

Section 7

Youth & Family Counsellors

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SERVICE DESCRIPTION

SCHOOL-BASED CHILD, YOUTH & FAMILY COUNSELLORS

DESCRIPTION:

This service provides counselling and support for students finding it difficult to function successfully in classroom and school environments. Services include counselling, family support, skill development and psychosocial interventions. Service is provided to all levels of School District 64 schools. Counsellors work in and outside of school classrooms, and in the community.

HISTORY:

The school support service began with Salt Spring Community Services in 1983 as part of the High School Gipsy program. In 1991 it evolved into the current school-based program with three Youth and Family Counsellors. This program was funded by the Ministry for Children and Families until 2002 when the responsibility for these services province-wide were transferred to school districts. Funding limitations reduced staffing to the current two positions. In 2008 the service shifted to strengthen the clinical therapy component.

POPULATION SERVED:

Services are available to children, youth and their families who live on the Southern Gulf Islands and attend school on Salt Spring Island. Service may be extended to students not attending, or who have dropped out of school. Students referred to the service are typically experiencing emotional or behavioural issues that limit their ability to function successfully within the classroom and school environment.

GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. Increase engagement with school and/or reduce drop-out rate.
2. Improve self esteem, communication, coping and problem solving skills.
3. Improve family, social and other significant relationships.
4. Increase ability to think clearly and make healthy decisions.

SERVICE DELIVERY PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES:

7. Service delivery will be caring, respectful, safe and open.
8. People will be treated with dignity and respect.
9. Services will be provided in a discreet and confidential manner.

10. Services will be empowering including the provision of advocacy and information.
11. Service delivery will be person-centered including being flexible, individualized and involving the person served in setting the direction of service.
12. Services will be responsive and timely.

SERVICE DELIVERY ACTIVITIES:

1. **Assessment and Goal Planning.** Counsellors work with students, their family and school to develop plans based on the individual needs assessment. This is typically done in collaboration with an Individual Education Plan.
2. **Individual Counselling.** Counsellors provide person-centered and solution-focused short term counselling. Counselling is strength-based and may include social and life skill development.
3. **Family Counselling.** Counsellors provide family-centered and solution-focused counselling that includes the entire family system.
4. **Groups.** Counsellors organize groups at times to address common issues such as communication, social skills or problem solving.
5. **Crisis Intervention.** Counsellors provide support for students and their families facing unusually difficult life situations.
6. **Conflict Resolution and Mediation.** Counsellors help resolve differences by acting as an intermediary between conflicting parties.
7. **Case Management and Coordination.** Counsellors communicate relevant ideas, goals and information between family, school and community supports to ensure services are delivered in an effective and holistic way.
8. **Referral and Advocacy.** Counsellors refer students and their families to other SSICS or community services as needed, and act on their behalf when needed to obtain resources and services.

LOCATION:

Service is provided in schools, community and homes as determined by individual case plans. Confidential meeting space is located at 134 McPhillips Ave (The Core Inn) and wheelchair accessible offices are located at 268 Fulford-Ganges Road and 120 Park Drive (Family Place). Services may also be provided in community locations including schools.

HOURS:

Services are available Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm and after hours as required during the school year (September to June).

STAFF RESOURCES:

One full-time Counsellor Two part-time Clinicians provide services and coordinate the program. One Clinician focuses on younger children attending elementary and the other focuses on middle school students. The Counsellor focuses on middle and high school students. Staff report to the Director of Child, Youth and Community Living Services. Staff are part of the Child and Youth Services Team, a multi-service team including mental health, alcohol and drug, family support, and early childhood services.

ACCESS TO SERVICE:

Services are accessed through the school, typically through the school-based team or counsellor. Students and parents/caregivers may enquire about access to the service directly with program staff or the SSICS Director of Child and Family Services.

STANDARDS/REFERENCES/BEST PRACTICES:

1. CARF accreditation standards
2. Child & Youth Mental Health Plan, MCFD

FUNDING/SPONSORSHIP:

The service is funded by Gulf Islands School District #64

PARTNERSHIPS/KEY CONNECTIONS:

1. School District # 64

**SALT SPRING AND SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY
PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL: SCHOOL-BASED COUNSELLORS**

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	MID-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	MEASUREMENT TOOLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salaries, Direct Service Mileage Staff Training Other Administrative Other Salaries and Benefits Office Space Computers Telephone and Communication Materials and Supplies Government Funding: School District Policies Service Contracts Sessions Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment & Goal Planning Individual Counselling Family Counselling Groups Crisis Intervention Information & Education Case Management & Coordination Referral & Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of children and youth served # of parents served # of consultations provided # of groups and # of participants # of referrals made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve self esteem, communication, coping and problem solving skills Improve family, social and other significant relationships Increase ability to think clearly and make healthy decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase engagement with school and/or reduce drop-out rate Improve emotional and mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children, youth and families lead healthy and stable lives 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child, youth, parents and school staff report improved self esteem, communication, coping and problem solving skills <p>Mid term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child, youth and parents report improved family, social and other relationships <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child and youth report increased ability to think clearly and make healthy decisions <p>Mid term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child, youth, parents and school staff report improved school functioning <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child, youth and parent report improved emotional and mental health <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children, youth and families report leading healthy and stable lives 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to Face Interview <p>Mid term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to Face Interview Questionnaire/Survey <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire/Survey File Review

August 2009

Affiliations

The youth and family counsellors work closely with the following organizations and persons.

1. **School District 64-**

- The youth drug and alcohol worker attends weekly school based team meetings with counselors and administrators at Gulf Island Secondary School. (GISS)
- -The youth drug and alcohol worker attends weekly meeting with the school counsellor at Salt Spring Island Middle School. (SIMS)
- An annual report is submitted to GISS to document contact made with students that were referred to youth D&A services.
- A weekly report of contact made with students that were referred is submitted by youth drug and alcohol outreach worker via email to Lyall Ruehlin, vice principal of GISS.

2. **SWOVA-** Regular contact is made between SWOVA executive director and team leaders and SSICS youth drug and alcohol worker(s) for the sake of developing a coordinated effort to address drug and alcohol misuse in connection to the healthy relationships.

3. **CPA-** Regular contact is made with the Crime Prevention Association (CPA). CPA monthly minutes are forwarded upon request to Youth Drug and alcohol worker.

4. **MCFD-** Youth drug and alcohol worker(s) collaborate on a 'needs' basis with MCFD workers assigned to the Gulf Islands .

5. **RCMP-** Youth drug and alcohol worker(s) collaborate with RCMP officers on a needs basis.

6. **PAC-** Youth drug and alcohol worker(s) collaborate with Parent Advisory committees and also target Parent Advisory committees with certain selective applications of prevention initiatives.

7. **S.O.L.I.D and Core Inn Youth Project-** Youth Drug and Alcohol worker (s) collaborate with other local non profit groups such as the Salt Spring Organization for Life Improvement and Development and the Core Inn Youth Project for the sake of creating and maintaining avenues for youth empowerment.

8. Child and Youth Care Association of British Columbia

Intake Process

- Schools are notified quarterly about the availability of counselling time for their specific student population
- Teachers bring/send the name of a child he/she is concerned about to School Based Team meeting
- School Based Team discusses each child and decides who is in most need of services
- A representative from the School-based Team contacts the parent of students under age 14, to discuss their concern and ask permission to make a referral to a Youth and Family Counsellor at Salt Spring Island Community Services
- A representative from the School-based team completes the referral and faxes it to the Youth Team Manager via the Salt spring Island Community Services confidential fax number
- Youth Team Manager reviews the presenting issues noted on the referral and determines if it is an appropriate referral for the Youth and Family Counsellor or may be best served by another agency service
- If the Youth Family Counsellor caseload is full, the Youth Team Manager will assess the applicability of the case for other services within the team
- Youth Team Manager copies the referral and assigns it to the Youth Family Counsellor or other team member
- Youth and Family Counsellor contacts the parent/student to set up a meeting to sign intake forms and discuss the focus of counselling
- Youth and Family Counsellor meets with parent/student to sign forms, review SSICS orientation manual and set a time for the first session
- Youth and Family Counsellor sends a Confidential Clinical Notification for Schools form to the school outlining the program participant disposition
- Intake Assessment forms are filled out within first month of sessions with persons served

Waitlist Policy

- SSICS does not keep a waitlist for Youth and Family Counselling services
- School-Based Teams are updated quarterly regarding the available counselling time as well as other available services at SSICS
- School-Based Teams will then decide which student should be seen as a priority
- If School-Based Teams are needing more support for their students they are encouraged to speak to the Youth and Family Counsellors about other services at SSICS that may be appropriate



JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNSELLOR
REPORTS TO: Clinical Director
CLASSIFICATION: Family Counsellor
WAGE GRID: Paraprofessional Level 14
WORK AREA: Child and Youth Services
LAST UPDATED: April 2013

JOB SUMMARY:

The Youth and Family Counsellor provides early intervention support on the smaller Southern Gulf Islands to families experiencing challenges. Responsibilities include assessment, case management, developing family-based intervention plans and service coordination. The Youth and Family Counsellor assists communities to develop healthy family support systems and activities.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Interviews, prepares case histories, assesses problems and orients persons served to SSICS service delivery and their rights.
2. Conducts comprehensive assessments and identifies areas of concern to be addressed by counselling and other intervention strategies.
3. Develops and implements therapeutic plans and programs necessary to meet the goals and objectives of persons served. Provides individual, group and/or family counselling to address identified plans.
4. Provides support and parenting education to parents including assisting with parent/teen conflict.
5. Assists persons served to maintain positive behavior by providing social and life skills training, connecting them with recreational and social activities, and developing stress reduction strategies.
6. Collaborates with family, school staff, therapists, social workers and others regarding case management and coordination of services.



7. Refers persons served to appropriate services and programs, and advocate as required to ensure continuity and effectiveness of services.
8. Maintains liaison with Ministry for Children and Family Development and/or School District services as needed.
9. Reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of services and the outcomes of persons served during and at the conclusion of services, including collecting feedback from persons served and referral sources.
10. Provides follow up support to persons served, including advising others involved in case plan of ongoing support and clinical services.
11. Maintains accurate reports and records of service delivery and completes monthly reports. Maintains clinical records sufficient to indicate the nature and time of service to persons served. Ensures that all required documentation is complete and complies with prescribed standards.
12. Maintains knowledge of community resources, and current best practices related to needs of persons served.
13. Provides consultation, liaison, education and advocacy to other workers, organizations and community resources.
14. Develops and implements prevention initiatives related to healthy families and support systems, including partnering with schools to implement school-based strategies.
15. Contributes to the development, evaluation and improvement of services.
16. Maintains familiarity with and follow SSICS policies, procedures and accreditation standards.
17. Participates in staff meetings, learning activities and supervision sessions.
18. Maintains and applies technology/computer skills as required.
19. Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS:

**EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE:**

1. Bachelor's degree in social work, child and youth care or a related field.
 2. Two (2) years recent related experience working in a community setting providing services to children, youth and families.
 3. A valid BC driver's license.
- or) an equivalent combination of education, training and experience.

JOB SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

1. Good verbal, written and interpersonal communication skills.
2. Ability to communicate effectively and develop relationships with persons served.
3. Knowledge of early intervention, counselling and group facilitation skills.
4. Good organization and time management skills.
5. Ability to work independently.
6. Ability to work effectively with other staff, social workers, school personnel, therapists and other related professionals.
7. Ability to be sensitive and respectful of people's differences.
8. Ability to work outside of regular office hours at times.
9. Ability to work in a stressful environment dealing with individuals in crisis situations.
10. Ability to work outside of the office on a regular basis including homes of person served and in the community.
11. Ability to manage a heavy caseload at times.

