



The purpose of this form is to inform you of your rights and responsibilities as a recipient of Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling services and the management of personal information within the WCS Client Management System.

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## Part A Management of Personal Information

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### Purpose of collecting information

- As part of providing a counselling service to your child, Open Arms will need to collect and record personal information about your child. Personal information is collected for the purposes of assessing your child's eligibility for Open Arms services and to enable your counsellor to plan and review the effectiveness of your child's counselling.
- Aggregated, de-identified data may be used for research and reporting purposes.
- You do not have to disclose personal information to Open Arms; however Open Arms counsellors can only work with the information you provide and if you choose not to provide some information this may limit the services able to be provided to your child.

### Confidentiality

- Open Arms is committed to preserving and upholding your and your child's right to privacy and confidentiality. Subject to certain limited exceptions (described below), your and your child's personal information is kept strictly confidential and stored securely, at all times.
- All Open Arms client information is stored separately from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). Open Arms will not provide any information about you or your child to DVA, except in aggregate and de-identified form to meet reporting requirements (for example, in the DVA Annual report). If you give your consent in writing, Open Arms will work with DVA and share relevant information where it is in the best interests of your child's clinical care.
- The clinician allocated to your child will be able to access both your child's current and previous Open Arms records.

### Exceptions to confidentiality

- As explained in the clauses above, Open Arms will not share your child's personal information unless you have provided your consent, or there are other circumstances where the sharing of that information is considered appropriate or necessary. For example, Open Arms may be required to disclose your child's personal information without your consent when:
  - information about your child is subpoenaed by a court or tribunal in legal proceedings;
  - you, your child or another person is at serious risk of harm;
  - the disclosure is necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law; or
  - disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law.
- Should these circumstances arise, your child's personal information will only be released in accordance with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

### Accessing your information

- You have a right of access to information Open Arms holds about your child in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.
- Requests for access should be made in writing to Open Arms.
- Examples of where access to information may be restricted are where disclosure:
  - may pose a serious threat to your child's physical or mental well-being, or the physical and mental well-being of others;
  - may infringe on the privacy of others; or
  - may hinder law enforcement activities.

### Client Rights and Responsibilities

- You should have been provided with a Client's Rights and Responsibilities brochure by Open Arms in, or prior to, your child's first session. Before finalising this consent form, please raise any issues or questions you may have about this information with your counsellor.

Open Arms is bound by the *Privacy Act 1988* and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs). For more information on how Open Arms manages personal information, please visit [www.dva.gov.au/privacy](http://www.dva.gov.au/privacy).

- I have read and understood the information on page 1.
- I acknowledge that my child's rights and responsibilities have been explained to me by an Open Arms counsellor.
- I understand that Open Arms may disclose my child's personal information to third parties, including DVA, if Open Arms has identified a risk to my child's, or others, health or safety, or as required by law.
- I understand that I can withdraw my consent in writing at any time.
- I understand that I may ask Open Arms to change incorrect information contained in my child's file.
- I give my informed consent for Open Arms to provide my child with services for duration of this episode of care.

**1. Client's name**

**2. Parent's name**

**3. Parent's signature**

Date