

Adolescent Confidentiality Policy



At Commonwealth Pediatrics, we recognize and support our teenage patients' evolving maturity and independence. Adolescence is a time of transition toward adulthood, and we believe that we should support this healthy transition in our office. We therefore want our teen patients and their parents to be aware of the following:

During our adolescent well visits, we will have part of each visit alone with the patient. We see this as an opportunity for teens to become more comfortable speaking alone with an adult health care provider, something that they will need to do independently once they are adults themselves. We also want to give all teens an opportunity to address any and all of their health care concerns in a private and confidential manner, should they need to.

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

We are also happy to speak privately with parents during the visit, at their request, regarding any concerns they may have about their son or daughter. We will maintain our patient's confidentiality in these discussions, however.

These confidentiality parameters also extend to any telephone calls that we may have with teen patients about their health care, including discussions about appropriate lab/imaging evaluations 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. We consider it a privilege to take care of adolescents, and to help them achieve their goals and dreams. We look forward to working together, with this policy in mind, as our patients grow and mature.