Personal Counselling at Archbishop Carney Secondary School

School Counsellors at Archbishop Carney are trained master level mental health professionals who support students' personal, spiritual, and socio-emotional development during school hours. Rooted in the school's Catholic values of dignity, compassion, and respect for every person, personal counselling services are offered to *all* students.

Roles and Responsibilities of Personal Counsellor

Counsellors provide both prevention and intervention services. Their work focuses on enhancing students' growth, fostering a supportive and caring school culture, and empowering young people toward positive, healthy change.

Counselling offers a safe, non-judgmental environment where students can speak openly about their concerns. Counsellors meet individually with students to provide personal support. While conversations are private, there are a few important limits to confidentiality (listed below). These limits are reviewed during the first session to ensure clarity and understanding.

Please note: **school counselling is different from academic advising.** Students with questions about courses, graduation requirements, or academic planning should contact their grade-level advisor.

Working in Partnership With Families

Rooted in our *Catholic belief* that parents are the primary educators of their children, school counsellors work in partnership with families whenever possible. With the student's consent, counsellors may share general strategies and collaborate with caregivers to support the student's well-being at home and at school.

In situations where safety concerns arise, counsellors follow the CISVA's personal counsellors confidentiality guidelines, which may include involving parents or caregivers as needed to ensure the student's well-being.

Our goal is to honour each student's dignity while nurturing strong, caring partnerships between home and school—ensuring that young people are supported in every part of their lives.

Confidentiality in Counselling

Confidentiality means that what a student shares with their counsellor stays private. Keeping information students share in confidence is the professional and ethical

responsibility of personal counsellors. Counsellors protect students' privacy except in the following situations:

- If we have reason to believe that you have been physically, verbally, sexually or emotionally abused, or have experienced neglect.
- If we have reason to believe that you might seriously harm yourself or someone else.
- If a court order or other legislation legally requires us to provide information.
- If you, yourself are able to give permission to share the information and do give that permission.
- If you are under 19 years of age, are not able to give permission yourself and the responsible adult in your life (parent/legal guardian) gives permission to share the information. This is usually done only to share the information with other people working with you, like a parent, teacher/s, administrator, or similar adult.
- School counsellors will consult with other school counsellors and clinical supervisors in order to provide the most effective counselling and support, though they will not share identifying information about you without your permission.

If any of these circumstances arise, the counsellor will talk with the student about next steps and ways to stay safe. Students are always informed if confidentiality cannot be maintained. Anyone with questions about confidentiality is encouraged to ask their counsellor directly.

Reasons Students Seek Counselling

All students are welcome to access counselling for any reason—no issue is too big or too small. Students often reach out for support with concerns such as:

- Bullying or social challenges
- Changes or transitions in life
- Resolving conflicts
- Peer pressure
- Relationship and/or friendship issues
- Problem-solving support

- Managing anger or strong emotions
- Body image concerns
- Feelings of depression and/or anxiety
- Grief and/or loss
- Self-care and healthy habits
- Building self-esteem or self-worth
- Self-harm concerns or suicide ideation
- Questions about sexuality or identity
- Stress or academic pressure
- Study strategies or performance anxiety
- Substance use (e.g., alcohol or drugs)
- Spirituality and/or faith-related concerns

If you would like to book an appointment with a counsellor, please email **bwolczyk@acrss.org** Monday to Wednesday 8:00 AM -3:00 PM or **tbentley@acrss.org** Wednesday to Friday 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM.

Faith, Spirituality, and Support

As a Catholic school, Archbishop Carney recognizes the importance of nurturing the whole person—mind, body, and spirit. Students who seek spiritual guidance are welcome to explore how their values, beliefs, or personal questions connect with their well-being. This is always optional and student-led.

In addition to counselling services, students may also participate in **weekly "Chap Chats"**—an informal opportunity to meet with the school priest. These gatherings provide a welcoming space for students of any faith background to ask questions, discuss challenges, seek spiritual direction, or simply talk.

Provincial/National Resources

Police/Ambulance/Fire : 911
BC 211 Support & Resources: 211
Kids Help Phone : 1-800-668-6868

M.C.F.D. (Ministry of Child & Family Protection Line) : 1-800-663-9122
Youth In BC
Foundry BC
Kelty Mental Health
Canada Suicide Crisis Helpline
Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA)