

# UNDERSTANDING COUNSELLING

*An Information Sheet from the Guidance Counsellor*

Respect and care for the whole person are key values for us at St James College. We provide an environment in which students, families and staff receive the guidance and support they need to live healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.

Our students and their families live in a rapidly changing world, a world that, at times, can be demanding and stressful.

Counselling can help people to cope with the demands of academic achievement, peer and family relationships, parenting and career decisions. There are also critical times at which counselling can be helpful to people. Some examples of such times are when a family member has died or is seriously ill, when relationships are under pressure because of separation or divorce, when children are leaving home or moving into adolescence.

Sometimes people can be reluctant to ask for help. They might believe that it is a sign of weakness or that things will improve by themselves. Sometimes people think that no one would be interested in their problems or that their concerns are minor compared with those of others.



In the counselling department we work hard to communicate the message that **everyone needs help sometimes**. Parents, students, teachers all find life difficult at times. This is normal, and spending time with a skilled listener can be a great help.

Talking about concerns in a **safe, confidential and supportive** environment often enables people to see their situation differently and to begin to manage their problems.

Many people find talking about their concerns a **healthy and helpful** thing to do. Coming to counselling does **not** mean that people have major psychological problems, nor is it an admission of weakness. Knowing we need help and asking for that help are signs of maturity and healthy self-awareness. So the other message we work hard to communicate is that **it is okay to ask for help**.

At St James College we believe that families deserve all the help and support we can offer. Skilled and caring members of our staff are here to accompany students and parents as we live our lives in this changing, exciting and demanding world.

*If you would like more information about counselling services or to discuss particular concerns, please contact Brian Thompson on 3839 4977 or [Brian.Thompson@stjamescollege.qld.edu.au](mailto:Brian.Thompson@stjamescollege.qld.edu.au).*