

Informed Consent Pamphlet

Christian Counseling Services



**CHRISTIAN FAMILY
& CHILDREN'S CENTER**

www.champion.org/counseling

724-455-2123 or info@champion.org

Introduction

The following information is a summary of the initial stages of your counseling experiences as part of Christian Counseling Services at the Center. This pamphlet is an abbreviated version of the policies that are published in our counseling handbook (www.champion.org/counseling) and is designed to answer in common sense language many of the common questions that people have about using our counseling services. During the intake part of your counseling session the intake worker will review this pamphlet with you to answer any questions that you might have. During your first counseling session your counselor will also review some of the important aspects of counseling with you. However, please remember that being informed about the counseling process is your responsibility to your own commitment to growth, and something you and your counselor should talk about any time you have a question.

Communication and Questions

Communication about the counseling process should be ongoing. After your first session, the counselor will review with you the counseling handbook which is a more detailed version of this pamphlet. Please read the handbook completely and discuss any questions you might have with your counselor or anyone at Christian Counseling Services. More information can be found on our website.

The Christian Counseling Services

Christian Counseling Services is a part of the Christian Family & Children's Center. It began as part of the Center's goals to provide biblically based programs which support the family. We really believe there is help in these services for you and your family.

Christian Services. The Center is a faith based counseling center. All of our counselors operate from an evangelical Christian perspective, believe that there is a real God who has created mankind, and has provided a plan for mankind to have a relationship with Him. We believe that the Bible is His word revealed to man, and within in it are principles that can not only provide direction for our lives, but frameworks with which we were designed to live. You can find a more detailed discussion of this on the Center's website. You can also see the Center's Statement of Faith there as well. The Center is an inter-

denominational ministry, meaning that it is not a part of one denomination, but has many Christian churches involved in what we are doing in the community.

Professional Counselors. Our therapists are at the minimum Master's level trained counselors. We require our counselors to receive ongoing training in both psychological and biblical principles as well as counseling techniques.

Counseling Team. Our team of counselors work together to help provide you with the best care possible. Each of our counselors works under a direct supervisor to make sure that they have every resource possible to help you achieve your counseling goals.

Supervision. All counselors are professionally supervised by the consulting staff, the executive Director of the Center, and the Center Board of Directors, to assure the highest possible level of quality service and accountability to you, the client. Information discretely shared with supervisors is held in strictest confidence. That supervision is intended to address such issues as objectivity, professional integrity, and assurance of the best therapeutic approach and aims to provide accountability of method, direction, and results of counseling.

Confidentiality. If for any reason it would seem to be helpful to you or the counselor to confer with other agencies or professional people in the course of counseling, the client(s) involved would express their consent to sharing information with that other person by signing a "release of information" form. Our commitment to maintain confidentiality means that nothing will be shared with anyone outside the context of the Christian Counseling Services supervision process without your permission. There are a couple of situations in which counselors cannot maintain confidentiality. The first is when a client or someone related to that client is in danger or there is potential for harm. That would include suicide threats, abuse, violence against someone, or in the case of a court ordered directive that was tested and executed.

Grievance Procedure. Should you need to talk to a supervisor about your counseling experience, you may contact the Director of Counseling at the Center, the Executive Director or the Board President at 724-455-2122 or write the Board of Directors at 2166 Indian Head Road, Champion, PA. 15622.

Starting counseling

Counseling can seem like a very big step. Please be assured that there are several goals that we have for you in this process that can help you better understand how counseling works, your responsibilities in the process and our commitments to you.

When you start counseling the initial steps of the process are designed to help us get to know you and your goals for counseling (intake process and first few counseling sessions) and for you to get to know about our goals for counseling (this informed consent pamphlet, the counseling handbook, website and the intake process). It is important that you are aware of this process and the details that are involved in it, so that you can be an active and informed part of the process.

Your first time at Christian Counseling Services will be spent going over the initial paperwork involved in the counseling process, getting a good personal and medical history, and going over the policies and procedures for the process.

Payments

Payment is due at the end of each session, and can be given directly to the receptionist at the desk. Payments can be made by cash, check, Visa, MasterCard or Discover Card. When paying cash, please be sure to obtain a receipt. If you are unable to make payment at the end of the session, we will send a statement to you within the next few days to help you keep track of what is due. New sessions will not be scheduled or conducted if a client is more than one session behind in payment. If a different payment schedule needs to be made, please contact the office. There is some financial assistance available. If you need help to make your payments please ask in the office. Insurance information is available at the front desk as well.

Records

Client records are our record of what transpires in the counseling session as well as testing, client information, etc. that is confidential. These records are protected under the same rules of confidentiality identified above. You have access to your records when you want or need them. You

can make a record release request at the main office. It will take some time for those to be processed, so please request for them in advance.

Brief overview of Counselling Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures are not meant to be an exhaustive list, but an overview of the more important procedures used for counselling at the Center. To review a detailed copy of the policy and procedures please ask one of the staff or your therapist, or you can view it on the web.

The American Association of Christian Counselors' Code of Ethics. All counselors and staff at the Center adhere to and are committed to the AACC Code of Ethics (AACC, American Counselling Association, 2005). This code is published on their website and is available from the front desk. Codes of ethics are a set of guidelines that are used in the profession to guide counselor behaviour and conduct.

Referrals. If you were referred here by a doctor, pastor, or other professional, we would like to partner with them if that is appropriate from your perspective. This is your decision completely. There is a form in the office that gives us permission to do this. The referring agency should let the person know that the referral contact has been made with us, and assure the person of our readiness to be available to help in counseling. If the referring person is doing supportive counseling with you on an ongoing basis, with your permission, we will work together to make sure they have all of the information they need to help with your care.

Within an appropriate time frame, someone from the Christian Counseling Services will respond back to the referral source to confirm that the person has made contact for counseling.

Biblically Based Counseling. For practical direction, counseling wisdom, and spiritual authority for the ministry of counseling, we refer to the Bible. Our position is not to imply that we have any exclusive insight on "the right" position or scriptural interpretation, nor to be dogmatic about any particular issue, doctrine, or practice in scripture. However, we do see the bible as accurate, and true.

Counselor's Personal Feelings. While we as counselors may have strong personal convictions on any given issue, as an interdenominational ministry, our desire is to address each of those issues that

may come up in a counseling session from your perspective as nearly as we can, and to do so in the framework of Biblical and personal integrity. We view therapy as a partnership between us, the counselor and the client. This requires your very active involvement.

The Counselor's Role in Your Life. In your best interests the counselor should not have any other major role in your life, being a close friend or socializing with any clients.

Non-Discriminatory Policy. Any program offered by the Center will be available to anyone, regardless of their age, sex, nationality, race, color, handicap, ancestry, or religious creed.

Christian Conciliation. By using Christian Counseling Services, you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook, informed consent therapeutic guidelines and other application documents. The parties to this agreement are Christians and believe that the Bible commands them to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (see Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Therefore, the parties agree that any claim or dispute arising from or related to this agreement shall be settled by biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker® Ministries. Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. The parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision. You may find out more about this process by contacting Peacemaker Ministries at www.hispeace.org or at Peacemaker Ministries, 1537 Ave D, Suite 352, Billings, MT 59102 - (406) 256-1583. You may also get more information from the financial offices of the Center.

Summary

This brief informed consent pamphlet has been designed as an intended tool to help you understand your rights and responsibilities in the counseling relationship at the Center. Please utilize it to help ask questions and obtain more information that will help you achieve your important goals in the counseling process.

References

American Association of Christian Counselors (2014). Code of Ethics. Alexandria, VA.

www.aacc.net

Christian Family & Children's Center (2014). Christian Counseling Handbook. Champion, PA .

www.champion.org/counseling.

Client Response:

By signing below I am indicating that I have reviewed this informed consent document and the therapeutic guidelines of Christian Counseling Services and want to work within the context of counseling at the Center.

Client Signature /Spouse or Child Signature

Date

Counseling Staff Reviewed with Client:

Initials and Date