



## What to Expect in Your First Counseling Session

When you arrive for your first counseling session you will go through our securely locked client entrance where you will then be greeted by our Intake Coordinator in the lobby. If this is your first time at our center, there will be some basic demographic paperwork and a trauma inventory that you will be asked to complete prior to meeting with your child's therapist. Due to the amount of paperwork and background information that is collected within this initial appointment, it is generally recommended that only a caregiver(s) attend the session, as there will be limited time, if any, for the therapist to meet directly with your child.

While meeting with your child's therapist you will be discussing basic agency information, counseling services, and the various types of trauma-informed treatment that will be available for your child. This session is also an opportunity for you to ask any questions that you may have about services, or questions that are specific to your child. Your child's therapist will also be collecting background information about your child and the ways that they have been impacted by the trauma they experienced to help guide the treatment that will be provided. There will be an opportunity for you to share your hopes and goals for your child's therapy services, as well as for the therapist to share their recommendations for treatment.

Once your session is concluded, you will schedule your next counseling appointment with either your child's therapist, or with the Intake Coordinator. This next appointment is dedicated primarily to your child and may be shorter than the average 50 -60 minute session. Your child will meet with their therapist and will have an opportunity to explore and become familiar with the counseling space. Your child's therapist will explain counseling services and will help your child understand what to expect from the counseling relationship. Typically, the therapist will have a game or activity to help facilitate basic self-exploration and relationship building. Your child will not be asked about their trauma experience, and they will not have to share about their trauma within this session. The only goal of this initial appointment is to start to build a safe and trusting relationship so that future trauma exploration may be possible.