

FAQ's

Will I be notified when my child sees the counselor?

Often, you are not notified when your child sees the counselor. Meeting with the school counselor is something many children enjoy and seek out. The majority of situations we deal with are normal, developmental issues like friendship concerns, managing strong feelings, resolving conflicts, etc. We operate under the laws of confidentiality and try to establish trust with students so they feel comfortable coming to us when needed. We try very hard to work through problems at school and assist students with making good choices. If the counselor feels that a student may harm themselves or someone else, we are required to break confidentiality and contact the parents. Also, if a recurring problem persists, many times we do involve parents in a positive plan to help the student.

Will the counselor see my child individually on an on-going basis if requested?

The school counselor's role is one of support. Although we are trained as therapists, we do not conduct "therapy," or long-term counseling in the school setting. We provide short term and/or crisis counseling. The school counselor may assist families in locating a therapist in the community who can more adequately provide services when long term/intensive care is needed.

Can you recommend any outside therapists/counselors for us to consider?

The elementary counseling team at Spring-Ford has created a resource list of area counselors that we can share upon request.

Do you offer counseling groups?

We have many small group opportunities for students. Groups are offered throughout the school year for a duration of six sessions per group. Groups are held during a student's recess time and combine only students of the same grade level. Teachers, parents, specialists, and other staff members can refer a student for a group. Topics include self-esteem, friendship, anger management, critical thinking, coping with stress, grief support, changing families, and transition to the Intermediate School. The Spring-Ford Counseling agency collaborates with our district to provide additional group facilitators due to high demands.

What do I do if my child doesn't want to come to school?

It is important for every child to attend school on a regular basis. We realize that anxiety can be overwhelming and are here to assist you in your efforts. It is best to keep them in a routine, like riding the bus, if at all possible. Driving them to school can sometimes make separation more difficult. When students come home, ask them to tell you three happy moments they had that day, instead of focusing on any concerns. Try to remain positive about school, and sometimes the adjustment difficulty will subside. Set up a play date with someone from their class, or ask their teacher to give them a morning job to look forward to.

How does the process work for a potentially gifted student?

Teachers, parents, or other staff members can refer a student for a gifted screening. Once the request is received, the school counselor will schedule an individual screening. Following the screening the counselor will contact the parent either via phone or email to provide feedback concerning the student's performance. If a student meets the criteria set forth by the state of PA, the counselor will communicate with parents to make a decision on the next step. If a full evaluation is warranted, parental permission is required and the student goes on a waiting list to be seen by the school psychologist. The state allows the school psychologist 60 calendar days to evaluate a student. Once complete, a meeting will be held to review the results of the evaluation to determine whether or not a student qualifies for the Gifted Support Program.

How do I know if my child is ready for Kindergarten?

Entering Kindergarten can be a very exciting, yet overwhelming time for your family. Children enter with various abilities and our Kindergarten team does a great job of teaching to all levels. Children usually know how to write their first name, their colors, their shapes, how to say the alphabet, and how to count from 1-10. Our Kindergarten teachers really stress listening to the recommendation of your pre-school teacher regarding your child's readiness for Kindergarten. The district sets forth guidelines for how old students need to be, but keep in mind your own child's needs and developmental readiness.

What do I do if my child is struggling academically or behaviorally?

We have a Child Study Team to help intervene when a student is not meeting with school success. Parents are a part of the team. The goal of the Child Study Team is to determine strategies the teacher and team can use to support a student. The strategies are utilized for 30 school days, followed by a follow-up meeting to determine if the strategies were successful. Our goal is for every student to be successful and to create the best learning environment possible.

The Response to Intervention model (RTII) is used in the Spring-Ford Area School District. This model provides reading intervention by delivering targeted instruction for students. Students who are identified as not meeting benchmarks receive intensive reading instruction and are closely monitored to ensure improvement. Students who are identified as meeting or exceeding benchmarks receive instruction to reinforce, extend, and enrich their reading skills. The goal of RTII is to provide appropriate reading interventions at all skill levels in order for all students to meet with success.

If my child is being evaluated by the school psychologist, what is the time line?

The state of Pennsylvania dictates a 60-calendar day time line from the date of signed parent permission. Our team works very hard to meet these time lines, and gives each case the dedication it deserves.