

TEEN CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

As pediatric health care providers, we want to recognize and support our teenage patients' evolving maturity and independence. Adolescence is a time of transition toward adulthood, and we believe that we should support this healthy transition in our office. Toward this goal, we want our teens and parents to be aware of the following office policy:

During our adolescent well visits, we will spend part of each visit alone with the teenage patient. We see this as an opportunity for teens to become more comfortable speaking alone with their doctor, something that they will need to do independently once they become adults. We also want to give all teens an opportunity to address any and all of their healthcare concerns in a private and confidential manner, should they need or want to.

When teens share something with us that they ask to remain confidential, we will honor that request, unless they plan to harm themselves or someone else. Although we always encourage adolescent patients to be open and honest with their parents, we also want them to have a "safe" place to go with any health concern, and sometimes our practice can be that safe place. We hope that parents will trust us to take the best care of our teenage patients in these situations.

We are also happy to speak privately with parents during the visit, at their request, about any concerns that they may want to share about their teen. We will maintain the teenage patient's confidentiality in these discussions, however.

This policy is consistent with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Society for Adolescent Medicine surrounding adolescent confidentiality in healthcare.

We consider it a privilege to take care of teenagers, and we look forward to working together, with this policy in mind, as our teens grow into healthy, independent adults.

Sincerely,

Chestnut Ridge Pediatric Associates