

What is Counseling Student Informed Consent



School Clinicians

All of our Hill School Clinicians hold professional licenses or are working towards licensure under supervision, demonstrating their highly trained and experienced status in the field. Our team is dedicated to addressing your concerns and collaborating with you to meet your needs. During your counseling sessions, you will work alongside a School Clinician to develop skills and gain insight, working through issues through conversation and practical exercises. Each session will vary depending on your goals, current circumstances, comfort level with communication, and the approach agreed upon with your School Clinician.

Appointment Check-in/out

Please check in with the administrative assistant before/after all counseling appointments. Once you finish your appointment, you will be given a pass back to class if needed. All passes indicate you are at the Wellness Center and do not specify counseling.

Cost

The cost of all counseling sessions at The Hill School is fully covered by tuition and fees. If we refer you to an outside provider, or you prefer seeing an external provider, this will be at a will cost to you.

Electronic Health Record

The Counseling Center uses an electronic health record to record clinical notes. Only the school counseling team and Medical Director have access to the information in the EHR. The Medical Director has access to the clinical areas of the chart for administrative oversight and continuity of care. Additionally, the IT administrator has access for maintenance functions as needed.

Clinical Services in the Summer

The Hill School does not provide clinical counseling services in the summer and will refer students to other providers. Once school resumes, clinical services can restart with their school clinician.

Counseling Website and Contact

To reach the Director of Counseling, please email Lroethling@thehill.org or call **610-705-1162**.

For more information on counseling services, please visit <https://www.thehill.org/families/counseling-program>

Drop-in Services

The Counseling Center is available for drop-in counseling sessions from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students will be seen in real-time to discuss a particular concern they may be having. We ask that *unless an emergency* you do not miss class to attend a drop-in session.

Benefits & Risks

Counseling can include discussing challenging or previously undisclosed aspects of life, which may sometimes be uncomfortable. On the other hand, counseling has demonstrable benefits in leading to better relationships, solving specific problems, and reducing feelings of distress. The goal of counseling is to impact the lives of students who take part positively. At the same time, anyone who believes that counseling is not working may discontinue or request a change in the School Clinician working with the individual. We will do our best to accommodate any requests for changes.

The Counseling Process

Typically, the first session is a screening session that allows you to talk about what is going on and if you think counseling would be helpful. If you choose to move forward with counseling, the next session will include evaluating your needs. Our assessment process screens for anxiety, depression, eating concerns, substance-related issues, internet addiction concerns, trauma/abuse history, and school/academic challenges. By the end of this assessment, we will be able to offer you some first impressions of your situation and a rough outline of a plan to follow moving forward should you decide to continue counseling.

Confidentiality

We understand that it can be difficult for students to share personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences in counseling if they fear the information will be shared with others. For this reason, we prioritize the privacy and confidentiality of our students during counseling sessions. However, as the Hill School operates in an in loco parentis role, we are required to acknowledge a student's status in services if requested by a parent, Hill School faculty, or Wellness Center staff. Furthermore, there are some exceptions to confidentiality that School Clinicians must abide by, requiring immediate disclosure.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

Confidentiality/privacy cannot be maintained in the following circumstances, and School Clinicians must make an immediate disclosure without discussion:

- If a student reveals a plan/intent to cause severe harm or death to the student themselves or someone else,*** we believe that the student has the purpose and ability to carry out this threat within a proximate time frame. In this instance, we are required by law to take steps to inform a parent or guardian as well as individuals at The Hill School with a need to know of what the student has told us and how serious we believe this threat to be and to try to prevent the occurrence of such harm.
- If a student exhibits self-harming behaviors,*** the School Clinician will collaborate with them to cultivate healthier coping strategies. In certain instances, if the student is unable to discontinue these behaviors, the parent may be informed to seek additional support and intervention. If required, the school nurse may also be notified to provide wound care as necessary.
- Suppose it is revealed or apparent that a child is/has been neglected or abused (physically, sexually, or emotionally).*** In that case, the law requires us to report the alleged abuse to the appropriate state child protective agency, the Pennsylvania ChildLine.

4. **If a student is under 18 and reveals that they have been a victim of sexual assault and/or misconduct**, we must report that information to Pennsylvania ChildLine and the student's parent. Regardless of age, if a reported sexual misconduct/assault includes another Hill School community member we must also notify school administration.
5. **If a student is assessed to have an eating disorder concern**, a parent will be notified.
6. **If a student is assessed to have a significant substance use concern**, a parent will be notified.
7. **If a student presents in the counseling center and is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs**, they will be taken to the Wellness Center for further evaluation.
8. **If a student has been deemed to need a medical leave of absence related to mental health**, the Director of Counseling will communicate that need to the Medical Leave Committee.
9. **If a student is discussed in Student Support Team (SST)**: SST is a small team of Hill Faculty who discuss student concerns. The Director of Counseling attends and provides general feedback to enhance the team's ability to support the student.
10. **Pregnancy** is considered a serious health concern. If a student discloses known pregnancy, the School Clinician will inform the Medical Director who will meet with you to discuss medical care. With a known pregnancy, this would result in communicating with parents.
11. **Other Adult Communication**: when in the best interest of caring for the student, the School Clinician will obtain the student's verbal consent to share the minimum necessary information with select Hill faculty.
12. **Information request by School Attorney** will result in release of requested information.

I CARE Services & Confidentiality

Students receiving counseling services for I Care must sign a release of information that allows the Counseling team to report to the Dean of Students if the student has completed the assessment and any, I Care recommendations. No information is given other than completion or non-completion of the counseling requirements.

Mental Health Medical Leave

When a student's mental health requires a medical leave, the School Clinician will collaborate with the Medical Leave Committee to guide the student through the process. The Medical Leave Committee comprises the Director of Counseling, Medical Director, Dean of Students, Dean of Residence Life, and Dean of Academics. Information related to the medical leave from counseling will be shared within the committee. The Head of School will approve all medical leaves and have access to the information discussed in the medical leave process. To inform relevant parties, a general communication will be sent to the Associate Head of School, Dean of Students, Dorm Head, Director of Studies, and Wellness Center notifying them of the Medical Leave without divulging details surrounding the cause.

Emergencies

If you are experiencing a mental health emergency (meaning you are not feeling safe), contact Hill Security at **610-327-3060** or walk directly to the Wellness Center and speak with a nurse. School Clinicians are on call 24/7 for mental health related emergencies when students are on campus.

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I hereby confirm that I have carefully read the above document and acknowledge and understand my rights in the counseling process. Additionally, my signature below gives permission for counseling services to begin.

Client Signature:

Date:

Client Printed Name:

Clinician Signature/ Credentials:

Date: