Treatment beyond the clinic:

Advocating for mental wellness in schools

Nadiya Boyce Rosen
Melissa Mecadon-Mann
Introductions

- Nadiya Boyce Rosen M. Ed., APC, NCC
  - Cobb County Schools
  - Acworth Elementary School
  - Pickett’s Mill Elementary School

- Melissa Mecadon-Mann M. Ed, APC, NCC
  - Paulding County Schools
  - Hiram High School
Purpose

- Students face significant barriers to obtaining necessary mental health counseling services.
- Importance of Parent/Teacher awareness and buy-in
- Due to barriers, school counselors are faced with addressing the counseling needs of students on top of their normal day-to-day responsibilities.
- This presentation will help to identify the barriers that students face as well as provide multiple tools and research-based interventions to support elementary, middle, and high school students with anxiety, depression, and behavioral issues.
ASCA Competencies

School counselors should articulate and demonstrate an understanding of:

I-A-9 The continuum of mental health services, including prevention and intervention strategies to enhance student success.

IV-A-3 Counseling theories and techniques that work in school, such as rational emotive behavior therapy, reality therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, Adlerian, solution-focused brief counseling, person-centered counseling and family systems.

IV-A-3 Responsive services (counseling and crisis response) including grief and bereavement.

IV-B-3c Demonstrates an ability to provide counseling for students during times of transition, separation, heightened stress and critical change.
LET’S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER!

VISIT:
KAHOOT.IT
Kahoot

1) What is the primary age level you work with?
2) Do you have a mental health counselor working in your school?
3) Approximately how many students come to you in a week with mental health concerns?
4) How confident do you feel assisting students with mental health needs?
5) My school/county has recently provided counselors and teachers with professional development on student mental health topics.
6) Are you currently licensed as an APC or LPC?
Advocacy starts with awareness of the warning signs for anxiety, depression, and suicide.
3. To what extent do you feel that mental health issues impact student learning and academic performance?

48 responses

- 0 (0%)
- 1 (2.1%)
- 7 (14.6%)
- 40 (83.3%)
4. I feel that I would benefit from professional development on student mental health issues.

48 responses
5. Which mental health concerns have you witnessed in the classroom in the past month? (Click all that apply)

43 responses

- Panic attacks: 25 (58.1%)
- Withdrawal from class activities: 29 (67.4%)
- Not wanting to attend school: 18 (41.9%)
- Severe worry: 15 (34.9%)
- Physical complaints: 19 (44.2%)
- Disobedience or aggression: 25 (58.1%)
- Threats of self-harm or harm to others: 15 (34.9%)
- Self-injury: 11 (25.6%)
- Over sexual behavior: 4 (9.3%)
- Substance abuse: 4 (9.3%)
Teacher and Admin Awareness and Support

- Professional Development at teacher staff meetings or during planning
  - 4 Corners Activity - Great for use in smaller groups (grade level meetings, planning)
  - Impact Challenge - Can be used in small and large groups

- Newsletter

- Bulletin Boards

- Needs Assessment
Teacher and Admin Awareness and Support

- Education about our role as counselors at the local school and district level
  - Presenting at or hosting a booth at district administration conferences and PLD events

- Including teachers in student education on mental health
  - Teachers As Advisors Program
  - QPR Training for Staff
  - Bully Prevention Training for Staff
Parent Awareness and Support

● Parent Nights
  ○ 4 Corners Activity
  ○ Impact Challenge
  ○ Mental Health Awareness Night

● Newsletter

● Education about our role as counselors
Parent Awareness and Support

- Resources for Newsletters and Parent Education
  - Voices for Georgia’s Children
  - GSCA
  - ASCA
2. Do you feel comfortable speaking with a teacher, counselor, or administrator if you or a friend appears to be in crisis?

451 responses

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<th>Student Perspectives (High School)</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>(12.2%)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>(15.7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>(31.7%)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>(16.9%)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>(23.5%)</td>
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3. To what extent do you feel that mental health issues impact your own learning and academic performance?

450 responses

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student Perspectives (High School)</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>124</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
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</table>
4. In the past year, I have seen a therapist or counselor (school or private) to discuss a mental health concern.

446 responses

- 64 (14.3%)
- 384 (86.1%)
5. Which mental health concerns (if any) have you experienced in the past month? (Click all that apply)

292 responses

- Panic attacks: 99 (33.9%)
- Withdrawal from class activities: 66 (22.6%)
- Sleeping in class: 164 (56.2%)
- Not wanting to attend school: 98 (33.6%)
- Severe worry: 92 (31.5%)
- Physical complaints: 42 (14.4%)
- Disobedience or aggression: 55 (18.8%)
- Threats of self-harm or harm to others: 26 (8.9%)
- Self-injury: 28 (9.6%)
- Substance abuse: 19 (6.5%)
Student Prevention and Support

- Year-round strategies
  - Teachers As Advisors
  - Mindfulness inclusion in classroom lessons
  - Peer support groups (DDP and Pirate Coaches)
Student Prevention and Support

- Event-specific strategies
  - Red Ribbon Week
    - Focus on healthy choices and importance of mental health during lessons
    - Ex. PE circuit training with a meditation and mental health discussion stations
  - Random Acts of Kindness Week (February 2019)
    - Ex. Small group discussion on mental health and peer support
Interventions and Resources for Students
MindYeti

- Mindfulness meditation resource
- Free website and app
  - Premium and school community memberships are available
- Categories cover calming, transition, kindness, and conflict resolution meditations
TherapistAid.com

https://www.therapistaid.com

- Online database of worksheets, interactive tools, videos, and articles.
- Mostly CBT-based
- Filtered by demographic or by topic
- Created and compiled by a licensed counselor.
- Appropriate for all ages
- Subscription: $75/year - for editing permissions
Interventions and exercises that don’t take a lot of time - all age levels, searchable by age and by topic.

Allow students to understand their own thought process and reframe their reactions to life events and daily happenings

Challenging Negative Thoughts (CBT)
- Thought record (CBT)
- Great follow-up for ‘Challenging Negative Thoughts’ activity/worksheet.
- Use as ‘homework’ for older students.
The Wise Mind (DBT)

PROACTIVE lesson for students who “over-experience” their emotions.

Use as ‘homework’ for older students.
Stop, Breathe, and Think

- Mindfulness and meditation app

- 1-10 minute long sessions
  - Session types: Anxiety, stress, sleep, yoga, etc.

- Version available for younger students (Breathe Kids)
  - Up to 5 student accounts available for free to educators
TAKE A BREATH

Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and think about how your mind and body feel!

DIM FOR 10 SECONDS
I'M PHYSICALLY...

- Great
- Good
- ✅ Meh
- Poor
- Rough

I'M MENTALLY...

- Great
- Good
- Meh
- ✅ Poor
- Rough
& EMOTIONALLY...

ADD EMOTIONS

Afraid
Apathetic
Bored
Concerned
Confused
Distracted
Hesitant

Anxious
Apprehensive
Clingy
Conflicted
Disconnected
Guarded
Indifferent

ALL DONE
Recommended Results

**PICK AN ACTIVITY!**

**GUIDED ACTIVITIES**

- **Grounding One**
  - 8 minutes
  - Feel steady, stable, and in your body

- **Listening**
  - 10 minutes
  - Listen to sound shift and change

- **Sitting to Standing**
  - 5 minutes
  - Become a micromovement explorer

- **Body Scan**
  - 8+ minutes
  - Check in with your whole self

**SEE MORE OPTIONS**

**LISTEN**
ADAA Reviewed Mental Health Apps

https://adaa.org/finding-help/mobile-apps

Description:

- Detailed list of mental health apps which have been reviewed by the Anxiety and Depression Association of America
- All listed apps are either FREE or relatively cheap
- Appropriate For: various ages (mostly middle school and up)
Closing remarks, discussion, and questions

- Remember the resources you use will depend on the needs of your school
- Use data and needs assessments to determine if and how a specific resource will be used
- Applying for LPC licensure has become a growing trend among school counselors. The licensure process includes coursework and training in DSM diagnoses
- CE trainings from ASCA and ACA can provide a foundation of understanding for utilizing theory-based interventions
REFLECTION

What are some of the barriers that you as a school counselor face when trying to advocate for students in need of mental health counseling services?