

1 To 1 Counselling
www.1to1Counselling.co.uk

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COUNSELLING AGREEMENT FOR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

Counselling provides the opportunity to talk about things that are of concern, in confidence, with a qualified Counsellor. What is spoken about will depend on the individual, but common themes are stress, relationships, change, loss, peer pressure, anxiety and distressing, traumatic events.

My name is Lorraine Cox and I am a qualified counsellor with experience of working with young people. I am trained to listen without judging and to help young people sort out their thoughts and feelings about whatever is concerning them, mostly at the pace the young person is most comfortable at.

Few of us are able to work well when we are stressed or unhappy. The impact of distressing or difficult situations can be felt even more acutely by young people than by adults. Experience says that young people find counselling useful in the same way as adults do. If young people are able to receive emotional support from a qualified professional they will have greater opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Counselling may be for a few sessions or longer term, starting with half an hour and if / when the young person is ready, moving to an hour.

Just because a young person accesses counselling does not mean anyone has failed. We all experience occasions when it feels hard to speak to those closest to us about things that are bothering us. Often this can be because we don't want to worry those we love best, or because we want help thinking things through with someone unbiased.

It is not my role to judge, it is to help young people find their way through whatever is troubling them.

An essential feature of counselling is the information disclosed is treated confidentially. This enables the young person to open up and share feelings without fear of blame or reprisals. It is also a time when it is acceptable to talk about concerns without fear of them being discussed elsewhere. This includes not discussing the work with parents, unless the young person requests or gives consent for this.

I acknowledge that this isn't an easy situation for parents, and it is quite natural for you to feel anxious about what may be being said in the sessions, but ensuring the confidentiality of the work is crucial for establishing trust so that the young person feels confident to speak openly and freely about what is concerning them.

Although the contents of the sessions will be confidential I retain the right to breach confidentiality in some specific circumstances:

- The young person requests, and feels that it is within their best interests, that certain information be passed on.
- For the purpose of my supervision, which is a regular meeting to make sure I am working in a safe and effective manner. The young person's identity will be not disclosed.
- Circumstances where I feel I have sufficient grounds to believe that the young person is suffering or is likely to suffer or inflict significant harm.
- If the young person discloses that they are aware of significant harm of another person.
- In the event that the young person is under a care order, or when child protection issues arise, I may, with the permission of the young person, attend case conferences and continue to honour the confidentiality contract.

However, if the young person appears to be at risk of significant harm it may be appropriate to seek help from other agencies to keep them safe; if appropriate you will be informed of this. I would discuss this first with the young person concerned.

Experience shows that the most helpful thing a parent can do is to show an acceptance of counselling as a normal and useful activity and to show an interest if their son/daughter wishes to talk about it, but not to press them if they don't.

Any paperwork is kept to a minimum and maintained in an appropriate manner that ensures the preservation of confidentiality. All records and information remain the property of 1 To 1 Counselling.

In the event of being unable to attend a session please ring the number above to let me know as soon as possible as most cancellations require a minimum of 24 hours notice or full session fees may be charged.

1 To 1 Counselling works within the Ethical Framework of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

If there is any cause for complaint, you or the young person are welcome to raise this with myself initially and if the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction then the BACP's contact details can be found on the 1 To 1 Counselling website.