The Family Therapy Center

your rights

540-231-7201
840 University City Blvd.
Blacksburg, VA 240
www.familytherapy.vt.edu
Your Rights As A Client

As a client, you are entitled to the highest standard of professional care.

Confidentiality

At The Family Therapy Center, all our services are fully confidential. We cannot discuss your case with anyone or even tell anyone else you are a client with us unless you have made a threat to physically harm yourself or others, your case involves abuse of a child or incapacitated adult, there is a valid court order compelling us to discuss your case in court or release your records, or you give us written permission to discuss your case with someone else. Further, all competent adults who have been in therapy together must agree to any release of information before records can be released about any of them, with the exception of the circumstances mentioned above.

Therapist Qualifications, Fees, and Your Consent to Treatment

You are entitled to ask your therapist about her or his training, about the basis for your treatment, and questions about cost. You will be given a copy of our fees before therapy begins, and must sign a payment agreement before therapy will start. You also must sign a separate agreement to enter therapy, which will specify what you can expect and what the limits of your and our obligations are. You are free to discontinue therapy at any time, though we may advise against it.

Your Rights and Research

While we occasionally conduct research with clients, you will never be placed in a research program without your written permission and informed consent, and we will not require you to take part in research as a condition of your treatment. All research involving clients must be approved in advance by the University Institutional Review Board. You may raise any questions regarding research at the Center with the Center Director at 540-231-7201, or with the Review Board.

Electronic Communications

For your protection, federal health care privacy regulations restrict us from communicating with clients by e-mail or by computer-based fax. While we recognize this is an inconvenience, please understand that e-mail and computer fax do not ensure the privacy of your conversations with us. Please use the telephone, the U.S. mail, or your regular appointments.

The Ethical Code of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and Virginia Law

Therapists are required to abide by the Ethical Code of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy and relevant Virginia law. Therapists are prohibited from having "dual relationships" with any client, meaning they cannot serve as therapists for anyone with whom they have business or family relationships, close friendships, or close collegial relationships. Therapists also are forbidden to have romantic or sexual relationships with either current or former clients. Ethical therapists do not “fall in love” with their clients, become sexually or romantically involved with them, loan them money, borrow from them, “hang out” with them, or otherwise take advantage of their position of trust.

Discrimination

Therapists may not discriminate against clients on the basis of the client’s ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or disability. This does not mean that your therapist may not sometimes disagree with you or advise a course of action you may choose not to take. But an ethical therapist does not disagree with a client’s choices simply because the therapist holds different values or beliefs. An ethical therapist always tries to help the client make choices that enhance the client’s sense of self control and confidence, and does not use her position for her own emotional or other type of personal gain.

If You Think Your Rights May Have Been Violated

If you think your rights may have been violated or simply have questions about them please telephone the Clinical Training Director at 540-231-6807, or the Program Director at 540-231-7201.