

## Parental Consent to Treat Minors

In the state of Nebraska, persons under the age of nineteen are declared minors. For minors seeking mental health services, parents must sign a consent form allowing their child to be seen by professional counselors. There are a few exceptions where a minor does not need parental consent and those include when the minor is married, emancipated (NEB. REV. STAT. 43-2101), or in an emergency (NEB. REV. STAT 38-1232).

Generally, information your child shares in therapy sessions is confidential. As a minor, they have certain rights to privacy that are not equal to those of an adult, but privacy is a crucial part of counseling. Parents have a right to know the treatment process but are encouraged to be sensitive to the process and allow for the healing process to develop over time. There are exceptions to confidentiality that are important to understand prior to starting the therapy process. In some situations, it is required by law that information discussed in therapy must be disclosed. These involve personal protection and the protection of others from the potential of hurt or harm.

- If there is disclosure that the minor intends on harming themselves (suicidal plans) or another person
- If they disclose knowledge of physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child or elder

These are conditions in which information would be shared with the proper authorities to maintain safety for them and others. Along with the proper authorities, the minor's parents will be notified of the disclosure.

Except for situations described above, parents/guardians will not be told of specific information disclosed in counseling. The client will need the freedom to trust and have confidence in the therapeutic relationship. Clients are encouraged to share with others what they are working on only when there is a confidence that what they share will be honored and valued within relationships. The therapist will not take the role of messenger between parties.

Parents of minors are encouraged to give latitude to the therapeutic process and develop trust in the therapist's work. Requests for information on the therapeutic process by parents will be discussed with the minor and the minor will have the opportunity in session to formulate an effective way to communicate a response to parents' questions. Parents may appreciate knowing general themes discussed in therapy and this too could be discussed in session with the minor. Parents joining for a session or contacted via teleconference are other options in facilitating communication if all parties involved agree.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent and relationship to child) on

\_\_\_\_\_ (date) give consent for \_\_\_\_\_ (my child) to

receive counseling with Tedd Burgason LIMHP CEDS CSAT at Sage Nutrition, LLC.