1.1b Confidentiality Guidelines

**“What is said here stays here.”**

Confidentiality means that anything you learn about another person must be kept private and not shared with others. If confidentiality is “broken” people can be hurt or embarrassed. You must not share an individual’s thoughts, feelings, or experiences that they tell you or personal information you learn during your project.

**What information must be kept confidential?**

**1. Information that your team members share with you.** You may share personal information with your fellow team members. You want your privacy to be respected and must respect the privacy of others as well.

* **For example:** You are doing an Active Listening exercise, and your partner shares that she has been receiving counseling services. This is personal information that your partner felt comfortable sharing with you, but it should not be shared with others.

**2. Information you gather through your research.** You might be collecting surveys or conducting interviews or focus groups for your research topics. In these cases rules of confidentiality also apply.

* **For example:** Sometimes in focus group discussions for interviews, people will share experiences they have had but do not want anyone to know that the information came from them. It is important to keep what it shared in these discussions confidential and never share the identity of the person who gave you this information. When reporting any results, you should always refer to general terms, such as, “one respondent said…”

**WHEN SHOULD YOU SHARE PRIVATE INFORMATION?**

If someone is or tells you they are…

* being hurt by someone else
* going to hurt someone else
* going to hurt himself or herself.

**IF THIS HAPPENS PLEASE TALK TO YOUR TEACHER OR ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER IMMEDIATELY.**

Adults working in schools are required by law to report if they heard about any of these situations. They need to make sure the person is getting the help he or she needs to stay healthy and safe.