St. Cloud Area School District 742!

MENTAL HEALTH

Resource Guide

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ROLE DEFINITIONS

SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS (SSW)

Most school social workers at St. Cloud Area School District 742 are funded through and have primary job responsibilities related to special education. As part of the educational team, they participate in screenings and evaluations (such as classroom observations, parent interviews and mental health screens) of students with social, emotional, behavioral and/or learning difficulties.

For students that meet special education eligibility and either have a significant mental health need or are not making progress toward their identified goals, special education school social workers provide specialized services which are specified on students' IEPs (Individualized Education Plan). These services may be:

Direct Services
- Individual and group mental health skills training that focuses on teaching and enhancing student use of coping, self-regulation and/or advocacy skills

Indirect Services
- Consulting and coordinating with family, school, and/or community providers to meet student needs

Special Education School Social Workers also have unique training and can help identify factors impacting student educational success, are familiar with available support services and can provide information and assistance to students and families with accessing school and community resources. School Social Workers also participate on building crisis and support teams and are available to assist with prevention and interventions (for all students, but especially for students on their caseload).

CHEMICAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Chemical Health Counselors work on site at North, South, Apollo, Tech, and McKinley-ALC. They provide education, prevention, and early intervention on substance use issues. Chemical Health Counselors meet individually with students who are struggling with substance use or who are impacted by others' substance use. Counselors can connect students and families with community resources and provide a safe place to express concerns. Education on substance use disorders and their impact on the community is also provided in health classes and small groups.

TRIAGE

Triage therapists receive referrals from contacts in each building and meet with families and students to assess the needs and supports that would be most appropriate for each referral. The therapist then connects the student and family to community agencies and can provide timely access to psychiatric appointments and diagnostic assessments through community partnerships. The therapist works to align students and families with providers that fit their needs and preferences and acts as a liaison between the school and agency. Therapists are also available for staff consultation and crisis response as needed.

ROLE DEFINITIONS

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Elementary

Elementary counselors are available in every elementary building in District 742. Elementary counselors work with students individually, in small groups, and can provide classroom guidance lessons. Topics may include self-regulation, coping skills, relationship building, family concerns, grief and loss, and interpersonal skill building.

Elementary counselors can work very closely with parents in helping their students gain the skills needed to achieve social, emotional, and academic success. Consulting with teachers happens regularly to best support the student.

Elementary counselors often make referrals to other district programs and help to coordinate services when students are involved with other mental health supports. Elementary counselors spend most of their time in direct service with students.

Middle School

Middle school counselors are available to meet with students individually to educate them about various mental health conditions and disorders. They also teach students coping skills for anxiety, depression, and ADHD. Other common topics a student may come to a school counselor about include vaping/ chemical health, healthy relationships, and grief/loss. Counselors will often meet with students to discuss social and emotional concerns around peers, home life, or school, and work to develop a positive rapport and create a safe space where students can share their feelings and feel heard.

Middle school counselors can also mediate conflicts between students and work to teach students how to improve their communication skills and resolve disagreements in a healthy, mature, safe way.

Middle school counselors will coordinate and run groups throughout the school year. Group topics can range from leadership qualities, communication skills, responsible decision making, and emotional regulation. The middle school counselors at District 742 coordinate care of students when they are attending other community in-patient facilities and work to create a smooth transition from in-patient to back-to-school.

All middle school counselors communicate frequently with parents about their child's mental health concerns and assess a student's risk if there is cause to believe a student could be harming themselves.

High School

High school counselors support the academic success of students by meeting with students individually to discuss social and emotional concerns in the student's life that can impact their success and by helping students develop skills and tools around self-advocacy, healthy relationships, effective communication, conflict resolution and stress management. High school counselors develop a positive rapport and create a safe space where students can share their needs and feel heard. High school counselors work to identify and breakdown any barriers to student success so that each student can achieve graduation and develop a career/college plan.

Other common topics a student may come to a school counselor for education and support include mental health concerns, chemical health, grief/loss, peer relationships, home life, college and career planning, school and work life. High school counselors collaborate with parents regarding their child's academic progress toward graduation and address any social, emotional and educational needs which can impede their progress toward graduation. High school counselors work with school and community resources to assess a student's risk for self-harm and coordinate care of students when attending in-patient facilities or are otherwise unable to access their learning due to medical needs.

ROLE DEFINITIONS

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Mental Health Counselors (MHCs) work with students and family systems in collaboration with school staff and community resources to address and support mental health concerns and behaviors demonstrating a lack of engagement or school success. MHCs maintain student confidentiality and adhere to ethical standards and code of conduct.

Mental Health Counselors provide a variety of services and supports to students and families including (but not limited to):

- Service Coordination
- Crisis Intervention
- Targeted Case Management
- Advocacy
- Service Linkage
- Referrals & Navigation

In addition, MHCs provide ongoing individual support to students to assist them with coping skills, communication skills, social skills and academic skill-building through individualized interventions and crisis management while supporting individualized treatment strategies and skills development consistent with student needs and goals. When appropriate, MHCs provide group support to students to build communication and coping skills and/or provide Psychoeducation while utilizing restorative practices.

MHCs develop and maintain therapeutic relationships with students serving as a role model by demonstrating positive, proactive and respectful communications. MHCs assist with and support triage referrals as necessary and appropriate.

MHCs also attend multidisciplinary team meetings to provide feedback related to student school success as well as attending student/family support meetings (IEP, Re-entry, Manifestation, etc.) as appropriate to support students/families. MHCs engage in case consultation with appropriate staff and community providers to ensure high quality care. MHCs maintain accurate records relating to services provided to students.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

School psychologists facilitate, administer and interpret psychological and academic assessments in the special education evaluation process to determine needs related to learning. School psychologists also may serve students through individual mental health skills building, crisis support and consultation with staff and families. Additionally, school psychologists support school-wide systems, such as classroom social-emotional strategies, crisis intervention and academic intervention practices.

OTHER SERVICES

GREATER MN: SCHOOL & FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH (SFMH)

Providing services for youth with a mental health diagnosis

The School Mental Health Program is an early intervention and education program that exists to support and promote the social, emotional and mental well-being of school-aged children within the school setting. The goal is to help youth feel more competent, confident and successful in school, at home and with peers. Referrals can be made by contacting the SFMH counselor in your school.

Referrals are made by:

- Parents
- Teachers
- School Administrators
- Community Service Providers

Our School & Family Mental Health Program provides:

- Diagnostic Assessment and Treatment Planning
- Individual and Group Counseling
- Family Sessions upon request
- Skills Training that focuses on healthy coping skills, managing emotions, conflict resolution and other social skills
- Problem Solving and Support for anxiety, school behaviors, grief, family change, crisis assistance and other issues
- Resource & Information on parenting issues, school concerns and mental health information
- Summer Programming with recreational, social, and educational activities
- Community Resource and Referral information

School & Family Mental Health Frequently Asked Questions:

How long does the School & Family Mental Health Program last?

- Though the needs of each student varies, on average a student may benefit from services from anywhere between three months to two years.

How long do sessions with the SFMH counselor last?

- Depending on the need, average sessions may last anywhere between 30-90 minutes.

How do I know if the student is making any progress?

- The SFMH program utilizes a variety of tools to assess each student's progress. The SFMH counselor regularly consults with a team of mental health practitioners to discuss each case. Additionally, every three months, the counselor meets with a qualified mental health professional to review the outlined goals and determine the progress made. The SFMH counselor also administers two methods of evaluation in six month increments (the CASII and SDQ) as requested by the Department of Human Services (State of MN).

Are these services confidential?

- YES! These services are confidential. However, only with parent permission, progress and goals may be shared with the school and/or other community programs.

OTHER SERVICES

TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

Transitional Services are those that support the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, assuring a student's rights to enroll in and attend school regardless of a transitional living situation.

Families may enroll students at the Welcome Center located at Quarryview Education Center in Waite Park. If transportation to the Welcome Center is not available, families can contact one of the district Transitional Education Liaisons listed to obtain assistance with transportation or to enroll off-site. The liaisons can also help with answering questions and in obtaining school-related supplies.

What is considered a "Transitional Living Situation"?

Transitional living situations include those families with students temporarily living in the following:

- Shelter, motel, vehicle or campground
- On the street
- In an abandoned building or other inadequate space
- Doubling up-living with friends or relatives because of the inability to find or afford housing

What educational support services are offered?

Liaisons can:

- Provide registration information
- Assist with student enrollment
- Support parents with efforts to maintain current school placement throughout the period of transition
- Ensure students receive opportunities for participation in special programs and/or services as provided to all students (For example, preschool, parent-teacher-student goal setting conferences, etc.)
- Aid students wishing to participate in District 742 sponsored extracurricular activities

HEALTH SERVICES

District 742 schools are staffed by a licensed practical nurse (LPN) with oversight by a registered nurse (RN) who holds a licensed school nurse license through the Minnesota Board of Education. School nurses can support families by coordinating care between school and community health care providers, creating individual health plans to meet student needs, being a member of the special education team, and administering medication at school if requested by parent/guardian and health care provider.