

Dear Parent:

Your child is a teenager now and we will be working with you to provide a supportive environment for your child to open up to us about what's happening in their life. Our goal is to encourage them to talk to you and share their worries and experiences with you. Sometimes though teenagers, who are trying hard to figure out how to separate from their parents and become independent adults themselves, won't always turn to their parents for advice and support. We hope to be one of (hopefully) many trusted adults in their lives they can go to for good information and understand that this office is a safe place to share personal information.

To help them express their concerns and for us to gauge how serious issues are we are having every teenager 15 years and older complete a short adolescent questionnaire. We won't be sharing the results with you unless your child gives us express permission so they can have the freedom to be as honest as possible. When we discuss their questionnaire, **EVEN IF THERE IS NOTHING CONCERNING REVEALED**, we will do so in private by asking you to step out for a few minutes. By creating a private time it reinforces that the teen can talk to us about anything in the future or bring up something at this visit that perhaps they weren't confident enough to write down on the questionnaire.

Understand that regardless of what information is shared, all girls 15 years of age and older are required to have a urine chlamydia screening done. This is in part because teenagers are notoriously bad at telling any adult the whole truth about their lives and because undiagnosed chlamydia, which is asymptomatic in women, can cause substantial problems if left untreated. We will ask for the urine sample before the provider even has reviewed the questionnaire so realize that the two are not linked in any way.

We are not trying to come between you and your child, just the opposite. We hope that by opening the lines of communication with us it will serve as a bridge to communicating more with you. Understand that our goal, like yours, is to help your child be as healthy physically and emotionally as possible. We will **ALWAYS** encourage your teenager to talk to you about everything they discuss with us and will offer to break the ice to start the conversation. If the opt not to discuss things with you though be pleased that they are confiding in a trusted adult who has their best interests at heart.

The Provider Team at Birmingham Pediatrics