



C.C. Winn High School

265 Foster-Maldonado Blvd.

Eagle Pass, Texas

78852

(830) 757-0828



Eagle Pass ISD Counseling Services Informed Consent/Written Receipt of Information

EPISD has licensed professional counselors (LPCs) available to provide counseling services to our students. The EPISD LPC counselor/client counseling relationship is a professional relationship even though it takes place in the school setting. EPISD professional counseling services are provided at no cost to the student. Prior to providing professional counseling services, the LPC must obtain a signed informed consent form or signed written receipt of information that includes specific information. The involvement of adolescents in therapy can be highly beneficial to their overall development. I will assess what is best for your child and make recommendations to you. Obviously, the support of all the child's caregivers is essential, as well as their understanding of the basic procedures involved in counseling children.

The general goal of involving children in therapy is to foster their development at all levels. At times, it may seem that a specific behavior is needed, such as to get the child to obey or reveal certain information. Although those objectives may be part of overall development, they may not be the best goals for therapy. Again, I will evaluate and discuss these goals with you.

Confidentiality

Student education records are records that are directly related to a student that are created and maintained by an educational agency or by a person acting for such agency or institution. Records that relate to professional counseling services provided by EPISD regarding past students, current students, or students who will be receiving services with Eagle Pass Independent School District are education records protected by FERPA. Oral and written records of students that are received by Eagle Pass I.S.D. from outside of EPISD become education records if they are maintained by EPISD or a person acting for EPISD. All student records are to remain confidential.

Because my role is that of the child's helper, I will not become involved in legal disputes or other official proceedings unless compelled to do so by a court of law. Matters involving custody and mediation are best handled by another professional who is specially trained in those areas rather than by the child's therapist.

The issue of confidentiality is critical in treating children. Children seen in individual sessions (except under certain conditions) are not legally entitled to confidentiality (also called privilege); their parents have this right. However, unless children feel they have some privacy in speaking with a therapist, the benefits of therapy may be lost. Therefore, it is necessary to work out an arrangement in which children feel that their privacy is generally being respected, at the same time that parents have access to critical information.



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This agreement must have the understanding and approval of the parents or other responsible adults and of the child in therapy.

Student records cannot be shared without the written consent of the student's legal guardian. It is policy not to release any information about a student without a signed release of information except in certain emergency situations or exceptions in which student information can be disclosed to others without written consent. Some of these situations are noted below, and there may be other provisions provided by legal requirements.

- When a student discloses intentions or a plan to harm another person or persons, the professional counselor is required to warn the intended victim and report this information to legal authorities.
- In cases in which the student discloses or implies a plan for suicide, the healthcare professional is required to notify legal authorities and make reasonable attempts to notify the family of the student.
- If a student is the victim of abuse, neglect, violence, or a crime victim, and his or her safety appears to be at risk, we may share this information with law enforcement officials to help prevent future occurrences and capture the perpetrator.
- Confidentiality and privilege are also limited in cases involving child abuse, neglect, molestation, or danger to self or others. In these cases, the therapist is required to make an official report to the appropriate agency and will attempt to involve parents as much as possible.

Minors may independently enter into therapy and claim the privilege of confidentiality in cases involving abuse or severe neglect, molestation, pregnancy, or communicable diseases, and when they are on active military duty, married, or officially emancipated. They may seek therapy independently for substance abuse, danger to self or others, or a mental disorder, but parents must be involved unless doing so would harm the child,

Generally, the LPC may not say to a person outside Eagle Pass I.S.D. that a student receives services or disclose any information identifying a student as an alcohol or drug abuser unless: (1) the student or guardian consents in writing, (2) the disclosure is allowed by a court order, or (3) the disclosure is made to medical personnel in a medical emergency, or to qualified personnel for research, audit, or program evaluation.



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A student may be discharged from LPC counseling non-voluntarily if: (A) the student exhibits physical violence, verbal abuse, carries weapons, or engages in illegal acts at the clinic, and/or (B) the student refuses to comply with stipulated program rules, or refuses to comply with treatment recommendations. The student will be notified of the non-voluntary discharge by letter. The student may appeal this decision with the Campus Principal or request to reapply for services at a later date.

Professional misconduct by a healthcare professional must be reported by other healthcare professionals. In cases in which a professional or legal disciplinary meeting is being held regarding the healthcare professional's actions, related records may be released in order to substantiate disciplinary concerns. Student records will be released in such a situation in accordance with applicable FERPA exceptions.

The records that will be created include: (1) this signed informed consent or in the case of an 18 year old student, signed written receipt of information, (2) intake assessment; (3) dates of counseling treatment intervention; (4) principal treatment methods; (5) progress notes; and (6) treatment plan. There is no billing information because no one, including insurance or Medicaid, will be billed for these services which are offered at no cost to EPISD students.

You may request access to your child's records in writing pursuant to FL (LEGAL) and (LOCAL). You have the right to review your child's records in accordance with FERPA; however, there are exceptions in FERPA for sole possession notes as well as "treatment records" for students aged 18 or older. The procedures for obtaining a copy of your student's records as well as your parental rights (or eligible student rights) related to those records is found in FL (LEGAL) and (LOCAL). NOTE: Eagle Pass ISD Policy FLA (LEGAL) related to student medical information does not apply to records related to professional counseling with EPISD. That policy and the related laws address electronically transmitted health information. Your student's information will not be transmitted electronically as a part of their treatment/relationship with the EPISD professional counselor. Additionally, there is no financial obligation associated with the EPISD professional counselor treatment/relationship and no insurance or Medicaid billing will occur.

If you have any complaints or questions regarding these procedures, please contact the LPC. We will get back to you in a timely manner. You may also submit a complaint to the Campus Administrator in accordance with Eagle Pass ISD Policy FNG (LOCAL).



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I understand that counseling sessions are attended during the school day, and I will not inquire about the content of sessions recognizing that if my child prefers not to volunteer information about the sessions, I should respect his/her/their right not to disclose details. Basically, unless my child has been abused or is a clear danger to self or others, the therapist will normally tell me only the following:

- whether sessions are attended
- whether my child is generally participating or not
- whether progress is generally being made or not

The normal procedure for discussing issues that are in my child's counseling will be conferences including my child, the counselor, and me and perhaps other appropriate adults (as deemed necessary). If I believe there are significant health or safety issues that I need to know about, I will contact the counselor and attempt to arrange a session with my child present. Similarly, when the counselor determines that there are significant issues that should be discussed with parents, every effort will be made to schedule a conference involving the parents and the student. I understand that if information becomes known to the counselor and has a significant bearing on the student's well-being, the counselor will work with the person providing the information to ensure that parents are aware of it. In other words, the therapist will not divulge secrets except as mandated by law, but may encourage the individual who has the information to disclose it for therapy to continue effectively. Recognizing that the student should have privacy in his/her/their therapy sessions, I agree to allow this privacy except in extreme situations, which I will discuss with the counselor. At the same time, except under unusual circumstances, I understand that I have a legal right to obtain information pursuant to FERPA. To increase the effectiveness of the counseling, I understand that the specific counseling purposes, goals, and techniques surrounding my child's counseling will be documented.

I have fully read the Eagle Pass ISD Counseling Services Informed Consent document that contains information regarding confidentiality, my rights and the purposes, goals and techniques to be used in my student's counseling.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Student Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

NOTE: In the case of a student 18 or older, only the student signature is required.

Counselor Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

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