



# Program Descriptions Community Counselling

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## POPULATION SERVED

Community Counselling provides services to youth and their families in the community, who are between the ages of 12 and 18. Services are offered at the 95 Wellesley Street office, in the community, and at clients' homes, with flexible hours to meet the needs of clients.

Referrals are accepted for youth who live in the City of Toronto.

## Referral Process

Referrals to Counselling Services are facilitated through the Agency's Intake Coordinator, who receives the request, provides information about the services available and conducts an intake phone interview. Requests for service are then prioritized based on risk and need, and are assigned to a counsellor as soon as possible.

## PRINCIPLES OF SERVICE

- Accessible
- Respectful/Non-Discriminatory
- Embrace Diversity
- Equitable
- Safe
- Strengths Based
- Relationship Based
- Partnership with youth and families
- Collaborative
- Transparent
- Flexible
- Efficient/Effective
- Risk Reduction
- Accountable

## MODEL OF INTERVENTION/APPROACH

The Clinical and Counselling Team is committed to providing an evidence informed, client centered, strengths based, relationship based approach that is sensitive to issues of racial, cultural, religious and sexual diversity. Services are always provided within the framework of best practice. Services focus on the assessment of the client's goals, strengths and needs, and corresponding interventions to support the achievement of goals, meeting of needs and the enhancement of strengths.

A range of treatment models for individuals, families and groups are used, with particular emphasis on Trauma Informed, Attachment Based philosophy of care and interventions. Treatments such as Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Narrative, and Brief Solution Focused Therapies are some examples of models of therapy used.

## **STAFFING**

The program is staffed by individuals with the appropriate range of skills and abilities necessary to respond effectively to the needs of clients and families. The Agency typically hires professional employees with post-graduate degrees in social work or a related field (e.g. Masters in Psychology/Education) to work within this program. Employees possess licensing with the appropriate regulatory body.

## **MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH**

A multidisciplinary approach is utilized in the delivery of service. The Counselling Program has bi-weekly clinical meetings to consult with peers regarding clinical issues and cases. As needed, we are at times joined by the consulting Psychiatrist and Psychologist. In addition, colleagues from other programs who may share a client are encouraged to join the team to participate in discussions.

## **COLLABORATION**

In keeping with our belief in youth and family engagement, the client and parents/guardians/caregivers are seen as integral members of the service team. As such, they are involved in all major decisions in the development and review of the service, and then regularly at goal reviews and at service completion.

If other service providers (such as school, doctor, other agency, hospitals, etc.) are likely to be involved in providing service to the client and parents/guardians/caregivers then, with the consent of the client and parents/guardians/caregivers, they will also be encouraged to participate as members of the service team.

## **FOLLOW-UP SERVICES**

While there is not a formal follow-up process, clients are welcome to reconnect with the program should crises arise or problems recur. Booster sessions are available for youth and families as needed.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARIES**

### **Counselling**

The primary focus of the Counselling Program is the provision of counselling services to youth and their families in the community, who are between the ages of 12 and 18. Services are offered at the 95 Wellesley Street office, in the community, and at clients' homes, with flexible hours to meet the needs of clients.

The Clinical and Counselling Team utilizes a Service Coordination Model, meaning that they are considered responsible for the service delivery, coordination of collateral services, and referral to more appropriate resources, as necessary. Length of treatment is individualized based on client's goals and needs. Service needs are reviewed every 3 months. Service Coordinators work closely with the youth and family to develop an assessment and treatment plan, as well as regular goal reviews and when service ends. Subsequent to completion, clients are welcome to reconnect with the program should crises arise or problems recur.

The goal of the counselling program is to assist youth to reduce identified symptoms, build on strengths and focus on the development of skills to help youth cope with their mental health and/or substance use needs.

### **Keeping Families Together (KFT)**

As part of the Clinical and Counselling Team, two counsellors provide services to Children's Aid Society Toronto (CAST) and Catholic Children's Aid Society (CCAS). The KFT program targets youth from 12-16 years of age who are either at imminent risk of placement through a Child Welfare agency or who have already been placed and will be able to return to their caregivers earlier with interventions. It is designed to offer these adolescents, and their families, home and community based child and youth mental health services and connection to other relevant community services in a timely and effective manner.

The focus of the program is to improve outcomes for youth and families through an effective, appropriate and accessible intervention. By addressing the youth and family needs in a successful manner, the program aims to reduce the number of admissions into care, the days of care and the length of child welfare involvement.

The duration of counselling is three months, with the possibility of an extension if the family's needs require further support. Referrals to this service are directed from the CAST/CCAS supervisor managing the program directly to the Manager of Clinical and Counselling Services, who then assigns the cases based on priority and the availability of the counsellors.

### **Jarvis Collegiate**

As part of the Clinical and Counselling team, one counsellor provides school based adolescent mental health services programs. This program provides counselling and support services to students (16 years of age and up) at Jarvis Collegiate Institute (CI) whose mental health needs require longer term counselling and/or case management services. Program activities may include individual and family counselling, with a possibility of group counselling, bridging ongoing longer-term services, parent education workshops, and employee development.

This program is supported by the TDSB Social Worker assigned to Jarvis CI who is involved with student referrals to the program. Students can be identified by teachers, administration, parents, Guidance or Social Workers. Students are screened by Guidance employees and consulted by TDSB Social Worker prior to being directly referred to the assigned counsellor.

Activities will take place during school hours at Jarvis CI, and at the 95 Wellesley Street site of TPYS when appropriate or necessary (e.g. family counselling).

The program operates one half day per week from September to June. Additional hours may be available for group, individual or family counselling held at TPYS where the need for off-site sessions exist and appropriate consents have been sought and documented.

The goal of the Jarvis Collegiate program is to reduce barriers to treatment by providing counselling support within the school setting. The program also assists youth to reduce identified symptoms, build on strengths and focuses on the development of skills to help youth cope with their mental health and/or substance use needs.

### **Healthy Teens (HT)**

As part of the Clinical and Counselling team, one counsellor provides services to Children's Aid Society Toronto. The Healthy Teens Project (HT) targets youth who are 12-16 years of age and living with their parents or kinship placements. The overarching goals of the program are improving mental health of the youth, connecting youth with an appropriate school program, establishing positive peer groups, strengthening the youth's relationship with their parents, preventing admission of youth into CAST care and as required referring youth to longer term treatment programs.

The duration of counselling is three months, with the possibility of an extension if the family needs further support. Referrals to this service are directed from the CAST supervisor managing the program directly to the Manager of Clinical and Counselling Services, who then assigns the cases based on priority to the HT counselor.

### **Walk-In**

The What's Up Walk-In Services is in partnership and collaboration with Oolagen, Hincks-Dellcrest Centre (HDC) and Central Toronto Youth Services (CTYS).

The program operates five days per week at the Oolagen office, offering some evening hours. The TPYS

counsellor is assigned to set hours at the Walk-In where they spend time meeting clients who come through the walk-in services. The program is for youth 12-18 years of age. The youth and/or family can attend the walk-in sessions on self-referral, as well as community and parent referrals.

The goal of the walk-in service is to provide short term counselling that assists youth to reduce identified symptoms, build on strengths and focus on the development of skills to help youth cope with their mental health and/or substance use needs.