

Counseling – When to Make a Referral

LDS Family Services, Maryland Agency

Deciding whether to refer a member to professional counseling or to try and handle the issue within the ward can be a fine line. When in doubt, call your local LDS Family Services office and consult with a therapist free of charge. Be sensitive to the spirit. Remember that if you refer to a professional, you may continue to play a major role in the person's healing.

With abuse cases, ALWAYS call the church Abuse Help Line 1-800-453-3860, ext. 21911.

The following is a list of some of the most common reasons to refer a member to counseling.

- **Depression:**
 - The person has suicidal ideations.
 - The person has been depressed for years.
 - The person is not medicated for depression and has been depressed for over 6 months.
 - The person has suffered a great loss in their life and is not "moving on" after 6 months.
 - The person could benefit from learning coping skills to deal with depression.
- **Sexual Addiction:**
 - The person has a long-standing habit history of pornography and/or masturbation (2 or more years; doesn't need to be this long).
 - The person has acted out sexually with other individuals.
 - Any sign or indication that there are minors involved.
 - The person has tried kicking the habit on his/her own using prayer, scripture study and church attendance.
 - The person's spouse has found out and is considering separation and/or divorce.
 - A young man/woman is getting ready for a mission and has confessed having a problem with pornography and/or masturbation.
- **Marital problems:**
 - There has been cheating.
 - There are major communication problems.
 - There are intimacy problems.
 - There are money management problems.
 - There are in-law problems.
 - The marriage is ending (consider a referral to divorce mediation).
- **Children & Adolescents:**
 - Children are sexually acting out inappropriately on a continual basis.
 - Adolescents are involved in substance usage.
 - Adolescents are sexually active.
 - Parent/child problems.
- **Pre-mission Evaluation:**
 - Perspective members desiring to serve a full-time mission but have a history of mild to moderate psycho-social problems. Examples include: ADHD; Asperger's Syndrome; Tourettes Syndrome; behavioral problems
 - A summary of the evaluation will be completed by the therapist and submitted to the bishop. This evaluation will accompany the missionary's paperwork to the missionary department.
 - There is no charge for a pre-mission evaluation.