



## INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

### WHAT COUNSELING IS

Counseling, or psychotherapy, is a process that can help you explore problems that are confusing and painful in your life with the goal of developing awareness and skills to live more effectively. It can often provide assistance in dealing with personal problems, making decisions, or making changes in your life. The counselor creates an atmosphere in which you do these things for yourself.

Counseling can, in some cases, evoke unpleasant memories and/or arouse strong emotions related to events in your life. Should feelings like these arise, they will be dealt with in the context of the counseling process.

### WHAT TESTING IS

Testing is a procedure by which you gain insight into yourself – your interests, abilities, personality characteristics, and personal problems – through the use of an assessment instrument. Summary data is then presented, usually within the context of a counseling session, to help you understand the results. The information from the test results does not make decisions for you; it provides input that you can use in understanding yourself better and making more sound personal decisions.

### PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

A professional code of ethics governs the counseling relationship. A key aspect of ethical practice is confidentiality. Information you share with your counselor will not be divulged to anyone who is not involved in the treatment process without your permission. However, there are some limits to this: **Laws in the State of Michigan require psychologists and counselors to report incidents of child abuse or neglect and threatened violence against yourself or another person.**

A brief record is made of your counseling contacts. This information is strictly confidential. Counseling records may be released with your written permission. Records can in some circumstances be subject to subpoena by court order.

If you feel an urgent need to contact a mental health counseling resource when our office is closed, you may call Riverwood Center Help Line at 269-925-0585. You may receive emergency psychiatric treatment 24 hours a day through the Lakeland Medical Center Emergency Room, 1234 Napier Avenue, St. Joseph, MI – ph.# 269-983-8656.

I have read and understand the above information and hereby give consent to receive services.

Client \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_