



**RECOMMENDED PROCESS
FOR MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT IN
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 48
(SEA TO SKY)**

BACKGROUND MENTAL HEALTH

What is Mental Health?

"Mental Health" may be broadly defined to include all aspects of human development and well-being affecting emotions, learning or behaviour. In healthy communities, it is everyone's responsibility and in everyone's best interests to ensure that all children and youth thrive. Parents and teachers may, from time to time have concerns about how a particular child or adolescent is developing. The concerns may include the emotional well-being of the child; what the child says, thinks, or feels or; how the child acts, for example eating and sleeping patterns, behaviour at school, getting along with family and friends, and coping with stress.

A number of options for support are available

What	Contact
School Counsellors	• Teacher → School-Based Team
School Psychologists	• Teacher → School-Based Team
Child & Youth Mental Health	• Squamish 604-892-1400 • Pemberton/Whistler 604-894-2091
Psychiatrists	• Family Physician
Urgent Response Clinic	• Family Physician

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following outlines a recommended Howe Sound School District procedure for identifying and supporting students who have significant social/emotional concerns:

- 1 The parent(s) and teacher discuss their perception of the child's problem. If they agree that mental health may be a problem, they proceed to the next stage.
- 2 The teacher approaches the school-based team and requests a screening assessment for emotional/behavioural and/or learning problems. The parent has the child's health assessed by their family physician to rule out any physical problems.
- 3 The screening data is shared with the school psychologist, who then administers a behavior rating scale (one to be completed by the parent, and one to be completed by the teacher). The psychologist may also conduct a functional behaviour assessment, a classroom observation, interview parents and teachers, review student records, etc. A full assessment by the psychologist is not considered necessary at this point unless there is evidence of a learning problem; however, a referral to Special Services is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

- 4 The school psychologist prepares a written summary of the screening information, behavior rating data, and any other information which has been obtained. The summary is shared with the school and the parent, and school counsellor.
- 5 The school and parents implement an intervention plan to address student needs and monitor the child's progress. This plan may include a range of services and supports including school counselling.
- 6 If the intervention appears to be unsuccessful, alternative courses of action might include additional medical assessment or further consultation with the school counsellor, school psychologist, school-based team, other clinical specialists, and community agencies.
(see back for options)
- 7 When student support requires other clinical specialists and/or community agencies a Community Care Plan must be established to guide the collective planning process.

Note:

Although this pamphlet outlines the general process it is recognized that sometimes due to the seriousness of a child's needs steps may be expedited.

COMMUNITY OPTIONS

(None of the services through Child and Youth Mental Health/MCFD have costs attached to them.)

1. The Child and Youth Mental Health Program can provide counselling services for children with mental health problems throughout the corridor. Services are available on a prioritized basis according to severity of the problem.
2. Child & Youth Mental Health has a consulting psychiatrist who is available once per month who can follow-up for a limited number of sessions for kids who require a non-urgent diagnostic assessment and treatment recommendations. Local services of a psychiatrist are not available on a weekly basis, nor are they available for urgent or highly complex cases that require weekly face-to-face contact.
3. For families that are willing and able to travel to the city and for whom a family doctor is willing to make a referral, there are some psychiatrists who will see children on a weekly basis. Again, this is covered under the Medical Services Plan.
4. For children who are experiencing a rapid deterioration in their behaviour and where either the home or school placement is in jeopardy (and the problems are not due to a chronic behaviour problem i.e. conduct disorder), the family doctor can make a referral to the Urgent Response Clinic at Children's Hospital.
5. For parents employed by large employers (i.e. the school district, municipal government, some of the forestry companies) counselling services (for children, adults, families) can be obtained through an Employee Assistance Plan, which is accessed through a person's place of work. These services (provided by MA's or PhD's) can often be accessed outside of regular office hours and on weekends. The service is provided as part of an employee benefit and therefore there no costs attached.

RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR REFERRAL

MENTAL HEALTH

