

information about our student counselling services

River's Edge Counselling Centre provides a full-year practicum training program to five graduate students each year. The program is part of our commitment to providing affordable and accessible counselling services in our community. It is also a way for us to make a meaningful contribution to the profession, by supporting the growth and development of new counsellors in the field.

What does it mean that I am seeing a student counsellor at River's Edge Counselling Centre (RECC)?

The student counsellors at RECC are completing a practicum for a graduate-level counselling program. While many of our students have prior experience working in mental health or a related field, they are generally new practitioners in the field of counselling, developing the entry-to-practice competencies needed to register as a professional. Our student counsellors have committed to one year of training at RECC, which is above and beyond the practicum requirements for their program. They do so for the opportunity to gain additional experience in the field, as well as to provide longer term support to clients.

Who supervises the work of a student counsellor?

Our student counsellors are supervised by experienced professionals on our team who are Registered Psychologists, Canadian Certified Counsellors, or Clinical Social Workers. In addition to weekly one-on-one supervision with their primary supervisor, our students receive weekly group supervision and teaching sessions with other members of our team. The primary supervisor oversees the work and development of the student counsellor by reviewing client records, viewing clips from session videos and receiving updates from the student counsellor.

What are the risks and benefits of seeing a student counsellor?

We often say that the benefit of seeing a student counsellor is getting two brains for the price of one! Your counsellor and their supervisor can consult about how your counselling is going and what might be helpful to you. Student counsellors bring a special level of enthusiasm and focus to their work with clients, as they have spent years educating themselves and waiting for this opportunity to work directly with clients and apply their knowledge. Another benefit to seeing a student counsellor is the significantly lower cost, which is also adjusted on a sliding scale when needed.



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RECC mitigates the risks associated with seeing a student counsellor through a rigorous selection process and by providing a high level of training and support. One of the primary risks of seeing a student counsellor is that they may not have the experience or skill required to help their clients with some issues or goals. When this happens, the counsellor will consult with their supervisor. They may then refer the client to other services, work with the client to adjust the goals for the therapy, or both.

Who can see a student counsellor?

There are few clients who we will not refer to one of our student counselors when requested. We assume that even clients with complex mental health issues may have life challenges and goals that can be addressed with the support of a student counsellor. Student counsellors work with their clients to identify appropriate goals for therapy, based on the counsellor's growing competence and the client's needs. They will refer whenever necessary to other professionals and programs.

It is an unfortunate reality that people often struggle to find affordable mental health services. For many of our clients, the student counselling program is a rare opportunity to receive longer-term counselling services at a rate they can afford. There is also often a long wait for mental health services. Thus, our student counsellors sometimes see clients who are waiting for other services to become available. They may also provide counselling while a client is receiving other services, as long as the therapy goals support the overall treatment and wellbeing of the client. It can be a place to start, a much-needed bridge, or follow-up support. Wherever clients are on their journey towards better mental health and wellness, our student counsellors are here to help.

For more information, or to book a session with one of our student counselors, contact our admin support team:

780-460-0022

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