

Terms of use of the counselling centre's services

Psychological counselling is the process of psychological empowerment of a person who is faced with difficulties which he/she cannot overcome alone with the aim of gradually overcoming the problem and achieving greater satisfaction with life. The type of psychological service depends on your specific problem and your expectations. There is a variety of different methods that a counsellor¹ can use, while the application of a specific method also depends on her professional orientation.

The counselling requires express activity from you. Therefore, the success also depends on how much are you ready to consistently work on yourself and apply what you have learned.

It is important to know that the counselling contributes to positive change but also that it can be followed by temporary unpleasant feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, loneliness, helplessness, confusion, and similar ones since those are the processes of confronting one's self. On the other hand, in the long run, counselling leads to more quality relationships with other people, more successful problem resolution, the alleviation/elimination of symptoms and, in general, greater satisfaction and acceptance of one's self.

Appointments

Sometimes it takes just one appointment to receive information or answers to concrete questions. In a larger number of cases, more appointments are necessary so you can be empowered to face the difficulties, more quality relationships with others and more successful problem resolution. The recommended frequency of appointments is once a week, but it can also be twice a month, depending on your needs and possibilities. The usual duration of an individual appointment is 60 minutes.

Who can use the counselling centre's services

The MAMA JE MAMA counselling centre is intended for minor pregnant women, parents, but also their friends and family members who want to support them.

¹ The text is partially written in the masculine gender and partially in the feminine gender in order to ensure gender mainstreaming.



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Mode of work and the procedure

During the first couple appointments, we will help you establish your needs and the goals you wish to accomplish, after which we will agree on a treatment plan together if you decide to continue the counselling process.

Supervision

In order to ensure the quality of psychological counselling, the counsellor shall participate in expert supervision where she will consult with other professionals. While participating, she will not disclose your identity, but rather, she will discuss the problem. Other professionals are also bound by professional secrecy so your identity and problem shall remain confidential.

Cooperation with the Department of Social Services (CZSS) and the Children's Home in Nazorova (DDZ)

If you have been directed to the counselling centre by the Department of Social Services (CZSS) or placed in the Maternity Ward of the Children's Home in Nazorova, the institution's representatives shall request information regarding your treatment. It is important to note the information that we share with them and the ones we do not.

The information which we forward to the competent CZSS and DDZ:

- ✓ Information on the type of treatment (individual counselling, group support)
- ✓ What is the agreed goal of the treatment
- ✓ Information on attendance (number of appointments/hours realised in the counselling centre)
- ✓ Information on other persons who are included in the treatment (family member, partner, and similar persons)
- ✓ Information on the counsellor's guidelines for the purpose of overcoming current difficulties in life (what to do, who to turn to for support, how to stand up for yourself, etc.)
- ✓ The opinion of the counsellor on changes achieved during and after the treatment is completed.

The information which is NOT forwarded without your explicit consent:

- ✗ Information on the content of the information disclosed during the counselling.
- ✗ Information on the context of life which can jeopardize your sense of dignity.
- ✗ Information on your unpleasant and traumatic personal experiences.

☞ The information regarding the treatment can also be provided to relevant institutions upon your request. In that case, you and your counsellor agree together on which types of information shall be shared.

Participating in an expert group

If you have been placed in the Maternity Ward of the Children's Home Zagreb, your counsellor from the Parents' Association "Step by Step", if needed, can participate in the meetings of the expert group which are held in the institution you have been placed in. The counsellor's role at the meeting is to provide support to the user, report on the progress in the work with the user, monitor her well-being and proposing measures in the best interest of the user.



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Cancelling or changing appointments

In case you are not able to arrive at the agreed-upon time, it is necessary to communicate that to the counsellor in advance via his/her mobile phone number or the Association's e-mail info@udrugaroditeljapkp.hr so another person can come in during that time period.

The decision to stop the treatment

If, during the process of treatment, for some personal reason you decide to stop the treatment at our counselling centre, it is important that you discuss it with your counsellor so that the process can be terminated in an adequate manner.

If you do not come to the agreed-upon appointment and do not call, the counsellor will contact you by phone in order to obtain information regarding your decision. If you do not accept such a procedure, it is important to emphasise it to your counsellor.



Confidentiality restrictions

The law and the ethics of the profession bind the counsellor to safeguard the professional secret. That means that all the information which is entrusted to the counsellor during his work cannot be forwarded to third persons. However, there is no obligation to professional secrecy in the following situations:

- ✓ when the counsellor believes there is an imminent threat to your health, safety, or life, he can recommend you to be hospitalised or/and inform the family which will take the necessary measures of protection.
- ✓ if the counsellor has reason to believe that your child or a member of your family has been neglected or/and abused, he shall forward that information to the relevant authorities in accordance with the provisions of the law.

- ✓ if the counsellor has reason to believe that you present a real danger to the health and life of others, he shall forward that information with the aim of taking protective measures, including your hospitalisation, a warning to the potential victim if she can be distinguished and call the police.
- ✓ if you are under investigation or in a criminal proceeding, the counsellor shall provide information about you solely on the basis of a court order or your written consent, which you will be informed about.

If such situations are emerging, the counsellor shall endeavour to talk about it with you, before taking other actions which he considers necessary. Since the above-mentioned is an exception from the obligation of professional secrecy, it is important that, if you have questions related to that, you discuss it before starting the treatment.