

## **DUBLIN SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES**

The school counselor is available to students to discuss a wide range of concerns and is familiar with the problems that students face. The counselor is available to talk about and listen to concerns of students. The most common issues discussed are divorce, separation or other family issues, concerns about personal drug use, sexuality, and interpersonal relationships; however, this is not an exhaustive list and other issues are discussed as they arise. The counseling office is open each day and appointments can be made easily and confidentially.

### **CODE OF ETHICS AND QUALITY OF CARE**

As a licensed mental health practitioner, I am governed by the Code of Ethics of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Copies of this code are available at all times in my office. My license and the Mental Health Bill of Rights are posted in my office. Please request a copy of the Mental Health Bill of Rights or additional information if you would like.

I make every effort to deliver the highest quality, most effective care possible. To help me do that, I will ask the student's participation in planning, implementing, and completing his/her treatment. I also encourage students to be honest with me about how we are doing. For more information about licensed mental health professionals or to file a complaint, contact the New Hampshire Board of Mental Health Practice, 105 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

### **BENEFITS AND RISKS**

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of one's life, one may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what one will experience.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Dublin School encourages students to develop a relationship of trust with its healthcare providers and to be candid about their health histories and risk behaviors. For this reason the school encourages parents to respect the privacy of students who may not wish to share certain information. On the other hand, the school will also encourage the students to communicate with their parents on such matters. In any event, the school counselor will share information with parents and (by signing this form) parents authorize the school counselor to share information with school administrators when, in her opinion, it is appropriate to meet the health or safety needs of the student or the school community.

Students are always free to share (with anyone they want) information revealed during therapy. However, ethical practice and state law require the counselor to keep all therapy related communications strictly confidential, except under certain circumstances. These include but are not limited to:

- When there is a serious threat of one doing harm to self, someone else, or property
- When the therapist feels she must safeguard the student's interests and well-being or those of another student in the community
- When there is a suspicion that a child or incapacitated adult is being abused or neglected
- When there is knowledge of student hazing
- When we witness or have information from the victim of a criminal act covered by the Safe School Zone Act
- When we receive a court order, a valid, authorized, release of information, or in certain litigated matters

In addition, I may share information confidentially with another licensed practitioner for the purpose of professional consultation. This helps ensure that the student is receiving the best possible care.

Under New Hampshire state law, parents of children who are under 18 hold the privilege to see and release their child's mental health records. However, Dublin School recognizes that trust is fundamental to the therapeutic alliance, as well as to students' comfort in seeking counseling. For this reason, Dublin School requests that parents respect the privacy of students who may not wish to share certain information.

**PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES**

Licensed mental health practitioners are obligated to maintain appropriate professional boundaries (relationships) with present and past clients. For example, we cannot accept gifts from clients, nor is it ever appropriate to have romantic or sexual relationships with present and past clients. Do not hesitate to raise any questions you may have regarding professional boundaries.

**FEES AND RECORDS**

There is no fee for seeing the school counselor. No insurance company is billed. However, if you and your child choose to have your child see a clinician in the community rather than the Dublin School Counselor, the parents are responsible for any fees relating to that service as well as any associated transportation costs.

**AVAILABILITY AND EMERGENCY COVERAGE**

The counselor is available to meet with students Monday through Friday, during the school day. Additionally, appointments can usually be arranged to accommodate the special needs of the student’s schedule. Confidential voice mail may be left at the counselor’s extension at any time. Voice mail is checked regularly and every effort is made to return calls promptly.

The school counselor lives on campus and is available 24 hours a day for mental health emergencies. She can be reached during non-school hours by calling the Administrator on Duty and requesting that they contact the counselor. In the case of a suspected medically related mental health emergency, dial 911 and call the Administrator on Duty and/or the school nurse.

The counselor is not available during school vacations. However, one can be connected to one’s community crisis hotline or emergency medical services by dialing 0 for the operator, or by dialing 911.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE**

I am happy to discuss with you the details of my knowledge, skills, experience, and credentials. I am qualified to assess, diagnose, and treat – in the most effective manner I know how – a wide range of mental illnesses. Anytime I encounter an illness or issue that would be best treated by a clinician with different qualifications or areas of expertise, I make appropriate referrals.

Students required by the Dean of Students Office to participate in drug and alcohol assessments and/or counseling will be seen off campus by a licensed drug and alcohol professional. Transportation costs as well as costs associated with treatment for such issues are the responsibility of the parents.

The school counselor’s primary responsibility is to the boarding population at Dublin School. However, I do see day students on a drop in basis as needed. If I deem that a day student’s issue is significant enough to necessitate ongoing counseling, I will contact the parents and make referrals to therapists in the surrounding community.

**RECOMMENDED TREATMENT**

At the beginning of the therapeutic relationship, and throughout treatment as appropriate, this clinician will discuss her recommendations and rationale for treatment with the student. I will do my best to explain the risks and benefits of the proposed treatment, the risks and benefits of alternative treatments, and the risks and benefits of no treatment. Students are encouraged to ask whatever questions they may have about recommended treatment at any time.

**FOR THE PARENTS**

I have read and reviewed the above information and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to my child engaging in counseling services as needed and to the counselor sharing information with school administrators when, in her opinion, it is appropriate to meet the health or safety needs of the student or the school community.

_____	____/____/____
Name of Student	Date
_____	____/____/____
Parent’s Signature	Date
_____	____/____/____
Clinician’s Signature	Date