

Talking To Your Healthcare Provider Alone

Building a trusting relationship with your provider is an important step in making sure you are getting the care you need. One step in building that trust is speaking with your provider alone (without your parent, guardian, or support person in the room) for a small part of every visit.

Why is this important?

Building a relationship with your provider will help you to:

- Speak up for your needs (self-advocate) in a clinic visit
- Learn how to manage your health

Is this allowed?

Many young people ask, "Am I allowed to talk to my provider alone, even if I am not yet 18?" The answer is Yes! Your parents will still make final decisions about your care and will be present during the rest of your visit, but you are allowed to have a private conversation with your provider.

What will we talk about?

Your provider will be able to answer any questions you may have about your health and health care. Many providers also use this time alone with you to talk about topics such as:

- The things you like doing or the things you are good at.
- The things you like at school and what you may be struggling with.
- Who you live with and who you can talk to about important things.
- Your friends and the things you do for fun.



- If you smoke, drink alcohol, or use any other drugs.
- How you are feeling and how you take care of your mental health.
- If you are dating, involved in any sexual activity, and how to prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections.
- If you are feeling safe at school, home, and with friends.

How can I feel more prepared?

- Talk with your parent, guardian, or support person about things that are bothering you.
- Use the **3-Sentence Summary** activity to practice talking about your important health information.
- Use the **Health Passport** activity to help remember important dates, names of medicines, health conditions, or other pieces of your health history.
- Use the **Clinic Visit Prep Sheets** to organize your thoughts and questions for the visit.