

Convincing a Child to Accept Counseling

First, talk with your child about your concerns. Choosing a comfortable place for the child is important. Speak with your child in a gentle manner, which will allow your child to express his/her concerns in as much depth as he/she is comfortable. Let your child know that a counselor is a confidential resource where your child can talk about whatever is on their mind, in a safe place.

Point out the benefits of therapy, such as improved mood and functioning and reduction of uncomfortable symptoms such as sadness or nervousness, for example. Since his/her safety is an utmost concern, contact your family physician or local emergency room if your child is an imminent threat of safety to him/herself or others.

Secondly, choosing the right therapist is a very important process, but it can be a daunting one, as there are many therapists to choose from. But don't be discouraged or intimidated.

Here are a few ways to get in touch with a counselor who is right for your child:

- If you wish to use your health insurance, contact your insurance company for a list of therapists who work with children.
- Don't limit your search to only in-network providers. Oftentimes, an out-of-network provider may be more suited to address the problem or concern. This may cost a bit more, but can cost less in the long run if your child is comfortable with a particular therapist vs. not being able to connect with one that is an in-network insurance provider.
- The internet has many therapist locator websites, where you can search by your town or zip code. You and your child can browse different therapist profiles, and after reading about the therapists and seeing a photo, your child may get a sense of whether or not he or she will be comfortable with this person.
- Ask around. Friends and family members may have had a good experience with a particular therapist and might recommend him or her

Know also that most therapists welcome a brief phone call so that a client can screen the therapist/assess for comfort level. They want to make sure you find the right person suited for your child's needs. Don't be afraid to ask the therapist about their training and experience working with your child's area of concern.

If you choose to work with a particular therapist, work out an initial plan as to how long problem resolution may take. However, be patient, especially in the beginning.

Uncomfortable symptoms or feelings often increase in the beginning of treatment as difficult emotions are discussed with the therapist and brought out into the open. Usually after a few sessions, these uncomfortable feelings will be felt less and less.

It is important to know that the symptom or feeling is a result of a deeper problem. As the therapist assists with addressing the underlying problem, the uncomfortable feelings subside even more.

GARY BREUER, MA, LPC



My private practice is located in North Scottsdale, within the offices of PsychArizona. I work with children (ages 6 and older), pre-teens, adolescents and adults. I work with individuals, couples and families with issues of anxiety, depression, trauma, grief and loss, career, academic and workplace issues, relationship issues, LGBT concerns, personal growth and spirituality.

I use various therapeutic approaches depending on the needs of the client. These approaches include developmental, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, existential, family-systems, mindfulness-based, transpersonal, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). EMDR is a model used for the treatment of trauma, and has also been found to be successful in the treatment of various other disorders as well.

I have experience providing professional counseling in clinical, business, and school settings.

Apart from my private practice, I am also a Reiki Master and have a great appreciation and respect for alternative as well as conventional treatment approaches.

9915 East Bell Road - Suite 140 - Scottsdale, AZ 85260 - (480) 758-2552