

## TEEN CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

As a pediatrician, I want to recognize and support our teenage patients' evolving maturity and independence. Adolescence is a time of transition toward adulthood, and I believe that we should support this healthy transition in our office. Toward this goal, I want our teens and parents to be aware of the following:

During our adolescent well visits, I would like to spend part of each visit alone with our teens. I see this as an opportunity for teens to become more comfortable speaking alone with their doctor, something that they will need to do independently once they are adults themselves. I also want to give all teens an opportunity to address any and all of their healthcare concerns in a private and confidential manner, should they need to.

When teens share something with me that they ask to remain confidential, I will honor that request, unless they plan to harm themselves or someone else. Although I always encourage adolescent patients to be open and honest with their parents, I also want them to have a "safe" place to go with any health concern, and sometimes I can be that safe place. I hope that parents will trust us to take the best care of our teens in these situations.

I am also happy to speak privately with parents during the visit, at their request, about any concerns that they may want to share with me about their teen. I will maintain my patient's confidentiality in these discussions, however.

These confidentiality parameters also extend to any telephone calls that I may have with our teen patients about their healthcare, including discussions about appropriate labs and results.

This policy is consistent with Massachusetts state law surrounding adolescent confidentiality, as well as the policies of the Society for Adolescent Medicine, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. I consider it a privilege to take care of teens, and I look forward to working together, with this policy in mind, as our teens grow up!

Dr. Jeffrey S. Feldman