

## USEFUL INFORMATION WHEN SEEKING COUNSELING SERVICES

### What is the difference between a Psychiatrist, a Psychologist, and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker?

**Psychiatrist:** A medical doctor with additional training in the area of psychology who can prescribe medication. Psychiatrists must hold a license in the state of Virginia. Their degree is listed as M.D.

**Specialty:**

1. Adult
2. Child and Adolescent: trained specifically in child and adolescent development with regard to psychological processes and medical implications. Ask if the psychiatrist is a Board Certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist. This certification means that supervised training with the child and adolescent population was completed.

**Psychologist:** A professional trained in the area of psychology. Psychologists can not prescribe medication because they are not medical doctors. Psychologists must be licensed in the state of Virginia by the Board of Psychology to provide independent services. Their degrees may be listed as Ph.D., Ed.D., or Psy.D. A school psychologist may hold an Ed.S. degree.

**Specialty:**

1. Clinical Psychologist: trained in behavioral management, psychological processes, assessment and emotional dysfunctions.
2. Marriage and Family Therapist: trained in the area of marriage and family problems, communication style, etc.
3. School Psychologist: trained specifically in the areas of academic and psychological processes, assessment, child and adolescent development, etc.

**Licensed Clinical Social Worker:** A professional trained in the areas of family functioning and social interactions. To provide independent counseling services, a social worker must be licensed by the state of Virginia. A licensed clinical social worker's degree is listed as LCSW.

### Questions to ask a prospective therapist:

- What are your credentials? (degree, specialty, license)
- In what area(s) are you Board Certified?
- What consultative services do you offer to parents, schools, and communities?
- Do you consider income when determining fees for services?
- What insurance do you accept? If I do not have insurance, will you serve me?
- Do you offer emergency screenings or treatment?
- Do you have a psychiatrist on site? (if medications are needed)