

Ethical Issues in Adolescent Mental Health

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The following discussion questions are provided as an additional educational tool to accompany this fireside chat video. Please feel free to select the questions that are most relevant to your committee or group, revise and adapt them as needed, etc. As always, we welcome feedback on this or any other NSHEN resource.

Questions:

- What stood out most to you in this interview and why?
- What do you think teens may be most concerned about when seeking help for mental health issues? What about parents/caregivers?
- What are some of the barriers teens may face in seeking help?
- Dr. Bagnell mentions that she and her colleagues have had success with online modules and apps that provide reminders to practice Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Can you think of other ways to reach adolescents who are struggling with mental health, and who may otherwise refrain from seeking help in person?
- Discuss different ways to build trust with an adolescent in the health care setting.
- Dr. Bagnell talks about how and when to talk to adolescents about the possible necessity of breaking confidentiality. What would be your biggest concern if you found yourself in a situation where you would have to break confidentiality about an adolescent under your care?
- What would you identify as the major challenges around consent when dealing with adolescents?

Resources

Corry, Dagmar Anna S., and Gerard Leavey (2017). Adolescent trust and primary care: Help-seeking for emotional and psychological difficulties. *Journal of Adolescence*, 54: 1-8. DOI: [10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.11.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.11.003)

Newton, Amanda, Alexa Bagnell, Rhonda Rosychuk, Janelle Duguay, Lori Wozney, Anna Huguet, Joanna Henderson, Jannel Curran. 2020. A Mobile Phone-Based App for Use During Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Adolescents With Anxiety (MindClimb): User-Centered Design and Usability Study. *JMIR mHealth and uHealth* 8(12): e19237. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2196/18439>

Paul, M. (2004). Decision-making about children's mental health care: Ethical challenges. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 10(4), 301-311. <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.10.4.301>

Radez, Jerica, Tessa Reardon, Cathy Creswell, Peter J. Lawrence, Georgine Evdoka-Burton, and Polly Waity. (2021). Why do children and adolescents (not) seek and access professional help for their mental health problems? A systematic review of quantitative and qualitative studies. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 30, pages 183–211. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-019-01469-4>

Schachter, Debbie, Irwin Kleinman, and William Harvey (2005). Informed Consent and Adolescents. *Can J Psychiatry* 50:534–540. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/070674370505000906>

Walker, Steven (2019). Confidentiality and Ethical Practice in Child and Adolescent Mental Health. *Ethics and Social Welfare* 13: 302-308 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2019.1649444>

Mental health and addictions services.

If you or a family member needs help, you can self-refer to a mental health and addictions clinic, service or program through the Nova Scotia Health Authority or IWK Health Centre.

Call toll-free: 1-855-922-1122 (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm)

Kids Help Phone

Kids Help Phone is a national helpline for young people between the ages of 5 and 20. Confidential and anonymous support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can phone to speak with a trained counsellor. You can also text to reach a trained volunteer crisis responder.

Call toll-free: 1-800-668-6868

Text NSSTRONG to 686868

Provincial Mental Health Crisis Line

If you're experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis, or are concerned about someone who is, the Provincial Mental Health Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call toll-free: 1-888-429-8167

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