



Welcome

We are so grateful that you have chosen to begin counseling with us at Footprints Counseling. It is an honor and a privilege to walk with you on this journey of healing. We are here to support you, walk alongside you, and care for you during this time. Footprints Counseling provides counseling for children, teens, and adults through individual and family counseling. While we hope we are a good fit for what you need, we understand that we cannot be a good fit for every person in need of counseling. If at any time you feel like Footprints Counseling is not the best fit for you, please feel comfortable sharing that with us so we can help you find the services in the area that would best fit your needs.

Counseling is beneficial and healing but it is also hard work. There will be times where it may feel like progress is slow and times where you may feel worse before you feel better. Counseling is not an instant fix, counselors do not have a magic wand. Counseling is a journey, there are harder times and easier times, twists and turns, ups and downs. We are here to support you through all of that.

Services and Fees

The first session that you will have at Footprints Counseling is the intake session. During the intake session, the time will be spent gathering information, getting to know each other, planning treatment goals, and determining if Footprints Counseling is the right place for you. All other sessions after the intake session are treatment sessions, where we will be working towards those treatment goals that we set together in the intake session. All sessions are about 50 minutes. The intake session is \$200 and treatment sessions are \$175. Payment is expected at the time of the session unless other arrangements have been made. If you are using your insurance to cover counseling fees, you are responsible for copays and for any fees that insurance does not cover. Footprints Counseling accepts cash, check, credit card, FSA, HSA and some insurances.

We have reserved your appointment time especially for you. If you cannot make a session, we ask that you call Footprints Counseling as soon as possible to cancel that appointment. We require that you give 24 hour notice when canceling an appointment. If you do not give 24 hour notice or if you fail to show for your appointment, you may be charged the hourly rate for that session. Insurance does not cover these charges.

If the scheduled client is sick or has been sick in the past 24 hours please be sure to cancel your session or switch it to telehealth. This includes (but is not limited to) fevers, coughing,

vomiting, diarrhea, head lice, pink eye, and bed bugs. We want to ensure the health and safety of other clients and staff in the building as well as your counselor and other clients that come into the office after you. Basically, if you don't feel good, stay home --telehealth is a great option for days like this!

We reserve the therapy hour for you and are unable to bill your insurance for anything less than 53 minutes per insurance guidelines. If you arrive late or must leave your session early, we will not be able to bill your insurance for that session which means we will need to bill you personally for the session rate.

If additional services are needed in between sessions such as report writing, phone calls longer than 15 minutes, letter writing, meeting attendance or other professional / administrative services, additional fees (\$25 for every 15 minutes) will apply that are not covered by your insurance coverage.

Footprints Counseling, PLLC keeps normal business hours from 9am - 5pm EST Monday thru Friday. However, we are here to serve you and will return urgent phone calls outside of normal business hours if requested. A fee of \$25 for every 15 minutes may apply to those returned phone calls. These fees are not covered by your insurance coverage.

If there is a balance on your account, then services may be discontinued until the balance is paid in full. Footprints Counseling, PLLC reserves the right to use an attorney or collections agency to collect past due balances.

Confidentiality

Footprints Counseling is required by law to keep accurate and confidential records for all counseling clients. This includes progress notes, intake paperwork, and contact notes. All information is kept on a confidential electronic filing system. If insurance is being billed for services, they may request information such as diagnosis, treatment plan, or treatment summary. This will be disclosed as needed at the discretion of the counselor. Footprints Counseling does have a business associate to assist with billing and clerical needs and that person will have access to client information needed to perform necessary duties.

As a limited licensed psychologist (LLP) Footprints Counseling's counselor, Christina Adamski, MA LLP, is required by the state of Michigan to hold monthly supervision under a fully licensed psychologist. To fulfill those requirements, Christina is supervised by Ed Swart Ph.D. During supervision and case consultation, cases will be discussed as needed.

Your confidentiality is extremely important to Footprints Counseling and maintaining your trust in this area is a high priority for us. This means that any and all information disclosed in session will be kept confidential. Information may only be released if a release of information has been signed by the client or client's guardian. There are however, exceptions to confidentiality:

1. If the client is a danger to themselves.
2. If the client is a danger to others.
3. If the client is a minor and is being harmed by another person.
4. If the therapist receives a subpoena from the court to testify or release information.

Footprints Counseling also wants to make sure all clients are safe. If the counselor suspects child abuse or neglect, it is required by law to report any information to Child Protective Services Immediately.

There are special circumstances when it comes to children under the age of 18 being seen in counseling. While Footprints Counseling wants to respect the confidentiality of these children, they also recognize a need to share relevant information with the parents/guardians of these children. This is at the discretion of the counselor and information is shared that will be beneficial to the treatment and progress of counseling for this child. In the circumstance of divorced parents of a child client, a copy of the divorce and custody agreement may be requested to determine the appropriate level of disclosure.

Footprints Counseling also wants to respect your confidentiality on social media. It is our policy that our counselors may not engage with clients on any form of social media in any way. This helps to protect you and your confidentiality

Divorce and Custody Cases

When a child is being seen at Footprints Counseling and there are divorce and custody issues involved, I acknowledge and agree to the following:

- The child is the identified client at Footprints Counseling.
- The purpose of this counseling is to benefit the child.
- Therapy for the child should be conducted in an atmosphere of privacy, safety and trust.
- The role and relationship of the therapist with the child is that of a therapist not a custody evaluator.
- It is not the role of the therapist to engage in court matters or make recommendations regarding custody.
- Information obtained in the context of child therapy regarding the child's personal thoughts and feelings toward either parent is inadequate, in both quantity and quality, as a basis for making formal custody recommendations.
- Trying to use child's therapy records as a shortcut to making custody recommendations, in place of a more thorough and lengthy assessment sometimes needed in conflicted divorce situations, is a misuse of the record.
- Anything either parent discloses to the therapist can be shared with the court as it benefits the child.
- Both parents and the court will receive the same communication from the therapist to eliminate miscommunication between the therapist, the court, and the parents.

Use of a child's comments made in therapy, by parents, attorneys, or other persons outside of a treatment context, has the potential to inflict damage to the child, to the parent-child relationship, and also the treatment relationship. The statement above is especially true when the child's comments are taken outside of a treatment context and used by parents in a court battle or repeated to children at home when court is over.

With the above understanding, the client and client's parent/guardian agrees not to have legal counsel subpoena the therapist to court or to ask the therapist to submit treatment information to the court via records, letters or reports.

Electronic Communications

You may choose to use electronic forms of communication such as email, SMS text messages or other means to communicate with your counselor. Although these methods of communication are convenient it is important to understand that using these methods does not ensure the confidentiality of your protected health information transmitted through these mediums. Footprints Counseling, PLLC will communicate with you via your preferred method, however in compliance with HIPAA and to maintain your confidentiality, we will limit the types of information that we can provide through electronic communications.

Emergency Services

Footprints Counseling may not always be available by phone when you call. You are welcome to leave a voicemail and your call will be returned as soon as possible. If there is a mental health emergency, please call 911 or go to your local emergency room. A local mental health hotline number is 616.396.4357.

When you sign this document, you are indicating that you understand all sections and agree to all of the terms stated. If you have questions about anything in this document, feel free to ask your counselor.

Patient Printed Name: _____

Patient / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor Signature: _____ Date: _____