

37 **Applying Ethics to Professional Situations**

- Dear Michael
 - As a matter of course, I have not agreed to see children without the consent of both parents. I have thought this was an ethical requirement, although I have heard of therapists who do not follow this. I was asked this week if I would see children in a divorce case even if the father was unwilling to consent. What is the current wisdom regarding this? Is it unethical? Is it illegal? Is it merely foolish because of the possibility of a board complaint? Inquiring minds.....

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- Dear Michael
 - My office building was broken into and my password protected laptop stolen. The police stated that the hard-drive is usually cleansed of data and the laptop sold. There were no psychotherapy records, mostly psychological evaluations and my billing records.

39 **Applying Ethics to Professional Situations**

- Dear Michael
 - A client has told her therapist that her friend is being "pimped out" by her boyfriend. Is this a mandated CPS report?

40 **Applying Ethics to Professional Situations**

- Dear Michael
 - I'm wondering if you are aware of any specific regulations that apply to transporting clinical files. Some of our interns work at school sites and need to carry documents with client information on them back to the clinic for their supervisor to review.
 - One of my colleagues said that she had heard that per HIPPA, files need to be transported in a locked file, in a locked car trunk and could not be taken on a bus or kept on the seat of a car. Have you ever heard of such a regulation? Any thoughts on the matter?

41 **Applying Ethics to Professional Situations**

- Dear Michael
 - My client is telling me of others out in the community who are threatening members of his family. I've encouraged him to tell the police, but he won't. Am I mandated to report? Is it Tarasoff? The threats are indirect, like communications: "picture [person] in a coffin..."

42 **Applying Ethics to Professional Situations**

- Dear Michael
 - Last Friday my patient missed her session. She called to say she was driving to Humboldt to stay with her father. She sounded like she might be decompensating - flat affect, robotic voice, difficulty with reality testing. My question is whether you think it would be defensible ethically for me to contact my patient's father (he is listed as her emergency contact in my intake paperwork) to check on her whereabouts. I don't have a signed release from the patient about doing this, but I know she has a positive relationship with her father.