



CLIENT INFORMATION PACKET

WELCOME TO FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY'S CENTER FOR COUNSELING!

This client information packet includes the following forms:

- *Client Information*
- *Statement of Client Rights*
- *Notice of Privacy Practices*
- *Financial Information*
- *Agreement to Pay for Professional Services*

Please speak to the receptionist or to your counselor with any questions regarding any form.

How Counseling Works

- In the first session, the counselor will work with you to gather information about you, including the concerns that have brought you to the Center for Counseling. Together, you and the counselor will identify goals for counseling and begin developing a plan for your treatment.
- Based on information provided during your first call to the Center for Counseling you have been carefully matched with a counselor who has experience regarding your concerns. If you feel that the counselor chosen is not right for you, please notify the Executive Director.
- You and your counselor will regularly review your progress toward goals.
- You can end services at any time. We do ask that you discuss terminating services with your counselor so that a discharge plan can be developed.

Confidentiality

The information shared with the Center for Counseling is held in the strictest confidence in accordance with the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), except as described below. Please refer to the *Notice of Privacy Practices* included in this packet for additional information.

Be Aware of Some of the Exceptions to the Confidentiality Laws:

- **Duty to warn and protect:** When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm someone else, the counselor is required to warn the intended victim and to report this information to the police. When a client discloses intentions or a plan to harm themselves, the counselor is required to make reasonable efforts to notify the family of the client or someone else who can help keep the client safe and / or notify the police.
- **Abuse of children and vulnerable adults:** If a client states or suggests that he or she is abusing a child or vulnerable adult or has recently abused a child or vulnerable adult or that a child or vulnerable adult is in danger of abuse, the counselor is required to report this information to the appropriate legal authorities. This includes parental exposure to controlled substances, which is considered child abuse.
- **Abuse or neglect of a senior:** Counselors are required to notify the elder abuse hotline if the client states or suggests that he or she is abusing or neglecting a senior.
- **Case Consultation:** Cases are sometimes discussed at group staff meetings of clinical professional staff. Client identities are protected and no identifying information is given out during discussion of the case. The opportunity to discuss cases gives you the benefit of the expertise of your counselor as well as the additional expertise and strengths of the group.
- **Subpoenas/Court Orders:** If counseling records are requested by the courts through a subpoena, the Center for Counseling is required to answer to the subpoena by appearing in court.

If the court orders that counseling records are provided to the court the Center for Counseling is required to answer to the court order. It is the policy of the Center for Counseling to notify the client of any subpoena and/or court order before appearing in court and before records are released.

- **Minors / Guardianship:** For questions regarding this issue, please speak to your counselor. He or she will provide information and discuss issues related to this matter.

Working with Your Insurance Benefits

- With your permission and with accurate information about your insurance coverage, the Center for Counseling will bill your primary insurance company. The Center for Counseling does not, however, bill secondary insurance providers.
- Please be aware that many insurance companies require the Center for Counseling to provide to them information about the services being received. This information may include diagnosis, recommended course of treatment, assessment, etc. If you do not want your insurance company to have this information, you have the option to pay directly for your counseling services.
- Your insurance company will decide if they will approve benefits/authorize treatment and may limit the kind of treatment received.
- It is your responsibility to contact your insurance carrier and to discuss with the carrier the costs and limitations and any other issues that may affect payment for services received at the Center for Counseling. You are responsible to understand the limitations and costs associated with insurance benefits. You are responsible to pay for all services not covered by insurance benefits.
- If your insurance coverage changes during the time of received services, please notify the Center for Counseling immediately.

Billing Information

- You are responsible for payment at the time of service.
- The adult accompanying a minor (or guardian of the minor) is responsible for payments for the child at the time of service.
- The Center for Counseling will not bill a third party for services unless that party specifically consents to being billed for services. For example, if an adult brings a child for services and there is a custodial agreement in place regarding that child, the Center for Counseling will bill the adult who is not present ONLY when the financially responsible party has read and signed the *Agreement to Pay for Professional Services* and with appropriate billing information on file. Until that time, the adult who brings the child to the Center for Counseling is responsible for payment.

For more information contact us at one of our office locations listed below or visit our website at www.realsolutionstoday.org For

DeKalb Office
14 Health Services Drive
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-758-8616

Sandwich Office
1406 Suydam Road
Sandwich, IL 60548
815-786-7079

815-758-7569 (fax)