

# Counselling Services

## Introduction

School Counselling Services provide a continuum of services to support the social, emotional, behavioural and mental health needs of students. Counsellors are available to meet with students and/or parent(s) in a consultative capacity or to provide direct counselling related services that are primarily intended to support academic success. School counselling may involve coordinating support with other adults involved including parent(s), teachers and outside agencies.

## What can you expect from the counselling process?

Counsellors can help students to solve a particular problem, make a decision, or better understand their lives or themselves. Counsellors help students to explore their feelings, concerns and the changes that they want to make. Students and parents have the right to refuse to do anything that is suggested and may discontinue service at any time and for any reason.

School counselling is primarily intended to help children and youth develop insights into social, emotional and/or behavioural barriers to learning and/or personal functioning. Sometimes this involves the application of therapeutic interventions aimed at effecting measurable change. In instances where more comprehensive therapeutic interventions are required, counsellors coordinate support services with outside agencies.

## Confidentiality in Counselling

A core component of informed consent for school counselling involves establishing a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limitations. When contact with a school counsellor is incidental and informal, limits to confidentiality are generally reviewed verbally by the school counsellor at the beginning of the discussion. When counselling support is of a more formalized nature, written informed consent includes a description of confidentiality and its limitations. On occasions when outside agencies are involved, school counsellors attain consent from a client and/or parent before receiving and/or sharing information with an outside agency.

## Support Services

### Level 1 and 2 Support

When a student is initially identified as being in need of support of a social, emotional and/or behavioural nature, a counsellor may meet informally with the child or youth on a one-time basis to determine how best to proceed. This may lead to the implementation of Level 1 & 2 supports aimed at helping resolve an issue through informal consultation with parents, teachers and other school-based personnel. Level 1 & 2 counselling related support and services also involve various classroom-based psycho-educational programs that are designed to proactively promote social emotional learning and well-being within the general school population.

### Level 3 Support

When Level 1 & 2 supports prove insufficient, more formal and extensive school counselling can occur. Individual or small group therapeutic interventions aimed at effecting positive change in a student's social emotional wellbeing can be agreed through the School Based Resource Team (SBRT). This may also require the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students with social, emotional and/or behavioural needs. Ministry Special Education identification and outside agency involvement may be required at this time as well.

### Level 4 Support

Some students with ongoing and serious challenges may require more intensive intervention involving, for example, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Services. School counsellors work with these other agencies to provide integrated case management/ wraparound services. These students will have an IEP and may be identified through the Ministry of Education as having Special Educational Needs.

## Referral Process

### Student Referrals

Elementary and secondary students may directly refer themselves for counselling support and services. Alternatively school personnel may refer students via the SBRT. Families are also encouraged to contact the school counsellor with any academic, social, emotional concerns they might have about their child.

## Counselling Services

In addition, the secondary school counsellor:

- helps students to resolve behaviours that are interfering with classroom success
- works with students to help them meet their personal and educational goals
- monitors the progress of students and works with the student, parents and teachers in addressing any emerging concerns
- provides information and guidance in programming and course selection to ensure that the student's graduation requirements are fulfilled
- provides key links between student's contact to appropriate resources as accessed through SBRT
- is an active participant on the SBRT
- facilitates the flow of information between external agencies and resources to meet the needs of students

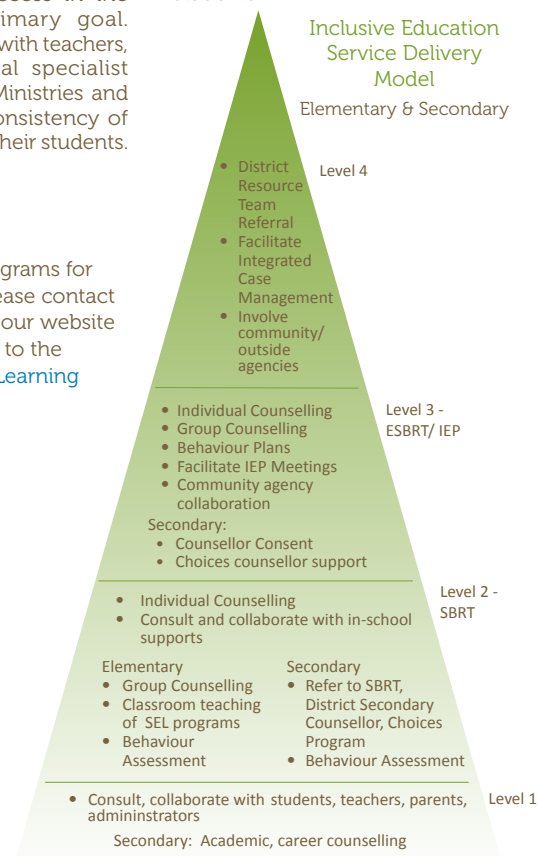
### Role of the Elementary Counsellor

The role of the elementary counsellor is to provide individual and small group counselling on issues such as barriers to academic progress, transitions and change, social skills, communication skills, self-esteem, anxiety, depression, grief and loss. Often this involves the application of brief, solution focused therapeutic interventions aimed at effecting measurable change. In other instances more comprehensive therapeutic interventions are required whereby coordinating support with outside agencies is beneficial.

### Role of the Secondary Counsellor

Every secondary school has a counselling team which provides support for academic, social, emotional, behavioural or mental health concerns. Success in the classroom is the primary goal. Counsellors collaborate with teachers, parents and additional specialist personnel from other Ministries and agencies to provide consistency of approach in support of their students.

For questions about programs for counselling services, please contact your home school, visit our website at [www.sd44.ca](http://www.sd44.ca) or refer to the [Inclusive Education 44 Learning Services Handbook](#)



- ~ BC School Counsellors Assn. <http://bctf.ca/bcsca/index.html>
- ~ Child & Adolescent Program (CAP) (604) 904-4336
- ~ Child Youth Mental Health & Addictions (CYMH) (604) 904-4336
- ~ Hollyburn Family Services [www.hollyburn.ca](http://www.hollyburn.ca) (604) 987-8211
- ~ Family Services of the North Shore [www.familyservices.bc.ca](http://www.familyservices.bc.ca) (604) 988-5281
- ~ Anxiety BC [www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com)
- ~ Crisis Centre Phone Line - Chat Line [www.YouthInBC.com](http://www.YouthInBC.com) (604) 872-3311