



# Torfaen Young People's Counselling Service

## Data Protection & Privacy Policy, Secondary Schools

**Counselling Service Manager:** [Ceri.jones@ccyp.org.uk](mailto:Ceri.jones@ccyp.org.uk) Tel: 0780 1550582

Any personal data provided by you, your parents/carers or by other adults known to you, to the Torfaen Young People's Counselling Service through any means (verbal, written, in electronic form) will be held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), in order for us to provide counselling as requested.

### Introduction

The Torfaen Young People's Counselling Service is committed to respecting your Privacy and upholding the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations.

If you have any questions about your personal information or any questions about our use of the information, please ask your counsellor, or contact the Service Manager, Ceri Jones, whose email & mobile number are at the top of this policy. When you request counselling with us, (or someone requests counselling on your behalf) you will be asked to consent to our processing of your data under the terms of this policy.

### What information do we collect?

- **Counselling Request Forms & Self Referral forms**– Requesting access to our counselling service can be on paper, via email or in person. Our request process involves providing us with your name, date of birth, address, & best contact number for you. We may also request information on your availability, therapeutic issues, and other details which we consider necessary for processing your request.
- **Personal Information**- We are required by the Welsh Government to record statistical information such as: your ethnic background, sexual preference (for those of you over 16), beliefs & if you have any disabilities; all of this information is recorded anonymously on a form that **does not have your name on**.
- **Counselling session records**- after each session, your counsellor will write down a brief outline of what you talked about to help them remember the session. You can ask to see these notes at any time.
- **Initial Assessment**– During the initial assessment (first appointment) we ask about your current personal and social circumstances. We will also ask about your background and family history, as well as the issues which are affecting you now. We need this information to decide if counselling is the right kind of support for you, and to help focus the counselling sessions.
- **Risk & Child Protection**- In the initial assessment (& during counselling sessions), if you are feeling very low and/or if have hurt yourself or might hurt yourself, the counsellor will ask questions about this to make sure that you are safe. They will record in the session notes any concerns & who they spoke to if they needed to share this.

### What do we use your information for?

- To provide young people with the professional counselling service requested from us.
- To keep brief, appropriate notes in accordance with the British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy Ethical Guidelines.
- To notify you about changes to your appointments and other changes to our service.
- To improve our service to ensure that it is provided in the most effective manner for you and for us.
- To report anonymised statistics about the Counselling Service to Welsh Government.

## What information do we share?

We will **not share** any information about you with other organisations or people, **except** in the following situations:

- **Consent** – Your Counsellor may share your information with teachers, other professionals, parents/carers or other adults, if you have requested this or directly agreed to this.
- **Serious harm** – Your Counsellor will share your information with Child Protection Officers, if they are concerned that you might seriously hurt yourself, someone else, or if someone else you talk about is at risk of being hurt.
- **Compliance with law** – We have to share your information, including counselling session records, if we receive an order from the courts to do so.

## How do we keep your information safe?

All information you provide us with is stored as securely as possible. All paper forms, correspondence and counselling session records are kept in locked filing cabinets in locked rooms.

Sometimes we receive counselling requests via email and this can never be guaranteed to be 100% safe. However, we will do our best to protect your information by using secure email providers & deleting electronic counselling requests once the request has been processed: once it has been securely filed or passed on to the appropriate counsellor.

Counselling records are taken to The Civic Centre in Pontypool at the end of the Academic year to be archived, and only the Service Manager and Primary Coordinator have access to these archived documents.

The archived notes are currently stored for 10 years after you turn 18. This storage time may be updated at a future time.

## Your rights

You have the right to ask us to provide a copy of the information held by us; and you have the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in your information. If you would like to do this, please speak to your counsellor, or contact the Service Manager, Ceri Jones.

You may withdraw your consent for us to hold and process your data at any time. However, if you do this while actively receiving counselling, your counselling will have to end.