

# Small Group Counseling at Maryland

*As part of our comprehensive school counseling program, I offer a variety of small groups for students. Groups are a great way for students to meet with others their own age to share and discuss common concerns. Students learn they are not alone with their feelings regarding a variety of developmental issues and experiences. Groups usually meet once a week during class time in the school counseling office. The following are descriptions of groups I offer most regularly during the school year.*

**Friendship Groups:** Friendship Groups are a fun way for kids in the same grade level to make new friends and practice their social skills in a safe, small group setting. Children are invited to participate in friendship groups for a variety of reasons. A few examples include: a child who is shy or often appears to play alone during free choice time or recess, a child exhibiting behaviors that unknowingly (to the child) “turn off” other kids, a child who repeatedly complains of not having any friends, a child who has a hard time initiating friendships, a child who lacks self-confidence, and/or who needs a confidence boost, or a child who is very accepting and easily befriends other children (always a very beneficial addition to a group).

**Changing Families Groups:** Family Change Groups are for students whose parents are divorced or separated. These groups are beneficial to students by enabling them to meet other children going through a similar experience. Many students find comfort in discovering they are “not the only kid” in the school with divorced or separated parents. Students also develop a greater comfort discussing divorce and the varying feelings they might have about it.

**Self Esteem Groups:** Self esteem groups focus on helping children identify ways in which they are likeable and capable. Children will be given opportunities to discover their individual talents and strengths and to share ways in which they are special. Candidates for this group might be children who seem to lack confidence, make negative remarks about themselves, their abilities or their work or give up easily.

**School Success (organization/study skills):** School Success groups can help improve the educational experience for students. The focus is on attendance, organization, time management, homework, and test taking strategies.

*Every child can benefit from participation in a small group. Students can be invited to join a group by parent request, teacher suggestion, or by student request. Parent permission is required to participate. For more information please contact Erica Hecker, School Counselor at 237-3280 ex. 278 or [erica.hecker@bexleyschools.org](mailto:erica.hecker@bexleyschools.org).*

