

## CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGREEMENT INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Wake Family Psychology, PLLC! This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. It also contains summary information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), a federal law that provides privacy protections and patient rights with regard to the use and disclosure of your Protected Health Information (PHI) use for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations. We are required by this law to give you a full Notice of the HIPAA standards and have you sign that you have received this notice. When you sign this document, it also serves as an agreement between us to participate in professional services as described in the agreement. You may revoke this agreement in writing at any time. That revocation will be binding unless we have already taken action in reliance on it; if there are obligations imposed upon us by your health insurer in order to process and substantiate claims; or if you have not satisfied any financial obligations you have incurred.

### CHILD AND FAMILY PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

#### Preparing for your First Meeting

In most cases, we will meet with parents before your child's first visit. To prepare, we suggest you:

1. Make a list of your questions and concerns. Bringing background information such as report cards, school work, or previous testing is very helpful.
2. Check your mental health benefits with your insurance company. If we are not included on your plan's preferred provider list, ask if your plan offers reimbursement for out-of-network providers.

#### Talking with your Child about Therapy

The following statements are often useful in preparing your child for the initial visit with a psychologist. You will have to decide if this presentation is appropriate for your child. A few days before the appointment, tell your child briefly about your concerns and that you are going to meet with a doctor who is different from most “shot” doctors or dentists. This doctor is more like a coach. Just as a coach helps players and teams reach their goals and succeed, this doctor helps kids and families improve. Tell your child that this coach will probably want to get his or her perspective after meeting with parents.

#### How We Can Help

At Wake Family Psychology, we use a variety of approaches to help children and families overcome obstacles and reach goals:

- **Individual Therapy** – Meeting one-on-one with your child to identify strategies and work on skills that will lead to improvement.
- **Family Therapy** – Meeting with all or a subset of family members to minimize relationship patterns that interfere with family goals and to build strong, positive behaviors and relationships.
- **Psychological Testing** – Uses a combination of clinical interviews, record reviews, rating forms, standardized tests to accurately diagnose emotional, learning, and/or attention problems and to make formal recommendations for appropriate interventions.

## **Therapy is a Special Relationship**

As a parent, you initiated therapy because you recognized that your child was struggling in some areas. For your child to know he or she can work in a professional setting to get “unstuck,” your child may need to know that what is said in therapy will be held in confidence. Don't feel hurt if your child does not wish to share what he or she talks about in therapy. As a coach for families, we often encourage children to learn how to share more openly with their parents so that the natural influences of change that parents and family can generate can help. At the beginning of each session, we will ask you to complete a brief form indicating what kind of change has occurred since the last meeting and what issues you would like to address today. We will also usually inform you about any “homework” we are asking your child to do.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves sharing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, and frustration. On the other hand, psychotherapy has been shown to have many benefits. Therapy can often lead to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in distress. There are no guarantees what you will experience. To have the best results, you will have to work on things we talk about both in session and between sessions.

The first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, your psychologist will offer you some first impressions and recommendations for treatment goals and strategies. You should evaluate these impressions along with your own opinions of whether you wish to continue working with us. Therapy can involve a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with us early on.

## **Contacting your Psychologist**

Due to our work schedules, we often cannot be immediately available by phone. Even though we are usually in the office on weekdays, we may not answer the phone if we are in session with someone. When available, our phone is answered by an office manager or otherwise by a voice mail recording. You may leave your information and trust that it will be confidential. We will make every effort to return your call the same day except on weekends and holidays. If you have an emergency and cannot reach us or wait for a return call, contact your physician, the nearest emergency department, or call the Holly Hill Respond Line at 919-250-7000.

## **Limits On Confidentiality**

The law protects the privacy of all communications between a patient and psychologist. In most situations, we can only release information about your treatment to others if you sign a written Authorization Form that meets legal requirements imposed by HIPAA. Other disclosures require only your written advance consent as provided by your signature on this agreement:

- Consulting with another health professional about cases. When doing so, we make every attempt to avoid disclosing identity. The other professionals are also legally bound to maintain confidentiality. We will note all consultations in your Clinical Record.
- Staff members at Wake Family Psychology, PLLC may be aware of some treatment information. All staff have been trained in protecting patient information and privacy.
- On occasion, we may contract with accountants, billing professionals, attorneys, etc and if this contract requires any disclosure of PHI the professional will be required to sign a business associate agreement that explains the promise to maintain confidentiality.
- Disclosures to insurance companies or collection agencies to collect fees.
- If your therapist believes that a patient presents an imminent danger to his/her health or safety, that psychologist may be obligated to disclose PHI to assure the patient's safety.
- If you are involved in a court proceeding and a request is made for information from the psychologist, that information is generally protected by the psychologist-patient privilege law. Your psychologist cannot disclose your information without your written consent or through a court order.

- If a government agency is requesting information for health oversight activities, your psychologist may be required to provide it to them.
- If a patient files a Workers' Compensation claim, and our services are compensated through workers compensation benefits, we must upon request provide a copy of the patient's record to the patient's employer or the NC Industrial Commission.

Some situations legally obligate us to take actions that we believe are necessary to attempt to protect others from harm and we may have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. These situations are unusual in our practice:

- If we have cause to suspect that a child under 18 is abused or neglected, or if we have reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult is in need of protective services, the law requires that a psychologist file a report with the County Protective Services.
- If we believe that a patient presents an imminent danger to the health and safety of another, we may be required to disclose information in order to take protective actions, including initiating hospitalization, warning the potential victim, if identifiable, and/or calling the police.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should be helpful to you, we are committed to discussing any questions you have now or in the future as the rules about confidentiality can be quite complex.

## **PROFESSIONAL RECORDS**

You should be aware that, pursuant to HIPAA, your psychologist will keep Protected Health Information (PHI) about you in two sets of professional records. One set constitutes your Clinical Record and includes information about why you sought therapy, a description about the way the problem impacts your life, your diagnosis, the treatment goals, your progress, your medical/social/treatment history, your billing records, and any reports or letters that have been sent to anyone. You may review your Clinical Record if you give written notice to your psychologist, but you should know that professional records can be misinterpreted or upsetting to the untrained reader. Therefore, we recommend that you first review the Clinical Record with your psychologist if you have communicated a wish to see them. If for any reason you request a copy of the Clinical Record be sent to another professional, we are permitted to charge a copying fee of \$.20 per page and for certain other expenses.

The second set of material may be the psychologist's Psychotherapy Notes. These notes are for his/her own use and are designed to assist the psychologist in providing you with the best treatment. These Psychotherapy Notes are kept separate from the Clinical Record and are not available to you and cannot be sent to anyone else, including Insurance companies without your written signed consent. Insurance companies cannot require your authorization of disclosure as a condition of coverage or reimbursement.

HIPAA provides you with several new or expanded rights with regard to your Clinical Record and any disclosures of PHI. These rights are described in your Notice and can be discussed with the psychologist at your request.

## **BILLING AND PAYMENTS**

In cases with children and dependents, an adult must be identified as responsible for payment at the outset of treatment. In separated and divorced families, the parent who initiates services will be held financially responsible for treatment costs. Another person cannot be billed unless he or she states in writing willingness to pay for services rendered.

Payment for all services is due at each session. If you are seeking insurance reimbursement, you must still pay your portion of the bill. You must pay your co-payment each visit and satisfy any applicable deductible. If we do not have a contract with the insurance company to be a preferred provider, you will be responsible for the full fee at time of service.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED AND READ THIS AGREEMENT AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS AND ALSO SERVES AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE HIPAA NOTICE FORM.

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient or Responsible Party Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority to act for patient (e.g., Parent, Legal Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACHMENT A: SCHEDULE OF FEES**

Fees are payable in full at each session unless otherwise indicated by the terms of your insurance provider with the psychologist. Please make checks payable to Wake Family Psychology, PLLC. We also can accept cash, MasterCard, VISA, or American Express. These fees will go into effect on March 31, 2023. You will be notified of changes after that point if fees increase.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Fee</b>
<b>Initial Diagnostic Interview</b>	\$195
<b>Diagnostic Interview</b>	\$195
<b>Individual/Family Psychotherapy (30 min)</b>	\$90
<b>Individual/Family Psychotherapy (45 min)</b>	\$160
<b>Individual/Family Psychotherapy (55 min)</b>	\$170
<b>Psychological Evaluation, per hour</b> For each hour spent administering tests, an additional hour is charged to score and analyze results, and produce a report.	\$200 per hour
<b>Group Therapy (60-90 min)</b>	\$120
<b>Telephone Consultations longer than 15 min, per quarter hour</b>	\$45
<b>School Consultation/Observation</b>	\$195
<b>Court-related Services, per hour</b> A retainer of \$1000 is required when testimony is requested. A \$500 minimum will be applied to preparation and is non-refundable.	\$350
<b>Late Cancellation/Missed Appointment</b> Please give at least 24-hour notice if you must miss an appointment to avoid this charge.	\$95

