

Questions Parents Ask About Counseling

Answers to Common Questions About Child & Teen Counseling

School Counselor Resource Series

Purpose

Beginning counseling is an important decision, and it's natural for parents to have questions. This guide addresses some of the most common questions families ask when considering counseling for their child or teenager.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I know if my child needs counseling?

Every child experiences challenges, but counseling may be helpful when emotional, behavioral, or relationship concerns begin affecting daily life at home, school, or with friends. You don't have to wait until a situation becomes a crisis before seeking support.

Does counseling mean I've failed as a parent?

Absolutely not.

Seeking support is a sign of care, not failure. Just as families seek tutoring for academic struggles or physical therapy after an injury, counseling provides additional support when children or teens are facing emotional or behavioral challenges.

What happens during counseling sessions?

Every counseling relationship is unique.

Depending on a child's age and needs, sessions may include conversation, activities, games, art, skill-building, problem-solving, and learning healthy coping strategies. Older students often spend more time talking through thoughts, emotions, relationships, and life experiences.

Freedom Path Counseling

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Will my child have to talk?

No.

Counselors work to build trust and create a safe environment where children and teens feel comfortable sharing at their own pace.

Will I be involved?

Yes.

Parents are an important part of the counseling process. While counselors also respect a child's appropriate confidentiality, parent collaboration often plays an important role in helping children apply what they are learning outside of counseling.

How long does counseling usually last?

The length of counseling depends on the child's goals, needs, and progress. Some concerns can be addressed in a relatively short period of time, while others benefit from ongoing support.

Is everything my child says confidential?

Counselors work to protect client confidentiality while also partnering appropriately with parents. There are important legal and ethical exceptions when safety concerns exist or when disclosure is required by law.

Will counseling "fix" my child?

Counseling is not about fixing children because children are not broken.

Instead, counseling helps children better understand themselves, develop healthy coping skills, strengthen relationships, build resilience, and navigate life's challenges with greater confidence.

What can I do to support my child?

Parents make a tremendous difference.

You can support the counseling process by:

- Encouraging honest communication.

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- Practicing healthy coping skills together.
- Celebrating progress rather than perfection.
- Keeping consistent routines whenever possible.
- Working collaboratively with your child's counselor.
- Remaining patient as growth takes time.

What if counseling doesn't seem to help right away?

Growth often happens gradually.

Many children begin by developing trust with their counselor before discussing difficult experiences. Celebrate small steps and maintain open communication with the counselor about your observations and concerns.

Remember

Every child deserves caring adults who believe in their ability to grow. Counseling is one way families can provide additional support, encouragement, and practical tools that help children and teens thrive.

Helpful Reminder for Parents

If you're wondering whether counseling might help, consider reaching out for a conversation. Asking questions and exploring your options does not commit you to counseling, but it may provide the clarity and confidence your family needs to take the next step.

Part of the Freedom Path Counseling School Counselor Resource Series

These resources are provided free of charge to support school counselors as they invest in the emotional well-being of students and families. Learn more and access additional downloadable tools at **freedompathcounseling.org/school-counselor-resource-center**

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