

Dear Counselling Corner:

We are new to Porter Street Elementary School and heard that there is a counselling program here. This is all new to us. Will you mind sharing what this is and how it works? Thank you.

Guardians of busy children who may benefit from counselling

Dear Guardians of busy children:

Thank you so much for reaching out and asking a great question!

I work at Porter Street Elementary School on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. My primary goal is to support the academic and social/emotional needs of our students and to set them up for success. I do this through:

- **Classroom visits:** I teach social and emotional related lessons to the whole class such as: Conflict Resolution, Caring and Kindness, Understanding and Managing Emotions, Friendship, etc.
- **Group Counselling:** I lead groups of 4-5 students during school time for 30 minutes each week starting in mid-October and running until Spring Break. I am currently offering three different types of groups:
 - *Synergy* – building interpersonal relationship skills with a focus on problem solving, collaboration, and mental flexibility.
 - *Cool Connections* – supporting students with anxiety management and prevention.
 - *Journeys* – supporting students in navigating through big changes and challenges in their lives.
- **Individual counselling:** I see students individually, to provide additional social and emotional support if needed.
- **Leadership:** I run two leadership programs with Mme Hayley Menary for our grade 4/5 students with the goal of empowering them to make a positive difference in their own lives and in the lives of others at Porter Street. The programs are: Peer Helpers which help our students to solve problems in peaceful ways and RAC (Real Acts of Caring) which is about doing something caring and kind for another and not expecting anything back.
- **Parent Meetings:** I am available to meet with you to discuss and help support your child's social and emotional needs.
- **Counselling Corner:** Every 1-2 weeks, I write a column which you can find in our newsletters or school website which focuses on social, emotional and nutritional related topics. Please feel free to request me to address a particular topic.
- **Food Security:** In addition to counselling, I am the Team Leader for the *Food Security Program* at our school. This position is FREE and was created by the provincial government last year with the goal of ensuring that our students' food and nutritional needs are being met. We now provide: a 'Grab and Go' breakfast program, open daily from 8:30-8:50am for ANYONE who is hungry; and snacks if needed, throughout the day. We also have a district lunch program available. Please let me know if you wish for your child to be on the lunch program and we can set it up.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's academic, social/emotional or nutritional needs. I can be reached at hchang@sd43.bc.ca or at 604 936-4296 (Porter Street phone number).

Harriette Chang
School Counsellor
Food Security Team Leader