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Notice of Client Rights, Treatment Expectations, and Consent to Treatment For Children and Adolescents

Client Rights: Clients have the right to accessible, respectful and quality care, regardless of their age, sex, social status, economic status, ability or disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

Clients have the right to obtain knowledge of their therapist's credentials, training, competencies, and licensure status. This information can be found on the Prairie Wellness website and licensure can be verified through the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Clients have the right to knowledge of alternative services in the community and alternative forms of treatment that are not provided by therapists at Prairie Wellness. Your therapist can provide that information.

Clients have the right to make complaints and are responsible for making their complaints known to their therapist. Complaints will be given careful consideration and will be received in a respectful manner. If you feel your therapist does not appropriately address your complaint, please contact Emily Smith, LISW, or another Prairie Wellness therapist, if Emily is your therapist. In the event you do not feel your concerns have been resolved, you may also contact state licensing boards to file a formal complaint.

Clients have the right to feel safe and secure in our office. Should you violate the perceived safety and security of therapists, or other clients, your treatment may be terminated. If, for any reason, you don't feel safe at our office, please notify your therapist.

Consent to Treatment: Clients have the right to consent to treatment and/or refuse treatment at any time. If the client does not have the capability to legally consent to services, they have the right to prompt explanation of services. Therapists at Prairie Wellness will provide treatment that is mutually agreed upon by both the client (and/or caregivers) and the therapist.

Clients have the right to appropriate treatment for their diagnosed condition. In cases where the appropriate treatment is not available at Prairie Wellness, a referral will be offered.

Clients have the right to be informed of the risks and benefits of the treatment provided to them. In addition, clients acknowledge that should they choose not to participate in recommended treatment plans, their therapist is not responsible for lack of progress towards their goals and reserves the right to terminate treatment.

Clients have the right to end therapy at any time. If you choose to discontinue treatment without discussing it with your therapist, your file will be closed after 60 days of no contact. Your file may be re-opened if you later decide to resume therapy.



Psychotherapy has both benefits and risks. Risks may include experiencing uncomfortable feelings because the process of psychotherapy may require discussing unpleasant aspects of your life. However, therapy has been shown to have benefits for individuals who undertake it. Therapy often leads to a significant reduction in feelings of distress, increased satisfaction in interpersonal relationships, greater self-awareness and insight, and resolutions of specific problems. We cannot guarantee that everyone will experience these benefits. Therapy requires a very active effort on your part. In order to be most successful, you will need to work on the things we discuss outside of your therapy session.

Consent for the Treatment of a Minor:

Therapists generally expect both parents to be aware of their child's participation in therapy. In cases where the therapist is informed the child has another legal guardian who lives in a separate household who has not signed the consent forms and/or is not present for the initial session, the therapist will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the guardian is notified so all legal guardians have reasonable access to provide information and consent to the therapy. If any question exists regarding the authority of a parent/guardian to give consent for psychotherapy, the therapist will require that the parent/guardian submit supporting legal documentation, such as a custody order. Only a parent or legal guardian can consent to the treatment of a minor child. If you are not the child's natural parent but have been granted legal guardianship of the child, you must provide legal documentation showing guardianship. Both parents retain a legal right to receive information about the child's treatment unless the therapist is presented with legal documentation showing a no contact order or termination of parental rights. Any legal guardian may request treatment be discontinued. The rescinding of consent for treatment must be made in writing.

A parent or guardian is expected to accompany the minor to the first appointment, and any subsequent appointments as requested by the therapist. The adolescent's parents/guardians have the responsibility to attend sessions and be involved with the adolescent's treatment as recommended by the therapist.

Confidentiality: Prairie Wellness takes your right to privacy and confidentiality seriously. Clients should expect that information provided to Prairie Wellness will be kept confidential. Clients may request their personal information be shared with others and Prairie Wellness will obtain legal permission to do so with a release of information.

Client information may be discussed between Prairie Wellness therapists and staff to coordinate care. Only information needed for the coordination and continuation of care will be shared.

Confidentiality for minors: Minors have the right to confidentiality in therapy. For psychotherapy with your adolescent to be successful, there must be a trusting and confidential relationship between the therapist and the adolescent. As a general rule, therapists will keep the information minors share with them in sessions confidential, unless they have the adolescent's consent to disclose specific information.

There are, however, important exceptions to this rule that are important for adolescents to understand before they share personal information with therapist in a therapy session. In some situations, therapists



are required by law or by the guidelines of our profession to disclose information whether or not we have your permission. Some of these situations include: The adolescent tells the therapist that they plans to cause serious harm or death to him/herself. The therapist must take steps to inform a parent or guardian of what the minor has told them and how serious they believe this threat to be. The therapist must make sure that the adolescent is protected from harming him/herself.

Another exception to confidentiality is if the adolescent tells the therapist he/she plans to cause serious harm or death to someone else who can be identified. In this situation, the therapist must inform the parent or guardian, and the police. If the adolescent is doing things that could cause serious harm to him/herself or someone else, even if they do not intend harm, the therapist must use his/her professional judgment to decide whether a parent or guardian should be informed.

If an adolescent discloses to their therapist that they are being abused-physically, sexually or emotionally- or that they have been abused in the past, the therapist is required by law to report the abuse to the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Finally, if the adolescent is involved in a court case and a request is made for information about their therapy, there may be issues regarding confidentiality. If this happens, therapists will not disclose information without consent unless the court requires them to. The therapist will do all they can, within the law, to protect the adolescent's confidentiality, and if required to disclose information to the court, the adolescent's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the adolescent when possible will be informed that this is happening. Also please note that Prairie Wellness therapists do not engage in parenting evaluations or provide recommendations pertaining to custody or visitations arrangements. Any time (including travel time) that is required of the therapist to respond to any legal action will be charged at the hourly rate of \$300/hr.

Communicating with parent(s) or guardian(s): Except for situations such as those mentioned above, the therapist will not tell parents or guardians specific things shared in private therapy sessions. This includes activities and behavior that parents/guardians may not approve of — or would be upset by — but that do not put the child at risk of serious and immediate harm. However, if the minor's risk-taking behavior becomes more serious, then the therapist will use their professional judgment to decide whether the adolescent is in serious and immediate danger of being harmed. If the therapist feels that the client is in such danger, they communicate this information to the parent or guardian.

Even if the therapist has agreed to keep information confidential – to not tell the parent or guardian – the therapist may believe that it is important for them to know what is going on in the adolescent's life. In these situations, the therapist will encourage the adolescent to tell their parent/guardian and will help find the best way to tell them. Also, when meeting with parents, the therapist may sometimes describe problems in general terms, without using specifics, in order to help them know how to be more helpful to their adolescent

Adolescents should also know that, by law in Iowa, the parents/guardians have the right to see any



written records kept about sessions. We ask parents/guardians to respect their child's confidentiality to promote the goals of psychotherapy.

Professional Consultation: Professional consultation is an important component of a healthy psychotherapy practice. Therapists regularly participate in clinical, ethical, and legal consultation with appropriate professionals. During such consultations, therapists will not reveal any personally identifying information regarding clients.

Email and Text Messages: Please note that personal email and text message security cannot be guaranteed. Information shared via email or text should be limited and used at your own risk. Appointment reminders will be texted prior to your appointment. Please tell your therapist if you do not want text reminders sent. Under no circumstances should email or text be used to communicate with your therapist in an emergency.

Scheduling: Therapists at Prairie Wellness aim to provide timely treatment and treatment frequency based upon client need. If the client is not happy with the scheduling availability of a therapist, a referral to another therapist may be provided.

Clients are responsible for attending all scheduled appointments. We will attempt to remind you of your appointments with text reminders but it is your responsibility to come to all scheduled appointments. Should you need to cancel an appointment, we ask for at least a 24-hour notice. If you cancel with less than a 24-hour notice or miss an appointment without notifying your therapist, we reserve the right to charge a fee. It is important that our clients keep appointments for continuity of care, respect for clients waiting for appointment times, and respect for Prairie Wellness therapists.

Prairie Wellness therapists may choose to terminate services in the event that the client fails to show for an appointment or makes last minute cancellations.

Payment: Clients are responsible for payment of services. Prairie Wellness accepts many types of insurance, but clients are ultimately responsible for copays, deductibles, and any fees that are not covered by their insurance plan. If you are unable to pay for services, we will provide you with an appropriate referral.

Clients are expected to pay their copays and deductibles at the time of service. We accept cash, checks, or credit card payments. A fee of \$25 will be billed in the case of a returned check.

Authorized release of information and benefits assignments for insurance claims: Should the client decide to use insurance to pay for therapy sessions, client diagnosis and treatment information will be shared with insurance providers in order to obtain payment for services provided. We will submit claims on our clients' behalf to insurance companies using HIPAA compliant resources. Should a client wish to prevent the sharing of information between Prairie Wellness and their insurance company, they may choose to pay full fee for services and not bill their insurance providers.



Children in the Waiting Room: Children 12 and under are not allowed to wait in the waiting room without adult supervision.

Hours of Operation: Prairie Wellness is an affiliation of independent therapists. Therapists set their own hours of operation. Please check with your therapist to find out when they see clients.

Emergencies: Your therapist can be reached during their scheduled business hours. Generally, voice messages will be checked once daily during business hours. We will make every attempt to return calls within 24-48 business hours after receipt of a message. If you are in crisis, or you or someone else is in imminent risk of harm, please go to the nearest emergency room, crisis stabilization center, or dial 911.