

Cornerstone: Foundations for Families

How to Get the Most from your Counseling

People are often wondering about what to expect when they come to counseling. They are not sure what to expect of the counselor, themselves, or if the counselor has any expectations of them. We know that counseling works because research shows people who go to counseling are better off than people who don't. This overview was created to help you get the most out of your experience with Cornerstone. Our goal is to help you in the most effective, efficient manner possible.

Let's start with you:

- Create your own goals and objectives
- Work on those goals between sessions
- Apply the ideas between sessions
- You are the expert in your life
- What you bring to counseling is the most important
- Talk with your counselor about how you think the relationship with them is going

Now the counselor:

- Is like a coach
- Will help you reach your goals with out violating your core beliefs
- Believes you will see some improvement in the first few sessions
- Has faith in your ability to change
- Believes in building upon your strengths
- Believes the relationship with your counselor is very important to your ability to change

We use two forms to help you achieve your goals: The Outcome Rating Scale (ORS) and The Session Rating Scale (SRS). The ORS is completed prior to each appointment. This form is used as a way to gauge the past week from your perspective. This form is located in the waiting room. The SRS is completed at the end of the appointment. It is used to gauge your opinion of the session and to help you get what you want from your counselor. It is important that you provide honest feedback even if it is not all positive.

Thank you for choosing Cornerstone and let us know if there is anything we can do to increase your satisfaction with our agency.

**Note to parents bringing their child to counseling:*

*We believe parents are the most important part of a child's life. Parental involvement improves counseling outcomes. It is our responsibility to help your child be the best he/she can be, to help them with their development, their feelings, and to help them sort out the things in their lives they don't understand, question or fear. We have found we not only have to support the parents, but also challenge some of their beliefs and behaviors. It is likely you will be asked to make some changes as well as your child. **For a child to excel at their greatest potential parental involvement is a necessity. Parents are and will be the most significant force in a child's life.***

*See information for kids and youth on the back.

Counseling Tips for Kids

If you have a broken arm or a bad cold you go to the doctor for help, to feel better, right? If you have a toothache you see a dentist, a special doctor for your mouth and teeth.

Sometimes kids have problems they can't see as easily as a broken bone or a cavity. When people have troubles with how they feel, the way they act, or the things they think about sometimes they see a counselor. This is someone who has gone to school for special training in the way people think and feel and how to help people feel better.

Counselors:

- Know a lot about kid stuff (how they think, grow up & see the world)
- Know how to help kids solve problems and deal with tough situations
- Will ask you some questions (What you think about, How you feel, & What you do)
- Won't make you do or say anything you don't want to
- Will meet with your parents as well as you
- Want you to know that talking helps

Kids:

May play games, draw pictures, or just sit and talk

Will be asked to set goals (How do you want things to be different?)

Need to tell the truth

Talk about why you are coming to see a counselor

Tell your counselor if you don't like something

Tell your parents if you don't like your counselor; so it can be talked about

Need to know that getting help is no big deal

Get to decide who knows you are seeing a counselor and who doesn't

The main thing to remember is that your counselor, teachers, and mom and dad want what is best for you; that is, for you to feel happy, be proud of yourself, and enjoy being a kid.