



Learn More, Read Less

Quick Professional Learning for School Counselors On-the-Go

Title	<u>Maintaining Confidentiality with Minors: Dilemmas for School Counselors</u>
Author/Presenter	Dr. Rivka Lazovsky, Head of Counselor Education Graduate Program in Beit Berl Academic College Israel
Summary	This study, completed in Israel, aimed to gauge the types of scenarios wherein counselors would breach confidentiality and to understand the rationale behind their decisions.
Topic / Platform	Ethics / Article

Key Takeaways	Implications for Practice	Level Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scenarios presented in the study fell into three domains: (1) Dangerous Behaviors/Situations, (2) Unlawful Behaviors, and (3) Personal/Family Information • Counselors were most willing to breach confidentiality with dangerous behaviors, less likely for unlawful behaviors and least willing for personal/family information shared • When explaining their rationale, most counselors agreed on the importance of prevention, helping the student, and avoiding harm to the student, but disagreed about the best course to do so. In other words, these reasons were used to argue both against and for breaching confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you must breach confidentiality, consider what information is actually necessary to disclose. • By their very nature, ethical dilemmas don't have clear answers (only 4 of the 18 scenarios achieved over 75% consensus). For this reason, consultation continues to be vital. • Kitchener's five moral principles (Autonomy, Beneficence, Nonmaleficence, Justice, and Loyalty) are another helpful tool in considering ethical dilemmas • It is important to document the process you followed to arrive at your final course of action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical studies typically find that counselors take students' age and maturity level into consideration. Counselors' training in child and adolescent development is an important part of evaluating how the moral principle of autonomy may apply to a particular ethical dilemma. • Research indicates that confidentiality is rated as very important by students of all age levels

Fun Fact... Did You Know?

If you're seeking a model for ethical decision-making, check out the "ACA Practitioner's Guide to Ethical Decision Making" or the "STEPS Model for School Settings." Remember to consult



Note: PDs-on-the-Go are intended to convey general information only, and not to provide legal/ethical advice or opinions. When facing an ethical dilemma, it is always best practice to consult with a colleague or supervisor and to document your ethical decision-making process.

