



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Social Worker Telepractice Services

Introduction:

School Social Workers are employed by many district school boards across the province of Ontario, in French, English, Catholic and Public Boards. They provide social work services to children, families, and schools with the overarching goal of improving student achievement, academic success and well-being. Their work is built on the foundation of an anti-oppressive lens which encompasses racism, gender, sexuality, LGBTQQ communities and colonialism.

All School Social Workers must be registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) and are ethically and legally bound by its standards of practice. School Social Workers are required to adhere to a set of professional ethics including equity and respect for an individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. Ontario School Board Social Workers have access and can be supported by the Ontario Association of Social Work (OASW).

In the event of extenuating circumstances, such as an extended school closure, the Lambton Kent District School Board may offer some virtual Social Work services through telephone, encrypted email or a live interactive video conferencing software platform that meets the privacy and security standards approved by the LKDSB Information Technology Department.

For additional information about Lambton Kent District School Board Social Workers, please contact the Superintendent of Special Education.

Roles and Responsibilities:

School Social Workers address specific areas of concern that can negatively impact a student's academic success and well-being. These areas are addressed by providing specific service to students, families, and/or schools. Within this framework, the five areas of concern addressed by School Social Workers are identified as the Key Domains of School Social Work practice and are as follows:

1. Mental Health
2. School Avoidance/ Attendance
3. Personal Adjustment
4. Family Adjustment
5. Crisis

The specific services that School Social Workers provide to address the key domains are defined as Core Services within this framework. The Core Services are:

1. Referral, screening, assessment and service delivery
2. Target classroom/group intervention
3. Staff and system consultation
4. Staff and system capacity building
5. School level needs assessment

Procedures for Virtual Social Work Services (Teletherapy)

1. Social Workers will connect with students to discuss the possibility of virtual counseling. Social Workers will explain what virtual counseling is including limits of confidentiality.
2. Social Worker will explain the consent process to the student/parent/guardian. If the student is open to proceeding with virtual counseling the Social Worker will email the Informed Consent Title (Appendix A) to the student/parent/guardian to review. If student/parent/guardian agree they will reply to the Social Worker acknowledging their consent. The Social worker will document this consent in their notes.
3. After consent is received, the Social Worker and student will discuss scheduling a time to meet.
4. A secure video conference link will be emailed to the students LKDSB .com email prior to the scheduled appointment. Lambton Kent District School Board (LKDSB) Social Work staff will use encrypted email as a method to schedule appointments and to share resources. Social Work staff will use the students LKDSB email or the students cell phone to schedule appointments and to share resources.
5. The Social Worker and student will complete their session as per normal practice. The Social Worker will be expected to document their session.
6. When the session is complete the Social Workers will ensure all members of the session have left the meeting at which time they will end and delete the meeting.
7. Should a Social Worker share resources with parents/guardians, it will be done so with an email provided by the parent/guardian. The Social Worker will ensure that any communication through text or email is documented as per standards of practice outlined in OCSWSSW. LKDSB cannot fully guarantee the security/confidentiality of email communication.

Implementation Date: May 8, 2020

Reference: Association of Chief Social Workers, School Social Work A Framework for School Social Work in Ontario

**APPENDIX A****Informed Consent for Psychology Department – Social Worker
Telepractice Service/Virtual Mental Health Services**

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In the event of extenuating circumstances, such as an extended school closure, the Lambton Kent District School Board may offer some virtual Social Work services (or telepractice/virtual mental health counselling services through telephone, email ? or live interactive video conferencing.

The recommended video conferencing platform will meet the privacy and security standards approved by the LKDSB Information Technology Department. Should you require more information about the privacy features of the platform, please enquire via your Social Worker.

Through the secure video conferencing platform, the student and/or their parent/guardian may connect over the internet by a link provided through an encrypted email from the Social Worker. The Social Worker will then admit the parent/guardian/student to the meeting when services are ready to be provided.

Counselling Services are provided individually to promote student learning. Counselling gives students an opportunity to reflect on personal or interpersonal matters with a counselling professional, and to develop problem-solving strategies and/or plans or goals that will optimize student success.

Parent/Guardian or adult student acknowledges and understands the following when providing informed consent for telepractice/ /teletherapy:

1. I have the right to withdraw consent at any time without affecting my right to future social work services with LKDSB.
2. That there are risks, benefits, and consequences associated with telepractice/teletherapy, including but not limited to, technological disruptions. I understand that there is a remote possibility that the transmission of my information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons; and/or the electronic storage of my health information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.

3. That there will be no recording of any of the online sessions by either party. All information disclosed within sessions and written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be disclosed to anyone without written authorization, except where the disclosure is permitted and/or required by law.
4. That information obtained through telepractice/teletherapy may be shared with the Social Worker's supervisor as part of the clinical supervision process.
5. That during a telepractice/teletherapy session, we could encounter technical difficulties resulting in service interruptions. If this occurs the session will end, and we will attempt to restart the session. We will ensure we have a plan in place prior to the session starting should this happen.
6. That the Social Worker may need to contact my emergency contact and/or appropriate person in case of an emergency.

Emergency Contacts

The Social Worker will need to know your location in the case of an emergency. You agree to inform me of the address where you are prior to the beginning of each session. I will also request an emergency contact name and number in the event of an emergency. This person will only be contacted if the Social Worker feels your safety is at risk and requires the adult to attend to your location to ensure your safety.

I have reviewed and understand the above information.

Student Name: _____

School: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

An email containing this information was sent to the parent/guardian on _____
at the following email address _____ at the request of the
parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian or adult student verbally agrees that they have understood the information provided and that all questions/concerns they may have at this time have been answered to their satisfaction.

Social Worker signature

Date