

From the Desk of Kathleen Massmann, StMCS School Counselor

Dear StMCS Families,

Fall greetings! As I return to StMCS for another school year, I am writing to introduce myself and to inform you of the counseling services available at St. Michael Catholic School.

This is our sixth year at StMCS, and we are very excited to continue our work with the school and your children. I have been working as a counselor for over 20 years and operate a private practice in the Monticello area. My team works with clients of all ages, but we have a great deal of experience and interest in working with children and teens. I am happy to announce that Mrs. Danna Bromaghin will be joining our StMCS team for the 2020-21 school year. We will be onsite a combined total of 8-12 hours per week, Mondays (Ms. Kathleen) and Thursdays (Ms. Danna). We know the past year has presented families and students with new challenges, and we are here and ready to support you!

School counseling services consist of presentations, classroom guidance, support groups, individual sessions, and parent consultation opportunities. Classroom visits are made 1-2 times per year to discuss general topics such as kindness, friendship, or other age-appropriate issues. Small groups and individual sessions are provided for students with parent permission. Groups meet once a week for no more than 45 minutes. Group counseling brings students together around a topic common to all members so they can learn and grow with one another. Individual counseling sessions are made by staff and teacher referral only and will generally occur weekly for about 20-30 minutes. For younger children, we will use play therapy as it allows for the use of toys to work through feelings and learn self-management strategies. If you're unsure whether small group or individual counseling is best for your child, please contact us.

If you are interested in having your child work with one of us on an individual basis, we will offer onsite office hours at StMCS to meet with students per parent request. These sessions will be 45-60 minutes in length, will be held on campus during school hours, and will be billed directly to the student's insurance.

If you desire small group or individual counseling services for your child, please complete the attached forms by September 25, 2020, indicating specific interest and providing permission. If you do not have concerns at this time, you are welcome to sign the consent now in anticipation of any possible future needs. All counseling services are confidential in nature, unless it is in the best interest of the child that we disclose abuse, neglect, or endangerment to the proper authorities. If your student is being seen due to a staff or teacher referral, appropriate information will be shared with applicable staff to ensure the best possible growth experience for your student.

StMCS cares about the whole child. Recognizing that a variety of concerns can interfere with student learning, StMCS supports our counseling partnership. We act as a part of the staff as we all strive to "Live for Christ and Learn for Life." While counseling services are generally geared toward small groups and individual support, StMCS administration and staff can call upon our expertise as needed to partner in one-time matters and/or crisis situations as they deem appropriate to support any student(s).

Parents are always welcome to contact our counseling team by email or phone with any questions or concerns. We will schedule time in September to offer consults to parents who are interested in group and individual counseling services. This will allow us the opportunity to learn more about your child and make appropriate recommendations for counseling services.

We are always happy to discuss general impressions and recommendations as we work with your child so you may best help him/her at home as well. Thank you for your partnership.

Most sincerely,

Kathleen Massmann, LPCC
kmassmann@stm Catholicschool.org
763-732-3351 ext. 700

Danna Bromaghin, Therapist

StMCS Optional Counseling Opportunities

Individual counseling and small groups are generally available to all who have an interest. If you would like your child to participate in counseling services this year, please complete the following form and sign the consent form. If you do not have any concerns at this time, but would like your permission on file in case an issue should arise, please sign the consent form for future use.

Below is a list of the small groups that will launch in Session I followed by a list of other topic(s) that may be a match for your child. Check all that may be of interest.

SMALL GROUPS - SESSION I OFFERINGS (October to April)

Each group meets weekly, unless otherwise noted. Additional groups may be formed based on interest and/or need.

- Losing Someone You Love: Grief and Loss Group (meet 2x monthly)
- Emotional Intelligence Group: Managing Change (meet weekly) - *Circle Age Group*
Grades K-3 Grades 4-8

What is emotional intelligence? It is the ability to be aware of the emotions we have and how to express and manage them. As kids, it can be scary and confusing to have strong feelings and not know what to do with them. At times, it can look like “acting out” because we have not learned how to communicate ourselves. This group will help children learn about a wide range of emotions and how to work with them. Students will be involved in interactive lessons about emotions and learn ways to express themselves that will help them thrive.

- “Boys Being Boys” Group (meet weekly) - *Circle Age Group*
Grades K-3 Grades 4-8
- “G.I.R.L.S. Group: Girls In Real Life Situations” (meet weekly) - *Circle Age Group*
Grades K-3 Grades 4-8
- Changing Families Group (meet weekly) - *Circle Age Group*
Grades K-3 Grades 4-8

COUNSELING FORMAT

- We are most interested in individual counseling, utilizing our private insurance
- We are most interested in small group counseling
- We are unsure about what is needed, but would like to set up a time to talk and make a plan

Informed Consent for School Counseling

I would like my child to participate in individual and/or small group counseling at St. Michael Catholic School with counselors Kathleen Massmann (Ms. Kathleen) and/or Danna Bromaghin (Ms. Danna). Individual counseling provides students with the opportunity to explore feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in a private one-on-one setting with a trusted adult (counselor). Small group counseling gives students the experience of working with two or more students under the guidance of the counselor to address feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and/or to learn specific skills. The purpose of both individual and group counseling is to work on academic, personal, social, and emotional issues so students will be more prepared to focus on academic achievement.

Counseling is voluntary and without guarantee. You or your child may stop counseling at any time without any negative consequences. At times, sensitive and/or difficult topics may be addressed, which could bring about emotional discomfort. However, dealing with these issues can lead to better understanding and acceptance of self and others.

Confidentiality is guarded within legal and ethical limits of the counseling profession. At times we may need to consult with other counseling professionals, however, the student's identity will always remain protected. If your child shares that he/she is being harmed, may be harmed, or plans harm to himself/herself, another person, or property, the counselor will share the information with parents and/or other appropriate persons. In group counseling, the counselor will make every effort to ensure confidentiality, but cannot guarantee group member compliance.

Our counseling team believes in the importance of communication and, at times, it may be beneficial for the team to consult with your child's teacher and StMCS staff. This communication allows us to best serve your child within his/her school environment. Please initial here to give us permission to consult with your child's teacher and StMCS staff, if and when needed. _____

I have read and discussed the above with my child. We both understand the conditions in which my child will be participating in counseling with Ms. Kathleen and/or Ms. Danna at St. Michael Catholic School. I grant permission for my child, _____, to join StMCS counselors in:

- Individual Counseling (Private Insurance)
- Small-Group Counseling
- Both Individual and Small Group Counseling

Print Parent First and Last Name

Parent Signature

Date

Email Address

Daytime Phone

Student Name

Teacher/Grade