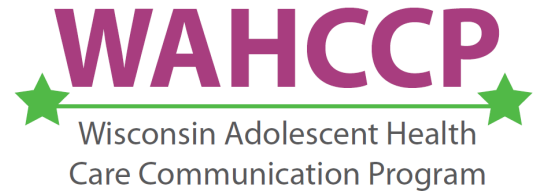


# Tool Kit for Teens



## How to Pick a Health Care Provider

- Did you know you have a right to choose a health care provider that you feel comfortable with? Well, you do! When choosing a provider, consider things that may make you more or less comfortable such as:
  - Gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, type of provider, age, insurance/payment.

## How to keep it Confidential

- Your conversation with your provider should be confidential and not shared with others.
- To check if your provider will respect your confidentiality you can provide them with a confidentiality contract or ask:
  - Is this conversation confidential?
  - Can you please explain what confidentiality means to you?

## How to Get Private Time with Your Health Care Provider

- It is important to have alone time with your provider because it can be difficult to talk about personal issues with a parent or guardian in the room.
- Here are a few ways you can make sure you have time alone with your provider:
  - Talk to your parent/guardian about giving you privacy for the exam. You can explain that you are growing up and privacy is important to you.
  - Call provider before your appointment to ask them about their office policy on confidential health care.
  - If you are in the exam room you can ask your parent to get you something outside of the room and then tell the provider you would like privacy.
  - Or you could excuse yourself from the exam room and tell another staff member that you need privacy.

## Is This the Place for You?

- *Here are some of the things you should look for:*
- Making the appointment
  - The person answering the phone should be polite and able to answer questions.
  - If it is urgent you should be able to get an appointment within a week.
- Planning your payment/insurance
  - The receptionist should be able to advise you on insurance and billing issues. They should be able to tell you if your insurance plan will cover the costs of your visit and what to do if you do not have insurance.

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- If you are planning on paying for the visit with a parent/guardian's insurance card but do not want them to know what services were performed, the receptionist should be able to tell you if your parent/guardian will receive information about the tests or services provided.
- If possible, the receptionist can suggest another way to pay, or refer you to a clinic that offers low-cost or no cost confidential services.
- The health provider's office or clinic
  - The waiting area and exam room should be clean and pleasant.
  - There should be health pamphlets and magazines to read while you wait.
- The visit
  - Usually you will see more than one staff member during your visit.
  - Each staff member should be polite, helpful, respectful, and non-judgmental—not critical of you and not putting you down.
  - Someone should always be available to answer your questions.
- Talking with the health provider
  - Talking with your provider should be comfortable, informative, and helpful.
  - Depending on the type of visit, it may be appropriate for your provider to give you information about exams and tests you may have, birth control options, and how to experience and enjoy your sexuality while remaining healthy and safe.
  - This part of your visit is the time for you to ask questions and talk about any health concerns you have.
  - If the center does not have the services you need, you should be referred to a place that can provide these services.
- The exam
  - For many people, this is the most important part of the visit.
  - The exam can be a bit awkward for some; the provider should try and make you feel as comfortable as possible.
  - If you would like to have another person in the room with you during the exam—such as a parent, friend, or someone else from the health clinic, like a nurse—you should feel comfortable asking for this.
- Length of visit
  - Some waiting time is common for health care visits.
  - You might want to bring something to read or your homework with you.