



Counseling Information and Confidentiality Policy Form

Pickens County Advocacy Center Mission Statement

To provide optimum quality assistance and crisis intervention for all sexual assault victims in Pickens County and exclusively provide direct services to this victim population.

Counseling Information

Therapy focused on the trauma of sexual violence (childhood abuse and/or adult assault) is a difficult process. Clients coming to Pickens County Advocacy Center can expect competent and professional services, therapists trained in trauma-informed treatment choices, and to be treated with respect. Therapy is effective when the client is committed to the process of healing.

Therapeutic Goals

You will have individual therapeutic goals that you determine in your treatment plan with your therapist. However, these are general goals we have for all our clients and secondary survivors.

1. Understand how sexual trauma has impacted you and how your symptoms are related to it; understand how to extinguish or manage triggers to resume optimal functioning.
2. Improve in daily living and minimize the negative impacts of sexual trauma.
3. Help family members, caregivers, and loved ones understand and support trauma survivors and develop skills to manage their own distress caused by secondary trauma.
4. Identify and build traits of healthy relationships and secure attachment.

What You Can Expect

1. Sexual trauma therapy provided by Pickens County Advocacy Center is designed to be a relatively short-term therapy (8-20 sessions) that is primarily focused on the wide-ranging impacts of sexual violence. During your first visit, you and your therapist will discuss your or your child's treatment needs and plan a treatment schedule. Some outcomes are as follows:
 - a. Learning that the trauma was not you/your child's fault and that you are not the only ones who have survived a similar traumatic event.
 - b. Identifying feelings and learning how to manage them.
 - c. Learning how to relax and tolerate trauma reminders.
 - d. Identifying negative thoughts that cause depression and anxiety.
 - e. Learning how to replace negative thoughts with more helpful thoughts.
 - f. Learning how to resolve problems.
 - g. Learning safety skills.
 - h. (When appropriate) learning techniques to improve parenting skills, communication, and survivor support.
2. Therapy appointments will generally average 45 minutes to an hour in length.
3. Attendance policies:
 - a. A 24-hour notice is required any time you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment.
 - b. Pickens County Advocacy Center reserves the right to close your case file after the third (3) missed/no-show appointment.
 - c. If one (1) calendar month passes without contact between you and Pickens County Advocacy Center, the agency reserves the right to close your case file.
 - d. If two (2) calendar months pass without an appointment (in person, on telehealth, or on the phone) between you and Pickens County Advocacy Center, the agency reserves the right to close your case file.
 - e. Should your case file become closed, you can request to have your name added to the waiting list for a future appointment, provided that you desire to recommit to counseling.
4. Receiving treatment for childhood sexual abuse or adult sexual assault can be difficult. Painful issues from the past that clients sometimes prefer to keep buried are surfaced and discussed. Consequently, therapy requires that an individual be emotionally and mentally stable. If your needs are determined by your therapist to be more related to your current mental health or a struggle with substance use than to your sexual abuse/assault, you may be referred to the agency that can best address that issue. If you become troubled by suicidal thoughts or attempts, it is essential that you call your medical professional immediately to help you through this emergency. Pickens County Advocacy Center may not be the appropriate level of care for you at the time, but we will be eager to assist you in finding appropriate treatment.
5. If it is in your best interest therapeutically, Pickens County Advocacy Center and the another service provider **may** provide services at the same time. It would be necessary for the two agency therapists to communicate with each other. You will be asked to sign a release that allows this to occur.

Pickens County Advocacy Center Confidentiality Policy

All information obtained during therapy is confidential with the following exceptions:

1. Individual verbalizes intent to harm self or someone else.
2. Individual provides information about the abuse or neglect of a child or of any person considered vulnerable due to age or mental, emotional, or physical limitations. Please remember that we are mandated reporters and reports of abuse and neglect must be reported to Law Enforcement and/or to the Department of Social Services.
3. If a subpoena, signed by a judge is served to your therapist, your therapist may be required by law to provide the information specifically described in the subpoena.
4. At certain times, client records are reviewed by grant monitors to ensure compliance with federal, state, and grant objectives. Grant monitors are required to comply with confidentiality/privacy issues. Your record may or may not be chosen for this review as the records are picked randomly.
5. If you wish information from your or your child's counseling file to be released to someone (e.g. an attorney, a physician, DSS, etc.) your therapist may do so if you sign an authorization for release of information form.
6. During clinical supervision, your therapist may discuss details of a case without personally identifying information in order to receive training or guidance relevant to your situation.

I, _____ understand the above and consent to the treatment of myself / my child at Pickens County Advocacy Center

Client / Guardian Signature Date

Witness Signature Date