

Informed Consent with children and mature minors

This policy provides information about our psychologists' obligations regarding consent and confidentiality when working with children and adolescents. Essentially, our psychologists have a duty to consider the best interests of the young person as being paramount in any decision concerning the provision of a psychology service.

Mature Minor: Adolescents over 14 years of age are able to make decisions about their own care if seen as having the 'capacity' to do so. The 'mature minor' principle: an adolescent under the age of 18 years is capable of giving informed consent when he or she achieves a sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable him or her to understand fully what is proposed.

Young Person Consent

If a young person is capable of giving their informed consent, our psychologists must obtain the young person's consent to provide them with a psychology service and must respect their right to terminate services at any time. If a young person is not capable of giving informed consent, our psychologist will require the consent of a parent or legal guardian or authority to provide psychology services to the young person. In Australia, a young person is considered capable of giving informed consent when they achieve a sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable them to understand fully what is proposed" (*High Court in Re Marion, 1992*). Generally, we accept the age of consent as being 15 years and older.

Parent Consent

The consent of both parents is not required, unless stipulated in a Court Order. However, it is desirable and advisable to involve both parents in the provision of psychology services to their child, where possible and appropriate. Where both parents' consent is required by Court Order, both parents' signatures are required. It is the responsibility of the referring parent to inform their child's psychologist of any existing Court Orders that require dual parental consent, before commencing the service. Please also inform your child's psychologist of any relevant changes to Court Orders or parenting/custody arrangements. Our psychologists are not responsible for pursuing the existence of any orders and cannot be responsible for providing services that breach any orders they have not been informed of. We recommend you seek legal advice if you are uncertain of your obligations regarding any existing or future orders.