

## School Counselling

My name is Kelly Harris and I am the School Counsellor at Westview Elementary. I hope that your children are all settling in well to their new classes and routines of the new school year!

It is my hope that this school year will be full of successful experiences for all students.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any social/emotional concerns about your child that may be impacting their success at school.

I work at Westview Elementary on **Monday (all day), Wednesdays (mornings only) and on Thursdays (all day)**. Since I work at another school, email is the best way to get a hold of me: [kharris@sd44.ca](mailto:kharris@sd44.ca)

You can also reach me by telephone at Westview: **604 903-3840** or at Capilano: **604 903-3370**

\*Please note that I do not have voicemail, so you can leave a message with the office if you are not able to reach me.

Below my introduction you will see that I have included some quick tips on how to have more insightful conversations with your child about their school day.

Best wishes,

Kelly Harris

**Counsellor Quick Tips:** Talking to your child about their school day

Many parents struggle (myself included) when they ask their children how their school day was and only receive a vague 'good' or 'bad' answer. Similarly if you ask them, 'What did you learn today?' and only receive a brief: 'Nothing' answer, it can be frustrating. Here are some tips to have more insightful conversations with them about their day at school:

### **Setting the stage:**

- find natural moments to talk when you are not in a rush and when they have your full attention (no device distractions) such as in the car, during bedtime tuck-in or at dinner.
- Make sure they are fed! Kids are hungry after school, so it is important that they are not 'hangry' before you try to have a conversation.

### **Ask open ended questions:**

E.g.

- What was the best thing you did at school today?

- What made you smile today?
- Who did you sit with at lunch?
- What was the hardest rule to follow today?
- What would you rate your day on a scale of 1 ☹️ to 10 😊? Why?
- When did you feel most proud of yourself today?
- Which playground skill do you want to master this year?
- What was the kindest thing you did for someone else today?

**Share something about your yourself:**

Example: “When I was your age, I remember being proud of myself when I mastered the monkey bars.”

**Avoid negative questions:** Asking in a positive way lets your child express concerns.

Example: Instead of asking, ‘Were the kids in your class friendly?’ you could ask, ‘Who did you enjoy talking to?’

**Listen, listen, listen:** Once your child starts talking about their day it is tempting to want to ask more questions. Try to hold off. Instead, make positive comments as they share. Children will get overwhelmed with too many questions at once. Your child will gain confidence when they relate their day to you and you affirm them.