

CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS SPECIFIC POLICY

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Preface

Island Community Services Programs Specific Manual includes the following:

- Child and Youth Mental Health
- Child, Youth and Family Counselling
- Family Enhancement
- Youth and Family Substance Use Counselling
- Youth Outreach

The purpose of Island Community Services Programs Specific Manual is to ensure stakeholders, the general public, individuals and families, referral sources and relevant others are provided with current information regarding the scope of and access to services, in a manner that is accessible and in an understandable format. Written program descriptions are used to ensure fidelity to the required delivery of services set by the funder, persons served, and relevant stakeholders.

This manual is additional to all other Policy and Procedure Manuals, to which these programs adhere.

Program Specific Manuals are reviewed and updated annually, and as required on an ongoing basis. **The current policies were reviewed and updated in January 2024.**

- All programs in this manual are no fee for service
- Trauma informed services are provided by qualified counsellors employed by Island Community Services, which is contracted by various funders with differing mandates
- While funders have different entry and exit criteria, no referral for these programs is declined. Specific funding requirements are itemized per program below
- Similarly, the general public may access services for themselves or others through the Clinical Director or designated intake worker and may be reached at 250.537.9971 or connect@ssics.ca, though specific funding requirements per program are identified below
- Populations served are generalized to school aged children, youth and their families, but prioritized to those specified by funders
- Service frequency, unless otherwise deemed necessary by individuals/families/funders/counsellors/supervisor, is one service hour per week for a maximum of 12 weeks. This may be extended if needed and with supervisor approval.

1. Child and Youth Mental Health

DESCRIPTION, ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA:

Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), this service provides clinical counselling services to at-risk children, youth, and their families. Services include assessment, individual, group and/or family counselling, collaborating with relevant community partners as required to develop treatment plans, assisting families/caregivers in methods of coping and managing their child's mental health issues. Service is complete when the person served is stabilized and supported well by the family and community. Service hours are typically between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Friday, though exceptions can be made for individuals and when conducting evening groups. The MCFD refers directly to this program, though individuals and families can refer directly through program staff. Frequency of service is typically determined collaboratively with counsellors, MCFD, and persons served.

PHILOSOPHY, LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED:

The service is intended for school aged children, youth and their families/caregivers residing in Southern Gulf Island communities experiencing significant and/or diagnosable mental health concerns. The clinician provides trauma informed counselling, family support, system navigation, and collaboration with and consultation to community partners. The MCFD determines the eligibility and nature of service for individuals and are given referral priority. The counsellor may work out of a confidential office at 120 Park Drive and 134 McPhillips Avenue, in schools and the community.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Improvement and increased resilience in life areas including social and family functioning and educational and vocational engagement
- Engagement of family members, caregivers and other supports where indicated as appropriate
- Increased accessibility to assessment and treatment for youth, family and/or caregivers
- Decreased need for medical intervention/hospitalization for clients experience challenges related to mental health

INTERVENTIONS:

Counsellors, with a Master's degree in social work, counselling psychology or related field and a minimum of three years recent related experience working in a community setting with child and youth mental health issues and eligibility for registration with appropriate licensing body, will provide specific treatment interventions as required to achieve program outcomes.

The counsellor will:

- Provide comprehensive assessment and goal planning. Counsellors work with students, their family and relevant community partners to develop treatment plans based on the individual needs assessment
- Provide trauma informed individual, group and/or family counselling
- Assist families/caregivers in navigating through their child's mental health challenges, including parenting skills, stress management, problem solving, conflict resolution, effective communication, and accessing other resources
- Organize evidence based skills groups at times to address various mental health presentations
- Provide crisis intervention support for clients and their families facing unusually difficult life situations
- Work with the family and MCFD workers to develop treatment plans with specified goals based on collaborative needs and risk assessments
- Support individuals/families more acutely during especially challenging times
- Collaborates, consults and maintains liaison with family members, counsellors, clinicians, physicians, MCFD social workers, School District 64 staff and others regarding case management and coordination of services, including accompaniment to meetings/appointments
- Refer and/or advocate for families regarding other services when needed, and acts on their behalf when needed to obtain resources and services
- Provide education and information to individuals, families and the community when required and collaboration on joint programming with community partners
- Follow up services to youth with challenges associated with substance use and/or mental health concerns

2. Child, Youth and Family Counselling

DESCRIPTION, ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA:

Funded by School District 64, 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, and is complete when the client demonstrates increased engagement with school. Service is typically provided during the school hours of 9:00am and 4:00pm, but may be extended beyond that time as required. This service is available during the school year of September to June. Services are typically identified and prioritized from the school-based team/counsellors, though individuals and families may refer directly through program staff.

PHILOSOPHY, LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED:

Services are available to youth and their families who live on the Southern Gulf Islands and attend Gulf Islands Secondary School. 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. Counsellors work in a confidential office in Gulf Islands Secondary School, a confidential office at 134 McPhillips Avenue, and in the community.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Increase engagement with school and/or reduce drop-out rate
- 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.

INTERVENTIONS:

Counsellors, with a Bachelor's degree in social work, child and youth services or related field, and a minimum two years recent related experience working in a community setting providing services to children, youth, and families (or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience), will provide specific treatment interventions as required to achieve program outcomes.

The counsellor will:

- Provide assessment and goal planning. Counsellors work with students, their family and school to develop plans based on the individual needs assessment, typically in collaboration with an Individual Education Plan
- Provide individual counselling that is trauma informed, person-centered, solution-focused and short-term. Counselling is strength-based and may include social and life skill development
- Provide family counselling that is family-centered and solution-focused and includes the entire family system
- Organize groups at times to address common issues such as communication, social skills or problem solving
- Provide crisis intervention support for students and their families facing unusually difficult life situations
- Provide conflict resolution and mediation by helping resolve differences between conflicting parties
- Provide case management and communicate relevant ideas, goals and information between family, school and community supports to ensure services are delivered in an effective and holistic way
- Provide referral and advocacy through referring students and their families to community resources/supports as needed and act on their behalf when needed to obtain resources and services.

3. Family Enhancement

DESCRIPTION, ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA:

Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), this service provides child, family and parenting supports including counselling and parent education for families who require additional support in managing parenting responsibilities. Service is complete when families have the capacity to care for their own children such that the children have healthy, non-violent role models that enable them to grow and develop to their full potential. Service hours are typically between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Friday, though exceptions can be made for individuals and when conducting evening parent support groups. The MCFD refers directly to this program, though individuals and families can refer directly through program staff. Frequency of service is typically determined collaboratively with counsellors, MCFD, and persons served.

PHILOSOPHY, LOCATIONS AND POPULATIONS SERVED:

The service is intended for families/caregivers residing in Southern Gulf Island communities with children aged 0-18 who have been determined to require preventative support to keep their child in the home. The MCFD determines the eligibility and nature of service for each family through a risk assessment, and are given referral priority. The counsellor may work out of a confidential office at 120 Park Drive, in the community or family home.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Children, youth, and families have increased resilience and improved healthy family functioning
- Improve parenting skills for parents and/or caregivers
- Improve relationships for parents with social supports and formal helping resources
- Improve self-esteem, resiliency and social functioning for children
- Improve school and community functioning for children
- Improve opportunities for social, recreational and community activities for families.

INTERVENTIONS:

Counsellors, with a Bachelor's degree in social work, child and youth services or related field, and a minimum two years recent related experience working in a community setting providing services to children, youth, and families (or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience), will provide specific treatment interventions as required to achieve program outcomes.

The counsellor will:

- Work with the family and MCFD workers to develop treatment plans with specified goals based on collaborative needs and risk assessments
- Provide trauma informed, person-centered and solution-focused short term counselling which may include social and life skill development, for individuals and families as required
- Support individuals/families more acutely during especially challenging times
- Act as case manager when needed, to communicate goals/information holistically, provide support/feedback to families/MCFD/relevant others, including accompaniment to meetings/appointments
- Refer and/or advocate for families regarding other services when needed, and acts on their behalf when needed to obtain resources and services
- Provide education and information to individuals, families and the community related to healthy family life.

4. Youth and Family Substance Use Counselling

DESCRIPTION, ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA:

Funded by Island Health Authority, this service provides a range of assessment, referral, early intervention and trauma informed counselling support to Southern Gulf Islands youth who are currently affected by or are engaging in substance use, and family members who may be similarly affected. Service is complete when there is an improvement of the youth's overall functioning and lifestyle choices, decreased substance use and increased connection into communities of support. Service hours are typically between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Friday, though exceptions can be made for individuals and when conducting evening support groups. Clients may be referred by Island Health, MCFD, physicians, SD64, families and individuals, and the community.

PHILOSOPHY, LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED:

The service is intended for youth ages 13 to 19 with consideration given to older youth deemed developmentally appropriate, residing in Southern Gulf Island communities who require counselling and support services for their own or someone else's substance use. Counselling and support services may also be provided to family members impacted by a client's substance use. Services are provided in the counsellor's confidential office at 134 McPhillips Avenue and through outreach in the community and schools.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Decreased substance misuse in youth
- Improvement in life areas including social and family functioning, educational and vocational engagement, recreational activity, general physical and emotional well-being
- Increased ability to make better decisions associated with substance use and positive lifestyle choices
- Establish supportive and trusting relationships that reduce risk, promote positive choices, for a healthier lifestyle, and support youths' connection, stability and attachment to family and community
- Early identification and intervention for youth at risk of experiencing harms associated with substance use resulting in reduced risk of harm related to substance use and associated high risk activities

- Engagement of family members, caregivers and other supports where indicated as appropriate
- Increased accessibility to assessment and treatment for youth, family and/or caregivers
- Decreased need for medical intervention/hospitalization for clients experience challenges related to substance use
- Decreased involvement with the criminal justice system
- Increased community resources and community supports for youth
- Reduced incidents of sexual exploitation among youth
- Enhanced capacity to respond to issues of harmful substance use for educational, health and human service providers with community.

INTERVENTIONS:

Counsellors, with a Bachelor's degree in social work, addictions counselling, child and youth care or a related field, and two years recent related experience with youth alcohol and drug counselling (or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience), will provide specific treatment interventions as required to achieve program outcomes.

The counsellor will provide:

- Assessment, counselling, referral and follow up services to youth with challenges associated with substance use and/or mental health concerns
- Education, counselling and other support services to youth who are affected by someone else's substance use
- Education, counselling and support to family members of youth experiencing substance misuse related issues
- Consultation, education, and liaison services to allied youth service providers
- Collaboration on joint programming with community partners
- Outreach and intensive case management to youth who are identified as at risk of harmful substance use involvement or dependence and/or youth at risk of being sexually exploited
- Early intervention services to youth who may be at risk of developing problematic substance use.

5. Youth Outreach

DESCRIPTION, ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA:

Funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, this service provides support to youth who are at risk of or may be in unhealthy or dysfunctional situations, such as unhoused youth. Service is complete when the youth is no longer engaged in those environments and are integrated into communities of support and/or their family support system. The MCFD refers directly to this program, though individuals and families can refer directly through program staff. Frequency of service is typically determined collaboratively with counsellors, MCFD, and persons served.

PHILOSOPHY, LOCATION AND POPULATION SERVED:

The service is intended for youth who are disengaged from their family, school, and general communities of support. The counsellor will address immediate basic needs of the youth, including shelter, food, and clothing, while working to reduce their levels of risk. The youth will participate in identifying their short and longer term needs and in developing plans to address them, including acquiring skills and knowledge necessary to keep themselves safe, achieve identified goals, establish and/or improve connections to community resources/supports, and successfully transition to adulthood. The counsellor may work out of a confidential office at 134 McPhillips Avenue and conduct outreach throughout the community.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Youth have a safe plan when temporarily disconnected from home and community
- Youth are reconnected to community with improved support networks
- Strengthened individual and family resilience and harmony.

INTERVENTIONS:

Counsellors, with a Bachelor's degree in social work, child and youth services or related field, and a minimum two years recent related experience working in a community setting providing services to children, youth, and families (or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience), will provide specific treatment interventions as required to achieve program outcomes.

The counsellor will provide:

- Safety planning and reconnection into communities of support
- Life skill development
- Service navigation and referral
- Peer mentoring and support
- Adult mentoring
- Risk reduction
- Caregiver – teen mediation