

Understanding Your Child's Rights to Confidential Health Services

TERMS:

A **minor** is a person 17 years of age or younger, according to Michigan law.

Confidential means spoken or written in strict privacy, not to be shared with others.

According to Michigan law, your child has the right to receive confidential health care (from anywhere or anyone providing care to minors) without your permission or knowledge. That health care is described below:

Minors of any age may receive confidential advice, testing and treatment for the following without your knowledge or permission:

- drug use and abuse
- sexually transmitted infections and HIV
- pregnancy testing and prenatal (pregnancy) care
- birth control
- abortion (only with a court order from a judge)

There is no specific age stated in the law, so this would apply to any minor who understands the nature and consequences of their actions, **except** if a minor is under 12 years old and is sexually active - this is considered child abuse and would not be confidential.

Minors above the age of 14 years can also receive:

- limited outpatient counseling (mental health) services not to exceed 12 visits over 4 months and not to include any medications.

Health care is **not confidential** and you as a parent or guardian will be notified without your child's permission if a health care professional learns that:

- someone is hurting your child
- your child is hurting themselves or someone else
- your child has a plan to hurt themselves or someone else

In those cases, the health care professional will try to inform your child of their duty to notify you before they do.

Please note that all information included in this summary was taken from the document "Consent for Care and Confidential Health Information" developed by Denise Chrysler, at Michigan Department of Community Health who adapted the document from Henry Ford Health System. The "Consent for Care and Confidential Health Information" document is available at www.michigan.gov/teenpregnancy under the "resources/websites" tab.