



### OCSB Addiction Counsellor

The Addiction Counsellor program at Ottawa Catholic School Board provides confidential short term, long term counselling and crisis counselling to students and their caregivers within the OCSB. Assessments, evaluation and data capturing is recorded through quality assurance with student clients.

The Addiction Counsellors support middle and high school aged youth holistically through individual counselling and psychoeducation. Students can self-refer through the student services department at their high school or be referred by friends or family or school staff. Presenting issues are related to substance use and behavioural dependencies such as screen time and gaming.

Families are supported as well and provided with psychoeducation, coping strategies and connected with referrals to community resources, when needed.

Classroom presentations and staff training is available with each counsellor as well as collaboratively with Ottawa Public Health. The Addiction Counsellors also focus on prevention through psycho-education workshops. These can be offered to both youth and parent communities.

The Addiction Counselors at OCSB support the school staff in many ways: offering lunch and learn sessions, classroom presentations, visibility of services in the school community, collaborating with senior administration staff, school student services staff as well as all Special Education and Student Services staff. The Addiction Counselors coordinate with Special Education and Student Support team staff to ensure coordination of services and the highest level of care.

The Addiction Counselor team builds on community awareness and linkage to develop and maintain connections with supporting community resources. They maintain ongoing educational development in the field, following current trends, issues and resources available to the youth and families served. Social media is provided with current updates for the school community.

### Changes with Covid-19

The Addiction Counselor team currently provides in person counseling with social distancing protocol implemented. Virtual counseling, care-giver meetings, presentations and community workshops are being practiced to ensure the safety of clients and the community.

