

# Tips for Providers

This is a collection of tips and best practices for providers serving teens and young adults who are accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare. Many of these tips focus on essential components of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC). If this is your introduction to TIC, check out the resources at the end of this tip sheet! Remember that providing health services through a trauma-informed lens is often an ongoing learning process that takes practice!

## Quality of Care

### Most adolescents are:

- Healthy
- Resilient
- Learning to be independent

### Adolescents are NOT:

- Big children
- Little adults

### This means that their care should be:

Adolescent-specific

Racially equitable and inclusive

Welcoming to LGBTQ+ youth

At an accessible location

During accessible hours (outside of school hours)

Easy to schedule

Free or low-cost

Confidential and respectful of young people's autonomy

Multi- and interdisciplinary

Comprehensive, including sexual and reproductive health care

Supportive of communication between teens and their parents

Supportive of youth transitioning into the adult medical care system

Given in plain language

Kind and nonjudgmental

# Confidentiality is key!

Many young people are concerned about their parents/guardians or trusted adults finding out about their personal health. It's important to reassure them about what will be private during the appointment.

## **Know your state's laws on minor consent**

State laws on minor consent vary widely. Make sure you're aware of the minor consent laws and ages of consent for different types of health care services in your state!

## **Post a confidentiality policy so it is easily visible**

### **Inform patients about the confidentiality policy up front before a visit**

Tell patient when parent/guardian will or will not be included in the visit. Discuss billing issues (e.g., routine STI testing, etc.), whether bills will be sent out, and if so, where they will be sent. Confirm a safe phone number or email address where you can reach out to the patient.

### **Discuss mandatory reporting**

When possible, have an open conversation with a young person about the need to report.

### **Example script:**

"I want you to know that our conversation today will be confidential. This means I will not notify anybody about what we talked about today, including parents, guardians, or other trusted adults in your life."

"The only reason I would share any of our conversation is if there is a concern that you or someone else is in danger. We would be to make sure that you get the support you need. If you have any questions about what is private or confidential, please ask!"

## One-on-one discussions

Be clear with young patients and their parents/guardians about when and why it's important to include a parent or guardian during the visit, and when and why it's important to have one-on-one time with the patient and provider. Set the stage at the beginning of the appointment.

### Example script:

For every adolescent visit, we really want to make sure young people get all the information they need to be healthy and feel supported. We also want to support teens in building confidence and independence so they can learn to navigate the healthcare system as they transition into adulthood

To do that, we'll start going over [patient]'s health history and any questions you both may have. Since [patient] is over 12 years old, we will have one-on-one time to chat about any questions or concerns they may have. I'll call [parent or guardian] back in at the end to discuss any follow-up care!

## AMAZE videos



[Puberty: What is Doctor Confidentiality?](#)



[How to Prep Your Teen for a Doctor's Visit](#)



[Yearly Checkup: Everything You Need to Know](#)

## Resources

[ARSHEP Modules](#)

[SPARK Trainings](#)

[SPARK – State Specific confidentiality laws](#)

[Washington state laws for minors accessing SRH services](#)

[Teen Health Hub WA](#)