

The Family Resilience Project

Frequently Asked Questions for Counselling Services

Who can access your counselling services?

- We provide counselling services to individuals who identify as a sexual or gender minority (LGBTQ) or questioning and are 12-25 years old.
- We also often meet with caregivers/guardians in the interest of helping to support our youth clients.

How do I book an appointment?

- You can book an appointment by calling our central intake line at **780-492-5205**.
- Make sure you tell the person answering the phone you would like to book with The Family Resilience Project.

Where is your office and what are your office hours?

- We have two office locations:
 - YWCA location (Monday 9am-5pm): #400 10080 Jasper Avenue in the Empire Building
 - University of Alberta location (Tuesday and Wednesday 11am-7pm and Friday 8-4): Counselling and Clinical Services, 2-600 Students' Union Building
 - **Please see end of this document for directions on how to reach our office locations.**

What will the first appointment be like?

- The first appointment is called an **Initial Consultation**, and will be different from follow-up counselling sessions. This first appointment is not a counselling session. Plan to be in this appointment for **up to 1 hour**. The purpose of an Initial Consultation is to:
 - Fill out paper work that includes questions about contact information, demographic information, and reasons for your visit.
 - Provide the intake clinician with a good understanding of any past or ongoing concerns related to health, mental-health, trauma, social support, addictions, risk-factors, family history, well-being and identity. The intake worker will have several questions related to all of the above.
 - Provide a chance to tell us what kind of support you would like to receive from us, or what you are hoping to achieve from attending our counselling services.
 - Provide information about helpful resources such as books, services, organizations or referrals to other health professionals.
 - Referrals to another service if we cannot meet your needs or if we are not accepting new clients.

- You have the right to privacy! We do ask questions in the first appointment so that we can understand how to best support you, or if we can give you referrals. If, however, you don't feel comfortable answering a certain question you have the right to say so.

What time do I need to be at my Initial Consultation?

- Please be at your first appointment/Initial Consultation **20-30 minutes early** to complete some brief paperwork. Not attending 20-30 minutes before your first appointment time may require us to reschedule. Allow time to find parking, navigate transit routes and find our office at the university or at the YWCA downtown on Jasper Avenue see (directions at the end of this document).

After my Initial Consultation, what happens?

- After your Initial Consultation, and if we are able to support you, we will book you an appointment with one of our Registered Psychologists.
- If we cannot support you because our service is full or because there is another professional who would be more appropriate, we will provide you with resources and community referrals.

What if I need to cancel or reschedule my appointment?

- If you cannot make your appointment or changed your mind about seeking support services from us, please let us know as soon as possible by calling **780-492-5205**.
- Please keep in mind that providing notice for cancellations allows us to support as many people as we can.
- We require at least 24 hours' notice to cancel or reschedule appointments.

How frequent and how long will my counselling appointments be?

- This varies and depends on a variety of factors including how many appointments we have available or how many coping skills and resources the people seeking our services have, among other things.
- Counselling appointments can be weekly, every second week, every third week, or monthly.
- Usually, when people first begin counselling, it can be helpful to have more regular appointments. As you gain skills, begin feeling better or accomplish your goals, appointments may become more spread out.
- Sessions are 50 minutes long.
- Please attend all your appointment at least 10 minutes early.

How many sessions can I get?

- We offer counselling in a short term model. Once your counsellor gets to know you and what you are hoping for, they will be able to provide you with more information about session limits.
- How many sessions people receive depend on several factors including:
 - Skills, resources, and supports someone currently has available to them.
 - When someone meets their goals in therapy or begins to show improvement.
 - The level of engagement and participation someone has in therapy.

What are counselling appointments like?

- You and your therapist will start by identifying what you and/or your guardian(s)/caregiver(s) are hoping for out of counselling. This will help to ensure that you are getting the most out of your time with your counsellor.
- When you meet with your counsellor, it is helpful to have something you would like to work on or talk about. Your counsellor can help you explore what this might be, but it's really up to you. This is your time!
- You and your counsellor might discuss what is troubling you as well as what is going well.
- Counselling appointments might involve talking, exploring concerns or issues, doing art work, setting goals, doing worksheets, and/or learning coping skills.

What do people talk about in counselling?

- Through the Family Resilience Project, most of our clients would like to discuss concerns related to their identity as a sexual or gender minority (LGBTQ), but this is not the only thing we can help people with. Other things we talk about with our clients include:
 - Experiences with discrimination, harassment, and bullying
 - Difficult feelings or moods like worry, anxiety, sadness, depression and fear (to name a few)
 - Concerns about family and/or friendships
 - How to improve relationships or improve oneself
 - Self-harm and thoughts about suicide
 - Transitioning
 - Upsetting or traumatic events that have happened in the past and you feel are still affecting you
 - Stress (school, work, family, etc.)
 - Not being accepted by friends and/or family

I have already been to the Family Resilience Project for counselling. Am I able to get counselling again?

- This depends on a variety of factors such as how many times you have accessed our service, what you are accessing our service for, and if our psychologists are able to take new clients.

- After 4 months of not seeing clients we will close a client's file. After the file is closed, people are welcome to return for another Initial Consultation. At that time, the clinician will determine if we can support an individual just like we would during any Initial Consultation.
- If you and your counsellor both agree to end therapy (because goals have been achieved, you need a break or are uncertain what to work on) and your file is closed, you are still welcome to return for another Initial Consultation if you decide to try counselling again.

Is there a cost to your counselling services?

- No. We provide free counselling services which is funded by The Ministry of Children's Services, City of Edmonton (FCSS), and The United Way of Alberta Capital Region.

Do you provide family counselling or counselling to parents?

- Not directly. Our clinicians can provide resources and referrals to guardians who wish to have their own support, or if family therapy is recommended.
- We offer the following to guardians and caregivers:
 - Information and education on issues related to sexual and gender minority (LGBTQ) children and adolescents
 - Sessions dedicated to helping you improve the way you communicate with and support the child or adolescent in your life
 - Brief support related to common concerns that guardians and caregivers face

Do you see everyone who comes for an Initial Consultation?

- Yes. So long as you meet the criteria for our service (12-25 years old and identify as a sexual or gender minority (LGBTQ) or questioning) and we have available appointments, we will see all people for an Initial Consultation.

Do you offer counselling services to everyone who comes for an Initial Consultation?

- Unfortunately, we might not be able to work with everyone who comes for an Initial Consultation for several reasons including:
 - We have no available counselling appointments at the time of the Initial Consultation.
 - Our psychologists do not have the expertise for the concern you would like to work on.
 - Counselling has been mandated by the court of law.
 - You require long term or specialized services that our program cannot provide to you.
- If we cannot provide you with counselling through the Family Resilience Project, our psychologists will provide you with community resources or referrals.

Do you have a waitlist?

- Currently, we do not keep a waitlist.
- If we have Initial Consultation appointments available, people wanting to book an appointment will be seen within two weeks from the time they contact our clinic.
- If we have counselling appointments available, we will see clients for their first counselling appointment within two weeks of their Initial Consultation.

I am under 18 years old. Does my guardian or caregiver have to be at my Initial Consultation?

- Your guardian does not necessarily have to be involved with your counselling, but will likely have to provide consent so that you can access our counselling services.
- **If you are between 15-17 years old**, it is likely that we will need your guardian(s) to consent for you to access our counselling services. This is related to legal and ethical requirements of our Registered Psychologists. **If you have any concerns about involving your guardian(s) in consenting to your counselling, please call us to discuss this at 780-492-5205 and ask to speak to one of the Family Resilience Counsellors.**
- **If you are under 15 years old**, we will not be able to offer you services without the consent of your legal guardian(s). This is related to legal and ethical requirements of our Registered Psychologists.
- Our clinicians are Psychologists who are registered with the College of Alberta Psychologists, and are upheld to certain ethical and legal standards. The law states that legal guardian(s) have right to know about and consent to any health care provided to minors under 18 years of age.
- Your guardian(s) may be able to help us support you by providing us with information you might not have access to, might not remember, or might not be aware of (i.e. medical history, family mental health history, etc.).

What will my guardian(s) know about my counselling?

- Your guardian consenting to you accessing counselling does not mean that they will be involved in your counselling, or that they will know what you are talking about in counselling.
- If you are under 18 years old, you have a right to privacy. As with anyone who is over 18 years old, your counsellor is only able to tell someone about the following things:
 - You are in very serious danger of harming yourself or someone else.
 - You tell your counsellor about a vulnerable person who is being neglected or abused (children under 18 years old, dependent adults and senior citizens).
 - If you are involved in a court case, and the court orders your counselling file.
- If your counsellor feels the need to share any of your information for any of the above reasons, they will talk to you about it first.
- When we meet with guardians and clients under 18 years old, we discuss and agree on what information will be kept private and what information you are okay about sharing with caregivers or guardians.

- If your guardian says there is specific information they want to have about your counselling, the counsellor will talk to you about this first to make sure you know what the counsellor might need to share with your guardian(s).
- Your counsellor will discuss with you if they think it's important to meet on occasion with your guardian(s) or caregiver(s). These meetings will only happen with your knowledge. These meeting might involve only your caregiver(s)/guardians(s) and the counsellor. They might also involve you, your counsellor and your guardian(s)/caregiver(s) all together. It can be normal to find these meetings challenging or uncomfortable, but most people find them helpful in the end.

I am a caregiver or a legal guardian. How will I be involved in the counselling process?

- We do not provide direct family therapy, or counselling to the caregiver(s) or guardian(s). If you feel you are in need of support, our clinicians can offer you referrals.
- We ask that the legal guardian(s) provide consent for the minor client to receive counselling services. This is a legal and ethical requirement of our Registered Psychologists.
- If there is a custody agreement, we will require consent from all legal guardian(s). If you think this will create any barriers to the child or adolescent receiving counselling, or that this would put the child or adolescent at greater risk, please let our clinicians know.
- We may provide you with information and sessions to help improve how you communicate with and support the child or adolescent who is in counselling.
- We may provide you with brief supportive sessions related to common concerns guardians of sexual and gender minorities (LGBTQ) often experience.

For more information about the Family Resilience Project, please contact us at: families@ualberta.ca

To talk to someone about the Family Resilience Project or to book an appointment, please call our central intake line at **780-492-5205**

Clinic Locations

University of Alberta

Tuesday and Wednesday 11am-7pm, Friday 8am-4pm

Counselling and Clinical Services (University Wellness Services) is located at **2-600 Students' Union Building (SUB)** on the **North Campus of the University of Alberta**. The nearest intersection to our clinic is 89th Avenue and 116th street. The following link is a map of our campus, and SUB can be found on the map coordinates E and 3.5 (indicated in blue):

<http://www.campusmap.ualberta.ca/~media/uofa2/Maps/pdf/northcampus-map.pdf>

We are located on **the second floor** of the Students' Union Building and can be found in the corner next to the TYP (Transition Year Project) and across from Aboriginal Student Services. A map of the second level can be found here:

http://www.su.ualberta.ca/media/uploads/72/SUB_Second_Level.pdf

Accessibility

There are several staircases that will take you to the second floor and **elevator access** can be found next to the Campus Food Bank (1-81) and Student Accessibility Services (1-80). A map of main floor SUB can be found here:

http://www.su.ualberta.ca/media/uploads/72/SUB_Main_Level.pdf

All Gender Washroom Access

Students' Union Building has an all gender washroom located on the lowest level floor at **0-52**. To access this washroom from our clinic, take the stairs located across from our clinic's front door (slightly to the right as you're leaving the clinic). Follow these stairs down to the lowest level floor and you will find this washroom to your Left (0-52)

Transit

University Station is accessible by ETS through LRT and Bus routes. LRT Trains arrive every 15 minutes during the day, and every 5-10 minutes at peak hours. Most bus routes run every 15 or 30 minutes, depending on the time of day and season. Route 4 runs East-West from Lewis Estates through University Station to Bonnie Doon and Capilano. Route 9 runs North-South from Southgate Mall through Downtown to Northgate and Eaux Claires. For more information on how you can access the University campus by ETS and to plan your route, please check their website:

<https://www.edmonton.ca/edmonton-transit-system-ets.aspx>

Parking

There is an abundance of parking around the University. Please refer to this convenient interactive map for full listing of parking locations which includes rates:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=165JjaLAGRTypViqVPxoobSHxrkl>

Parking locations nearest to SUB include Stadium Car Park, as well as Stadium Car Park East, North and South.



YWCA – Monday 9am-5pm

The YWCA is located at #400, 10080 Jasper Ave in the Empire Building (4th Floor)

<http://www.ywcaofedmonton.org/>

Accessibility

The YWCA is accessible by elevator from the ground level or from the basement level, which connects to Central Station.

All Gender Washroom Access

There are several gender neutral bathrooms inside of the YWCA office space.

Transit

The YWCA is located in the Empire Building above Central Station on the LRT line, and is accessible from many major bus routes. For more information on how you can access the YWCA by ETS and to plan your route, please check their website:

<https://www.edmonton.ca/edmonton-transit-system-ets.aspx>

Parking

Please visit the following link for information on Parking around Downtown Edmonton

<http://en.parkopedia.ca/parking/edmonton/?arriving=201705081500&leaving=201705081700>

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