

August 2020

Confidentiality Concerning Minors

Being an msw school based therapist intern I am working alongside children who are under the age of 18. Centerstone adheres to maintaining confidentiality for children and families who are engaged in therapy services. Centerstone cannot disclose personal information of a child to their legal guardian if they initiated seeking services at the age of 16. However, confidentiality is breached if a child discloses being abused in the home of their caregiver and/or their legal guardian.

At Goal Academy, there was an instance of a client who sought counseling services with the therapist Chris. The client was 16 years old and shared that he had one experience with his father who had punched him in the face while he was driving. The client disclosed the situation and Chris expressed to the client that he would have to report the incident because he was a mandated reporter. The therapist called the father and shared with him that his son was being honest about his history with abuse and shared a recent incident he had with his father. I could hear the father on the other end recall what happened and began to explain what happened. The father was teaching his son how to drive and had gotten startled that the car ahead on the other side of incoming traffic was going to collide with the vehicle while turning left. He reacted by hitting his son in the face. Judging his tone of voice, the father sounded remorseful and sincere and stated that he understood why the report had to be completed.

The way the school-based therapist handled the situation impressed how to remain calm and posed while also engaging in healthy confrontation on behalf of the client. I also felt my stomach churn at the fact that the child had to return home to the parental guardian. The child's safety was put in first place by the therapist. I think this example of confidentiality concerning minors encompassed an authentic care for the child's well being while also empowering the parent of the child by communicating what process had to be made as a mandated reporter. The NASW values and principles that I gleaned from this experience was the dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity.

September 2020

Disclosure

While I was shadowing a therapist at Bradley Central High School I was observing a client who was in the 9th grade and still had issues with the death of her infant brother. The client had witnessed his burial when she was in the 6th grade and had been seeking treatment with Centerstone. During the session, the therapist engaged in grief counseling and was guiding the conversation towards reconciliation of the death.

The therapist disclosed to the client that her mother had died when she was in high school. She explained that she would "talk to her mother." I noticed that the attention appeared to have shifted from the client to the therapist. Although, she

explained that in her clinical judgement, she decided to disclose her experience in order to encourage the client to reconcile the death of her brother. The piece of homework she gave the client was to write him a letter.

As a social worker intern, the topic of disclosure came to my mind. I think that the therapist deemed it appropriate to disclose as it was to encourage healing for the client. I personally felt uncomfortable as I thought that the client may have interpreted that statement literally than metaphorically. I may have reframed the explanation of talking to the client's brother as sharing a love letter expressing what she would've wanted him to know. I think that this was a clear example of disclosing given the amount of rapport built between the client and therapist.