

# BCMS START Team Initiatives

In addition to identifying students who exhibit behaviors, actions, thoughts, etc. that might inhibit their learning, the START Team has additional responsibilities.

First, the START team assists with matching students with staff mentors. The mentoring program is for all children that need support in the middle school years.

The START team also organizes afterschool Fun Days. The purpose of these days is to encourage *all* students to partake in age-appropriate fun activities. This will allow students to see staff members and other students in a different environment and will lead to the development of new relationships.

## START Contact information:

Diana Zuroski	School Counselor	e: <a href="mailto:zuroskd@lmsd.org">zuroskd@lmsd.org</a> P: 610-645-1488
Stephanie Brett	Mental Health and Wellness Counselor	e: <a href="mailto:bretts@lmsd.org">bretts@lmsd.org</a> P: 610-658-3931



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Bala Cynwyd Middle School

START Program



**START**  
**Reaching out to**  
**Help**

**A Guide for Parents**

## **What is START?**

START (Student Assistance Referral Team), made up of school and agency staff, is available to help you access school and community services for your child.

In Pennsylvania, every school district is required to have a plan for identifying and assisting who experience barriers to learning.

The START team will help you find services and assistance within the school, and if needed, in the community. We do not diagnose, treat, or refer your child for treatment. We will provide you with information and you make the choice(s) that best fit your needs and wishes. As the parent/guardian you are an important part of the team.

### *Do You See Your Child Showing Any of These Behaviors?*

- Sudden drop in grades
- Frustration over failure to master key grade-level skills
- Withdrawing from friends
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Talking about suicide
- Depression
- Defying authority, both at home and at school
- Acting aggressively or acting out
- Lying
- Needing money without an explanation
- Experimenting with drugs or alcohol

### *Are You Concerned About Your Child's Reaction to....?*

- Recent death of a loved one
- Divorce of parents
- Family relocation
- A relationship problem
- Bullying
- Other traumatic event

### *How Does My Child Become Involved in the START Program?*

Anyone can refer a child to the START team. Some students are referred by teachers or other school personnel. A friend or family member can also let the START team know that they are worried about someone. The child can even go directly to the START team to ask for help. Schools will gather information to determine how a student is doing in their classes. However, the START team will not proceed unless you give your written parent permission. Once permission is received, the START team will work with you to develop a plan of action to help your child achieve success in school. Participation in the program is voluntary.



### *What if Someone Has Referred My Child to START?*

A START team member will contact you regarding your child's referral to the program. Before a START team member talks to your child, you will be asked to sign a permission form. The START team will work with you and your child throughout the process. As a parent, your knowledge and thoughts about your child will be helpful in developing a plan of action. If you need more information before making a decision about START, please feel free to talk to a START team member.

### *How Do I Contact the START Team?*

If you have any questions about START or you feel that your child may need help, call your child's school and ask to speak with any of the team members: 610.645.1480 (see back page for START team members and contact information).

### *Privacy*

The START team information is completely confidential and the team will respect you and your child's privacy at all times.

If you would like more information on START, go to your school website at <https://www.lmsd.org/bala-cynwyd/student-services/start/index.aspx>.