

Should your child have a chaperone for therapy?

If your child is under 13, we will have a chaperone in the room when I am working with them. This is normally a parent but, with your written consent, could be another close relative as long as they are over 18 years of age. The chaperone must be willing to take part in the therapy, such as learning a technique so they can remind your child how to use it at home. So it should be someone your child sees regularly and trusts.

If your child is between 13 and 16 they may prefer not to have a chaperone. I use their preferences and yours, plus a 'Gillick competency' assessment to decide if this is appropriate. Broadly, this says a child is competent if they can:

- understand the issue they are working with and its consequences,
 - understand the reasons for seeking therapy,
 - understand what to expect during and after a session,
 - understand confidentiality and its limits,
 - set and work towards goals for therapy,
- understand that they must play an active part in therapy if it is to succeed,
- remember and apply any techniques and practice tasks given in the session.

If we agree that your child is Gillick competent, we will decide together whether a chaperone should remain with them or leave the room, during all or part of therapy.

If your child is aged 16-17, you will have to sign a permission form, but they can otherwise be treated as an adult and seen without a chaperone unless there are specific reasons that this might not be the best option for them.

If you would like to ask more about this, please contact me:

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