

## SERVICE DESCRIPTION

# SCHOOL SUPPORT

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### **DESCRIPTION:**

School Support Services provide counselling and support for students who are finding it difficult to function successfully in the classroom and school environment. Services include counselling, family support, skill development and specific psychosocial interventions for children and youth. Service is provided to all levels of School District 64 schools. Counsellors work in schools in and outside of regular classroom activities, and in the community.

### **HISTORY:**

The school support service began with SSICS in 1983 as part of the High School Gypsy 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 the staffing complement to the current two Counsellors.

### **POPULATION SERVED:**

The service is available to children, youth and their families who live on the Southern Gulf Islands and attend school on Salt Spring Island. 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. Improve social and behavioral functioning in school settings.
2. Increase engagement with school/reduced drop out rate.
3. Improve self esteem, communication, relationship, coping and problem solving skills.

4. Improve social and community functioning.
5. Improve family functioning.

**SERVICE DELIVERY PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES:**

1. The climate of service delivery will be caring, respectful, safe and open.
2. People will be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Services will be provided in a discreet and confidential manner.
4. Effective service includes empowerment, advocacy, and information.
5. Service will be person-centered. The service is individualized and flexible. The person served is included in setting the direction of service.
6. Service will be responsive and timely.

**SERVICE DELIVERY ACTIVITIES:**

1. **Development of Individual Goals and Plans.** Counsellors work with youth and their family to develop plans based on the persons assessment, input, ideas, thoughts, and feelings about their needs.
2. **Individual Counselling.** Person-centered and solution-focused short term counselling that is strength based
3. **Referral.** Refers the person served to other SSICS or community services as needed.
4. **Advocacy.** Acts on behalf of the person served to obtain needed resources and services
5. **Family Counselling.** Provides family-centered and solution-focused counselling that includes the entire family system.

6. **Case Management and Coordination.** Oversees the provision of a variety of specialized services to ensure that they are delivered in a manner that provides an effective response to the whole problem, person and their support system.
7. **Life and Social Skills Training.** students participate in skill building activities in both individual and group settings
8. **Groups.** Students participate in group experiences to develop communication and social skills.
9. **Crisis Intervention.** Support for students and their families faced with an unusually difficult life situation
10. **Conflict Resolution and Mediation.** Helps resolve or settle differences by acting as an intermediary between two conflicting parties
11. **Liaison Between Family, School and Community.** Communicates relevant ideas, goals and other pertinent information between family, school and community

**LOCATION:**

Service is provided in schools, community and homes as determined by each individual case plan. The home base for the service is the main SSICS site at 268 Fulford-Ganges Road. Workers also use office and confidential meeting space at the Core Inn.

**HOURS:**

Service is available during the school year from September to June Monday to Friday, 9am to 4 pm, Thursday 9am-7 pm, with flexibility to meet after hours as required.

**STAFF RESOURCES:**

Two counsellors provide services and coordinate all aspects of the program. One counsellor specializes in younger children attending elementary and middle schools, and the other one specializes in older

children and teens attending middle and high school. The counsellors report to the Director of Child and Youth services. These workers are part of the Child and Youth Services Team, a multi-service team including mental health, alcohol and drug, family support workers, and early childhood services.

**ACCESS TO SERVICE:**

Services are accessed through the school, typically through the school-based team at each school. 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. Code of Ethics South Vancouver Island Youth and Child Care Counsellors Association
2. BC Guidelines for Provision of Youth services
3. Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for BC

**FUNDING/SPONSORSHIP:**

The service is funded by Gulf Islands School District #64

**PARTNERSHIPS/KEY CONNECTIONS:**

1. School District # 64