



EPSY 829 - Ethics and Professional Practice

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Informed Consent is a...

- shared-decision making process.
- continuous process starting from the outset.
- verbal/written document that provides clients with information to help them gain a further understanding of their rights.

The purpose is to...

- foster a therapeutic relationship.
- ensure the client's best interests.
- ensure minimal harm to the client.
- promote client autonomy.
- help address significant issues.
- inform clients of record keeping, treatment/evaluation practices, and ensure clients understand their rights.

Legally

- Consent is voluntarily given
- Client must comprehend
- Client must have the capacity to comprehend

Ethically

- Provide all the information that a reasonable person would need to make a decision, such as rights, goals, limits to confidentiality, objectives, alternative options, and pros and cons, etc.

Challenges

- Informed consent is easier to understand as a concept than it is to apply to practice!

Medium

- Verbal, Written or Combination
- Written Question Format
- Documentation

Determining Understanding

Written Question Format:

- To be used in addition to written/verbal consent forms.
- Allows clients to express their understanding in their own words and clarify any questions they may have.
- Brings up additional questions that the client may not have previously considered.

Determining Understanding Activity

- Brainstorm a list of questions that you would include on your **Written Question Format Document**.
- Questions can include: nature of therapy, seeking alternative care, appointment management, confidentiality, insurance/managed care and qualifications/licensing.

Working with Youth

- Need to balance the privacy, decision-making skills, and autonomy of youths with appropriate disclosure.
- Children are often referred to counselling by a third-party, such as a caregiver.

Working with Youth: Consent Combinations

Table 1. Table of Combinations of Verbal and Behavioral Consent

(Tan, Passerini, and Stewart, 2007, p. 194)

Verbal consent	Behavioral co-operation
Verbal consent	Behavioral resistance
Verbal consent	Behavioral compliance
Verbal refusal	Behavioral co-operation
Verbal refusal	Behavioral resistance
Verbal refusal	Behavioral compliance
Absence of verbally expressed views	Behavioral co-operation
Absence of verbally expressed views	Behavioral resistance
Absence of verbally expressed views	Behavioral compliance

Case Studies

1. What are the potential challenges to obtaining informed consent in this scenario?
2. Who is the client?
3. How would you ensure that the client comprehends what they are consenting to?
4. How would you keep the informed consent process going throughout the therapeutic relationship?
5. Describe the consent combination shown.

Works Referenced

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