

**Family Life Coaching
Code of Ethical Practice**

Family Life Coaching is a process where a client and a trained coach work together to achieve client-identified family goals. The process is collaborative and client-directed, working from a strengths-based perspective.

Family Life Coaches utilize research-based coaching strategies and techniques to encourage and support the competence and achievement of client-identified goals. They build respectful, trusting relationships with parents, children, and/or families in order to facilitate positive growth in family life, enabling families to maximize their strengths and potential.

Family Life Coaching Association Core values

- Respect
- Professionalism
- Support
- Diversity
- Universal Access
- Collaboration
- Inclusivity
- Evolving Practices

Key Principles

- Do no harm to the client
- Respect and right to privacy
- Report abuse/neglect
- Report actual or potential harm to client or others
- Maintain rapport and trust
- Facilitate resolution
- Refer clients who cannot be worked with in an ethically and unbiased manner
- Provide research based best practices

A. As a coach, Family Life Coaches are committed to:

A.1 Maintaining Confidentiality

Coaches protect knowledge of the experiences and identities of their clients, except in situations where the client has harmed or is at risk for harming themselves or others. Coaches treat the knowledge they have of the client respectfully. Aside from mandated reporting circumstances or legally required circumstances, coaches only share protected information with the permission of the client. Clients should be made aware of the boundaries of confidentiality at the beginning of the relationship.

A.2 Reporting any harmful or potentially harmful behavior

Coaches are mandated reporters. They must report or ensure the client self-reports any behavior or potential behavior that poses a risk to themselves or another. Coaches need to inform clients of this responsibility at the beginning of the relationship.

A.3 Creating clear agreements with clients that define all relationship and service parameters

Coaches are transparent with clients about the scope of the coaching relationship. Coaches and clients create a clear understanding about the logistics, financial arrangements, and locations of services. Coaching agreements may only be entered into with individuals that are of legal age and have the ability to enter into agreements for services. Agreements with minors or adults with special needs should have the knowledge of a responsible caretaker, as well as cooperation of the client.

A. 4 Providing Client-oriented services

Coaches focus on the client's goals and interests. Coaches facilitate, not direct, change.

A. 5 Offering Unbiased work

Coaches check their biases and work to treat all their clients without preconceived notions of characteristics, behavior, or abilities.

A.6 Empowering clients

Coaches support clients in making their own changes on issues they prioritize and do so using strengths-based coaching approaches.

A. 7 Following the client's lead

A coach's role is to help a client explore, not to offer direction or solution. Coaching is client directed, focused on client goals.

A.8 Openness and honesty about the service and limits of the service

Coaches accurately explain the scope of coaching services to clients at the beginning of the relationship and additionally as needed in order to allow clients to choose the most appropriate helping services.

A.9 Using research based knowledge and practices

Coaches utilize current knowledge of proven theories, findings, and techniques.

A.10 Building skills

Coaches use a client's strengths to improve their relationships, hone abilities, and further their goals.

A.11 Maintaining safe boundaries

Coaches balance authentic, warm relationships with maintaining professional distance from ownership of client's experiences.

A.12 Setting aside personal beliefs

Coaches separate their personal experiences and own preferences and demonstrate respect for their client's right to choose their own actions and beliefs.

A.13 Asking permission if stepping out of coach role

Coaches with credentials in other helping fields may come out of their coaching role with clients to provide education or intervention only with the expressed permission of the client. This maintains a client controlled relationship and keeps the parameters of coaching clear.

A.14 Using unconditional positive regard

Coaches operate from the perspective that clients are doing the best they feel they can do in their present situation. Coaches validate client's worth and work from a strengths based perspective to empower clients to make self-identified changes.

A.15 Utilizing appropriate assessment and data collection to ensure effective treatment

Coaches monitor the progress of clients in order to ensure that techniques are appropriate and that the coaching relationship is helpful and meaningful to the client. Progress may be monitored using session notes, exercises or instruments appropriate to the client.

A.16 Respecting the client, even in third-party payer situations

Coaches recognize that their client is the person who they are in a relationship with, regardless of who is paying for the fees. Coaches are clear with both the client and the payer about the boundaries of the arrangement. There are clear understandings with all parties about responsibilities of each, the nature and conditions about sharable information, and the nature of the coaching relationship. This applies whether the payer is a parent, an employer, or another party.

A.17 Referring as needed

Coaches recognize the limits of their work with clients. When clients exhibit or express needs beyond the scope of coaching, coaches are familiar with appropriate options of other professionals and are able to offer referral suggestions to clients.

A.18 Respecting a client's right to terminate relationship

Coaches maintain an open and voluntary relationship with the client. Coaches recognize that the client's benefit is primary, and do not take a request to end the relationship personally.

A.19 Respecting their own right, as a coach, to terminate relationship

Through the open and voluntary relationship, a coach recognizes when the coach-client relationship has reached an end or if it may not be a good fit. With permission, the coach works to find a suitable coach for the client.

B. As a professional, Family Life Coaches are committed to:

B.1 Strong foundational knowledge in Family Science and Coaching Methodology

Coaches have formal training both in Family Science and in Coaching Methodology.

B.2 Familiarity and compliance with laws and regulations that guide work with individuals and families

Coaches are current in knowledge of the laws that govern the locations where they practice. They comply with all legal aspect of interactions with clients.

B.3 Professional and confidential storage of records related to clients

Coaches collect only necessary, required personal information from the client and maintain organized records of their work in a protected area.

B.4 Avoiding any disruptive or harmful behaviors that may lead to misinterpretation caused by multiple roles/relationships with clients

Coaches are clear in the parameters of their role with clients. Coaches avoid serving too many roles with clients that may not serve the client's best interest. Where possible, the coach should avoid additional roles with the client outside of the coaching relationship.

B.5 Avoiding any sexual or romantic relationships with clients or former clients

Coaches refrain from any romantic relationship with any client who is in a formal coaching relationship or has been in the past two years. Coaches also refrain from any romantic relationship with anyone closely connected with the client for the same period of time.

B.6 Avoiding any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in work with clients or organizations

Coaches prioritize client interests above their own within the coach-client relationship. Coaches reclude themselves from relationships where their actions may or may appear to benefit themselves at the cost of the client.

B.7 Honesty in marketing

Coaches represent their background and services accurately in all communications and materials designed to recruit clients.

B.8 Awareness of own biases

Coaches self-reflect and inspect their own tendencies and biases towards others. Coaches take steps to maintain effective and equitable treatment of all clients. Coaches continual work toward improved cultural competence.

B.9 Maintaining a continual internal check of self

Coaches continually self-reflect on beliefs and actions to improve their skills and maintain professional and ethical practice.

B.10 Receiving regular mentoring and/or supervision

Coaches participate in regular review of practice with another similarly trained professional to monitor and improve interactions with clients.

B.11 Continuing education and update research-based knowledge

Coaches maintain continual learning in trends and findings in both Family Science and Coaching Methodology.

B.12 Advocating for all individuals and families, especially the most vulnerable

Coaches educate others and work toward improving conditions and experiences for individuals and families, both formally and informally.

B.13 Supporting policies and laws that promote the well-being of individuals and families

Coaches utilize their connections and actions to educate and influence power sources within their communities.

B.14 Contributing to and supporting the profession of Family Life Coaching

Coaches donate their time, talents and knowledge to grow the profession. Coaches also advocate for the profession by informing the general public about what family life coaching is, what its benefits are, and what the field as a whole provides to society.