

YOUR RIGHTS, OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

With Alternatives for Youth you can expect a positive, recovery-oriented experience that is strength-based and inclusive. Our services use treatment approaches that are modelled after best practices in substance use and addiction.

A Safe Environment

When receiving services from Alternatives for Youth (AY) in one of our locations, we will provide you with a culturally and physically safe environment that is inclusive and free from judgement and oppression.

Confidentiality

We cannot share what you say to us with others (example; parents, police officers, probation officers, school staff) unless you provide us with permission to do so. However, there are some exceptions to confidentiality. For everyone's safety, the law requires that reports be made to the appropriate authority when:

- *We have reason to believe that someone may harm her/himself, or someone else*
- *We have reason to believe that any person under the age of 16 is in need of protection*
- *If the court orders that information be given*

As AY therapists work as a team, your information may be shared with other AY staff members for the purposes of service delivery and treatment planning.

Release of Information

If you choose to give us permission to share your information with others about what you say here, you will need to sign a consent form. This allows us to communicate to others you might be involved with, such as other professionals or your family members. You can also give permission for other services to share information with us. We share information by speaking to other professionals, or by providing reports from your file. You can tell us what kind of information can be released (eg. informing others only about your attendance and not what you have talked about).

Client Files

The purpose of keeping files at AY is to have an ongoing history of your progress and a complete record of relevant events and information you have shared. Your file is confidential, and can only be shared with your permission, or by court order. We are legally obligated to keep files for a minimum of 10 years after you are no longer a client. If you would like to review your file at any time during this period, you can contact the Executive Director to set up an appointment.

We protect your information through our administrative policies and by adopting appropriate safeguards and security measures. Client files are stored in locked cabinets at the AY office or the site where you receive service, and are only accessible by AY staff. All electronic client information is saved within a secure information system and AY has a secure server. Laptop/desktop computers have encryption software installed on them and are password protected to protect your information.

Substance use:

It is expected that you will make every effort to not use alcohol or other drugs prior to an appointment but should you use, you commit to discussing this use openly with your therapist to support you in receiving appropriate care.

Complaint Procedure

A complaint refers to any form of dissatisfaction you have with your therapist or the services provided by AY. To file a complaint, please communicate with your therapist or with the Executive Director of AY. We will acknowledge receipt within 24 hours and advise you of next steps. Our goal is to endeavor to resolve the issue, and the Executive Director will work with you and the AY team to find a resolution. In the event it is not resolved with the Executive Director, the complaint will be brought before the Board of Directors for final resolution.

Please note that if you think you would feel more comfortable with a different therapist than the one you have been assigned, you have the right to request a new therapist.

Communication and Treatment Methods

AY uses multiple forms of communication and service delivery for which you have the right to choose. You have a right to communicate with us by text, email, telephone, mail or in person. E-mail/text are not secure forms of communication and we cannot guarantee the privacy of the information that is shared this way. The purpose of email and text is for scheduling appointments and providing resource information only. Counselling/therapy, sharing of personal or health information are not to take place over email/text, and messages are only received and answered during office hours. Communications are documented in your file. You have a right to treatment in person, or virtually by video conference or telephone. If you are receiving services virtually, you are responsible for using that method appropriately and to sign a related consent form.

Treatment/Service Plan

Individualized, client-directed treatment is provided to you to assist you in exploring your substance use, in reducing or discontinuing use, relapse prevention and/or referral to residential treatment, and includes comprehensive education about the risks related to youth substance use. The treatment plan is a collaborative approach between you and your therapist and we will encourage you to include your circle of care (friends, family of choice, caregivers or other as defined by you) in your treatment plan. You will have the right to make decisions on your treatment/service plan and we will provide you with information and support to help you make informed decisions.

I have read, understood and accept the rights and responsibilities outlined above and agree to adhere to them at all times during my treatment/service with AY.

Client

Witness

Date