

# Adolescent Privacy Policy

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One of our most important goals in caring for your family through the years has been helping you raise healthy children to become healthy adults. Adolescence brings a new dynamic to this relationship as it requires confidentiality between the child & health care provider about certain topics. Teenagers are often willing to discuss important topics only after they are assured confidentiality; therefore **state laws require that adolescents be able to seek care for certain conditions without parental consent\***.

These conditions include problems relating to:

- drug or alcohol use
- sexual activity
- contraception
- mental health concerns

\*If a teen's behavior presents a serious threat to his/her life or the life of another person, only then can a provider overrule these confidentiality laws and share information with a parent/guardian without the teen's permission.

**Please be aware that we do not encourage teens to keep secrets from their parents/guardians and we recognize the valuable role the family can play in helping adolescents reduce or stop their risky behaviors. Providers often try to help adolescents appreciate this fact & open up their own lines of communication within the family.**

## Here are a few concrete ways that this shift of responsibility will be implemented:

Starting with the 13 year old physical exam, the parent/guardian will wait in the waiting room for part of the patient's visit.

Login information for the Patient Portal will be held solely by the patient.

Adolescents should be familiar with their own medications & allergies.

Over the age of 18, only the patient can receive medical information (lab results, medical records). He/she must provide consent before a provider can share this information with a parent/guardian.

We care for patients until they turn 21 years old, so it is important for older adolescents to start communicating directly with the our office staff & clinicians about their health questions, appointments, prescriptions, etc. We expect parents, patients, & providers to work together so these next few years can be a gradual transition of responsibility from the parent to the adolescent as he/she prepares to be a healthy & independent adult.

