

INFORMED CONSENT FOR THERAPY WITH TEENS

When parents refer teens for therapy it is my practice to interview the parents first. During this initial session, I gather family history and information about the current difficulties to create a context for understanding the problem.

I then meet one or two times with the teen to hear their perspective. The teen is encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings with one or both parents in the next session. It is the teen's decision about who they want to talk to. Sometimes the teen views the problem to be mostly with their mother and at other times with their father. I do not require nor push for a session in which all family members are present.

When there is a high level of reactivity between a parent and teen, it may be necessary to meet individually with the adult or teen to explore the nature of the reactivity. The goal is to continue conjoint sessions when both parties can be in the presence of the other and remain relatively calm. There are times when it is expedient to have only the parents in a session without the teen to discuss how the parent's interactions may affect the teen, or to see one parent alone.

All sessions are confidential and no information is shared by the therapist with any other family member. However, the effectiveness of therapy sometimes depends on sharing information told to the therapist by a parent or teen in an individual session. Every effort will be made to encourage the parent or teen to reveal the information to the appropriate other family member.

The exceptions to confidentiality are the mandated reporting responsibilities for child and elder abuse, and danger to one's self or others.

The confidentiality policy is explained in the *American Association of Marriage and Family Therapist Code of Ethics* to which I adhere as a licensed therapist, or intern.

Marriage and family therapists do not disclose client confidences except by written authorization or waiver, or where mandated or permitted by law. When providing couple, family or group treatment, the therapist does not disclose information outside the treatment context without a written authorization from each individual competent to execute a waiver. In the context of couple, family or group treatment, the therapist may not reveal any individual's confidences to others in the client unit without the prior written permission of that individual.

If you agree to my practice principles please sign below.

Parents: _____

Teen: _____ Date: _____