

Detail of Informed Consent

Process, Benefits, and Risks of Psychotherapy: Participating in individual psychotherapy may result in a number of benefits including a reduction of problematic behaviors, a greater understanding of the child's strengths and weaknesses, improved awareness of emotional issues, improved self-esteem, and increased availability within the learning environment. However, such progress cannot be guaranteed. Working towards these goals requires efforts from the patient and support from the family is essential.

Confidentiality: The laws and standards for mental health professionals require that records be kept regarding the treatment of your child. All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are completely confidential and cannot be revealed to anyone without your written permission, except where disclosure is required by law. Disclosure is required by law in the following circumstances:

- When there is reasonable suspicion of child or elder abuse or neglect
- Where the client presents a danger to him/herself or to others
- When disclosure is court-ordered

The reason for such requirements is that mental health professionals have legal and ethical responsibility to take action to protect endangered individuals from harm when there is indication that such a danger exists. Such actions may include notifying the parent/guardian, notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the child.

When working with children, the issue of confidentiality is often complicated. In order for children to relate well to the mental health professional and thereby address their social, emotional, and behavioral goals, children must feel a sense of privacy about the information they decide to share. However, mental health professionals understand and acknowledge that there may be types of information that would be important for the parent or guardian to know, even if it does not fall under the categories listed above.

In addition, children are made aware from the onset of treatment that regular communication with the parent/guardian will occur. They are told that relevant themes and issues will be shared with the parent/guardian, when it seems in their best interest to do so.

Availability and Emergency Procedures: I have voicemail that I check periodically throughout the day. In addition, I carry an emergency pager throughout the day and after hours. This pager is for emergencies only, e.g. if the child is experiencing an emotional or behavioral crisis and you feel that he or she is out of your control and at risk of hurting him/herself or someone else. In the event of a life threatening emergency and I cannot be reached, **the parent should immediately call 911 or immediately proceed to the nearest emergency room.**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your Informed Consent, please feel free to discuss them with us directly.

The Clinical Staff
The Child and Family Counseling Group, P.L.C.
