



## Support & Advocacy

SCHSS Mental Health & Addiction Counsellors provide support to clients in variety of ways. This support can be in the form of **advocacy**, which can be anything from family to judicial matters. In some instances SCHSS can also provide **transportation** to clients to their out of town appointments (*not always available - and only used for the 1st or 2nd appointment, after that clients must access the SCHSS medical van*). SCHSS can provide transportation to and from regularly scheduled in-office appointments, and to/from group programs and special workshops or events.

- **Moral support** is a way of giving support to a person or cause, or to one side in a conflict, without making any contribution beyond the emotional or psychological value of the encouragement.
- **Support groups**; in a support group members provide each other with various types of help, usually nonprofessional and nonmaterial, for a particular shared, usually burdensome, characteristic. The help may take the form of providing and evaluating relevant information, relating personal experiences, listening to and accepting others' experiences, providing sympathetic understanding and establishing social networks. A support group may also work to inform the public or engage in advocacy.

**Peer support** occurs when people provide knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help to each other. Peer support is used to refer to initiatives where colleagues, members of self-help organizations and others meet as equals to give each other support on a reciprocal basis. *Peer* in this case is taken to imply that each person has no more expertise as a supporter than the other and the relationship is one of equality. A peer has "been there, done that" and can relate to others who are now in a similar situation. SCHSS staff can assist in connecting peers, to one another when needed.