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CHILD/FAMILY CONSENT FOR TREATMENT

Therapy can be helpful to parent/caregivers and children in improving behavior and relationships and individual and family functioning. In order for therapy to be effective for you and your child(ren), you are accepting and agreeing to the following:

- I will need all members of the family participating in treatment to sign this consent and the Disclosure and Consent for Treatment, except where a child developmentally is too young to read, understand and sign these documents. However, confidentiality and their rights to privacy will still be explained verbally to these young children.
- I will expect ongoing involvement of participating caregivers to address issues as they arise. Therefore, I will ask that the caregiver be available to participate in all sessions. Caregiver involvement is likely to include addressing parenting issues/skills individually with the caregiver and conjoint sessions with caregiver and child(ren) to address behavioral and relationship issues. Similarly, I will require that the caretaker share with me any issues or circumstances that arise that may impact the course of treatment or the child(ren)'s emotional and behavioral well-being. Parent/caregiver information shared with me is also confidential and will not be shared with the child(ren).
- I may need to have contact with other's treating your child(ren) and/or that are involved in your child(ren) lives to gather necessary information for ongoing treatment and care. These may include teachers, doctors, extended family and/or other professionals assisting your family. When this additional contact is necessary, any release of PHI pertaining to any particular member of the family must be authorized in writing by that member who have signed the consent for treatment, including your child.
- I may refer you to other providers, such as a psychiatrist, as needed for your child(ren)'s well-being.
- The purpose of therapy is to help child(ren) and caregivers improve functioning. It is not to make decisions about custody. I have found that using therapy for this purpose often makes it stressful for children and therefore damages the safety necessary for effective treatment. I have found that divorce counseling, custody evaluations and mediation are more effective services for custody disputes.
- It is important that treatment be presented positively and as an opportunity for change and growth. Therefore, using therapy as a punishment is counter to creating an environment that helps children participate effectively and benefit from treatment, and I reserve the right to terminate services if this is a parent/care giver's goal in seeking my services.
- You are trusting me with your child(ren) to discuss issues that are troubling them. These may include sensitive and controversial topics, such as sex, drugs and possible illegal activities and behaviors that you may not approve of. In order for treatment to be effective, children need to feel safe and comfortable to talk about these issues with a knowledgeable and neutral adult. Specifics of discussions that occur with your child can not be disclosed without the written consent of your child. Your child has the right to refuse to share this information or allow me to disclose it, restrict the scope of what is disclosed or in writing rescind their written consent. I reserve the right to end services with a child if their unwillingness to disclose any specific or general information or to seek appropriate intervention is counter to effective treatment, may be damaging to the child or family, or somehow violates my ethics.

- Issues of confidentiality to be aware of with children:
 - When working with children age 12 or under, I will review with the caregiver or help the child(ren) share with the caregiver the concerns discussed. With children over 12 years old, specific information discussed in sessions will be treated as confidential. In an effort to facilitate healthy communication and relationships, I will assist and facilitate child(ren) sharing their concerns with caretakers, but I will not communicate for them. I am, however, permitted to share very general information about the progress of treatment.
 - As working with child(ren) requires work with different members of the family, confidentiality issues may become quite complex. Therefore, there may be limits to confidentiality as issues are shared individually and in the family setting.
 - In the case of divorce or separation, I will continue to share and involve the caregivers who initiated and signed the child(ren) into treatment. However, if a parent/caregiver was not initially involved and did not sign the child(ren) into treatment, I will require written permission (releases of information) from the participating parent/caretaker to have that parent/caretaker become involved in the child(ren)'s/family's treatment. I reserve the right to discontinue treatment if caregiver disputes interfere with the safety and security of the counseling environment.
 - **By law, I have to report any concerns regarding a child's safety and health to the appropriate authorities. This includes where abuse or neglect is suspected, or if the child is making threats to self or others. I will make every effort, where possible, to inform you of this necessity as it arises.**

Your signature below indicates that you have read and agree to the expectations explained above.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Child

Date

Signature of Child

Date

Signature of Child

Date

Name of Therapist Providing Service

Signature of Therapist

Date