



# Counselling Information for Parents/Caregivers

If you're a parent or guardian concerned about your child, welcome! I understand and appreciate that being a teenager, or the parent of a teenager, today can be stressful and can come with physical and emotional challenges.

My experience as a specialist counsellor in Eating Disorders, as well as my work with unaccompanied minors arriving in Australia, in foster and kinship care and working with young people with disabilities has given me valuable insight into issues facing young people today.

Issues I've previously supported young people with include:

- Eating disorders and body relationship issues;
- Depression and low mood;
- Life transitions (i.e. grief and loss, moving countries, changing schools, divorce/parental separation);
- Anxiety;
- Identity;
- Relationship issues;
- Self-harm and suicidal thoughts;
- Social anxiety;
- Emotional regulation;
- Trauma

As with my other counselling services, I offer a brief, free meet-and-greet session over the phone to all young people and/or their parents/care givers interested in starting counselling. This typically takes 10-15 minutes and allows you all an opportunity to

hear a little more about what to expect from counselling sessions and to reduce any possible anxiety regarding starting counselling.



## Challenges and Benefits of Counselling

It's important to be aware of potential benefits and risks of counselling. For example, as therapy often involves discussing challenging aspects of one's life, your child may experience uncomfortable feelings before, during and after our sessions, like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness and helplessness. Working through challenging emotions can sometimes lead to an increase in difficult behaviours before the adolescent is able to utilise new coping strategies or fully integrate their experiences. This is something I speak about directly with all clients to come up with shorter-term strategies for coping until longer-term positive outcomes start to take place. This is also an area I can support you with directly, as the key support person in the young person's life.

Benefits of counselling may include:

- 1- Improved emotional well-being: Counselling can help adolescents develop more effective and helpful coping strategies, build resilience, and enhance their overall emotional well-being.
- 2- Enhanced self-awareness: Exploration of thoughts and feelings can lead to a better

understanding of oneself; fostering personal growth and self-acceptance.

3- Improved communication skills: Counselling can assist adolescents in improving their communication skills enabling them to express their needs and concerns effectively.

4- Strengthened relationships: By addressing interpersonal issues and learning effective relationship patterns, counselling can improve relationships with family, friends, and peers.

5- Academic success: Counselling can help alleviate stress and anxiety related to academic pressures leading to improved focus, motivation, and capacity to focus on academic pursuits.

## How does confidentiality work?

- Counsellors who work with adolescents must find the balance of protecting the adolescent's right to privacy while at the same time respecting the parent's or guardian's right to information.
- At Emily Stanley Counselling, your child's counselling time is a time just for them and provides a space for them to develop a safe, respectful and trusting relationship with me as their therapist.
- Typically, parents and guardians remain outside for the duration of sessions. However, you will be consulted about sessions and, depending on your child's unique situation, you may at times participate in the sessions (for example, during our first session or as part of a discussion about strategies to implement at home).
- To ensure an adolescent's privacy I will not provide detailed information to the parent/caregiver regarding what the child shared unless the child provides consent or something is disclosed during the session that requires action.
- General therapeutic themes, ideas and recommendations will be provided to you as parent/caregiver, as well as support and encouragement.

## How many counselling sessions will my child/loved one need?

All sessions begin with an initial assessment and from here you, your child, and I can collaboratively make an informed decision about how many sessions is likely to be most helpful to your child. However, counselling is not linear and I find it most valuable to be flexible depending on what issues and needs are raised in sessions. Ultimately, it is up to you and your child how many sessions they attend and we can regularly review and discuss the topic as we progress.

Do you have further questions or would like to book a meet-and-greet session? If so, please get in touch!

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