



Parent or Caregiver Handout

Welcome to the Benson Wellness Center:

Adolescence is a time of rapid change and development. Teens and young adults need specialized medical care and a provider with whom they can discuss anything, from normal body growth and development, illness, preventive care, sexual concerns and emotional problems.

If teens feel they can speak with clinicians in confidence, this opens the door for conversations about the risks of certain behaviors that may lead to serious problems. Sometimes teenagers will hide their behavior so parents are not the first to find out. Our goal is to help prevent and identify any issues before they become serious. Data indicate that many youth are facing health challenges that we are well-positioned to help with.

Among 11th graders in Oregon*:

- 32% were depressed in the past year
- 17% seriously considered suicide in the past year
- 22% have used tobacco products
- 39% have been sexually active

We know that parents and guardians are an important source of health information for youth, and that you likely help in decisions around your teen's care. We always encourage the teen to discuss important issues with their parent or guardian.

Oregon law allows adolescents of certain ages to consent to medical care on their own although we encourage them to share their medical issues with their parents and often ask their permission to speak with you. Additionally, a new Oregon law allows for more privacy for teens to make their medical visits confidential. This means the teen is seen for a medical visit and the medical office and insurance company communicate directly with the teen instead of the person listed as the responsible party for billing.

We let all teens know that our services are confidential. However, safety of our patients is our priority, but there are some cases when we are required to break confidentiality for safety reasons.

The staff is always available to discuss health problems or answer questions. Our staff wants to work with you to help your teen(s) make the best choices for a healthy future. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.