

## What Is Professional Disclosure and Informed Consent?

Professional disclosure and informed consent mean making sure students and families understand my role and what to expect from counseling before we begin.

Gladding notes that a professional disclosure statement helps establish structure and clear expectations from the start (2019).

Counseling may involve collaboration with parents, teachers, or school staff, but the student is always the primary focus, and clear roles and boundaries are maintained (Gladding, 2019).

Confidentiality is respected and explained upfront. Gladding defines confidentiality as “the ethical duty to fulfill a contract or promise to clients that the information revealed during therapy will be protected from unauthorized disclosure” (2019). Some information may be shared to protect safety or meet legal requirements.

## My Commitment

I am committed to supporting students in a way that is ethical, transparent, and collaborative. As Gladding notes, effective helping relationships are built on structure, care, and clear communication (2019). My goal is to create a counseling experience grounded in trust and respect.

## WHO I AM

This is me!



My name is Max Crouch, and I am a future school counselor working primarily with middle and high school students (approximately ages 11–18). My role as a school counselor is to support students’ academic, social-emotional, and personal development within the school environment. I work from a student-centered, strengths-based approach and believe that students do best when they feel safe, respected, and understood.

I am completing graduate-level training in school counseling, including coursework in counseling theory, ethics, child and adolescent development, family systems, and school-based intervention. My work is guided by professional ethical standards and a commitment to clarity, care, and collaboration.

BY MAX CROUCH

## PROFESSIONAL DISCLOSURE & INFORMED CONSENT

From the perspective of a future school counselor



# WHAT I CAN OFFER STUDENTS

I provide short-term individual counseling focused on school-related concerns such as stress, anxiety, peer relationships, academic motivation, identity development, and adjustment challenges. Sessions are goal-focused and time-limited, with an emphasis on skill-building, insight, and problem-solving that support success in school.

Because I am a school counselor, I do not provide long-term therapy or clinical mental health treatment. Gladding explains that counselors must clearly define the structure and limits of their role so students and families understand what counseling can and cannot provide (2019). When needs extend beyond school-based support, referrals may be recommended.

## Working With More Than One Person

When I work with a student, the student is always the primary client and central focus.

At the same time, students exist within systems, including families, classrooms, and peer groups. Supporting a student often requires collaboration with others who play important roles in their life.

With appropriate consent, I may communicate or meet with parents or guardians, teachers, administrators, school support staff, or outside professionals. These interactions are typically consultative or collaborative, rather than joint counseling sessions. The purpose of including others is to share relevant information, coordinate support, and reduce barriers to the student's success.

I do not provide family therapy.

I do not provide family therapy. However, I can assist families by helping them understand school-based concerns, clarify expectations, strengthen communication with the school, and access resources.

Gladding stresses the importance of "establishing structure, boundaries, and expectations" when working with multiple people so roles remain clear and ethical (2019).

## CONFIDENTIALITY & ITS LIMITS

Student confidentiality is respected and taken seriously. Information shared in counseling is kept private whenever possible. Gladding describes confidentiality as "the ethical duty to fulfill a contract or promise to clients that the information revealed during therapy will be protected from unauthorized disclosure" (Gladding, 2019, p. 133).

There are limits to confidentiality.

Information must be shared if there is concern about harm to self or others, abuse or neglect, or when required by law or school policy. These limits are explained clearly at the beginning of counseling. When collaboration with others is helpful, consent is requested, and students are included in decisions about what information may be shared. Gladding emphasizes that informed consent and clarity are essential when counseling occurs within systems (Gladding, 2019, p. 133).

## Referrals & Additional Support

If a student's needs extend beyond what school counseling can provide, referrals to outside services may be recommended. I work collaboratively with students and families to identify appropriate resources and support a smooth transition.

## References

Gladding, S. T. (2019). Family therapy: History, theory, and practice (7th ed.). Pearson.

