



Haldimand-Norfolk  
**REACH**

*supporting children, families, communities*

**101 Nanticoke Creek Parkway  
Townsend, Ontario NOA 1S0**

**519-587-2441**

**1-800-265-8087**

**Email: [info@hnreach.on.ca](mailto:info@hnreach.on.ca)**

**Website: [www.hnreach.on.ca](http://www.hnreach.on.ca)**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Haldimand-Norfolk REACH promotes and supports social inclusion and community well-being by providing coordinated access, planning, programs and services for children, families, and communities.

February 2016



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# **Your Rights and Responsibilities**

**Haldimand-Norfolk Resource,  
Education And Counselling Help**

## Welcome to Haldimand-Norfolk REACH

We are an agency that provides a variety of services to promote and support the well-being of people who live in our communities.

**We want you to know that you have certain rights when you receive our services.** These rights are guaranteed under “Acts of Legislation” which include:

- Child and Family Services Act
- Child Care and Early Years Act
- Social Inclusion Act
- The Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Personal Health Information Protection Act

These “Acts” have been written by the provincial government to make sure that you and your family’s best interests and well-being are protected by law.

**With these rights also come responsibilities.** This helps to ensure that you will have the best possible service and that we can continue to help the people who need our services.

**This booklet outlines your rights and responsibilities before, during, and after you receive our services.** If there is anything you don’t understand after reading this booklet, please be sure to discuss it with the staff person you are working with at REACH.

**Please note that R.E.A.C.H. is a strict scant free workplace as we have employees with severe sensitivities.**

## Right to File a Complaint

Another important right to remember before, during, and after you are receiving services is the right to complain. Our agency has a process which allows you to make a complaint and work toward a resolution. We encourage you to read more about this right and the procedures to follow if you have any concerns. If you wish a copy of the complaint procedure you may ask your REACH staff person or a receptionist for one. The complaint form is also available on our website. The Privacy Statement you receive also has information about how to file a complaint if you feel that your personal health information has been shared without your consent.

## Special Rights and Responsibilities

In addition to those outlined in this brochure, each program may have special rights and responsibilities. Please be sure to read all pamphlets and materials provided to you by the specific program/service in which you participate. If you are unsure about anything, please ask your REACH staff person.

## In Closing

Just as you have a right to begin receiving services from our agency, you also have the right to stop receiving services. You can do this by withdrawing your consent to receive services at any time, from the first time you call to the time we finish our work together. We keep your record in accordance with the Personal Health Information Protection Act legislation and our agency policies on Privacy and the Creation, Maintenance and Destruction of Records. You can review these policies if you wish.

It is your responsibility to let us know if you feel you no longer need our services. If you wish, we can work with you to find services that can better meet your needs. In some situations, we can provide follow-up supports for a time after you complete your work with REACH.

Thank you for taking the time to read about your rights and responsibilities. We look forward to working with you now that you know All About Your Rights!

## Confidentiality

You have the right to have your information kept confidential. There are times however, when we may need to disclose information without your consent, since safety for you and others always comes first.

- This may happen when there are suspicions that a **child may be in need of protection (past or present)**. By law, under Section 37(2) of the Child and Family Services Act, that information must be reported to the Children's Aid Society.
- When there is a clear and present **danger of harm to another**, action is required to prevent that harm. This may include informing the intended person or the police. Confidential information must be divulged in those circumstances. You should also be aware that a criminal or family court of law could **subpoena** your records, and in such cases, confidentiality cannot be kept. It is also the policy of Haldimand-Norfolk REACH to inform parents/guardians and, when needed, an appropriate physician of a participant's **suicidal thoughts or intent**, irrespective of the participant's age.

Ask your REACH staff person if you have any questions about these exceptions.

## Using Text and Email

We know that using text or email is sometimes a more convenient and efficient way to communicate. However, we ask that you please talk with your staff person about our agency guidelines, and the risks and benefits for using text and email to communicate with us. H-N REACH **cannot** guarantee the confidentiality of texts or emails. We will ask you to sign a consent form that indicates you understand this. **Please do not use text or email if you are in crisis and need urgent help. Please call the Child and Youth Crisis Service at 1-866-327-3224 (children and youth up to 18 and their families) or CAST at 1-866-487-2278 (youth over 16 years and adults). You can also call your EAP Emergency Afterhours service. These services can provide you with urgent support.**

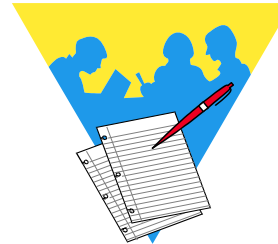


## Questions

We can help!

Please call if there is anything you do not understand.

## Requesting Service – Consent & Permission



With the exception of some justice programs, all services provided by our agency are **voluntary**. This means we need your written consent to provide you with services. If you are a parent or guardian, you will be asked to give your consent for a child who is in your care and has not reached an age where he/she can provide consent.

In some of our justice programs, you may have been ordered by the police, courts or probation to participate in a program. Your consent to participate will still be requested. If you choose not to consent, we will let whoever ordered you to participate know of your decision. They may discuss their expectations further with you.

If you are twelve years of age or older, you do not need permission from your parents to receive child counselling services. However, other services may require your parent or guardian's consent if you are under age 16. We will talk with you about involving your parents/guardian in the services you receive.

As well, you also have the right to refuse some services once you are twelve. However, we hope you would have a discussion with us before making this decision so that together we can talk about what the decision may mean for you.

A parent/guardian can be:

- Both parents, where both have custody.
- One parent, where just that parent has custody.
- Another person who has custody.

## When Service Begins

When you begin to receive service you will **be informed of your rights and responsibilities**. You may receive written information or the staff person with whom you are working may talk with you. It is important that you understand this information. Be sure to ask any questions that you may have about your rights.

Together, you and your staff person will decide **when to meet**. Keeping your appointments is an important responsibility. If you need to cancel or change an appointment, call us as soon as possible.

Your staff person will also talk with you about **where to meet**. Depending on the service, you may meet in your home, in a private office, or another location. We try to offer meetings in places that are convenient for you.

You will be asked if there is anything that we need to consider when working with you, such as language, cultural beliefs or holidays, etc. Please let us know about any of these and we will plan with you and do our best to meet your needs.

REACH is committed to providing services that are safe for you, the staff person and the community. This is a responsibility that both you and your staff person share. In the event that there are concerns about safety during a meeting, the staff person will talk with you about how to stay safe. REACH does not permit staff to use any kind of physical discipline. Staff may use physical restraints only if properly trained to do so and only to prevent immediate harm. No weapons or items that could cause harm are allowed at any REACH facilities or appointments.

## Record Keeping



The general purpose of keeping records (files) is to ensure that we keep track of your involvement with our agency; keep all your information together; know about any other services with which you have been involved, and how helpful these services have been. Having this information helps us plan while you are in service. For this reason, we also keep notes of each contact with you, from the first time you call to the time we finish our work together. Different programs have different rules about how long records are kept. We hope you will ask your staff person about the rules for your program.

## Sharing Information from your Record

When you meet with a REACH staff person for the first time they will ask about any other REACH programs you have been or are currently involved with. A discussion will occur with you about sharing information between REACH programs. What and with whom you want to share is up to you. At REACH, we believe that most often services work best for people when everyone works together toward a common goal.

Sometimes, other people want to see what is in your file. For example, a doctor who is treating you may need more details on your background or emotional well-being. Parents may also ask to see what is in their child's file.

In most situations, if you are 12 years of age or older, your consent is required in order for us to share information from your file. If you are younger than 12 years of age, and you are able to understand and appreciate the risks and benefits of consenting to sharing your information, we will ask your permission to share your information with anyone who doesn't work in our agency. But, before you consent you have a right to know:

- Precisely what information will be shared;
- The purpose of sharing this information;
- With whom the information will be shared;
- Whether this will mean the person can then share it with other people;
- And, for how long your consent to share this information will last.

You also might want to know what is in your own file – that is also your right. Our staff will discuss what is in the file with you. We may, however, leave things out if we think they will cause you, or others harm. There may be things in your file that are incorrect. You have the right to have these things corrected by your staff person and ask to see the corrected information. You have a right to ask for a copy of our Privacy Policy that explains all of this in detail. Please talk with your REACH staff person if you have any questions about this.