clinical Policy: Homebuilders® Services

Reference Number: LA.CP.BH.520c

Date of Last Revision: 4/25

Coding Implications

Revision Log

See [Important Reminder](#) at the end of this policy for important regulatory and legal information.

I. Description

Homebuilders® is an intensive, in-home Evidence-Based Program (EBP) utilizing research-based strategies (e.g., motivational interviewing, cognitive and behavioral interventions, relapse prevention, skills training) for families with children (birth to 18 years of age) at imminent risk of out-of-home placement (requires a person with placement authority to state that the child is at risk for out-of-home placement without Homebuilders®), or being reunified from placement. The goal is to prevent the unnecessary out-of-home placement of children through intensive, on-site intervention and to teach families new problem-solving skills to prevent future crises.

II. Policy/Criteria

It is the policy of **Louisiana Healthcare Connections** that Homebuilders® services are medically necessary when the following criteria are met:

A. Admission Criteria

At least **one** of the following must be met:

1. Families with children (birth to 18 years of age) who meet one of the following:
 - The child is at **imminent risk of out-of-home placement**, such as foster care, group or residential treatment, psychiatric hospitals, or juvenile justice facilities, with confirmation from a person with placement authority.
 - The child is being **reunified** from placement.
2. Children and families identified with one or more of the following:
 - Caregiver and/or child emotional/behavioral management problems
 - Trauma exposure
 - Incurability
 - Academic problems
 - Delinquency
 - Truancy
 - Running away
 - Family conflict and violence
 - Poor/ineffective parenting skills
 - Single parent families
 - Sibling antisocial behavior
 - Parental/caregiver use of physical punishment, harsh, and/or erratic discipline practices
 - Substance use
 - Mental health concerns (e.g., depression/mood disorders, anxiety)

- Additional contributing factors such as:
 - 1. Poverty
 - 2. Lack of education
 - 3. Substandard housing
 - 4. Lack of supports and resources
- 3. Any **member at risk** of psychiatric admission, residential placement, or transitioning to a more restrictive environment due to behavioral/emotional problems.
- 4. Any **member transitioning** from a more restrictive to a less restrictive placement (e.g., group home to foster home or relative) for stabilization purposes, or when foster placement is at risk of disruption.

B. Intensity and Quality of Service

All of the following must be met:

1. Services are provided for **four to six weeks** of intensive intervention, with up to **two booster sessions** totaling five hours within six months of the initial referral.
2. Services are **strengths-based**, with goals focusing on:
 - Effective parenting
 - Improved family environment
 - Improved member behavior
 - Pro-social family involvement
3. Services are delivered in the **family's home and community** and must include:
 - a. Availability for crisis intervention **24 hours a day, 7 days a week**
 - b. Collaborative completion of an assessment of family strengths, problems, barriers to treatment, and outcome-based goals
 - c. Use of **evidence-based interventions**, including motivational interviewing, behavioral parent training, CBT strategies, and relapse prevention
 - d. Identification and development of **formal and informal support systems** to maintain progress

C. Continued Services Criteria

All of the following (1–4) and **either 5 or 6** must be met:

1. The family/member continues to meet **all admission criteria**
2. There is a **reasonable expectation** of benefit from continued services
3. Treatment promotes **developmentally appropriate** behavior, activities, and social skills tailored to the member's individual strengths and needs
4. Interventions in the treatment plan are **time-limited** and aimed at increasing autonomy and family functioning
5. New problems or symptoms have **emerged** that meet admission criteria
6. The member requires continuation of treatment in the community **until a support network** is activated

D. Exclusion/Exception Criteria

At least **one** of the following must be met:

1. The family/member's primary concerns are **social, financial, and/or medical**, without a **behavioral** component as outlined in the admission criteria
2. The family/member is currently receiving **similar services** of equal or greater intensity through another provider/resource

E. Discharge Criteria

At least **one** of the following must be met:

1. The member/family no longer meets continued stay criteria and has **met treatment goals**
2. The member is **not engaged** in treatment as prescribed, and a lower level of care is more appropriate
3. The **severity of illness requires a higher level of care**, or the child has been removed from the home despite the treatment provided

III. Background

The provider agency must be an **approved Homebuilders® provider** in Louisiana. The licensed entity assumes responsibility for the service under its license. The agency must have a contract with the **Institute for Family Development (IFD)** for training, supervision, and service monitoring, primarily through a Homebuilders® national consultant. Training and consultation are provided under a contract with the **Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)**. Teams are required to maintain Homebuilders® standards or face a **quality improvement plan**.

Homebuilders® participants demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Serious behavioral and/or emotional problems in the home, school, and/or community
- Substance abuse, mental health issues, or poverty-related challenges (e.g., inadequate housing, clothing, or food)
- Substance-exposed or failure-to-thrive infants
- Adolescents exhibiting high-risk behaviors or parent-teen conflict
- Children/youth who have experienced abuse, neglect, or trauma

IV. Program Components

A. Intensity

- 8–10 hours of **face-to-face contact per week**, averaging 38 hours total
- Sessions scheduled during days, evenings, and weekends
- 3–5+ sessions weekly based on family needs

B. Duration

- 4–6 weeks of intensive service
- 2 booster sessions totaling 5 hours available within 6 months
- Extensions must be approved by a **Homebuilders® consultant**

C. Crisis Intervention

- **24/7 therapist availability** via phone and in-person response

V. Core Program Strategies

1. **Engagement** using motivational interviewing
2. **Assessment & Goal Setting** across life domains, including safety, domestic violence, and crisis planning
3. **Behavior Change** through cognitive and behavioral interventions
4. **Skills Development** for parents and children (includes homework and practice)
5. **Concrete Services** access and skill-building
6. **Community Coordination & Advocacy**
7. **Immediate Response to Referrals** (24/7 availability)
8. **Natural Environment Delivery** (home and community-based)
9. **Small Caseloads** (average of two families per therapist)
10. **Flexible and Responsive Services**
11. **Time-Limited Interventions** with booster sessions
12. **Strengths-Based Approach**
13. **Ecological/Holistic Assessment & Individualized Treatment Plans**
14. **Evidence-Based Practices**, including:
 - Motivational interviewing
 - Behavioral parent training
 - CBT strategies
 - Relapse prevention
15. **Support Building** through formal/informal networks
16. **Critical Thinking Framework** for implementation and evaluation

VI. Exclusions

Homebuilders® services are comprehensive of all other services, with the **exception** of:

- **Psychological evaluations/assessments**
- **Medication management**

These may be billed separately.

Homebuilders® **cannot** be billed concurrently with:

- Other **behavioral health services** by licensed/unlicensed professionals (excluding medication management or assessment)
- **Residential services**, including professional resource family care

Coding Implications

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| Reviews, Revisions, and Approvals | Date | Approval Date | Effective Date |
|---|-------|---------------|----------------|
| Removed duplications and corrected typos. Removed exclusion for Autism, developmental delay, developmental disability or mental retardation | 10/19 | | |
| Added Core Benefits Removed attachments Added references for the policy | 08/20 | | |
| No Revisions | 12/21 | | |
| Reviewed. Template change. Changed policy number from LA.UM.97. | 02/23 | 5/26/23 | |
| Annual Review. References Reviewed and Updated. | 2/24 | 4/26/24 | |
| Annual Review. Format changes with no changes to criteria. References reviewed and updated. | 4/25 | 7/28/25 | 8/28/25 |

References

1. LDH Behavioral Health Services Provider Manual. Chapter 2. (Appendix E-3 – Evidence Based Practices HOMEBUILDERS®. Issued 7/17/23 Replaced 2/25/22.

Important Reminder

This clinical policy has been developed by appropriately experienced and licensed health care professionals based on a review and consideration of currently available generally accepted standards of medical practice; peer-reviewed medical literature; government agency/program approval status; evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations; views of physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas affected by this clinical policy; and other available clinical information. LHCC makes no representations and accepts no liability with respect to the content of any external information used or relied upon in developing this clinical policy. This clinical policy is consistent with standards of medical practice current at the time that this clinical policy was approved.

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