Essential Pieces to Students' Success

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From Your *GSCA* President

Greetings School Counselors:

It is with great pleasure that the Association presents you the 19th annual GSCA *Journal.* GSCA proudly offers the *Journal* as an element of research, professional growth, and learning. As you read, you will discover many *"essential pieces*" to the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of your comprehensive counseling programs and activities.

Special thanks to Dr. Rhonda Bryant, *Editor,* and her editorial board for their endless hours of soliciting articles, editing, dedication, and professionalism. They have worked incredibly hard to provide Georgia school counselors, graduate students, and counselor educators with a wonderful opportunity for professional growth and professional development based on counselor-identified needs. Additionally, join me in honoring the authors who published in this publication. You will find their hard work informative, enlightening, and impressive.

I would like to challenge counseling professionals to submit an article for next year's *Journal*. If you are interested in publishing, the *Journal* is the place to begin. I am positive you will enjoy the *Journal* and will discover many *"Essential Pieces to Students' Success."*

Sincerely,

Barbara G. Strickland

2012-2013 GSCA President

From the *GSCA Journal* Editor

Growing up, I enjoyed many hours putting together puzzles with my father. He encouraged me to turn the pieces different ways to visualize how they might fit and to use the picture on the box (i.e., the big picture) to plan my strategies. Our theme this year, *Essential Pieces to Students' Success*, reminds me of his encouragement and wisdom to plan creatively and carefully!

What a wonderful analogy to characterize this issue of the *Journal*, which offers professional counselors and counselor educators ways to put together the pieces of complex diverse school counseling contexts and frameworks. This issue highlights our effectiveness and offers creative approaches that encourage practitioner reflection and transformative culturally responsive counseling.

Thank you to my editorial assistant, Mrs. Debora Knowles, and the Editorial Board, whose perseverance is astounding. Similarly, thank you to GSCA President, Barbara Strickland, who is always positive and Albany State University College of Education leadership for the latitude to complete this project. Finally, I offer sincere gratitude to the membership of GSCA for all they do.

Dr. Rhonda Bryant is an Associate Professor of Counseling and the coordinator of School Counseling at Albany State University. She earned a Ph.D. in Counselor Education from the University of Virginia and holds leadership positions in the American Counseling Association (ACA), including 2012-2013 presidency of ACA division, Counselors for Social Justice, and 2012-2013 co-chair of the ACA Human Rights Committee.

From the *GSCA Journal* Editorial Assistant

My enthusiasm for working on this wonderful project never wanes! Assisting the senior editorial staff and the state journal editor, Dr. Rhonda Bryant, with tasks essential to the production of this publication, makes me proud to be a part of the school counseling profession. I would challenge other students to find ways to become involved with *GSCA*; our learning extends so much further than the classroom.

As I near the completion of the program and induction into the profession, I look forward to incorporating the articles' concepts and research outcomes into my professional work. As we collaboratively build and strengthen our collective capacity for K-12 and higher education advocacy and excellence, our diversity of thought, ability, and singularity of mission position us to advance the profession and the significance of professional school counselors.

Debora Knowles is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she earned a B.S. in special education and an M.S. in education with an emphasis in urban education. She is a highly sought after motivational speaker and integrates spirituality and wellness into her counseling. Mrs. Knowles continues to work toward her Master's degree in Counseling at Albany State University and is involved in a number of community projects designed to promote physical and spiritual wellness.

Working with School Age International Students: Considerations and Strategies for School Counselors

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Abstract

The number of school age international students and their parents matriculating in U.S. schools continues to increase. These students and their families have a myriad of unique needs that are multidimensional and continue to evolve as they transition into U.S. culture. Strategically placed to help these students become familiar with school culture, school policies and procedures, and classroom expectations, school counselors must have a strategic plan to facilitate transitions for this population. This strategic plan includes cultural competence, self-awareness, and systemic advocacy skills to address potential bases that may interfere with these students' educational experiences.

Keywords: international students, school counselor, multicultural, counselor competencies

Working with School Age International Students:

Considerations and Strategies for School Counselors

This is a totally different environment than I have been used to.
The change is different because it upsets the kind of life I had.
It was different back home. School was different, teachers were different.
I feel depressed because I miss my friends in my country.

Immigrant Child from China, Age 11
(Igoa, 1995)

In the age of globalization, individuals are travelling more frequently across the flattening borders of the world. One group of sojourners navigating these borders is international students. International students are temporary sojourners who travel overseas to engage in educational activities either on the primary, secondary, or tertiary level (Lin & Yi, 1997). Quite often students in primary (elementary) and secondary (middle and high) schools are the children of parents attending tertiary (collegiate) institutions. In fact, approximately one-third of international students, attending tertiary institutions, bring their spouses and children with them (Chittooran & Singaravelu, 2004). This means that as the number of international students in tertiary education and their families continue to increase, there will be more school-aged international students (SAIS) attending U.S. primary and secondary schools. As the number of these students increase, it would behoove school counselors, and other helping professionals to understand and address the needs of these individuals (Andrade, 2006). This understanding is especially important because for SAIS and their parents, like other sojourners, the adjustment to U.S. culture is often foreseeably stressful (Larson & Ovando, 2001). Moreover, counselors have a major role in responding to the transitional needs of international students as they navigate the many changes associated with living and learning across cultures (Arthur, 2004). For SAIS, this is especially crucial since schools often serve as the entry point into U.S. culture; schools also

serve a critical role in helping these students adjust to a new culture (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007).

This article will provide an overview of some of the adjustment issues, academically and socially, that SAIS and their parents can experience in entering the U.S. educational system. The article also presents a description of factors that could potentially affect academic performance and a discussion of ways to help the parents of SAIS to engage actively with educators to support the school success of their child. Finally, the article presents a checklist of possible issues and suggestions for possible interventions.

The SAIS and School Experiences

Adjustment to Academic Culture

SAIS are plunged into the everyday life of school, peers, and teachers, and are expected to adjust to a new way of functioning (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). These students face being able to manage the differences in classroom procedures, teacher-student relationships, and interactions and pedagogy of U.S. schools (Lin & Yin, 1997). Beyond the usual stresses of learning the routine of how to survive in a U.S. school, such as using school lockers, and moving from class to class (Juntunen, Atkinson, & Tierney, 2003), SAIS may experience major cultural barriers that may prove challenging. For example, SAIS may struggle with the U.S. education system that values and rewards assertiveness and verbal fluency (Gollnick & Chinn, 2006). These attitudes may directly conflict with the values inculcated by these students' culture of origin (Banks & Banks, 2003). Students from cultures where teachers are more authoritarian than democratic and communication is more linear than egalitarian may not feel comfortable with teachers who expect verbal participation in class discussion or classroom interactions. Teachers who promote a democratic or egalitarian classroom may consider SAIS passive and

disengaged, particularly if the students' culture of origin views linear communication with the teacher (i.e., authority figure) as challenging and inappropriate (Sue & Sue, 2003). Further, students coming from a collectivist culture, which emphasizes interdependent self and a group reference point, may experience some dissonance when entering the U.S., which values an individualistic cultural approach that emphasizes independence and self-reliance (Helms & Cook, 1999). Finally, SAIS may come from cultures that foster conformity to parental expectations during the educational decision-making process. For example, school counselors may ask students to make decisions about what foreign language to take or curricular emphases such as college or vocational/technical but some SAIS cultures value the perspectives and direction of elders when making decisions about educational paths. Generally, students from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East come from predominantly collectivist orientations (Institute of International Education, 2005).

Linguistics and Academics Performance

Language plays a vital role in the academic success of students in school, whether or not the individual's primary language is English. This is no different for SAIS. Younger students seem to acquire English language skills more quickly than secondary school students (Larson & Ovando, 2001). Additionally, there is a strong positive correlation between older students with literacy and language skills learned in their primary language and their academic success in U.S. schools (Ovando & Collier, 1998). Moreover, Ovando & Collier (1998) also state that factors such as age and the extent of prior schooling experiences in their home countries affect the academic performance of SAIS. Students who are older, and who have had more academic experience, tend to do better academically than students who have had limited school experience.

Not only is the spoken language important, an awareness of the fact that there are language differences in the written language is important. This is true for even an English speaking SAIS. For example, a SAIS from a country that uses the British English (BE) may spell words as they appear in the British vocabulary. For instance, the student may spell "centre" (BE) instead of "center" or "behaviour" (BE) instead of "behavior." Educators should not assume that these students are academically slow or having difficulties with spelling. Factors such as these may also affect the performance of SAIS on standardized tests such as the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) or the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) which could affect the student being able to smoothly progress through their academic paths.

Another linguistic factor that may affect the performance of SAIS is avoidance of public speaking. Given that teachers can consider English linguistic fluency as an indicator of intelligence, some of these students may avoid speaking in the classroom because of their accents. The SAIS may perceive that others misjudge them and their academic ability based on their different intonation and even their written language; SAIS may also fear others' misperceptions of them as less fluent or eloquent by their peers and teachers (Roysircar, 2004). Again, educators err in presuming that these students have cognitive or academic deficits and assuming that these students lack interest in classroom activities because they remain silent in the classroom. To facilitate academic success for students with language differences, school counselors can assist SAIS by helping educators focus on students' language assets rather than focus on perceived language deficits. Focusing on assets will help educators recognize that perceived language deficits do not automatically mean that the student has limited intellectual potential (Gollnick &Chinn, 2006). These linguistic matters may also influence the social interaction of SAIS.

Social Adjustment

School Age International Students

Not only do SAIS have to adjust academically to a new school system, they also have to navigate socially U.S. culture. Younger children, primary school students, seem to make a smoother social adjustment (Larson & Ovando, 2001). They also seem to have less developmental crises because of age (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). It appears also that younger children still see their parents as authority figures in their lives and hence they have less conflict with their parents regarding social interaction and influence in the host culture. Adolescents, on the other hand, seem to have more difficulty adjusting socially (Coll & Magnuson, 1997). Normal developmental tasks of SAIS adolescents can intensify when they enter the U.S. during secondary school years (Larson & Ovando, 2001). Larson and Ovando (2001) stated that adolescent SAIS may have an even more difficult time if they were not included in the decision making of leaving their home country and familiar surroundings for a place they know little if anything about (Larson & Ovando, 2001).

Issues of identity development become prominent during adolescence (Erikson, 1968), and for the SAIS identity development is no different. However, SAIS have the added pressure of establishing identities in two different worlds that frequently have conflicting value systems (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). For instance, adolescent SAIS from cultures that foster conformity to parental expectations regarding social interaction, such as friendships, may struggle with wanting to fit in socially with peers and the competing expectations of their parents (Helms & Cook, 1999). Additionally, SAIS may want to be involved in extracurricular activities. However, the families of SAIS may consider involvement in extracurricular activities as a distraction from schoolwork (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes). Hence, these SAIS adolescents'

parents may also restrict them from social peer interactions because of the perception that the U.S. adolescents may "corrupt" them. Parents with this belief may view activities like going to a coeducational school dance as unacceptable and as a result, SAIS may not be allowed to attend even though the activity has the potential to foster developmentally appropriate social interactions. These restrictions could lead to conflict with their parents.

Parents of School Age International Students

Parents of SAIS may find parenting their children in an unfamiliar cultural environment stressful, particularly if parenting without a social support system similar to the one available in their country. These parents often deal with the pressure of trying to navigate their own academic and social experiences (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). Factors such as these may affect how they parent their SAIS, including their involvement in their child's education, interactions with the school, and the level of social involvement they allow their children to have with U.S. children.

Parents of SAIS, like other parents, play a major role in the academic success and social adjustment of their children. For parents of SAIS, active involvement in their child's schooling can hinge on a number of factors that include their perceptions of U.S. school systems and knowledge of school procedures. Moreover, the parents' understanding of the school's day-to-day expectations of students and possible conflicts between parental and school expectations of parents can also affect SAIS's school adjustment (Juntunen et al., 2003). Parents from cultures where parent-school collaboration is not the norm may not be as involved in their child's progress. Schools serve their SAIS well by considering this norm in a cultural context rather than as a lack of caring or concern for their child's success at school (Juntunen et al., 2003).

Not only do the parents of SAIS have to adjust to the expectations of an unfamiliar school system, they also have to adjust to the societal/social differences of the host culture. Included in this adjustment is getting used to the social expectations of parenting, which could prove challenging as parents of SAIS raise their children in an unfamiliar culture (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). For instance, the social pressure of conforming to discipline styles in the U.S. could prove to be a challenge. For example, parents coming from a culture where corporal punishment is acceptable may not understand why they could potentially get in trouble with the law for disciplining their child in that manner. In addition, parents may have to adjust to their children's immersion in the host culture, which can create cultural conflict between the home culture and the host culture (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). Parents of SAIS may have some difficulty with their children's increasing independence resulting from exposure to an individualistic culture at school (Bemak & Chung, 2003). Their perceptions of their child becoming more "Americanized" than they would like may push some parents to become hyper-vigilant and increase their control to limit their child's exposure to the U.S. culture. They may restrict their child from participating in age appropriate extracurricular activities like a school dance or sleepovers. This increase in control as well as the other parental challenges of raising their child in an unfamiliar culture may cause the child to respond with defiance (Segal, 1998). The dissonance and sometimes conflict within the family may affect the SAIS's performance in school and necessitate for the school counselor to assist in the adjustment process.

Issues SAIS may face and Possible Interventions for School Counselors Working with SAIS

Academic Issues		
Possible Issues	Possible Reasons	Possible Intervention
Student performs poorly academically and seems to need remedial classes.	Student's primary language is not English.	Counselor may work with teacher(s) to identify

	Student (even if English speaking) is unfamiliar with the some of the vocabulary of the host culture. Student is having difficulty adjusting to the teaching style of the host culture.	possible deficit and to help student get the necessary resources to do well. Counselor may conduct small groups with students to help them develop the skills necessary to be successful in a U.S. classroom. Counselor may reach out to parents in community settings to teach about school culture and provide skills so that parents can assist their child at home.
Student appears to be slow, non-responsive, or withdrawn in the classroom.	Student has not adjusted to the American classroom style of teaching. Student may not be comfortable speaking because of her/his accent. Student may be familiar with an authoritarian method of learning in home culture and not used to democratic approach to teaching. Student may be new to interactive learning and more familiar with rote memory. Student may be experiencing symptoms of culture shock that affect their social integration into a peer group.	Counselor may teach large group counseling lessons on accepting cultural differences and persons who speak with accents. Counselor may work with students to understand the expectations about participating in the classroom in the U.S. Counselor may provide individual counseling with the student to discover ways that she/he may feel comfortable in the classroom. Counselor can confer and consult with the teacher to share information about the student's cultural expectations and ways to adapt the classroom format.
Student performs poorly on standardized testing.	Student may have difficulty with content of exam since there may be a cultural skew; unfamiliarity with colloquial language on the test; or	Counselor could provide resource information to parents regarding standardize test preparation.

	difficulty distinguishing subtle nuances of English language. Student may have difficulty with exam because of language difference	Counselor could provide student with study skills approaches to help student prepare for the exam.
Student may have difficulty getting into her/his college of choice.	Student performed poorly on standardized test.	Counselor may work with parents to get student additional assistance to prepare for the standardized test. Counselor may help student explore other schools that may not be as stringent about standardized scores. Counselor may work with student on non-cognitive components of the college application, such as the statement of purpose, to strengthen the student's application.
Student may face roadblocks in gaining acceptance to a U.S. college due to immigration paperwork or status.	Student's visa status does not allow her/him to transfer automatically from a secondary to tertiary institution. Student may not be eligible for financial aid or scholarships based on student's visa type. Student's parents may be returning to home country.	Counselor may work with student to gather information regarding the process of getting into college based on visa type. Counselor provides academic counseling to the student to gather information regarding going to college in her/his home country. Counselor may provide individual or small group counseling with student on the transition home after living in the U.S.
Socio-emotional Issues		
Student may display irritability, depression, and crying more than usual.	Student may be experiencing extreme homesickness.	Counselor may meet with student with the intent of building a trusting

	Student may be experiencing intense feelings of loyalty to own culture.	relationship that opens the door for the SAIS to share their feelings about missing their home culture. Counselor may create a counseling group for SAIS to give them the opportunity to share common feelings about being away from home.
Student may be withdrawn and have difficulty socializing with peers	Student may be afraid of negative peer responses due to differences in dress or way of speaking. Student's family may have asked him/her to be wary of socializing with U.S. peers.	Counselor may collaborate with teacher(s) to provide opportunities for cross-cultural dialogues in the classroom. Counselor may spearhead a cultural event that highlights different cultures that represent SAIS at the school. This could give SAIS the opportunity to share about their culture and have their U.S. peers be able to engage in dialogue with them.
Student has concerns about dating.	Student may experience dissonance between her/his home culture's rules of dating and U.S. dating customs. Student's parents may not approve of her/him dating someone outside own culture. Student's parents may perceive dating to be inappropriate for adolescents.	Counselor may meet with student to get a better understanding of cultural norms are for dating. Counselor may meet with parents to get a better understanding of their concerns about their child dating. Counselors need to ensure that they refrain from judging the parenting styles of the SAIS's parent. This could lead to undermining the authority of the parents. Counselors could host a

		workshop for parents of SAIS to discuss social norms and activities to help parents get an understanding of the U.S. culture.
Student has difficulty dealing with engaging in extracurricular opportunities such as study abroad.	Student may not be able afford such opportunities. Student's visa status may prohibit activities such as study abroad.	Counselors may help students find cultural activities in the U.S. that may substitute for the opportunities like going on study abroad. Counselor may help student locate resources that may help pay for such an activity if the student is able to travel abroad.
Student may not engage in developmentally appropriate activities such as school dances and sleepovers.	Student may be uncomfortable with not being able to dress like peers at a social event. Student's parents may deem such activities inappropriate. Student's parents may view engaging in such activities as too Americanized.	Counselor may meet with parents to discuss their concerns about such activities. Counselor may work with student to find other activities that may substitute for not being able to be involved. Counselor may suggest that parents chaperone one of these events to observe what the event is like.
Student would like to have an afterschool or summer job but cannot do so.	Student's visa type would prohibit student from working.	Counselor may help student find volunteer activities that may substitute for work.
Parents may not allow the student to participate in extracurricular activities such as band, sports, or other school clubs.	Student's parents view these activities as a distraction from academics.	Counselor could meet with parents to understand their concerns about the student participating in extracurricular activities. Counselor may share with parents information regarding the benefits of extracurricular activities

		related to academic performance.
Student may have somatic complaints such as stomachaches, headaches, and sleeplessness.	Student may be experiencing culture shock. Student may be nervous about being in a new culture and school. Student may be genuinely ill.	Counselor needs to be sensitive to these complaints and not automatically assume that it is a psychological issue. Counselor needs to develop a sense of trust with the student and respect the student's privacy. The student may be from a culture that considers discussion of physical ailments as inappropriate.
Student may not make eye contact when speaking with adults.	Student's culture considers looking at an adult directly in the eyes disrespectful.	Counselor may educate students about the perception of the student not making eye contact. Counselor may work with student on practicing making eye contact with others. Counselor may educate school personnel about the student's cultural norm regarding eye contact.

Strategies for Working with SAIS and Parents

Sandhu (1994) suggests that school counselors be proactive concerning working with students and their parents. They are in strategic positions to assist SAIS and their parents to transition into the U.S. school culture given that the school often serves as the entry point into the host culture. It would be helpful for counselors to develop a systematic transition plan to help SAIS and their parents become familiar with the new academic culture (Baird, 1997; Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). As part of this plan, counselors may want to monitor these students regularly, teach them basic survival skills, and help them clarify school processes, rules,

and procedure. Counselors could include in this plan a method for helping students understand appropriate classroom behavior, including expectations of class participation (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). School counselors are also poised to help educate parents of SAIS about U.S. culture and the U.S. school system so that they may better serve their children academically and socially. Therefore, as part of the transition plan, school counselors to can provide parents with information that explains the nature and purpose of parent-teacher relationships, the reasons for teacher conferences, and ways to actively engage in their children's learning (Sandhu, 1994). This dissemination of information could be done through parent workshops and training sessions. Such training sessions could help parents develop the necessary skills to be active participants in school-parent relationships as well as active participants in their child's academic involvement (Gollnick & Chinn, 2006).

School counselors are also in a position to serve as "cultural brokers" between SAIS and their parents, and the school (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007). As "brokers," school counselors would not only educate SAIS and their parents about school community, but also educate school personnel about the culture of SAIS (Juntunen et al., 2003). School counselors can also serve as advocates for SAIS and their parents. They would do so by educating the school's administration and teachers about some of the stressors, such as culture shock, language differences, and cultural conflict these international students face. Additionally, as advocates they could proactively foster a school climate that embraces diversity. For example, they can work with teachers to develop ways to include aspects of a SAIS's culture into class activities such as reading about a SAIS culture during story time (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007).

The needs of SAIS are multifaceted and meeting these needs requires a collaborative and proactive effort of school counselors to network with other helping professionals (Sandhu, 1994).

It is therefore crucial that school counselors demonstrate cultural competency to be effective at assisting SAIS to transition into the new environment. These competencies must be the foundation for working with SAIS and their parents (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007; Pederson, 2004; Sue & Sue, 2003). Additionally, school counselors also need to be aware of their own biases and assumptions, and their perceptions of human differences such as race, culture (national heritage), religion, gender, and sexual orientation; they must also be able to develop culturally sensitive interventions and therapeutic skills (Sue & Sue, 2003). They also need to be prepared to challenge and scrutinize personal assumptions and expectations about cultural differences and their beliefs about how these affect the counseling process (Chittooran & Sankar-Gomes, 2007).

Conclusion

As the number of SAIS in the U.S. continues to increase, school counselors and other helping professionals will need to become acutely aware of the multidimensional needs of this population (Andrade, 2006). This is especially important because the needs of this population of students often remain ignored (National Education Statistics, 2002). School counselors are in a unique position to serve as "cultural brokers" between the SAIS and school personnel to ensure that these students achieve academic and social success. Counselors are also poised in positions to help parents of SAIS navigate the expectations of an unfamiliar school system to ensure that their SAIS are academically successful in a foreign land. Through reflective practice that demonstrates cultural concern and competence, professional school counselors can transform the school environment for SAIS and their parents into one that is positive and meaningful.

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Adolescents and Substance Abuse:

Warning Signs and School Counseling Interventions

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Abstract

Adolescence is a challenging time for many young persons. Navigating the academic, personal/social, and career planning challenges associated with adolescence indeed is challenging even with excellent school, family, and community support. For those adolescents struggling with substance use and abuse, these challenges become even greater. School counselors can provide timely and relevant interventions for adolescents with substance abuse issues if the counselors become well versed in warning signs and meaningful strategies. This article summarizes the warning signs of adolescent substance abuse for prescribed and illicit drugs and offers strategies and considerations for counseling.

Keywords: adolescent substance abuse; adolescent substance abuse warning signs; school counselors and adolescent substance abuse

Adolescents and Substance Abuse:

Warning Signs and School Counseling Considerations

Adolescents face a number of challenges throughout their preteen and teenage years. These challenges include, but are not limited to, gaining a greater sense of independence,

strengthening relationships with peer groups, planning future career goals, family issues, and deciding whether to use drugs (Burrow-Sanchez, 2006; Day-Vines, Patton, & Baytops, 2003; Giordano, Cernkovich, & Demaris, 1993; Howard, 2003; Moore & Chase-Lansdale, 2001; Robbins, Briones, Schwartz, Dillion, & Mitrani, 2006; Zinck & Littrell, 2000). A specific concern, which several researchers have noted, pertains to adolescents' exposure to illicit drugs at a young age. Concerns about exposure to illicit drugs are not surprising, as researchers have reported that peers or relatives of adolescents serve as frequent influencers to use alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana (Burrow-Sanchez, 2006; Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Powell, 2008; Robbins et al., 2006; Zinck & Littrell, 2000) and further, peers or relatives can be duly credited to exposure and familiarity. Recent related literature presented in this paper reflects contextual and individual risk factors for adolescent drug use. A brief summary of implications for school counselors will conclude this review.

Review of the Literature

Burrow-Sanchez (2006) reviewed the *Monitoring the Future National Results on Adolescents Drug Use: Overview of Findings* (2002) and discovered from the longitudinal study that 43,000 adolescents in the 8th, 10th, and 12th grades report using drugs. Based on *National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2003) data, 68,126 adolescents in the United States between ages 12 and 17 years report illicit drug usage. Of the reported respondents, nine percent potentially met the criteria for substance abuse disorder and 11% were classified as adolescents who use drugs on a regular basis. Within this sample of adolescents, 21% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, 12.6% were European American, African Americans, and Latina/Latino Americans represented 10.8%

respectively, 4.8% identified as Asian Americans, and 12.5% of the sample identified as bi or multiracial (SAMHSA, 2003).

Data indicated that in 2005, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders' abuse of cocaine, crack, and heroin has remained constant since 2004 (Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenburg, 2006). The report noted that among powder cocaine adolescent users, 1.75% were 8th graders, 3% were 10th graders, and 12th graders represented the highest rate at 4.5%. However, crack cocaine usage among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders was between 1.4% and 1.9% across all three levels. The prescription drug, Vicodin, was another drug regularly used that remained steady in abuse across the three grade levels. In contrast with statistics on regular drug abuse, abuse of marijuana, cigarettes, and alcohol seemed to decrease (Johnston, et al., 2006). Among these three substances, adolescent cigarette usage significantly decreased between 1996 and 2005 from 56% to 51%. The *Monitoring the Future National Results on Adolescents Drug Use: Overview of Findings* of 2005 reported the decline in cigarette smoking could possibly be attributed to the high rise in prices, an increase in perceived health risks, and the increase in anti-smoking campaigns and effective laws; yet, alcohol remains "widespread among today's teenagers" (Johnston, et al., 2006, pg. 9). The report also indicated that binge drinking has modestly increased and alcohol abuse has become parallel with illicit drug use among teens. Across gender, males use illicit drugs more than females. However, across race and ethnicity, African American youth use cigarettes, alcohol, and illicit drugs at substantially lower rates than European Americans and Latina/Latino Americans (Johnston, et al., 2006).

While illicit drug abuse among adolescents seems to be on a slow decline, the effects of adolescent prescription drug use reach far beyond the school hallways. Students perceive prescription drugs as safer and easier to access and this perception may contribute to adolescents'

increasing abuse of prescription drugs (Kuehn, 2006). The administration of prescription drugs for students within the school building is an ethical concern and should be a confidential matter as it pertains to students' safety. Ethical considerations and legal mandates indicate that school staff take necessary precautions to safeguard students' identity, social, personal, and mental health.

Recently, school communities have expressed increased concerns about the use of teens' abuse of psychotherapeutic medications (Johnston, et al., 2006; Wright, 2012). Not only are adolescents and teens living in homes where relatives have "powerful pharmaceuticals in the family's medicine cabinet" (Wright, 2012), but also students' have received more mental health diagnoses than ever that result in the prescription of powerful psychopharmacological medications. Wright (2012) states since 2008, the number of childhood AD/HD cases has declined (Samuels, 2010); however, over one million children receive psychopharmacological treatment with methylphenidates, atomoxetines, or dexamphetamine, which nonprofessionals may know as Ritalin, Strattera, or Adderall. School counselors can visualize the line of students outside of the nurse's office to receive their "AM meds" to normalize daily behavior. Some students protest taking their prescriptions because they feel discomfort after taking the medication. Indeed, some of the critical side effects consist of an increase in blood pressure, reduced appetite or stomach pains, an increase of nervous and anxious behavior, and/or difficulties in sleeping (Wright, 2012). Although students who refuse to take their prescriptions represent the slow decline of drug abuse among younger adolescents (Kuehn, 2006), adults remain concerned about the long-term effect of the usage of psychotropic stimulants and possible implications for drug and alcohol addiction for students (Wright, 2012). According to Hawkins,

Catalano, and Miller (1992) prescription drug use for school-aged adolescents represent an individual risk factor for later drug use.

Contextual risk factors and individual risk factors are two influences associated with adolescents' drug use and their co-existing behaviors. Contextual risk factors consist of loopholes in drug laws and alcohol taxes that help adolescents to make legal purchases. Additionally, drug availability for example, within neighborhoods or in the possession of a relative who uses drugs is also a contextual risk factor. Hawkins et al. (1992) also identified problem behaviors as another individual risk factor. Such problem behaviors students display can be associated with conduct disorders, AD/HD, depression, aggression, and negative moods. Individual risk factors include learning disorders, low academic achievement, problems with parents, and having friends who use drugs. These factors contribute to a student's academic, social, and personal developmental struggles. Interesting, the literature focuses on intra-individual factors and offers little insight into multi-systemic factors that may contribute to adolescent drug use.

Research has shown continuously that a predictor of adolescent drug use relates to lack of parental monitoring and supervision of peer activities and adolescent relationships. Some researchers believe this factor is found *mostly* in single female-headed and cohabitating households (Burrow-Sanchez, 2006; Howard, 2003; Lee, 2005; Robbins et al., 2006; Zinck & Littrell, 2000). Some researchers purport that children in married households receive more monitoring, time, and attention (Moore & Chase-Lansdale, 2001; Thompson, McLanahan, & Curtin, 1992). Thus, the literature is not clear on the influence of single parenting or dual parenting on childhood drug abuse. The literature does indicate that specific aspects of family relationships such as inconsistent discipline, unclear family rules, high levels of family conflict,

lack of supportive involvement, low parental monitoring of adolescent activities, and parent-adolescent bonding remain associated with disruptive behavioral problems and substance abuse in adolescents (Bell, 2001; Robbins et al., 2006; Dunham, Dermer, & Carlson, 2011).

Within urban school systems, school counselors report being daunted by students' low academic performance in reading and math, high student mobility rates or high transitional living arrangements, chronic absenteeism, and unmet psychological needs (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Holcomb-McCoy & Mitchell, 2005; Holcomb-McCoy & Moore-Thomas, 2001; Lee, 2005; Young, 1994; Zinck & Littrell, 2000). Interestingly, in recent years, rural school systems have indicated similar concerns (Hann-Morrison, 2011). Understanding that school counselors' responsibilities and roles continue to evolve and increase, counselors still benefit from addressing the early warning signs of student addictions through the school counseling program (Wright, 2012, pg. 334). Moreover, school counselors who understand the etiology and progression adolescent substance use and abuse can provide counseling and interventions with a non-judgmental attitude that focuses on appropriate diagnosis and treatment; facilitate recovery, and continued development; and reduce the stigma associated with drug abuse. The following points present warning signs of adolescent substance abuse and suggested actions that support the adolescent and contribute to a safe learning environment. Warning signs of student substance abuse (Wright, 2012) include:

- Alcohol, cigarette smoke, or marijuana on the breath and on clothing;
- Slurred speech, forgetfulness, clumsiness, and poor coordination;
- Change in grades and interest in school;
- Lethargy and low motivation;
- Truancy;

- New clique of friends whose values appear to conflict with the teen's;
- Secrecy and excessive need for privacy;
- Restlessness, rapid speech;
- Chaotic affect with being quick to anger or tears;
- Consistently reckless or self-injurious choices;
- Sudden lack of money, along with petty thefts around school and home;
- Inebriated parents who dropped off or picked up the student;
- Potential diversion of painkillers brought to school (even with a medical excuse).

Actions That Support a Safe and Drug Free Learning Environment

- Parents/school officials destroy leftover painkillers;
- Consider signs of vulnerability to addiction: external factors – family history of drug or alcohol abuse; social issues with friends, academic difficulties and internal factors such as low self-esteem or impulsivity;
- Facilitate a group counseling program with a strengths-based group approach to "… to validate, expand upon, and constructively challenge student's perspectives" (Day-Vines & Terriquez, 2008);
- Connect family and school to create a strong support system for student (ASCA, 2005; Tucker, 2009);
- Educate parents about substance abuse warning signs to help parents determine if their child may have a substance abuse problem;
- Reis et al. (2005), Facilitate small group discussions that will last the academic year focused on students of family members who are addicted to alcohol or drugs;

- Group counseling to target increase appropriate psychosocial development, create awareness of long-term effects, and use strengthening factors from a strength based school counseling approach, choice theory, or reality therapy approach to enhance positive behavioral outcomes;
- Recommend community agency services such as AL-NON or ALATEEN for additional parental support systems and rehabilitation programs in the local area of the school counselor that parents may use for support.

Final Considerations

Meeting the needs of students who may have a substance abuse problem requires multi-disciplinary intervention. While the safety of the school and students remain paramount, school counselors can assist these students by being well versed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual's criteria for substance abuse disorders. While diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse problems are beyond the scope of school counselors' professional practice, familiarity with diagnostic criteria can assist them in conceptualizing the constellation of presenting behaviors and understand the impact of substance abuse on their students' lives. Further, school counselors who have a working knowledge of family and system dynamics, particularly as outlined by the Adult Children of Alcoholics approach, can provide strategies that support teachers and administrators in improving the academic, personal/social, and career development of students with substance abuse problems.

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Using Group Counseling to Improve the Attendance of Elementary School Students with High Rates of Absenteeism: An Action Research Study

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Abstract

The foundations of academic and social learning are laid in the early years of school, and attendance is critical to school success. However, research suggests that chronic absenteeism is a significant problem at the elementary school level (Chang & Romero, 2008; Romero & Lee, 2007). This paper presents the results of an action research study (ARS) exploring the impact of small group counseling on the attendance, self-concept, and attitude toward school among students with high rates of absenteeism at one elementary school in Georgia. Implications for future research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: school counselors and absenteeism; elementary students and absenteeism

Using Group Counseling to Improve the Attendance of Elementary School Students with High Rates of Absenteeism: An Action Research Study

The purpose of this action research study (ARS) was to determine the impact of small group counseling on the attendance, self-concept, and attitudes toward school of students with high rates of absenteeism at one elementary school. While school professionals have recognized absenteeism and truancy as problems with serious consequences in middle and high schools,

until recently, little attention has been paid to the issue in elementary schools (Romero & Lee, 2007). However, a growing body of research now suggests that chronic absenteeism during the elementary years is not only a significant problem but also one that, in many ways, sets the stage for future academic and social difficulties. With the increasing pressures on schools to achieve standards set by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, the need to identify effective measures for ensuring regular school attendance of students becomes even more pressing.

Review of Related Literature

Definitions and Scope of the Problem

"Truancy" is a term that refers only to unexcused absences and typically, educator use the term with middle and high school students. The term usually implies that the student is absent without the parent's or guardian's knowledge. In addition, "truancy" usually connotes inappropriate behavior by the student (Chang & Romero, 2008). At the elementary level, a student is usually not absent without parental or guardian knowledge, and attendance records typically distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. While attendance reporting procedures and protocols vary widely from district to district, Chang and Romero (2008) argue that both excused and unexcused absences should be taken into account when considering the impact of absenteeism. They propose defining "chronic absenteeism" as missing 10% of any given school year.

In a study by the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), Romero and Lee (2007) reported that over 11% of kindergarteners and almost 9% of first graders are chronically absent, although statistics vary widely across districts and sometimes from school to school within a district. In another brief reporting on the same study, Chang and Romero (2008) pointed out that students are exposed to basic academic and social learning during the early years

of school. Chronic absence during this time places the student at risk of future academic failure and eventually dropping out of school.

Absences during kindergarten frequently begin a pattern that continues into future years. Romero and Lee (2007) found over half of the students who were chronically absent in kindergarten were also chronically absent in first grade. Data also seem to suggest that among children living in poverty, the risk for absenteeism is compounded and that the lower the family income, the higher the absenteeism rates. While attendance tends to improve during the elementary years, a greater proportion of children living in poverty were chronically absent more others. One consideration of these data about children living in poverty and absenteeism is that children living in poverty may have difficulties getting to school if they have unmet basic needs such as adequate clothing. Further, some poorer school districts have eliminated school bus service, rendering some elementary students as "walkers" even though the school may be three to four blocks from their homes. Parents or caregivers who may not be able to walk their children to school (e.g., due to health or mobility issues or work responsibilities) may elect to keep their children at home.

Causes of Chronic Absenteeism

Many researchers and practitioners agree that the reasons for chronic absenteeism have multiple components and include community, school, family, and individual factors (Bell, Rosen, & Dynlacht, 1994; Chang & Romero, 2008; Falis & Opotow, 2003). Community factors include elevated rates of high school dropouts, poverty, violence, unemployment, as well as a lack of resources to assist families with positive child development and support for school attendance. School factors may include a failure to communicate adequately the school's attendance policies or to monitor absences and make family contacts in a timely manner. School

factors might also include a failure to provide a safe environment in which instruction is engaging, high quality, and relevant. Family factors may include lack of awareness of the importance of attendance, lack of resources to support regular attendance (such as transportation, food, and clothing), unmet physical or mental health needs, or high rates of mobility (Chang & Romero, 2008). Individual factors might include low self-image, academic difficulties, or peer conflicts (Carlson, Clark, Nerad, & Taylor, 1993).

Consequences of Chronic Absenteeism

It is not surprising that academic skills suffer when students miss school. Gottfried (2009) found a significant positive relationship between school attendance and academic achievement. Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten have lower levels of achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge in first grade (Chang & Romero, 2008). Among children living in poverty, those who were chronically absent during kindergarten had the lowest levels of academic achievement by the end of the fifth grade (Romero & Lee, 2007). When academic difficulties result in grade retention, the risk becomes even greater. Rumberger (1995) identified grade retention as one of the most significant factors predicting a student's decision to drop out of school.

Chronic absenteeism influences more than just academic achievement. These students are also at greater risk for social and behavioral difficulties. Students who were rated by teachers as less mature in social-emotional functioning than their peers had higher rates of absenteeism (Romero & Lee, 2007). Poor attendance is also associated with a student's engagement in delinquent behaviors (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001; Wang, Blomberg, & Li, 2005), and with risky activities such as tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drug use (Hallfors et al., 2002).

These negative effects on academic achievement and socialization often follow students throughout their academic career and beyond. Some retrospective studies indicate that students who will drop out of school can be predicted with relative accuracy from attendance, academic achievement, and discipline records beginning at the elementary level (Barrington & Hendricks, 1989; Rumberger, 1995). These factors highlight the need for early intervention to reduce chronic absenteeism at the elementary school level.

Effective Interventions

Recent investigations into promising practices for improving attendance point to a need for a comprehensive, non-punitive approach that identifies and addresses all factors that influence attendance (Chang & Romero, 2008; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Bell, et al., 1994). One trend in the literature is the practice of increasing family and community involvement in the schools. Schools implementing school, family, and community partnerships are finding success in improving student attendance, as well as overall student achievement (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; National Center for School Engagement, 2005; Sheldon, 2007).

While partnerships show promise at addressing school, family, and community factors that influence nonattendance, the question remains how to address some of the individual factors that put students at risk for attendance problems. McPartland (1994) argues that a climate of caring and support is critical in motivating students to stay in school and work hard to achieve learning goals. Epstein and Sheldon (2002) recommend reaching out to help students feel less anonymous, and explicitly communicating the importance of being in school.

There is considerable evidence demonstrating that increased interaction of at-risk students with adults at school has a positive impact on attendance. Ford and Sutphen (1996) found counseling of students with attendance problems by supervised social work practicum

students improved student attendance. Newsome, Anderson-Butcher, Fink, Hall, and Huffer (2008) also found students who received social work services showed an increase in satisfaction with school, self-esteem, and perceptions of their academic performance. The Check and Connect program provides another example of the positive effects of increasing adult interaction with students who have attendance problems. This program, which pairs the student with an adult monitor, has been successful with middle and high school students, and, in a study with elementary school students, Lehr, Sinclair, and Christensen (2004) found students who participated in the program for at least 2 years had significant decreases in absences and tardies.

Using Group Counseling to Improve Attendance

While the evidence supports the contention that increasing adult interaction with at-risk students can improve attendance, high caseloads and competing responsibilities can limit the possibility of one-on-one services to students in need. Working in groups could increase the number of students served. Group counseling is usually an integral part of a school's comprehensive guidance and counseling program, and seems to address many of the social, emotional, and behavioral issues associated with chronic absenteeism.

Keat, Metzger, Raykovitz, and McDonald (1984) conducted a multimodal friendship group for third graders with poor attendance and found 4 of the 5 participants' attendance improved. Waltzer (1984) found that an 8-week behavioral group increased attendance among chronically absent junior high school students. Baker (2000) reported that elementary students participating in attendance groups improved their attendance. Baker also found improved self-concept and attitudes toward school as measured by teacher input and the Piers Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers & Harris, 1983). However, little recent research has studied the

effectiveness of group counseling on improving the attendance of students with high rates of absenteeism.

The leadership team at the elementary school where the principal investigator (PI) is employed as a school counselor has identified a goal of improving student attendance. The school has an enrollment of approximately 610 students in prekindergarten through fifth grade. It is a Title I school, with about 59% of students eligible for free or reduced meals. In 2009/2010, 12.3% of students missed more than 15 days of school, and 17.4% missed between 10 and 14 days. The PI wanted to determine if group counseling might be effective in helping the school improve attendance. Action research was determined to be an appropriate research design because it allows practitioners to study the effectiveness of interventions in their own environments with the goal of improving their practice (Mills, 2011). This ARS sought to answer the following questions:

- How do self-concept and attitudes toward school influence attendance among study participants?
- What effect does group counseling have on self-concept, attitudes toward school, and attendance among study participants?

Methodology

Participants

Potential ARS participants were identified based on attendance data for the 2009/2010 school year and the first 12 weeks of the 2010/2011 school year. Students with 15 or more absences for the 2009/2010 school year and five or more absences during the first 12 weeks of the 2010/2011 school year were considered. Twenty-four students were identified using the

above criteria. One student with an emerging pattern of absences was included in the study at the request of the school's administrators.

Parents or guardians of the identified group were informed of the ARS by letter, and permission to include their children in the study was requested. Once parent permission was secured, the PI met with each student individually, explained the ARS to him or her in developmentally appropriate language, and requested permission to include them in the study. Permission was granted to include 18 students in the ARS: 1 repeating kindergartener, 2 first graders, 6-second graders, 3 third graders, 1 fourth grader, and 5 fifth graders.

Procedure

Three counseling groups were formed based on the grade level of participants. The intervention involved weekly group counseling sessions. In addition students were asked to check in with the PI each morning to mark their attendance on individual goal charts.

The PI met with each group weekly for approximately 45 minutes during January, February, and March 2011. Groups met early in the morning to reinforce the importance of punctual school attendance and to set a positive tone for the day. Groups were named "Awesome Attendance Groups" and the slogan "When you're not here, we MISS you, and you MISS a lot!" was posted and referred to frequently. Two of the groups met upon arrival, ate breakfast, and watched the school's morning announcements together. In addition, they reviewed their individual attendance charts and marked their collective attendance on a group attendance chart. Individual students earned tokens for reaching attendance goals. These tokens could be used to purchase items from the school store. Each group also earned a party with special breakfast treats for meeting group attendance goals. Other group activities included discussions and activities that supported self-esteem and positive attitudes toward school. Due to

scheduling issues, the third group met during first period. The format for this group was identical to the other two except the students did not eat breakfast or watch morning announcements.

Data Collection Procedures and Instrumentation

Student attendance data were collected from the school's student information database. Each student's number of absences during the second 9 weeks of the school year (prior to the start of the intervention) was compared to his or her number of absences during the third 9 weeks, during which the group counseling intervention took place.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, Second Edition (Piers-Harris 2) was used to measure self-concept. The Piers-Harris 2 is a 60-item self-report questionnaire designed to provide a general measure of the respondent's self-concept as well as subscales that measure six specific components of self-concept. The instrument is appropriate for use with children and adolescents in grades 2 through 12 who demonstrate at least a second-grade reading level.

The Piers-Harris 2 was administered to third, fourth, and fifth-grade participants prior to the first group meeting and again at the end of the intervention. The Piers-Harris 2 is not appropriate for kindergarten and first grade students. Therefore, the participants in these grades did not complete the scale. In addition, because some of the second-grade participants did not meet the reading level criteria, the PI decided to exclude second-graders from the administration for consistency sake. T scores for total self-concept (TOT) were compared from the pre- and post-administrations to determine if there was a change in self-concept scores after the intervention.

Teacher perceptions gathered through a brief questionnaire (see Appendix 1) and student group evaluation forms (see Appendix 2) administered during the third week of March, were also

analyzed to determine if the intervention had a positive effect on the study participants' self-concept and attitudes toward school. Case notes kept by the PI were also analyzed. These notes, teacher perceptions, and student evaluations were particularly important for the younger students for whom Piers-Harris 2 data was not collected.

Results

The Relationship of Self-concept and Attitude Toward School to Attendance

Pre-intervention Piers-Harris 2 scores did not suggest a link between low self-concept and poor attendance for these study participants (see Table 1). The 10 participants in grades 3, 4, and 5 took the Piers Harris 2. Five of those students had Total Self-Concept T Scores (TOT) in the low or low average range, while 2 participants had TOT scores in the average range, and 3 participants had TOT scores in the high or low high average range.

Teacher perceptions also did not suggest a link between low self-concept, negative attitudes toward school and poor attendance (see Table 1). Teachers rated the self-concept of 4 students as positive or very positive prior to the intervention, while they rated the self-concept of 8 participants as neutral, and 4 particpants as negative or very negative. (Note: teacher ratings were not available for 2 participants.) Similarly, teachers rated the attitude toward school of 5 students as positive or very positive; they rated the attitude toward school of 6 students as neutral, and they rated the attitude toward school of 3 students as negative or very negative.

Table 1

Piers-Harris 2 Pre- and Post-Intervention Scores

Partici-pant Code	TOT T-Scores		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
I	52	52	0
J	43	43	0
K	66	63	-3
L	35	41	6
M	34	30	-4
N	69	63	-6
O	60	69	9
P	38	43	5
Q	47	52	5
R	36	44	8

TOT Score Interpretive Labels:
30T - 39T= Low
40T - 44T= Low Average
45T - 55T = Average
56T – 59T = High Average
60T – 69T = High

The Effect of Group Counseling on Self-concept and Attitude Toward School

Comparison of Piers Harris 2 pre-intervention T-scores to post-intervention scores for Total Self-Concept (TOT) were mixed. Five students' scores increased between 4 and 9 points; 2 student's scores remained the same, and 3 student's scores went down between 3 and 6 points.

Teacher perceptions provide additional insight into the effect of group counseling on participant self-concept and attitude toward school (see Tables 2 and 3 below). Teachers believed the self-concept of 12 of the participants improved during the intervention, while they believed that the self-concept of 4 of the participants remained the same. Regarding attitudes toward school, teachers reported that 9 of the students had more positive attitudes toward school

during the intervention, while they perceived the attitudes of 6 of the students to be unchanged and 1 student's attitude toward school was more negative. When asked to what they attributed the change in self-concept, some themes emerged from teacher comments. Some suggested the group had a direct impact on the change with comments such as "He loves going to group," or "Having something to look forward to each week." Other comments suggested changes in behaviors that may or may not have been related to the group such as "She is a little more outspoken in class," or "He has really tried harder in school and come in much more prepared."

Table 2 Teacher Perceptions of Changes in Self-Concept

If you perceive a change in self-concept, to what do you attribute the change?			
Participant Code	**Pre-intervention**	**Post-intervention**	**Response:**
A	0	P	
B	0	VP	He has really tried harder in school and come in much more prepared.
C			
D	0	P	The positive attention has given her value.
E	VN	P	She knows we care about her and miss her when she is not here.
F	VP	VP	
G	N	P	Not sure. She seems much happier since group started. She has been present more often.
H			
I	0	VP	He does not want to miss anything at school. He wants to be active in outside of class activities.
J	0	P	Having something to look forward to each week. Knowing she is held accountable in a positive way.
K	0	P	She has been a little more outgoing and believes in herself. I hope this group helps her continue to shine.
L	VN	VP	He loves going to group.
M	0	P	Getting some individualized attention.
N	P	P	
O	P	VP	
P	N	N	
Q	O	P	She is a little more outspoken in class. Seems more comfortable and confident.
R	P	P	

VP = Very Positive P = Positive 0 = Neutral N = Negative VN = Very Negative

Table 3

Teacher Perceptions of Changes in Attitude Toward School

If you perceive a change in attitude toward school, to what do you attribute the change?			
Participant Code	**Pre-intervention**	**Post-intervention**	**Response**
A	0	P	
B	0	P	He is completing more tasks successfully, scoring better on tests, reading better, etc., so he doesn't feel as defeated.
C			
D	VN	P	She wants to avoid disaapointing anyone at school.
E	VN	P	She enjoys learning and being praised for a job well done.
F	VP	VP	
G	0	P	She seems almost joyful to be here.
H			
I	0	VP	
J	P	P	She enjoys school, just not the academics.
K	P	P	
L	VN	N	I have backed off of putting any pressure on attendance. I am leaving that to the group.
M	N	P	Feeling more confident.
N	0	N	
O	P	P	
P	N	N	
Q	0	P	The counseling group attendance.
R	P	P	

VP = Very Positive P = Positive 0 = Neutral N = Negative VN = Very Negative

Students' perceptions of the effect of group counseling on attititudes toward school were measured, in part, on the group evaluation form by asking them to respond to the statement "This group helped me like coming to school more." Fifteen students responded "Yes" to this statement, while 3 students responded "Don't know" to the statement. Student commentary about what they liked about the group suggested that students found the group to be "fun" and they enjoyed the games, treats and completing the attendance charts (see Table 4).

Table 4 Student Group Evaluations

Q1: This group helped me like coming to school more.
Q2: This group helped me have better attendance.
Q3: One thing I liked about this group is:

Participant Code	Q1	Q2	Q3
A	Y	Y	I like that we're making a show (skit).
B	Y	Y	It's fun.
C	Y	Y	
D	Y	Y	I like the group because it's fun.
E	Y	N	It is fun.
F	Y	Y	I like eating here.
G	Y	Y	We have fun.
H	Y	DN	We played games.
I	Y	Y	Fun.
J	Y	DN	It's fun.
K	DN	Y	We have fun together and it makes us have better attendance.
L	Y	Y	We get to eat donuts.
M	Y	Y	We do stuff that helps me.
N	Y	Y	Playing games and the chart.
O	Y	Y	Playing games and the chart.
P	DN	Y	Parties.
Q	Y	Y	The games.
R	DN	Y	Playing games. Parties!

Y = Yes N = No DN = Don't know

The Effect of Group Counseling on Attendance

Attendance for 13 of the 18 participants improved during the intervention period, while 3 of the participants had the same number of absences, and 2 of the participants had an increase in absences (see Table 5). Of the students whose attendance improved, the decrease in the number of days absent ranged from 1 to 9, with an average decrease of 4.3 days. Of the 5 students whose number of absences increased or remained unchanged, 4 had medically excused absences and 1 had only 1 absence during both 9-week periods. (This student was included in the study because his absences during the 2009/2010 school year and his absences during the first 12 weeks of the 2010/2011 school year met the criteria for inclusion.)

Table 5

Attendance Data

Partici-pant Code	2nd Nine Weeks	3rd Nine Weeks	Change
A	7	1	-6
B	1	1	0
C	7	3	-4
D	4	4	0
E	4	4	0
F	7	1	-6
G	19	18	-1
H	5	2	-3
I	9	0	-9
J	4	2	-2
K	7	0	-7
L	9	1	-8
M	0	7	7
N	9	4	-5
O	5	2	-3
P	10	7	-3
Q	5	1	-4
R	2	4	2

Teacher perceptions shed light on reasons for the changes in attendance from the second to the third 9 weeks (see Table 6). Teachers attributed improvements in attendance to the group counseling intervention for 4 of the participants. Representative comments include "He is excited about the group's positive attendance goals," and "She also, many times, mentions her morning group each week." Other comments suggested reasons that may or may not have been related to the group such as "She seems to enjoy school more and has more confidence in her work," or "The family realizes the importance of making it to school on time and the impact

missing school can have." In several cases, teachers felt the involvement of the student's parents in the school system's truancy intervention programs caused the decrease in absences.

Table 6 Teacher Perceptions of Changes in Attendance

To what do you attribute the improvement, lack of change, or decrease in attendance during this time period?				
Participant Code	**Absences 2nd 9 weeks**	**Absences 3rd 9 weeks**	**Change**	**Response**
A	7	1	-6	Attendance group.
B	1	1	0	The family realized the importance of making it to school on time and the impact missing school can have.
C	7	3	-4	She had an illness.
D	4	4	0	She had surgery.
E	4	4	0	She enjoys learning and being praised for a job well done.
F	7	1	-6	
G	19	18	-1	
H	5	2	-3	The intervention of the school social worker regarding attendance.
I	9	0	-9	He is excited about the group's positive attendance goals.
J	4	2	-2	
K	7	0	-7	A positive attitude goes a long way. Self-confidence helps with a positive attitude.
L	9	1	-8	I'm sure the counseling group helped, but I believe the biggest reason for the improvement is that (the student's) mother will be sent to truancy court if more absences occur.
M	0	7	7	Lack of parental concern/involvement.
N	9	4	-5	Parents received a letter regarding attendance/
O	5	2	-3	The student had several illness during the second nine weeks.
P	10	7	-3	
Q	5	1	-4	She seems to enjoy school more and has more confidence in her work.
R	2	4	2	

Students' perceptions of the reasons for changes in attendance were assessed on group evaluation forms by asking students to respond to the statement, "This group helped me have better attendance." Fifteen students responded "yes" to the statement, 2 students responded "no", and 1 student responded "I don't know."

Case notes recording the PI's observations during the intervention provide support that the group was a factor contibuting to improvements in attendance for several of the students (see Table 7). Student enthusiasm and active participation in group activities as well as excitement about earning individual rewards suggest that the group was a positive experience for many of the students. Quotes from students such as, "I love my group days," "My throat was hurting a little this morning, but I wanted to come to the party," and "I was feeling a little bad this morning but I said, 'no, I've got to go check off my chart.'" indicate that many of the students found the group activities meaningful and, in some cases chose to come to school because of the these activities or to reach attendance goals.

Table 7 Case Notes and PI Observations

Participant Code	
A	A comes to check in each morning with a BIG smile to get a hug. She commented once "I love my group days." While playing a game, A could not respond to the questions of what she was good at or that she liked to do. When I told A during group today that her teacher had told me how smart she is, A responded "I'm not smart." .
B	B is very talkative in group. loves spending IES bucks (individual rewards.)
C	C had difficulty in the first few sessions catching on to the routines and remembering to come to check in. Now, he has caught on. He has begun to play around with the other boys, and really got into dancing to the music before morning announcements today. C participated very well for his part of the skit today. AP reported that during attendance team meeting, C's mother stated that there were days she was running late or thinking of keeping C home, but he told her "no, I've got to go to check off my chart."
D	D often has trouble remembering to come to check in. Often, we have to remind her to come. D got very actively involved in planning the skit, and volunteered to make the graphic organizer. Today in group D commented that "My dad (teasing) told me that Ihad to stay home today because he knows how much I love my group days.
E	E seems enthusiastic about group and spending rewards. She often volunteers to help with activities.
F	F remembers to come to check in each day. He often asks to help run errands or remind other students to come to group.
G	G continues to miss a lot of days since group started. She never comes to check in and frequently forgets to come to group until someone goes to remind her. When she comes, she usually has a big smile. G's presence at group today caused the group to earn it's first attendance party. This brought loud cheers from the other students and a big smile from G. G seems to enjoy earning attendance rewards.
H	H always comes to check in and group without reminders. Seems to enjoy group. He is very physical and requires frequent reminders to maintain appropriate control. He often engages the other boys in horseplay which is disruptive. Today, H was very helpful running errands for me. H was busy reading in group today, was not engaged in planning the skit until one of the other members suggested including Zombies in the script.
I	"I" seems enthusiastic about group. As the weeks go on, "I" has begun to engage in more off-task behavior and horseplay. When discussing the skit today, "I" asked "Is that the only reason that we're here? "I" suggested writing Zombies into our skit. The other students were enthusiastic about this.

Table 7 Continued Case Notes and PI Observations

Participant Code	
J	J seems enthusiastic about group. She comes in daily to check off chart and remembers group days. J commented today "I was absent yesterday because my mom made me go to my dad's doctor's appointmen so it's her fault.
K	K is very helpful and cooperative in group and follows directions explicitely. Today, K got very excited about the skit and came up with many ideas.
L	L usually arrives later than the others to group. He never remembers to come to check in. L participates, but seems more motivated to engage in horseplay with the other boys. L chose not to come to group today, when I asked him about it later, he said he planned to come to future group meetings.
M	M seems to enjoy group, and often comes to talk to me during check in. M has continued to miss several days during the intervention. M was not in group this morning. She came in tardy. Her mother was with her and said "We slept in." Later, M told me that her grandfather wakes her mom up, but he had not done so this morning. When I asked, she said they did not have an alarm clock.
N	N has had several absences since group started. In one group session N reported being absent due to a pet's illness. When present, N participates actively in group activities.
O	O participates actively in group, and offers many suggestions. He loves playing board games. O commented in group today that his mother had said "If your stomach hurts and you stay home, you will waste Mrs. Landman's money." (I had purchased breakfast for the group for meeting group goals.)
P	P has missed several days since group began. Although usually quiet when I've talked to him alone, P smiles and laughes in group and seems to enjoy games. P was excited to purchase a photo album with is reward money today. Today in group P reported that he would be absent next week because he was having tests done (medical condition.)
Q	Q seems to enjoy group and participates actively. Q often goofs off with other group members Q reported today "my throat hurt a little this morning, but I wanted to come to the (group reward) party, and also so my class could spin the wheel (a school-wide attendance incentive.)
R	R seems to enjoy group. Participates actively in all activities. R has had several absences since group began, but seems to be trying to maintain attendance. She asked me today when she came in tardy if she could still check off her chart.

Discussion

This ARS sought to answer whether student self-concept and attitudes toward school influence attendance, and whether group counseling could have a positive effect on attendance, self-concept, and attitudes toward school. The PI expected to find a link between low self-concept, negative attitudes toward school and poor attendance. The results of this ARS do not support this premise. Prior to the intervention, only half of the participants Piers Harris 2 scores

indicated low self-concept, and teachers rated only 4 of the study participants self-concept as "negative" or "very negative." Teacher-rated attitudes toward school were similar with only 3 of the students attitudes toward school considered negative.

While Baker (2000) found increases in self-concept scores, as measured by the Piers-Harris, for each of the 6 participants in her secondary group, in this ARS, Piers-Harris 2 post-intervention scores were mixed. Only 5 of the 10 students who took the scale had increases in self-concept scores, with increases between 3 and 6 points. It must be said that these relatively small changes should be interpreted cautiously, in light of data from other sources. The pre- and post-tests were administered approximately 12 weeks apart, and in some cases, these changes were the result of only one or two items being endorsed differently. Teachers did, however, perceive positive changes in self-concept for 12 of the participants and attitudes toward school for 9 of the participants during the intervention. In addition, 15 of the 18 students reported that the group had "helped them like school more."

Thirteen of the 18 participants in this ARS had fewer absences during the intervention period. These results are consistent with the results of Keat, et al. (1984), Waltzer (1984), and Baker (2000) who found that group counseling resulted in improved attendance. While the improvement in attendance for thirteen participants is encouraging, it may not necessarily be concluded that the intervention caused the change. Other variables that cannot be controlled for in an action research design, such as school-wide attendance incentives or parent contacts by the school or system attendance team, could have also played a role. However, teacher and student perceptions and the PI's case notes indicate that the intervention played a role in improved attendance for a number of the students. Based on the enthusiasm of the students and the support of the school's faculty and administration, the PI has chosen to continue the groups through the

end of the school year, and to include similar attendance groups in the school's counseling and guidance plan.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

There are several limitations to this study's findings. The intervention took place over a relatively short period of time and, at the time of this report, the data only provide a comparison between the first nine weeks of the intervention period and the nine weeks immediately prior to the intervention. Additional research examining whether improvements in attendance are sustained after the intervention concludes would be beneficial. Studies lengthening the intervention period might also be useful.

Another limitation is that the study included a relatively small sample size. Replication of this study by this PI or others would provide additional insights into the effectiveness of group counseling to improve attendance. Future research might also shed light into the characteristics of students most likely to benefit from group counseling, and those who might benefit from other interventions. An additional limitation is that only students in grades 3, 4, and 5 had a standardized measure of self-concept (the Piers-Harris 2). In future studies, it might be helpful to use an instrument that would be appropriate for students at all grade levels.

Conclusions

Regular school attendance is critically important to student achievement. This ARS suggests that group counseling can have a positive effect on attendance. The relatively simple design could be easily replicated in other schools. While ARS results cannot be universally generalized (Mills, 2011), this study will help the PI/school counselor support her schools efforts to improve student attendance and may add to the counseling profession's understanding of how to effectively help elementary students overcome obstacles to regular school attendance.

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Appendix 1

Dear

As you know, I am conducting a research study looking at the impact of group counseling on self-concept, attitudes toward school, and attendance. I would appreciate your input on the following questions regarding your student participating in this group. Please know that I will keep all of your comments confidential. Thanks very much!

Student: _____

1. How would you rate this student's self-concept prior to the group counseling intervention that began in January 2011?

(Circle One) Very Positive Positive Neutral Negative Very Negative

Comments:

_____

2. How would you rate this student's self-concept now (March 2011) after 10 weeks of group counseling?

(Circle One) Very Positive Positive Neutral Negative Very Negative

If you perceive a change in self-concept, to what do you attribute the change?

_____

Comments:

_____

3. How would you rate this student's attitude toward school prior to the group counseling intervention that began in January 2011?

(Circle One) Very Positive Positive Neutral Negative Very Negative

Comments:

_____

4. How would you rate this student's attitude toward school now (in March 2011) after 10 weeks of group counseling?

(Circle One) Very Positive Positive Neutral Negative Very Negative

If you perceive a change in this student's attitude toward school, to what do you attribute the change?

_____

Comments:

_____

ATTENDANCE DATA:

This student missed ____ days during the 10 weeks immediately prior to the group counseling intervention.

She/he missed _____ days during the first 10 weeks of the group counseling intervention.

To what do you attribute the (improvement/lack of improvement/lack of change) in attendance during this time period?

_____

Please provide any additional feedback on this group counseling intervention that may help me improve future interventions:

_____

Appendix 2

Awesome Attendance Group Evaluation

(Circle One)

This group helped me like myself better: Yes No Don't Know

This group helped me like coming to school more: Yes No Don't Know

This group helped me have better attendance: Yes No Don't Know

One thing I liked about this group is: _____

One thing I didn't like about this group is: _____

One thing I learned in group is: _____

One thing that would make group better is: _____

The Effects of a Bully Intervention Program on the Relational Aggressive Behaviors of 5th Grade Girls

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Abstract

Using a mixed method design, this study investigated the effectiveness of a bully intervention program aimed at fifth-grade girls. The Ophelia Project provided the framework for a six-week prevention program. Results showed that the bullying intervention program did decrease the relational aggressive behaviors among the participants and indicated that interventions increased participants' knowledge of relational aggression.

Keywords: girls and aggression; relational aggression; bullying and girls

The Effects of a Bully Intervention Program on the Relational Aggressive Behaviors of 5th Grade Girls

This study investigated if implementing the Bully Intervention Program, Ophelia Project, would reduce relational aggressive behaviors, including verbal comments in a cold or hostile tone of voice, eye-rolling, spreading rumors, "mean" facial expressions, and exclusion in 5th grade girls. Relational Aggression is a type of bullying that involves exclusion and isolation of others, manipulation of relationships, gossip, and rumors prevalent among adolescent girls.

There can be a number of angry students that enter guidance offices everyday. In most instances, girls handle their anger and fighting differently than boys. Boys, when angry, typically fight, but after a couple of days, they are often done with it, and some are back friendly with each other within a week of the incident. Girls, on the other hand, can hold grudges and go days, even months without speaking to each other. They can also be guilty of spreading rumors. When children experience relational aggression, it is more than likely affecting their education.

Relational aggression and any other forms of bullying are primarily student-experienced problems. The students are the perpetrators, victims, and the bystanders. Social aggression among girls includes behaviors, social ostracism, gossip, talking behind backs, verbal attacks, glaring and eye-rolling, and manipulating relationships (Willer, 2009). It is also known that the most determined adult, whether it is a teacher, counselor, or parent may not even know or be able to stop these types of aggression alone. Research shows that any type of bullying is more likely to occur when there is minimal to no adult supervision. Due to these findings, it is suggested that implementing student-driven approaches might further enhance anti-bullying programs (Lepkowski, Overton, & Packman, 2005).

Approaches that are student-driven tend to aim at involving all students, especially those not directly involved with bullying as victims or perpetrators. Bystanders usually are too intimidated to intervene, or gain a vicarious thrill from observing the oppression of another student. Lepkowski, et. al. (2005) stated that peer group power is an important way to help stop bullying. When there are larger percentages of bystanders who enjoy seeing students humiliate other students, then perhaps they would respond differently to bullying behaviors if they were amongst a group of students who did not feel oppressing others was appropriate. Once the children who are neither bullies nor victims adopt the attitude that bullying is an unacceptable

behavior, schools are well on their way to having a successful bullying program (Lepkowski et. al., 2005).

Rationale

Relational aggression in girls occurs because of the cultural beliefs surrounding what girls are like and how girls should behave. Unfortunately, many girls do not see relational aggressive behaviors as unacceptable and it has even become expected from girls. It can be argued that the culture's expectations for girls warrants reconsideration and American society can encourage girls by giving them the tools to become less malicious and more supportive.

In order for girls' relational aggressive behaviors to change and be effective, school counselors need to become more in touch with how relational aggression works and make the necessary efforts to respond to it when and before it arises. Thus, prevention methods are needed that not only educate girls on relational aggression, but also include faculty, staff, and parents of girls. Preventative programs are only effective if everyone is agrees to participate.

Both bullies and victims are at risk for negative future outcomes. Milsom and Gallo (2006) reported that as bullies go through adolescence, they are more at risk for severe problems such as delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, and dropping out of school. Bullies, as well as victims, have been found to be more depressed than students who are not involved in bullying. Since depression is associated with bullying and victimization, it can lead to academic problems, self-defeating behaviors, and interpersonal problems. Moreover, if bullying behaviors are severe and prolonged, there will be additional factors involved, including suffering from academic problems, absenteeism, loneliness, and loss of friends (Milsom & Gallo, 2006).

Unfortunately, relational aggression is at times undetectable. Technological gadgets, such as cell phones and computers, give students access to texting, instant messaging and social

networking sites, which allow relational aggression to occur outside of school (Milsom & Gallo, 2006). Through guidance lessons and group sessions, discussions about bullying and relational aggression can be brought into the classroom.

Review of Literature

Defining Relational Aggression

Recently, there has been an increase in information available on relational aggression, through popular media such as movies, books, and websites. However, the works of scholars, such as Crick and Grotpeter (2005) have contributed to a boom in research related to relational aggression in school-age girls. Aggression is an overarching construct, which includes covert and overt behaviors. Intent to harm is the common thread among all of the types of aggression. Crick and Grotpeter (1995) suggest that there are critical differences between the forms of aggression. Overt aggression is hurting someone with physical aggression and intimidation. On the other hand, relational aggression is purposefully damaging peer relationships through manipulation.

Aggressive acts occurring between individuals involve a specific intent to harm, but do not necessarily involve repeated negativity. It is important to distinguish between aggressive acts, which occur between individuals/groups of equal power and bullying, where the victim generally feels that they have less or no power. Acts of aggression can be considered to involve a two-way process of attack and retaliation, whereby each party has a relatively equal stake in the conflict. Bullying, however, describes a one-way attack situation whereby the perpetrator has more power and where the victim rarely feels able to retaliate. The key issues of intent to harm, repeated and ongoing negativity, as well as a power imbalance, are generally agreeable. Bullying has been defined and conceptualized in many different ways by researchers and educators.

Relational aggression encompasses behaviors that hurt and harm others by damaging, threatening to damage, manipulating one's relationships with his/her peers, or by injuring one's feelings of social acceptance. Studies continue to show that relational and other nonphysical forms of aggression are just as harmful to a student's ability to learn, as well as grow and succeed (Cappella, 2005). Relational aggression and bullying occur throughout the school day and across school property. Some studies have reported that conflict is most likely to arise in the classroom during free work or independent time, while others suggest that such behavior is apt to occur in crowded unsupervised areas. The underlying message here is clear: anywhere or any time students are unsupervised the likelihood for conflict and aggressive behavior increases. In a breakdown of such behaviors, hallways, buses, and bathrooms have been identified as some of the most problematic areas for such behavior (Cappella, 2005).

Traditionally, the term aggression denotes physical acts committed against another person; these include hitting, punching, and kicking. However, recent research indicates that gender plays an important role in the way young people display aggression. Though both genders are aggressive, boys tend to exhibit overt, physical aggression, while girls display signs of relational, manipulative aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Although there are a variety of definitions for relational aggression, there is a general consensus that this includes acts aimed at damaging the target's social status or self-esteem, such as: sarcastic verbal comments, speaking to another in a cold or hostile tone of voice, ignoring, staring, gossiping, spreading rumors, "mean" facial expressions, and/or exclusion.

Research on Relational Aggression and Bullying

Elementary school is a crucial time in a child's life, and it is imperative that students learn normative beliefs that foster cooperation, respect, and effective conflict resolution (Crick &

Grotpeter, 1995). When aggression occurs, it not only affects children's social and emotional well-being, it makes it difficult for children to focus on academic learning. Researchers have recently shown that girls engage in just as much aggression as boys. Importantly, the expression of aggression among girls is different from that of boys. Both boys and girls use verbal aggression, such as verbal insults, but the nature and content of verbal assaults are likely to differ for boys and girls. Whereas boys are more likely to engage in physical forms of aggression, girls are more likely to use more covert forms of behavior that harms others by damaging or manipulating their social relationships through relational aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Until recently, bullying has been a behavior that is rarely punished or taken seriously by schools because it was thought of as something that all kids go through, or something that kids need to work out for themselves. In rare and severe circumstances, bullies have been sent to guidance offices for the obligatory slap-on-the-wrist punishment. Since gun violence and weapons are on the rise, aggressive behavior of all types has been taken very seriously (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Few people can recall their school years without remembering the one or two kids singled out or picked on for various reasons.

So, why do girls feel the need to express their aggression in such psychologically destructive ways? Studies suggest that relational aggression is probably learned. For decades, researchers believed that boys were more aggressive than girls were because girls presented with less overt displays of anger and hurt. However, in the past decade, experts have realized that while boys chose to exhibit anger and aggression in physical or verbal ways, girls show aggression through manipulation of relationships and social structures in order to inflict emotional pain (Bjorkqvist et al, 1992). While boys tend to have loosely knitted groups of friends, girls' social networks are far more tightly knit, which enables such kinds of relational

aggression to occur. Close friendships are what lead relational aggression tactics such as gossiping, shunning members of a "clique," giving the silent treatment, spreading rumors and using friendships with others as weapons of revenge (Bjorkqvist et al, 1992).

Little is known about girls' bullying behaviors, how they perceive these behaviors, the impact on the victim, or the significance of friendships in relation to these behaviors. Research building on what is known and asking new questions relevant to girls' behaviors in schools is needed because this population has been ignored. According to Milsom & Gallo (2006), bullies gain control over others through physical force or threats, verbal teasing, and exclusion from peers. There are four specific types of bullies: physical, verbal, relational, and reactive. In many cases, physical bullies hit, kick, or shove others. Verbal bullies tend to use words to harm others through name-calling, insulting, making racist comments, or harsh teasing. Relational bullies often focus on excluding one person from their peer group and usually do so through verbal threats and spreading rumors. Finally, reactive bullies are individuals who are often both bully and victim - typically victims first, then they respond to victimization with bullying behavior. While both boys and girls engage in and are victims of bullying, research has shown differences in their bullying behaviors. For example, boys engage in bullying more frequently than girls. Additionally, boys are more likely to engage in physical or verbal bullying, while girls often revert to relational bullying (Milsom & Gallo, 2006).

To study and eventually help relationally aggressive students, one must first identify them, which can be more difficult than expected. Identification of relationally aggressive girls (and boys) is subjective and reliant upon chance observation of the behaviors, or reports from victims. Crick and Grotpeter (2002) provided an interesting perspective on girl bullying, saying that girls who are relationally aggressive are disliked by their peers. The authors also stated that

it was possible that being rejected by one's peers lead girls to act in relationally aggressive ways. Relational aggression is significantly related to maladjustment (e.g., depression, loneliness, social isolation). Additionally, relationally aggressive children feel unhappy and distressed about their peer relationships.

Youth violence and the problems associated have become a national priority given to youth, our school systems, and to society. Males typically use physical means to a greater extent than females, who use more verbal means (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992). Investigations of youth aggressive behaviors have several key limitations. These include a focus on physical and overt forms of aggression (i.e. - hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking) rather than the more subtle manifestation of social exclusion and rumors, a focus on aggressive boys rather than aggressive girls, and the development and validation of school-based interventions that focus almost exclusively on physical manifestations (Leff & Crick, 2010). Continuing, Leff & Cricket (2010) found that victims of relational aggression believe that their school is less safe and rate their school-based social experiences as being relatively negative. As mentioned by (Bjorkqvist, et al, 1992), during the ages of 11 and 15, girls begin to form tighter groups and develop more pairs, which can lead to the use of manipulation of friendship patterns as an aggressive strategy. Additionally, girls are known to mature faster verbally than boys, which can facilitate the usage of indirect means of aggression by increasing the verbal skills needed for the manipulations. It is essential to develop early interventions for relational aggressors, which enables victims to hold much promise for improving the health and well-being of school-age children, their schools, and their communities.

Consequences for Bullies and Victims

Bullies and victims are equally at risk for negative outcomes in the future. According to Milsom and Gallo (2006), as bullies go through adolescence they are more at risk for severe problems such as delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, and dropping out of school. Bully victims are targeted, taunted, harassed, threatened, and generally made miserable by the bullies or gangs who are determined to torment them. Needless to say, school may not be top priority for the victimized students. Both bullies and victims have been found to be more depressed than students who are not involved in bullying. Depression associated with bullying and victimization can lead to academic problems, self-defeating behaviors, and interpersonal problems (Milsom and Gallo, 2006). Lastly, victims are particularly at risk if there is no emotional support provided or if the bullying behavior is severe and prolonged. These victims are more likely to suffer from academic problems, absenteeism, loneliness, and loss of friends. According to the Safe School Initiative issued by the United States Secret Service, in over 2/3 of school shooting/homicides, "the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to the incident" (Vossekuil, Reddy, & Fein, 2000, p. 7).

There is no question that physical aggression and "traditional" bullying remain serious problems in the schools. However, relational aggression among students, particularly girls, is just as problematic. It is much easier to witness a child bullying another physically; pushing and fighting are much more obvious than rumor spreading, gossip, and peer-exclusion. School counselors can serve a critical role in lowering the incidence of relational aggression in the school environment.

Research on Bullying Intervention Programs

Only recently has relational aggression become a prevalent topic in the media, as well as, in schools. Programs that have a focus on bullying have often included decreasing physical aggression and attitudinal change as primary goals. Relational aggression is often left out of school based bullying programs. Girls in late childhood and early adolescence may be involved in social aggression exclusively whereas boys participate in overt aggression. This literature review yielded no investigations that evaluated programs designed to reduce social aggression in schools.

Schools provide little or no support for students experiencing bullying and harassment (Crockett (2004). As a school resource for social and behavioral as well as cognitive issues, the school counselor must be able to provide worthwhile assistance to teachers and other school personnel who may witness this behavior frequently. Hodges and Rodkin (2003) suggested that school professionals should help teachers develop a more active role as an aggressor of school bullying issues rather than passively condoning these behaviors through a strategy of noninterference. Orpinas, Horne, & Staniszewski (2003) state that bullying intervention programs have a higher chance of success when implemented at the school level by the teacher, rather than an at-home, parent-driven program.

Often schools address bullying by attempting to get tougher on bullying. Zero tolerance policies have grown in popularity and, used alone, have shown little evidence of increasing school safety. Milsom and Gallo (2006) suggest that many recommendations have been made with regard to how to approach the problem of bullying. Most researchers agree that effective programs should be comprehensive - targeting students, schools, families, and the community. It

is important to understand that attending to the needs of victims is as essential as intervening with bullies and assessing school climate.

Anti-bullying programs generally focus on building school environments that create (1) warmth, positive interest, and involvement from adults, (2) firm limits on unacceptable behavior, (3) consistent application of nonpunitive, nonphysical sanctions for unacceptable behavior or violation of the rules, and (4) adults who act as authorities and positive role models (Lepkowski et al, 2005). Many other anti-bullying approaches include student and faculty education, increased awareness of the problem of bullying and adult involvement, in addition to counseling for individual victims and bullies (Lepkowski et al, 2005).

Milsom & Gallo (2006), bullies are more likely to continue engaging in bullying behavior when they feel no one will intervene and there will be no consequences for them. Acknowledging that bullying occurs and that it will not be tolerated is an important start in helping students to recognize a school's commitment to protecting them from bullies. After communicating this awareness, school personnel are encouraged to develop policies that include clear definitions of bullying, outline policies for reporting inappropriate behavior, and list possible ramifications of bullying.

Bully Intervention Program: The Ophelia Project

The Ophelia Project is unique to bully-prevention programs in that it focuses entirely on relational aggression among girls. The goal of the Ophelia Project is to prevent bullying through character development, and to prevent the negative influences on girls in our culture today. Their program includes:

(1) Bringing together a community of caring adults (teachers, administrators, parents) and high school students to address the specific social and emotional needs in a school or school district.

(2) Giving participants the organizational tools needed to begin to organize for systematic change.

(3) Creating the organizational structure using a school/district task force and teams to plan/implement what it means to have a safer, social climate. Raise the collective awareness of the extent of peer aggression in the school.

(4) Teaching a common language and body of information to use with aggression intervention.

(5) Motivating parents to serve as an integral part of a safe school climate.

(6) Empowering students to take a major role in changing the environment.

(7) Creating a force that can reach beyond the school to change the social environment for families (Ophelia Project, 2007).

Analysis of Literature

Based on the literature reviewed, it appears that the body of research regarding relational aggression among girls is growing. However, as most of the research found is recent, the study of relational aggression among girls is still very new. While school counseling and other school-based fields have previously focused on bullying as it relates to physical violence and aggression, peer-reviewed research and popular literature are becoming more focused on relational aggression and social dominance among school-aged girls. Unfortunately, the preparedness of schools for dealing with this issue is not on the same trajectory.

Methodology

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate if implementing the Bully Intervention Program, Ophelia Project, would reduce relational aggressive behaviors, including verbal comments in a cold or hostile tone of voice, eye-rolling, spreading rumors, “mean” facial

expressions, and exclusion in girls currently in the 5th grade. This research included a mixed-method approach combining quantitative data (questionnaire survey) and qualitative data (small group sessions).

Classroom lessons and survey questions were given to build general awareness and small groups were conducted so that it would be more effective for the girls directly involved with or likely to experience relational aggression. Students who seemed to be at risk for relational aggression were identified by their teachers as being a victim and/or perpetrator of relational aggressive behaviors and invited to participate in the study. These sessions included a mixed group of girls: (1) those who are bullying/aggressive and (2) those who are insecure and lack assertiveness, which could in turn make them easy targets of relational aggression. In many cases, girls who are picked on or excluded often respond well to group sessions, as it is a place where they can get emotional support and have further opportunities for positive social interactions. During the duration of the classroom lessons, the students learned how to:

- identify positive self qualities in each other
- identify feelings, recognize what makes them angry, and how to show it
- distinguish between thoughts that are positive and negative
- identify cliques/true friendships, and how they can be that type of friend
- develop strategies for resolving conflicts/empathy
- identify cultural/societal expectations of girls
- identify being mean/compliments
- identify gossip, rumors, and jealousy
- develop effective communication and confrontation skills

Research Questions

1. Will the effects of a Bully Intervention Program reduce/decrease relational aggression among elementary school age girls?
2. Do interactive presentations with videos and audience participation increase the girls' knowledge of relational aggression?

Participants and Sample Selection

The participants surveyed for this study were fifth grade girls at a rural Georgia elementary school. Eighteen girls were identified by their teachers as being a victim and/or perpetrator of relational aggressive behaviors and were invited to participate in the study. Those girls who voluntarily complied to become a part of this study and returned signed permission slips participated in small group sessions and completed a survey on aggressive behavior.

This study's participants identified as African American female students; no other race is represented in the fifth grade. The students' ages ranged from ten to eleven years old at the time of the study. Participants were ethnically representative of the school from which the sample is drawn. Participants in this study were divided into treatment and control groups. In order to protect the confidentiality of the child, a number and not the child's name appeared on all of the information recorded during the study. The students met in the counselor's office twice a week for a six-week period.

Instrumentation and Interviews

A six-week prevention program developed by the Ophelia Project that focuses directly on relational aggression was conducted. The study assessed outcomes based upon a bully/aggression instrument developed by the Ophelia Project. The 12- question survey was very

brief and completed during the group on aggression. The girls also watched a video during group on "Bullies and How to Help Them" to increase their knowledge of relational aggression. Informal qualitative data was collected throughout the group sessions. The groups were conducted and data collection during a timeframe when the students had more available time without testing interruptions (February – March).

Data Collection

A mixed-method approach combining quantitative data (questionnaire survey) and qualitative data (small group sessions) was conducted in this study.

Phase 1: Data were collected and analyzed from the answers given from the aggression survey of the fifth grade girls selected to be in the group. The questions ranged from "Has a close friend ever talked about you behind your back?" to "Have you ever noticed another girl's clothes and tried to hurt her by telling everyone how weird she looks?" The girls also watched a video during group on "What I Learned about Bullying."

Phase 2: Data were collected and analyzed from the 6-week intervention program. An overview of the topics covered follows. In Lesson One, *The Language of Peer Aggression*, the stage was set for the lessons to follow by creating a common language to describe peer aggression. The girls were introduced to the types of aggression: physical, verbal, and relational. Girls also identified two roles played in aggressive incidents - aggressor and target. Lesson Two, *The Bystander: You Can Make a Difference*, introduced the third role in the bullying situation - the bystander, also referred to as the kid in the middle (KIM). Lesson Three, *Normative Beliefs*, addressed the relationship between what we believe and how we act, whether true or false. Girls were able to identify common normative beliefs, differentiate norms from rules, and analyze anti-bully laws. In Lesson Four, *Friendship*, the girls learned qualities we look for and admire in

our friends, as well as characteristics of healthy relationships. Additionally, girls learned how to connect to each other and establish friendships. In Lesson Five, *Leadership* was the focus. They were able to define qualities of a leader, and to define positive and negative qualities of popularity. In the final lesson, *Cyber-bullying*, the girls were able to compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal communication, identify common emoticons/internet abbreviations and assess the writer's intentions in ambiguously written statements.

Phase 3: An End of Group Questionnaire was given and information gathered during the sessions through recording and note writing was compiled. The questions included: (1) What did you learn in group about relational aggression? (2) What things have you seen from members of the group change in behavior? (3) What things have you seen in yourself change in behavior? (4) What do you plan to do with the knowledge you learned in the group? (5) What, if group was done over, would you change or add? This process was conducted over a period of one day after the six-week program was completed and done with each student individually.

Data Analysis

To determine whether the bullying intervention program, Ophelia Project, has decreased relational bullying among the elementary school aged girls, teachers were given a post-evaluation to describe the behaviors of the students they chose to be a part of study. All data was analyzed by t-Tests

To increase the girls' knowledge of relational aggression, interactive presentations with videos and audience participation was done during the six-week intervention program. The girls watched a video during classroom guidance on "Bullies and How to Help Them" to increase their knowledge of relational aggression. The students' answers from the End of Group

Questionnaire and reactions to interactive activities were also used to determine changes in behavior. Data collection on bullying and relational aggression began in February.

Results

Research Question 1: Will the effects of a Bully Intervention Program reduce/decrease relational aggression among elementary school age girls?

Data was collected and analyzed from the answers given from the aggression survey created by the Ophelia Project of the fifth grade girls selected to be in the group. According to the results of the survey, the girls answered yes to 8 of the 12 questions. These questions included (1) Has a close friend ever talked about you behind your back? (2) Has anyone ever spread a hurtful rumor about you? (3) Do your friends ever spread gossip about others over the phone or on the computer? (5) Have you ever seen girls picking on another in school or trying to exclude her? (7) Have you ever been pressured to pick on or exclude someone just to fit in and look cool? (8) Have you seen somebody using body language to be mean to someone else (e.g. rolling their eyes)? (9) Have you ever noticed another girl's clothes and tried to hurt her by telling everyone how weird she looks? In addition (11) Have your friends ever ignored you and you had no idea why?

The researchers collected data and analyzed by t-Tests of the teacher's Pre- and Post Surveys of the treatment and control groups. The teachers were asked the same question for each student. The question was "Does this child show signs of relational aggressive behaviors, including verbal comments in a cold or hostile tone of voice, eye-rolling, spreading rumors, "mean" facial expressions, fighting, victimization, and exclusion of girls in the classroom. This child is also having academic failure or underachievement problems." According to the results of the survey question, students in the treatment group showed more improvement in relational

aggressive behaviors than the controlled group over the course of the 6 weeks in which the program was implemented. Additionally, the treatment group showed significant improvement in relational aggressive behaviors from the pre- and post survey of the teachers. Below are the tables showing the results of the teacher pre- and post surveys.

Table 1: T-Tests Results and Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Pre- and Post Surveys of Treatment Group

Outcome							95% CI for Mean Difference			
	Pre-Survey			Post Survey						
Teacher Ratings	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			t	df
	2.00	.00	9	1.33	.50	9	.949, 1.72		8	8

$p < .05$

The difference between the two means is statistically significantly different from zero at the 5% level of significance. There is an estimated change of .67 between the pre- and post surveys for the treatment group. Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there was a decrease in relational aggressive behaviors of the treatment group from the beginning to the end of intervention program.

Results of Teachers' Pre- and Post Surveys of Treatment Group

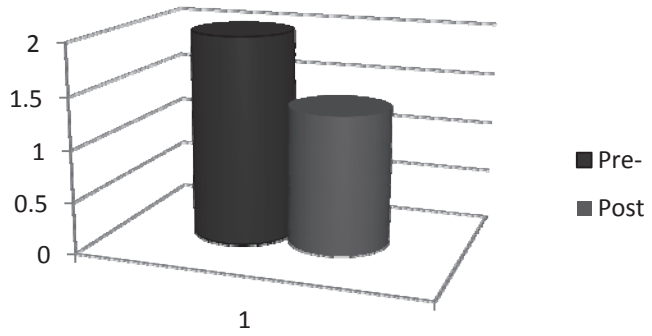

Table 1: The t-test results indicate the teacher ratings for pre- and post surveys of the treatment group are statistically different at the .05 level of significance. It appears that the bullying intervention program did reduce/decrease the relational aggressive behaviors among elementary school age girls.

Table 2: T-Tests Results and Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Post Surveys of Treatment and Controlled Groups

Outcome							95% CI for Mean Difference			
	Treatment			Controlled						
Teacher Ratings	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	Lower	Upper	t	df
	1.33	.50	9	1.67	.50	9	.949, 2.05		10	16

$p<.05$

The difference between the two means is statistically significantly different from zero at the 5% level of significance. There is an estimated change of .34 between the teacher ratings of the treatment and controlled groups. Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the intervention program did decrease relational aggressive behaviors of the treatment group as it compares to the controlled group.

Results of Teachers' Post Survey of Treatment and Controlled Groups

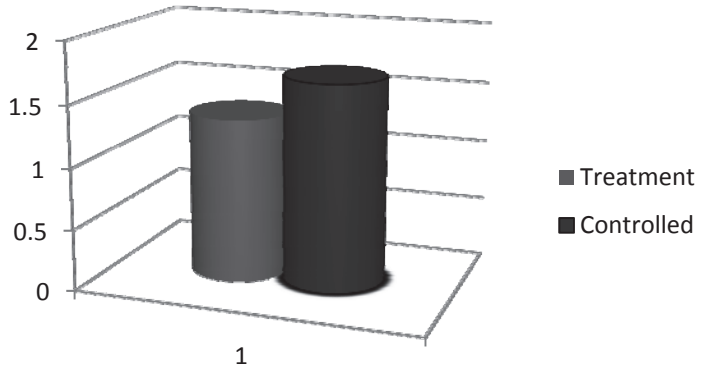

Table 2: The t-test results indicate the teacher ratings for post surveys of the treatment and controlled group are statistically different at the .05 level of significance. It appears that the bullying intervention program did reduce/decrease the relational aggressive behaviors among the treatment group.

Research Question 2: Do interactive presentations with videos and audience participation increase the girls' knowledge of relational aggression?

Additional data was collected and analyzed from the End of Group Questionnaire that was conducted following the 6- week Bullying Intervention Program. Responses to each of the

questions have been summarized. The questions were answered by each student as a group and discussed with them individually.

Question #1: What did you learn in group about relational aggression?

For question 1, five out of nine students said they learned a lot. One student stated that she learned that rolling her eyes and talking back to her teachers is relational aggression. Two out of nine students mentioned that it is best to walk away instead of fussing with other girls. Other responses included learning a lot about why not to spread rumors and how to stop talking back to her teachers, that being mean is not nice and the differences between norms and rules.

Question #2: What things have you seen from members of the group change in behavior?

In question #2, 50% of the students responded that they have seen the attitudes of the other girls in the group change for the good. One out of nine girls said members have not rolled their eyes as much. Other responses were other members have stopped fussing with teachers, less bullying is occurring, they are calmer and they have been doing their work.

Question #3: What things have you seen in yourself change in behavior?

In question #3, seven out of nine students said that their attitudes have changed in a positive way. Two out of nine girls stated that they have not rolled their eyes in a long time. Two out of nine also said that they are not talking back to the teacher. Other responses included grades have come up and fussing with other people has decreased.

Question #4: What do you plan to do with the knowledge you learned in the group?

The responses to question #4 were similar. 100% of the responses were positive. Responses to the question included thinking good thoughts, using information to lessen drama, share with other girls, take it to the middle school (6^{th} grade), and keeping a good attitude daily.

Question #5: What, if group was done over, would you change or add?

The responses to question #5 varied. Six out of nine girls shared that they would not change anything about the program. One of the girls said she would add more acting out scenarios and another said she would use more eye contact exercises. Two of the nine girls expressed adding more people to the group.

The girls watched a video entitled "Bullies and How to Help Them" to increase their knowledge of relational aggression. The girls learned simple techniques to deal with bullies, to reason with, or to avoid them. They also learned that if they witnessed bullying that they should not go along with it and laugh; instead be cool and stand up for what is right. Additionally, the girls gained insight into sometimes getting help from an authority is the only thing you can do. One of the most important things they learned was that if they were bullies, they should stop, and that if they do not like it when someone bothers them, then they really do not want to make others feel bad. Instead, they should use their power in a positive way.

Some of the main points presented in the 24 minute video include: (1) defining the word bully, (2) tips on what to do if faced in a bullying situation (i.e. - walking away), (3) the two scenarios of bullying, (4) how to deal with the problem, and (5) being strong enough to care about others (Discovery Education, 1997). The girls had a discussion afterwards in which they seemed to have more knowledge about bullying and how bullying relates to relational aggression.

In addition to the video, the girls also participated in lessons as part of the Ophelia Project six-week program. In *The Bystander: You can make a difference*, the girls had an opportunity to role play in a Bystander Role Play activity. They were able to act out scenarios and discuss the ways to make them positive. In the lesson focused on Normative Beliefs, the girls

had the opportunity to place different comments (i.e. - Girls cannot play football. / The speed limit on the highway is 55 mph) under either rules or norms on the board. In the lesson focused on Leadership, the girls were able to pair up and guide each other through Tanagram Leadership. Each girl had to instruct another girl on how to arrange the tanagrams and the follower could not move any of the pieces unless instructed by the leader. In the last lesson of Cyberbullying, the girls were able to play charades with different emoticons and internet abbreviations. According to the girls' reactions to the lessons, as well as, their comments from the End of Group Questionnaire, the interactive presentations with videos and audience participation did increase the girls' knowledge of relational aggression.

Discussion

Implications for Counseling

Establishing and maintaining healthy relationships is an important developmental task for children. Unfortunately, relational aggression works against the development of these relationships and negatively affects students' social skills. Ultimately, relational aggression is very hurtful, damages self-concept, and interferes with academic and physical development (Ophelia Project, 2007).

The Ophelia Project Relational Aggression Program proved effective in reducing/ decreasing relational aggressive behaviors of the group members. Participants demonstrated less aggressive confrontations and negative behaviors and seemed to learn new ways of relating to others to preserve friendships. These new behaviors have translated into fewer discipline issues and a safer more positive school environment.

Since relational aggression is a form of bullying which may harm girls emotionally, it is important that counselors become aware of these types of hurtful behaviors that girls display

toward each other and help all students develop strategies to report, seek support and develop anti-bullying coping skills to use when students encounter these problems in their social circles. Additionally, counselors should have one-on-one contact with students in order to identify students' needs in social relationships. Just as in this study, students can be identified through teacher referrals, as well as, through peer surveys, self-reports, disciplinary referrals, and observation. After students have been identified, counselors can implement relevant intervention programs such as the Ophelia Project. School counselors can help students examine how to create successful relationships. Fortunately, in many cases, counselor encouragement is essential. When students are known as bullies, but have shown signs of being nice to another student or helping another student in need, it becomes important for the school counselor to give positive feedback to the student for their efforts toward a more positive attitude.

Counselors can also play a major role in assisting girls with developing their own "sense of self." They should conduct classroom guidance or small group activities that demonstrate healthy self esteem, in addition to providing activities where appropriate and safe choices in friendships are created. School counselors can help in preventing girls showing relational aggression behaviors from turning into bullies by showing children how to become empathetic and teaching social skills classes at an early age.

Limitations to Study

The limitations to this study included limited demographic representation (race) and a small sample size. The PI invited eighteen girls to participate in the study. The girls were randomly selected to treatment and control groups (9 in each group). Each treatment and control group will have the opportunity at different times to participate in the It Has a Name: Relational Aggression Girls' Curriculum under the Ophelia Project. The number of girls per group was

determined by the number of students willing to participate and who had returned signed permission slips.

Although this study suggests that the bullying intervention program developed by the Ophelia Project did decrease the relational aggressive behaviors among elementary school age girls and that the interactive presentations with videos and audience participation increased the girls' knowledge of relational aggression, there could still be some areas that can be addressed in future research. Future research could explore relationships among developing healthy friendships, satisfaction of the need for being liked by others and relational aggression. One of the big challenges for future research is determining whether there is a connection between the relationships between parenting, relational aggression, and children social development. Additionally, correlating this intervention to measurements such as discipline referrals, absences, referrals to the counselor and grades would support program effectiveness as a school intervention.

Conclusion

Relational aggression is a behavior intended to hurt someone by harming her relationships with others. Covert and subtle, uncovering relational aggression requires careful observation and monitoring. Most importantly, school counselors cannot consider these behaviors as "kids just being kids." The findings of this study suggest that the bullying intervention program did decrease the relational aggressive behaviors among elementary school age girls. Results also showed that the interactive presentations with videos and audience participation increased the girls' knowledge of relational aggression. This research's finding suggest that school counselor interventions can reduce girls' relational aggression and facilitate accomplishment of age appropriate developmental tasks.

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Effectiveness of Small Group Social Skills Lessons with Elementary Students

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Abstract

This action research study (ARS) describes the effectiveness of small group social skills lessons with elementary students, using *Too Good for Violence: A Curriculum for Non-violent Living* by the Mendez Foundation. The school counselor and school social worker taught the curriculum in a structured small group of 4th grade students in 8 weekly sessions. The skills taught were conflict resolution, anger management, respect for self and others, and effective communication. The ARS provides current findings to school counselors, regarding the impact that the social skills lessons have on elementary students' knowledge of skills, behavior, and academics.

Keywords: small group, social skills lessons, elementary students, school counselor

Effectiveness of Small Group Social Skills Lessons with Elementary Students

By teaching students personal and social skills, school counselors facilitate students' preparation for the future (Tomori, 1995). The American School Counselor Association (ASCA, 2005) states the school counselor's purpose in a comprehensive program is to teach proactively certain skills to support students' school success. School counselors provide a valuable service

to students by leading small groups, which can have a counseling or guidance focus. Students are taught skill building lessons in small groups, generally in the area of personal/social or academics. Action research (AR) can help school counselors gather information on how effective their interventions are in causing a positive change in the lives of students. Based on AR results, changes can be made to increase the intervention's effectiveness (Mills, 2011). The purpose of this action research study (ARS) was to describe the effectiveness of small group social skills lessons in an elementary school by looking for an increase in the students' (a) knowledge of skills, (b) positive behaviors related to the skills learned, and (c) academic achievement.

Review of Curriculum and Best Practices of Skills

Since the ability to cope socially is an important predictor of success in young adulthood, implementing interventions early in a child's development is important. "Promoting the development of social competencies and reducing involvement with delinquent peers may protect at-risk youth from engaging in serious delinquency in early adulthood while increasing their educational success" (Stepp, Pardini, Loeber, & Morris, 2011, p. 464). Ogilvy's (1994) evidence suggests children lacking social skills are expected to have academic, social, or psychological issues. If students learn social skills early, then the expectation is that students will apply these skills and avoid problems in later stages of development. Improving social skills allows the possibility for improvement in the academic achievement. Marzillier and Winter (as cited in Verduyn, Lord, & Forrest, 1990) found one problem teaching social skills is the difficulty for students to generalize the skills learned outside of the group setting. Verduyn's et al. (1990) findings demonstrate students can gain the ability to generalize the skills in other situations and that school is an appropriate setting for groups, since it is most similar to daily life.

This reinforces the need to find effective programs for the elementary school level in order to correct any skills deficits and possibly lead to academic and personal/social success sooner.

An early study by Tomori (1995) found that teaching social skills in group counseling provides a positive and supportive environment. that can lead to effectively learning of skills and improving self-esteem. Groups can help students find a sense of belonging as they identify with other students who have the same concerns. Whiston and Quinby (1995) found that when presenting guidance curriculum, small group work is more effective than guidance lessons presented to an entire class. They also suggest group interventions are more effective when used as a response to students' problems or difficulties. Finally, Whiston and Quinby's research found that group counseling is effective with younger children but more research is needed regarding the format of the groups. Brantley and Brantley (1996) conducted a study using small group counseling lessons to decrease acting-out behaviors with students attending an impoverished, inner-city elementary school. In their environments, the students were exposed to elements related to violence and drugs. The school district invited school counseling interns to lead the interventions because they had no elementary school counselors. The study compared a structured and unstructured small group approach and found the structured approach demonstrated a slight improvement in behavior over the unstructured approach. Since the findings did not demonstrate a significant improvement, it appears more research could be conducted with unstructured and structured group approaches.

A few studies indicated that the use of small group interventions did not have significant positive results. Villalba (2003) used a 6-week solution-focused small group intervention with third, fourth and fifth grade students, who are English-for-speakers-of-other-languages /English-as-a-second-language (ESOL/ESL) to determine the effects on self-concept, school success, and

student attitudes toward school. Although the results demonstrated that students were more aware of their ESL teacher's impact and were more satisfied with their school success, after treatment there was no significant difference between the control and experimental groups in regards to self-concept and attitude towards school. Bland, Melang, and Miller (1986) used a small group intervention focused on self-concept, study skills, learning skills, and goal setting with fourth grade underachievers. The groups met twice a week for 9 weeks. The findings indicated a significant difference only in the mean change scores between the treatment and control groups but no other significant differences were found. The results suggest this intervention may help with work habits and classroom behavior according to teacher input, however, caution should be used when viewing the results. Since some small group interventions used in elementary schools with specific student subgroups presented varying results, additional research is needed that specifies the student population in the study as well as the intervention and results.

ASCA National Standards provide a framework that helps school counselors develop the competencies in their program (2005). The goal is for the students to know and be able to demonstrate the personal/social, career, and academic standards after participating in a comprehensive school counseling program. Barna and Brott (2011) found school counselors view both academic and personal/social standards as important and put these standards into action in their counseling programs. "A growing body of evidence reinforces a positive link between students' academic achievement and personal/social development in such areas as emotional intelligence (EI), social competence, academic enablers, and behavior" (p. 242-243). Parker et al. (as cited in Barna & Brott, 2011) indicated that EI has a positive impact on students' academic achievement. Steen and Kaffenberger (2007) conducted an elementary school study,

which taught small group lessons focused on both personal/social concerns and academic concerns. The results support that group counseling is an effective intervention to address the academic and personal/social needs of the students. Verduyn et al. (1990) conducted a study with 10-13 year old students, with either observed behavior issues and/or problems with social interactions, to evaluate the effectiveness of a social skills program taught in a school. The students attended training sessions, which met twice a week for 4 weeks. Each session was structured and focused on a certain part of social interaction using a variety of teaching methods such as discussion, modeling, and role playing. The results support that teaching social skills to students with behavior issues in school is effective.

Conclusions of Literature Review

When school counselors effectively teach social skills, the positive impact can spread from improved social relationships to possible success in academics and adulthood. As the students demonstrate improvement in social competence, their competence can reduce barriers to learning and increase academic achievement. This review of literature gleaned no landmark or classic studies. Yet, the review of literature suggests that teaching these skills in the school setting, specifically in structured small groups, may be the most effective way for the students to learn. The ARS provides data on the effectiveness of a structured small group approach to social skills lessons. The structured small group met with the school counselor and school social worker weekly for 8 weeks. The discussion describes the effect on the students' knowledge and application of the skills, as well as their academic achievement.

Methods

For this study the principal investigator (PI), who was also the school counselor, implemented an ARS to find out if the format and delivery of the small social skills group were

effective. Using AR allows school counselors to evaluate the impact guidance has on student outcome (Mills, 2011). The PI looked for any changes that would increase the effectiveness of future small groups. AR is the appropriate design for this study because the PI strives to improve her elementary school counseling program by finding the most effective small group lessons to help students learn and apply social skills. This design allowed the PI to perform research on her own work to find methods that lead to student success. The goal of the AR was to find if the small group lessons positively increased the 4th graders' knowledge, behavior, and academics. Student knowledge was determined by the student's ability to answer multiple choice questions correctly regarding the concepts taught. Student behavior was observed by the classroom teacher and rated on a Likert scale for the frequency of positive and negative social behaviors. An increase in academics was determined by comparing the students' grade point average (GPA) on their report cards before and after the group. The information was gathered and analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the small group social skills lessons.

Participants

A total of 8 fourth grade elementary students participated in the small social skills group. The group makeup of students was 50% female and 50% male. The population was composed of 62.5% Black, 25% White, and 12.5% Multi-racial; ages ranged from 9-10 years. The 12 students were referred by a teacher, administrator, or school counselor for a social skills group. The group was narrowed to participants, for which the PI obtained parental consent as well as child assent to participate in the group. Six students were referred because they had participated in the same type of group the previous year and the school counselor wanted them to have the opportunity to continue with the new 4th grade lessons this year. Five of the 6 chose to participate again. However, one withdrew her consent after 4 group sessions. Of 6 newly

referred students 3 chose to participate. One student gave his assent but withdrew from school before the group began, while 2 of the students did not give their assent. The students attend a suburban Georgia elementary school, which teaches kindergarten through 5th grade students, with a total enrollment of about 800 students.

Measures

The survey assessing student knowledge data was collected in a group meeting before and after the group lessons completion. The 10 multiple choice questions and answers were read aloud to the students, while they were asked to circle the one correct answer. The PI collected the students' report card grades for the reporting period prior to and after the group lessons. The teachers received and filled out the survey that rated student behaviors before and after the group lessons were taught. Teachers completed these independently and returned them to the PI. At the conclusion of the group, 2 teachers volunteered to provide an individual structured formal interview with the PI. The teachers provided additional information on their student's behavior. The student knowledge survey and the teacher behavior rating scale survey were provided with the Mendez Foundation curriculum, which is a research-based program that has been proven valid and reliable. The PI developed teacher interview questions and this survey did not undergo validity or reliability study.

Procedure

The small group curriculum, *Too Good for Violence: A Curriculum for Non-violent Living* by the Mendez Foundation, was presented in 8 weekly sessions. The PI and school social worker both led the group sessions after previously being trained by the Mendez Foundation in the curriculum. The weekly 40 minute lessons covered the following areas to teach social skills: conflict resolution, anger management, respect for self and others, and effective communication

(Mendez Foundation, 2009). The curriculum contains 7 lessons that are scripted for the leader and includes most all materials needed to conduct each lesson. Student booklets come with the curriculum, which allowed for individual and group activities that coincided with the lessons. Each lesson reviewed previously learned material and then taught a new skill through stories, group discussion, and activities to demonstrate or practice the skill. The PI and school social worker implemented an incentive for the students to be engaged in the lessons by offering candy at the conclusion of the sessions to decrease talking out of turn and encourage staying focused on the group activity.

Results

Student Knowledge Survey

Results of the Student Knowledge instrument show an increase from pre to post survey. The mean score for all participants on the pre survey was 68.3%, while the mean on the post survey was 76.6%. The group's mean score increased by 8.3% (see Table 1). Three of 6 students increased their score from the pre to the post survey. Two students maintained the same score from pre to post, however the pre and post scores were high at 70% and 90%. One student score decreased from pre to post by 10%.

Table 1

Student Knowledge Survey

Participant	Pre survey	Post survey	Change
#1	70%	70%	No change
#2	90%	90%	No change
#3	40%	50%	Increased 10%
#4	50%	90%	Increased 40%
#5	80%	70%	Decreased 10%
#6	80%	90%	Increased 10%

Note: Student knowledge survey question topics:

- Differences between cooperating and competing
- Identifying a communication roadblock or exaggerating
- Conflict resolution and management
- Ways to show respect to other people; handling disagreements with beliefs or opinions
- Identifying bullying
- Conflict escalation and de-escalation

Student Behavior Checklists

Student Behavior Checklists (SBC) scored by classroom teachers yield varied results. The checklist contained 6 items in 4 categories, which included emotional skills, social skills, social behaviors, and inappropriate social behaviors, for a total of 24 items. The SBC post survey results are discussed by category. In the area of emotional skills 1 participant received 4 of 6 marks for most often displaying emotional skills, while 1 student received 2 of 6 positive marks. Three of the 6 participants had 1 of 6 marks in the positive scale range, while 1 student received no positive marks. In the area of social skills one student received all 6 marks for most often displaying social skills, while one received 3 positive marks out of 6. Two of the 6 received only 1 positive mark of 6 for the item, "likes or feels attached to teacher(s)." The remaining 2 participants received no positive marks in this area. In the area of social behaviors 2 students received 5 or more marks for most often displaying positive social behaviors out of 6. One participant received 1 positive mark for the item, "helps other students," while the remaining 3 received no positive marks in the social behavior category. In the area of inappropriate social behaviors the students scored high for almost never displaying these behaviors. Three participants scored 3 or more marks for almost never displaying inappropriate

social behaviors. The remaining 3 participants scored 1 or less for almost never displaying the behaviors. The checklists were scored for each participant by averaging the 6 responses in each of the 4 categories. The highest possible positive score was 5 while the lowest possible score was 1.

Grade Point Averages

Student GPAs were compared for the 2nd 9 week report card (before group began) and the 3r d 9 week report card (1 week before group ended). At the 2nd 9 week report 4 of 6 students had a 3.4 GPA or higher. At the 3rd 9 week report 4 of 6 students had a 3.2 or higher. Overall, two students' GPA increased, while Participant 1 stayed equal and Participant 3 decreased.

Table 2

Participant Report Card GPA

Participant	2nd 9 weeks Report Card GPA	3rd 9 weeks Report Card GPA	Change in GPA
#1	3.40	3.85	Increase
#2	3.40	3.28	Decrease
#3	2.70	2.10	Decrease
#4	3.85	4.00	Increase
#5	1.85	.85	Decrease
#6	3.70	3.70	No change

Teacher Interviews

Structured formal teacher interviews were conducted with 2 teachers, who volunteered to be interviewed. When teachers were asked if they noticed their student applying the skills taught in the group, the teacher of student #4 noted improved communication skills in the classroom and with peers. The other teacher noted she had not observed the application of any of those skills for student #1. The teachers also were asked to indicate if any of the following negative behaviors were observed: disrespect to self or others, ineffective communication, anger outbursts, or not handling conflicts peacefully. Student #4's teacher did not see any of the

negative behaviors before or after the group. The teacher for student #1 did not see any of the negative behaviors before or after the group, but noted that the student is very impulsive and not able to keep her hands to herself. Finally the teachers were asked if any change was noticed in the student's ability to focus on learning in the classroom. The teacher for student #4 noticed her student participating and asking more questions in class. She also stated her student appears more comfortable (i.e., not afraid to read aloud). For student #1 the teacher did not notice a change in this area. Following is a discussion of the results, which includes interpretations and how the PI can apply adjustments to future interventions. Figures A-1 through A-4 summarize results:

Figure A-1. Emotional Skills Pre and Post Surveys

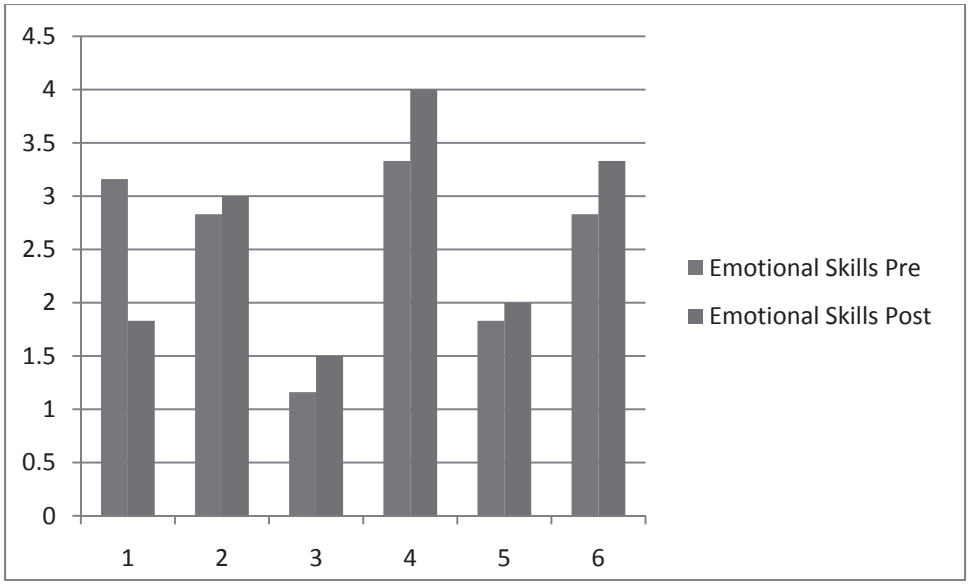

Figure A-1. Participants 1 through 6 mean emotional skills scores are shown with the highest positive rating of 5 and the lowest rating of 1.

Emotional skill items on checklist:

- Uses "I feel messages" to share his/her feelings
- Sets goals in the classroom
- Stops and thinks before acting

- Calms him/herself down when stressed or upset

Figure A-2. Social Skills Pre and Post Surveys

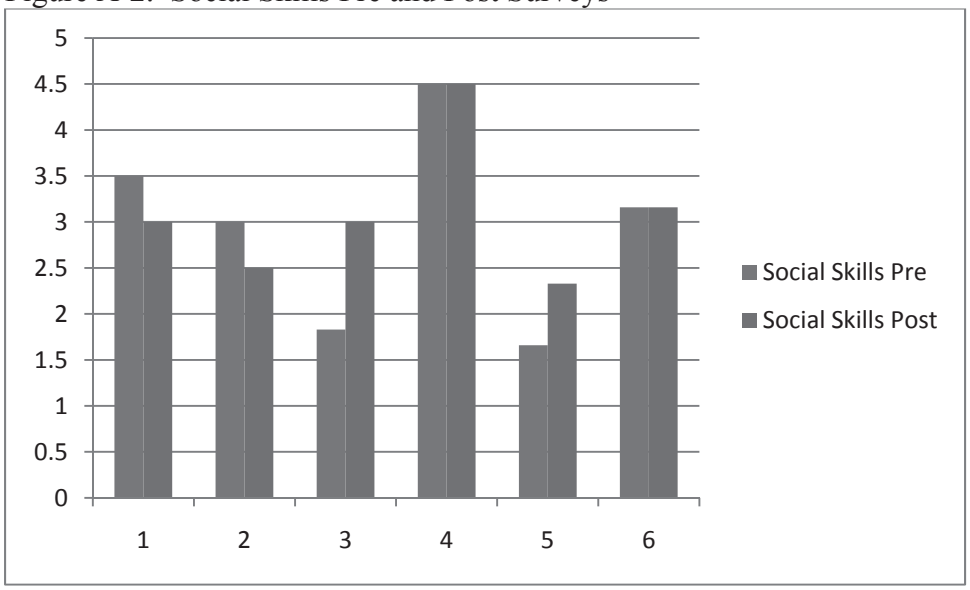

Figure A-2. Participants 1 through 6 mean social skills scores are shown with the highest positive rating of 5 and the lowest rating of 1.

Social skill items on checklist:

- Treats other students with respect
- Uses positive strategies to resist peer pressure (e.g., avoid, ignore, walk away, humor).
- Listens to other students' feelings and points of view.
- Resolves problems with other students on his/her own.
- Likes or feels attached to teacher(s).

Figure A-3. Social Behaviors Pre and Post Surveys

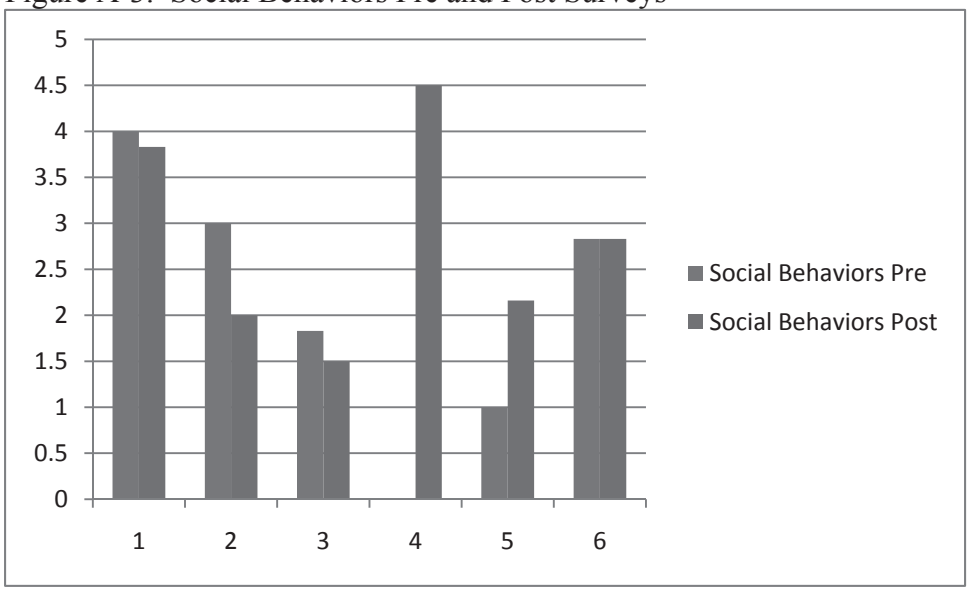

Figure A-3. Participants 1 through 6 mean social behavior scores are shown with the highest positive rating of 5 and the lowest rating of 1. The teacher left this category blank on the pre survey for participant 4.

Social behavior items on checklist:

- Helps other students.
- Comforts other students when they feel badly or sad.
- Says "I'm sorry" when appropriate.
- Says nice things to other students.
- Takes turns, shares and plays fair.

Figure A-4. Inappropriate Social Behaviors Pre and Post Surveys

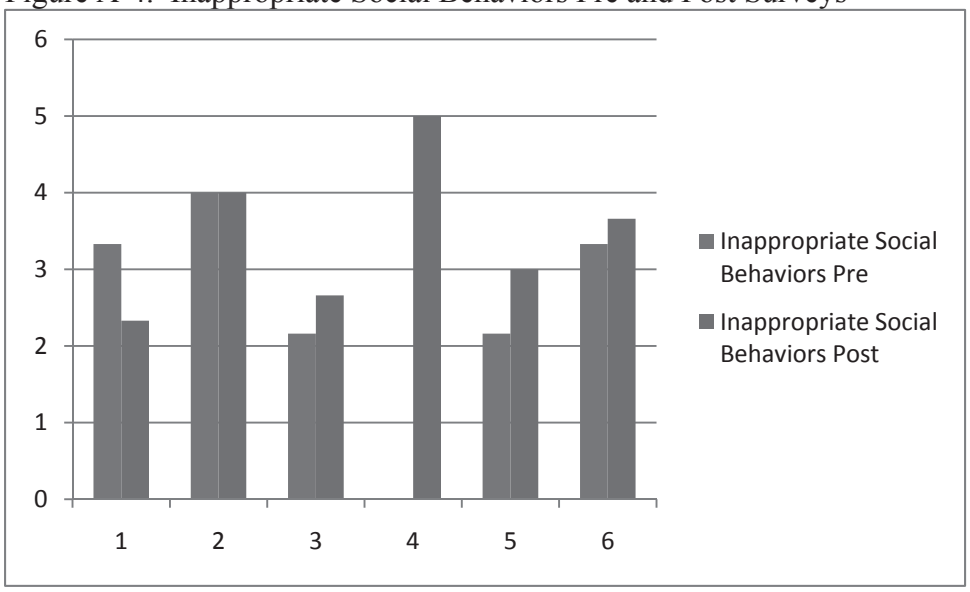

Figure A-4. Participants 1 through 6 mean inappropriate social behavior scores are shown with the highest rating of 5 (the behaviors almost never occurred) and the lowest rating of 1 (the behaviors most often do occur). The teacher left this category blank on the pre survey for participant 4.

Inappropriate social behaviors on checklist:

- Difficulties getting along with other students (argues, displays aggression, or bullies)
- Disrupts instruction and/or procedures

Discussion

The number of participants in the ARS decreased from 8 to 6 because 1 student chose not to continue after a few sessions. Due to personal circumstances another student was not able to attend school during the conclusion of the group. While 8 was an ideal group, the data for 6 group members was substantial.

Overall the group's mean scores demonstrated that participants gained knowledge about the social skills taught in the group lessons because 83% scored a 70% or higher on the post knowledge survey. Only 50% of the students showed an increase from the pre to post, while

33% had pre and post scores that remained the same at 70% and 90%. Since the 33% (2 students) had previously attended a similar social skills group as 3rd graders, the higher pre scores could be due to knowledge retained. However, 2 other students, who had not previously attended a social skills group, scored 80% on the pretest. Maybe the high pre-survey scores indicate that certain students already had prior knowledge of the skills yet may not have been using these skills appropriately.

The PI noticed one question on the post survey was missed by all 6 participants. The question was, "to get from a conflict to a solution, start by." Four of 6 students chose, "agreeing to disagree," which was one of the strategies taught to solve conflicts. One student chose, "telling the other person why he or she is wrong," while another chose "competing with each other." The correct answer was "agreeing to travel together to solve the problem." The results suggest that further explanation would be needed in future groups, to insure students understand first an agreement to work out the conflict is needed, and then to focus on solutions. A question regarding respect for other people listed choices that were all examples of respect, with the last choice stating "all of the above." Two of 6 answered incorrectly by circling the first answer choice. The incorrect answer could be due to not using good test-taking skills, which calls for reading all statements before answering, since they did not read and/or recognize that all of the answer choices were correct. The PI noticed limited time for the post survey was scheduled at the end of the group before classes dismissed for lunch and some students may have rushed their answers. In the future the PI will remind the students when taking the survey to consider all of the answer choices before marking an answer and to take their time to choose the best answer.

Regarding student behavior, the PI expected that as the students' knowledge of social skills increased, their application of skills would increase in the classroom. With 83% scoring

70% or higher on their post knowledge survey of social skills, the PI expected the majority of the participants to improve in the behavior checklists also. The PI considered any increase from the pre to post score an improvement but also considered any score above 3.0 (which was the neutral answer of "sometimes" on the behavior checklist) as positive. The majority of the participants increased in the area of emotional skills. For social skills a third of the participants increased scores, while another third maintained a positive score. In the area of social behavior there was only a small increase in scores, but a third of the post-survey were positive. For inappropriate social behavior the majority of participants either increased or maintained a positive score. Overall, the areas that had the most improvement and highest scores were emotional skills and inappropriate social behaviors.

In the literature review some studies taught both social and academic skills to students, who found academic success. Even though this ARS did not teach academic skills, the PI expected an improvement in grades for students who gained the knowledge and applied the social skills. Regarding grades, 66% of the participants' GPA began and ended with a 3.0 or higher, which demonstrates that they were already academically successful. Only 33% showed an increase in their grades, while another 33% maintained a 3.0 or higher. The students who increased their grades were student #1 and student #4, whose teachers participated in the voluntary survey. Student #1 increased her grades but did not show improvement in her knowledge survey or on any category of the behavior checklist. This could be due to some attention and impulsivity issues, which her teacher noted in the interview. However, she progressed with her academics without these issues interfering with her learning. Student #4 increased her grades as well as showing the most improvement on her pre to post knowledge survey (50% to 90%). She scored between a 4.0 to a 5.0 on the post behavior checklist, which

were the highest scores in each category. According to the teacher this student did not display any of the negative behaviors before or after the group, which could be a reason for her higher scores on the checklist. The PI concluded that since the intervention in the ARS did not focus on academic achievement, the increase or decrease in social skills did not directly affect the students' academic progress. In future groups focused solely on social skills, the academic aspect would be dismissed.

Implications of the ARS

Many factors can affect the rate of a student's learning and application of skills such as, ability to focus, motivation to improve, duration of time measured, amount of experience, awareness of knowledge and behavior being measured. For future small social skills groups, the students would be made aware that their teachers are filling out pre and post surveys of their behavior. This knowledge might motivate then to show more positive behaviors. The PI would allow 4 weeks after the last group session before asking the teachers to fill out the behavior checklist to find if with additional time students are able to demonstrate the application of skills. For students who are not applying the skills, the PI could offer a review session. Increasing the number of sessions to 9 would allow more time to cover the material and completion of the surveys. When administering the knowledge survey, the PI will remind students to consider all answer choices and to avoid rushing. An incentive for a certain score or percentage on the post knowledge survey and/or behavior checklist may also be implemented to see if with motivation the students demonstrate higher knowledge or application of skills. The academic component would be dismissed for future groups. The PI plans to invite these students to participate in the 5th grade Too Good for Violence small group with new strategies in place. By continuing to

conduct AR the PI expects to find the most effective social skills group for her students. Action research has relevance for an individual program and its audience (Mills, 2011).

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iPads for School Counselors: Productivity and Practice

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Abstract

This article reviews 20 uploadable iPads applications (apps) that provide school counselors diverse options to use in any phase of the comprehensive school counseling program. A brief explanation of each app is presented, and the cost and web address for acquisition are provided in the appendix. This information can be a helpful guide to the busy school counselor who understands the need for technology in his or her school counseling program as a way to engage students. Ethical issues related to iPad use by school counselors are also addressed.

Keywords: iPad, school counselor, technology, applications, counseling

iPads for School Counselors: Productivity and Practice

With increasing advancements in technology, the Apple iPad offers school counselors a tool that has the potential to increase productivity and improve practice. The iPad provides school counselors with new strategies that can be used to communicate with a generation of students that grew up using technology from an early age. M-learning (or mobile learning) refers

to "the advantages afforded by mobile technologies" in the learning environment (Manuguerra & Petocz, 2011, 1). Creative use of the iPad can be one form of implementing M-learning. M-learning affords the school counselor with multiple ways to interact with students in the classroom, group setting, and individually. iPads are a means to tap into the technology skills of school counselors and students in a way that can engage students in academic, personal/social, and career digital interventions. The portability of the iPad makes it an excellent technology tool that a school counselor can access anywhere in the school.

Currently, there are approximately 1.5 million iPads being used in the educational setting (Rao, 2012). The education applications or apps available on the iPad exceed 20,000. Apps (applications) are software programs that are found on mobile devices. Many of these apps can potentially assist the school counselor in meeting the needs of students more effectively. While the apps specific to school counseling are limited, many of the productivity apps and educational apps can be modified to be functional for school counselors. An added advantage in the use of iPads in school counseling activities is the potential to result in students becoming more quickly engaged in the school counselor's interventions for a longer period of time.

Productivity Applications

Productivity apps can help school counselors optimize their time. There are numerous apps that are relevant to the job of the school counselor. This article describes ten apps that have the potential to increase productivity. Appendix A contains the name of the application, the cost, and the developer. The ten apps are **Safari (Internet), Email, Logmein, Drop Box**, **IAnnotate PDF, Keynote, Evernote**, **Quickoffice Pro**, **Language Translator, and Dragon Dictation.**

There are several applications that could help increase the productivity of school counselors by allowing access to information, documents, and PDFs. iPads come with **Safari**

already loaded allowing immediate access to the internet as long as a wireless connection is available. This software provides school counselors with access to student records outside their office, email, and any other online resources that are needed without returning to their office. **Email** can also be set up so that the same emails that are delivered to a desktop computer or laptop will also be delivered to an iPad**. Logmein Ignition** provides remote access to other computers available to the school counselor. School counselors can be at home or another part of the building and remotely access another computer to retrieve a document or check information, even make and save changes to a document. Files can also be managed using **Logmein Ignition** (Logmein, 2012). **Drop Box** is a file sharing service that provides an online storage folder that allows the school counselor to drop a file in the folder then access on another computer, smartphone, or iPad with an internet connection. The file could be a document, PDF file, photo or video (Dropbox, 2011). A guidance lesson plan could be dropped into the folder then shared with the classroom teacher to determine if the teacher would like any changes in the lesson. **IAnnotate** is a tool that can be used to read, comment, and share PDF files. School counselors can also write or draw on a PDF file using their finger. Files can be tabbed so that it is easy to return to a certain part of the document. Once comments and changes are made the file can be emailed to another individual (Branchfire, 2012). A PDF file with an activity could be developed to use in an individual counseling activity. The student could complete the activity using his/her finger to write and review with the school counselor.

Keynote is a presentation tool that school counselors can use to develop, deliver, and share presentations. Photographs can be loaded into the presentation while charts and graphs can be created with this application. With a tap of the finger slides can be edited and organized. Animation can be used to increase the effectiveness of the presentation. **Keynote Remote** is an

accessory that can be used to control the presentation as you walk around the room (Apple, 2011). Keynote can be used to deliver classroom guidance lessons by connecting the iPad to a projector in the classroom. **Evernote** is an application that provides school counselors with a place in the iPad to take notes and create digital notebooks. This software uses technology to help users "organize various types of information from several different sources into one, central, web-based location. The product also allows users to clip web pages and archive them for later reference, store screen shots, photos and text notes, all within a customizable storage system" (Productivity501, 2012). **Evernote** will also organize information for you by the date a note or other document was created. In addition, notes/notebooks can be searched, organized, and synched with another computer (Evernote, 2012). School counselors could use **Evernote** to create blogs that can then be added to the school counselor's website. **Quickoffice Pro** is a technology tool that lets the user create, access, and share Microsoft Office files. Documents, excel sheets, and Powerpoints can be created and edited from the iPad, put in Dropbox and shared with other Dropbox users and computers (Quickoffice, 2011). This app increases the ability of school counselors to create and access documents anywhere there is an internet connection.

myLanguage Translator Pro is an application that translates sentences or words in 59 different languages. The translation is returned in writing and in audio. An internet connection is required for audio translation (myLanguage Pro, 2011). School counselors struggling with understanding non-English speaking students can use this application to increase communication between the counselor and student. **Dragon Dictation** is a voice recognition application that allows you to speak and instantly the user will see an email or text message. **Dragon Dictation** is five times faster than typing on a keyboard. It can also be used for social networking or to

creating notes. You can also paste text developed in **Dragon Dictation** to other applications using the clipboard (Nuance, 2012). This particular application increases the mobility of school counselors and allows for multi-tasking.

Practice Applications

Similar to productivity apps, there are hundreds of apps that could potentially be used in the practice of school counseling. The ten apps that will be discussed related to school counseling practice are **Smack talk, Puppet Pals HD, Social Express Lite, You Can Handle Them All**, **ICDL**, **Scribble Press, BeSeen**, **Guidance Counselor, Petersons College Guide,** and **Super Duper Data Tracker**. There are also numerous free games and books that can be downloaded to the iPad and used when working with students such as racing games, puzzles, and chess.

School counselors frequently use puppets to help children address problems or as part of group and classroom guidance. Two puppet apps that can be downloaded to the iPad are **Smacktalk** and **Puppet Pals**. The **Smacktalk** application has three different animals, a hamster, a dog, and a cat that mimic whatever the user says in whatever language is selected. Children can create stories, read them to one of the animals, and whatever the child reads is stated back to him or her (Marcus Satellite, 2011). This app could be used to build rapport with a child, as a reward, or to help children tell their stories. **Puppet Pals** is a cartoon/animation application that allows the user to create stories using the characters provided by the app. The user selects the characters, moves them around on the set, and provides their voice. Once the story is finished, a video is created with all the characters, movements and speech that the user created (Polished Play, 2011). This application would be beneficial to use as a group activity requiring the students to address role play topics or when working with individual students.

You Can Handle Them All is an app for managing student behavior. One hundred and twenty-four behaviors identified as problem behaviors are available in the app. For each behavior, a primary cause is listed along with actions that can be taken to address the behavior. In addition, related behaviors are cross referenced (The Master Teacher, 2011). This application provides school counselors with a quick resource to respond to student inappropriate behavior or to help teachers manage problem behaviors in the classroom. The purpose of the **Social Lite Express** app is to help children and adolescents who have difficulty in social situations to learn how to function appropriately in these situations. **Social Lite Express** uses "best practices and programs that feature cognitive behavioral techniques and virtual strategies including social stories" (Social Express Lite, 2011, 1). Social issues addressed include identifying feelings in others, nonverbal language, coping strategies, social cues, and social conversation. This application would be appropriate for the school counselor to use with any student that struggles in social situations.

ICDL-International Children's Digital Library is a source of free books for children that can be downloaded to the iPad. Books are available from over sixty countries. Many of the books have been translated into other languages making this app useful for working with children when English is not their native language (ICDL, 2008). This resource helps the school counselor find resources that support an issue germane to the school counseling program including classroom guidance activities, group sessions, or individual counseling. Another tool that can be used to work with children is **Scribble Press** (Scribble Press, 2012). This tool allows the user to create stories on the iPad. The stories can be created or there are 50 templates in the app that can be used to create a story. In addition, the app includes drawing tools, such as markers and stamps, a photo library, and a sharing tool that allows the creator to share the story created

(teacherswithapps, 2012). School counselors could develop stories specific to a child's situation or when needed help the child to create a story. **Scribble Press** could also be used to journal. The purpose of the **BeSeen** app is to teach kids internet safety. The app uses a social networking video game that teaches uses how to post appropriate public and personal information on the internet. The app also teaches users how to protect themselves and same age peers in situations such as cyberbullying, slander, and revealing personal information (BeSeen, 2011). This is a resource that could be used in individual counseling and group counseling to help students understand the dangers of the internet.

The **Guidance Counselor** app allows the user to take a career assessment that results in a list of careers that match the user's interests. From this list a second list is generated indicating schools that offer degrees in a selected career interest where the student can then request further information from that school. The user can also browse a variety of professions and find schools that offer degrees in a particular profession. The app also provides an option to call a live advisor to answer additional questions. This app quickly provides the school counselor with a tool to assess students' career interests and provide further information about colleges and universities that offer degrees related to jobs in a student's area of interest (Guidance Counselor, 2010). **Peterson's College Guide** provides the user with information on over 4000 two and four-year colleges in the United States. The information includes: the type of school, setting, degrees offered, cost of tuition, entrance difficulty, average admission GPA and SAT scores, and athletic information. In addition, the user can search by several different criteria such as size of the school, location of the school, tuition and majors offered. For those planning on visiting colleges, the application can also map a route from one university to the next. This is a quick and easy app

that school counselors can use to help students gain information about different colleges (Peterson's Nelnet, 2009).

Super Duper Data Tracker is a means to record and document data for students. For example, pre/post-test scores, grades, and goals can be recorded and tracked in the application. Students can be labeled individually or custom groups can be created. If using the app to record pre/post data, the school counselor can set the group and items up then simply tap either red or green to indicate correct or incorrect responses. **Super Duper Data Tracker** will then calculate the percentage correct (Super Duper, 2011).

Ethical Issues

The iPad is a portable technology device that may assist school counselors in being more productive and provides applications that can be useful in helping students gain information and resolve issues. However, there are ethical issues that need to be addressed when using any technology device. The American Association for School Counselors (ASCA) ethical standards that relate to the use of iPads include:

> Promote the benefits of and clarify the limitations of various appropriate technological applications. Professional school counselors promote technological applications (1) that are appropriate for students' individual needs, (2) that students understand how to use and (3) for which follow-up counseling assistance is provided.
>
> **c.** Take appropriate and reasonable measures for maintaining confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of computers, facsimile machines, telephones, voicemail, answering machines and other electronic or computer technology.

d. Understand the intent of FERPA and its impact on sharing electronic student records. (Technology, A.10.)

It is important for school counselors to clarify the purpose of the iPad and the limits of an application when working with children. It is also important to make sure the application is developmentally appropriate and that students understand how to use the applications they are working with in order to make the process as easy as possible. School counselors must be very aware of where they are when using the iPad, who can view the iPad when accessing and viewing students' records, and the criteria for sharing electronic records. It is equally important that once the school counselor is finished viewing student records that the screen displaying the records is closed out.

Conclusion

Technology has changed the way students in schools learn and interact. It is important that school counselors use new strategies to assist students in their academic, career, and personal/social growth. iPads have the potential to provide school counselors with strategies and the means to engage students using a format students are familiar with. In addition, the portability of the iPad can potentially increase the productivity of school counselors by allowing them to access information and work with and create documents anywhere they have an internet connection.

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You can Handle Them All (Version 1.1.1) [Computer app]. Manhattan, KS: The Master Teacher, Inc.

Appendix A*

Application	Cost	Developer
BeSeen	Free	WebWise Kids, Inc.
Dragon Dictation	Free	Nuance Communications, Inc.
Drop Box	Free	Dropbox, Inc.
Email	Free	School Email
Evernote	Free	Evernote Corporation
Guidance Counselor	Free	OMNIPATTERNS, Inc.
IAnnotate PDF	$9.99	Branchfire, LCC
ICDL	Free	ICDL Foundation
Keynote	$9.99	Apple, Inc.
Logmein Ignition	Free (Logmein Ignition Pro– $29.99)	Logmein, Inc.
myLanguage Translator Pro	Free	mylanguage Pro, Inc.
Peterson's College Guide	Free	Peterson's Nelnet, Inc.
Puppet Pals HD	Free (Director's Pass, $2.99)	Polished Play LLC
Quickoffice Pro	$14.99	Quickoffice, Inc.
Safari (Internet Browser)	Free	Apple, Inc.
Scribble Press	Free	Scribble Press, Inc.
Smacktalk	$.0.99	Perfect Buzz Music
Social Express Lite	Free (to upgrade $89.99)	The Language Express
Super Duper Data Tracker	$5.99	Super Duper Publications
You Can Handle Them All	Free	The Master Teacher, Inc.

*i-Pad users can access apps through the App store that available on the i-Pad.

Integrating Sand Tray and Solution Focused Brief Counseling as a Model for Working with Middle School Students

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Abstract

School counselors are master jugglers and must assume a variety of roles and tasks in order to be successful. Despite common misconceptions, Play Therapy is not for exclusive use with younger children. In fact, adolescents can also benefit from its unique properties. One integrated technique that could prove to be especially helpful with middle school students is Sand Tray used in conjunction with Solution Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC). Sand Tray and SFBC could help validate the feelings of students while also helping students set and achieve short-term goals, regardless if they are academic, social, or emotional.

Keywords: Sand tray, solution focused brief counseling, middle school students, counseling interventions

Integrating Sand Tray and Solution Focused Brief Counseling as a Model for Working with Middle School Students

The therapeutic relationship is vital to the effectiveness of the counseling process. School counselors can find building a solid relationship with students difficult given tremendous

demands on counselors' time, role conflict, and multiple responsibilities. Nevertheless, school counselors are master jugglers and must assume a variety of roles and tasks in order to be successful. Finding time to nurture the relationships between counselor and student can be a daunting task in this type of environment. In order to maintain their positions, school counselors must be innovative and dynamic in their approach to the establishment of this relationship.

The introduction of Play Therapy techniques into an academic setting can help the counselor establish trusting relationships and build rapport with the students (Rasmussen & Cunningham, 1995). Traditional "talk therapy" methods can be useful in communicating with students about the nature of their issues, but play therapy allows for a less invasive, creative way for the student to express him/herself and his/her anxieties to the counselor. Play acts as a medium for metaphorical expression equally as powerful as verbal expression (Chesley et al., 2008). The use of metaphors in the school counseling setting helps students make sense of distressing internal and external events occurring in daily life. Play therapy techniques allow students to process these experiences using a familiar means (Landreth, 2002; Rasmussen & Cunningham, 1995).

Despite common misconceptions, Play Therapy is not for exclusive use with younger children. In fact, adolescents can also benefit from its unique properties. Older students can process monumental or difficult life experiences using symbolic play (Chelsey et al., 2008). One specific play technique that could prove to be especially helpful with the adolescent population is Sand Tray. Sand Tray is a symbolic method of self-expression in which the client represents himself and the world around him using a base of sand and miniature figurines. Although Sangganjanavanich and Magnuson (2011) point out that Sand Tray is not a

replacement for a solid counselor-student relationship, it can be an excellent supplement because the technique can enhance and deepen student disclosure.

The metaphors that manifest during Sand Tray can give valuable insight into the student's perspectives, thereby promoting deeper counselor empathy and an enhanced counseling relationship. Counselors can use student-created metaphors and identify potential counseling opportunities (Sangganjanavanich & Magnuson, 2011). Sand Tray gives the user the power to control their "sand environment" which can be freeing for students who have little control over their life circumstances. This technique also allows students to depict persons and events in their lives without actually having to disclose too much information to the counselor. Sand Tray methods are also diverse enough for use with students of any age and allow for the expression of cultural and societal differences (Sangganjanavanich & Magnuson, 2011).

Sand Tray techniques can be both directive and non-directive. Traditionally, Sand Tray sessions have been non-directive in nature, allowing the student to take direction and control over the session. Non-directive Sand Tray promotes the growth of the counseling relationship. The approach can also help the student build self-esteem and trust. However, when Sand Tray is directive, associated techniques help the student dynamically engage in the process of goal-setting (Nims, 2007).

Both aspects of Sand Tray are important in a school counseling setting. In an ideal situation, the school counselor could designate enough time for non-directive Sand Tray with individual students. Even with time constraints, an entirely directive approach reduces opportunities for the student and counselor to build a strong working alliance. An integrated strategy that blends directive and non-directive techniques can enhance the counselor-student bond and direct the student toward concrete, realistic goals (Rasmussen & Cunningham, 1995).

Within the realm of school counseling, the ability to integrate various counseling methods is indispensible. The counselor wants to be as effective as possible, but large lists of assigned students and other duties can counteract the efforts of even the most determined helper (Sklare, 2005). School counselors may benefit from combining an additional counseling element with talk and Sand Tray techniques.

Solution Focused Brief Counseling

Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (also referred to as Solution-Focused Brief Therapy) is a short term, goal-oriented therapeutic technique designed to help students achieve objectives agreed upon by both the student and counselor (Nims, 2007; Sklare, 2005). This ground-breaking method focuses on solutions rather than problems. SFBC emphasizes future goals instead of past events (Iveson, 2002).

Sohby and Cavallaro (2010) pointed out that SFBC uses a variety of open questions to stimulate creative problem-solving in the student; SFBC allows the student to become an active part of his/her counseling and goal-setting. The SFBC process is positive, inspiring students to take responsibility for the resolution of their own problems, and celebrating previously accomplished victories in the student's life and setting concrete goals for future achievement (Sklare, 2005; Sobhy & Cavallaro, 2010). Through the use of SFBC, the student can embrace the possibility of change. A technique referred to as the "Miracle Question" is particularly effective in changing a student's negative pattern of thinking. The counselor asks the student to imagine the problem no longer exists by assuming a miraculous event has occurred and removed the problem from his/her life (Iveson, 2002; Sklare, 2005). The student must describe what his/her life would be like without the problem, thus creating alternative actions and thoughts that can diminish the presence of the issue at hand.

SFBC and Sand Tray

Taylor (2009) showed that Sand Tray and SFBC can be combined to provide deep and encouraging counseling sessions. Both Sand Tray and SFBC help the client to become "masters of their own worlds," while the counselor remains a goal-directed observer and collaborator (Taylor, 2009). When used in conjunction with SFBC, Sand Tray could help validate the feelings of students while also helping students set and achieve short-term goals, regardless if they are academic, social, or emotional.

Sand Tray could be particularly effective in the exploration of the "Miracle Question" because it stimulates deeper thinking and allows the counselor to work within the metaphor created by the student. Brief, powerful sessions such as these would be suited for the school counseling environment and also allow the counselor to make the best impact he/she can on as many students as he/she can. SFBC works well with middle school aged students when creative and expressive techniques are incorporated (Nims, 2007).

However, not all students would be suited for Sand Tray and SFBC integrated therapy. Sklare (2005) points out students experiencing trauma may not want to seek a solution right away. Likewise, the use of symbolic representation in Sand Tray therapy could also be damaging to a traumatized student. A Solution Focused approach assumes students are healthy enough to solve their own problems, and this may not always be the case (Sobhy & Cavallaro, 2010). In any clinical situation, it is best for the counselor to refer the student to another professional within the community.

It is up to the counselor to use his/her best judgment in determining good candidates for Sand Tray and SFBC. Sangganjanavanich and Magnuson (2011) did not recommend the use of Sand Tray with clients who were resistant to the counseling process, or clients dealing with

severe emotional or mental challenges. In the school counseling setting, forcing a student to engage when she is highly resistant to Sand Tray therapy could damage the therapeutic relationship and stall progress.

Despite those few exceptions, Sand Tray and SFBC would still be effective methods in the school counseling setting, especially among middle school students. Middle school aged students experience many complex emotional and physical changes. Adolescence is an influential time in the student's life where he/she is transitioning between childhood and adulthood. There are astonishing amounts of issues middle school students face, which require some sort of therapeutic outlet in order to cope and transition effectively. In fact, research suggests that middle school students deal with problems related to body image, bullying, and perceived adult authority.

Both middle school girls and boys deal with body image issues and self-esteem. Petrie et al. (2010) showed that adolescent girls place great emphasis on social body comparisons and were likely to use exercise to manage their appearances, which could lead to body image issues and disordered eating. Likewise, boys are more susceptible to peer-pressures that urge them to build muscle mass and maintain strength (Petrie et al., 2010). The use of Sand Tray therapy (over talk therapy) could be a better outlet for students dealing with negative body image because it allows them to creatively and symbolically express this struggle, and how their lives would differ if body image was not a factor.

Many middle school students also struggle with issues of bullying. Aggression and victimization are common throughout adolescence and can result in maladjustment for both the aggressor and victim (Card & Hodges, 2009). There can be a large degree of fear and notions of "tattle-telling" among adolescents. This can make it difficult for a school counselor to make any

progress with a bullied student. However, Sand Tray could provide an outlet of expression for the student without making him/her feel guilty, and could lead to deeper conversations and goal setting in the future.

Middle school students also deal with their own perceptions of adult and peer authority. As adolescents mature, a conflict between parental, peer, and personal authority emerges. Middle school students are more likely to seek approval and validation from their friends, while accepting their parents as legitimate authorities decline. During the early adolescent years, legitimacy beliefs deteriorate and give way to more independent experiences (Kuhn & Laird, 2011). This can create a divide in trust between the student and middle school counselor. Sand Tray is less threatening and it does not require the student to deeply disclose to the counselor right away. Sand tray could help the counselor and student break the ice and create a stable relationship in a shorter amount of time.

Conclusions

Due to the emotional and social conflicts that arise during the early adolescent years, middle school counselors must bring a variety of counseling methods to the table in order to be as effective and appealing as possible. Using a variety of creative and play techniques with middle school students can benefit both students and counselors. Combining the use of Sand Tray and SFBC could be most useful in the middle school setting. The integration of these techniques helps students to feel safe and free to express what they are feeling inside.

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Clinical Supervision Strategies for School Counselors Working with Twice-Exceptional Students

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Abstract

Clinical supervision is a way for counselors in training to develop needed skills (Bernard & Goodyear, 1998). Best practices indicate that counselors trained in the application of supervision theory should provide clinical supervision. However, many school counselors receive administrative supervision by non-counseling professionals who may overlook the school counselors' clinical development. In addition, there is limited research on school counselors' clinical or administration supervision with special population such as twice-exceptional learners. This article reviews current literature on school counselors' clinical and administrative supervision practices with the twice-exceptional population, in consideration of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) National Model. Implication for counselors, suggestions for future research, and strategies to increase this type of supervision will also be discussed.

Keywords: Supervision, school counselor supervision, twice-exceptional students, special education, gifted education

Clinical Supervision Strategies for School Counselors Working with Twice-Exceptional Students

School counselors shape the development of students' unique academic, social/emotional, and career needs (Page, Pietrzak, & Sutton, 2001). Counselors may address these unique needs through a variety of counseling services offered through the school counseling program. While trained to address these diverse student needs, school counselors often do not receive adequate clinical supervision to perform these duties effectively (Studer, 2006). In particular, school counselors meeting the needs of twice-exceptional students have singular clinical supervision needs and considerations.

Twice-exceptional students can be defined as students who possess an identified disability in conjunction with gifted abilities (Assouline, Nicpon, & Huber, 2006). The knowledge and skills of school counselors can address the unique presenting needs of twice-exceptional students (Assouline, Nicpon, & Huber, 2006; Neilson, 2002). A discussion of supervision in the school setting follows.

School Counseling Supervision

Different types of supervision exist in the school setting. What is supervision? Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth (1982) define supervision as an intensive, interpersonal focused relationship, usually one on one or small group, where the supervisor helps the counselor learn to apply wider varieties of assessment and counseling methods to increasingly complex cases (Page, Pietrzak, & Sutton, 2001). Hart (1982) defines supervision as an "on-going educational process in which the supervisor helps the supervisee acquire appropriate professional behavior through an examination of the trainee's professional activity (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004). Bernard and Goodyear (2004) define supervision as an intervention provided by a senior member

of a profession to a junior member of that same profession. Further, Herlihy, Gray, & McCollum (2002) state that supervision is "a contractual formal process in which a relationship is formed between supervisor and trainee" (p 8). Boyd (1978) identified the purpose of the supervision relationship as facilitating trainees' personal and professional development (Studer, 2006). The supervision of school counselors should be implemented by a "senior professional to a junior professional *of that same* profession" (italics added).

Page, Pietrzak, & Sutton (2001) define administrative supervision as "an ongoing process in which the supervisor oversees staff and staff communication, planning, implementation, and evaluation of individuals, programs, or both individuals and programs (p. 144)." School counselor responsibilities are multifaceted in relation to designing and implementing a comprehensive school counseling plan. As well, school counselors are sometimes the only professional in the school who possesses knowledge of education as well as mental health (Henderson & Gysbers, 2006). To this end, school counselors' time, attention and supervision should focus on their roles as outlined by the American School Counseling Association Model [ASCA] National Model (ASCA, 2003).

The duties of a school counselor may vary across school settings. The building administrator (i.e. principal) may have counselor expectations that deviate from the ASCA National Model; this misalignment of duties may stem from the principal's lack of knowledge and understanding of professional school counselors' roles and responsibilities. Therefore, the principal's administrative supervision may focus more on the management of inappropriate (non-counseling duties) administrative duties such as registering all new students, performing disciplinary actions, teaching classes, and administering cognitive, aptitude and achievement tests (ASCA, 2003). However, a professional school counselor who serves as lead counselor or

the guidance and counseling director may be able to focus program development on appropriate administrative and clinical tasks such as designing individual student academic programs, counseling students, collaborating with teachers to present school counseling curriculum lessons, and interpreting cognitive, aptitude, and achievement test through clinical supervision.

Research has shown while school counselors may not receive clinical supervision, they recognize its importance and would like to receive clinical supervision (Crespi, 2003; Page, Pietrzak, & Sutton, 2001). In a study conducted by Crespi (2003), approximately 95% of school counselors confirmed the importance of clinical supervision and reported a desire for clinical supervision. However, many reported that they do not receive clinical supervision. In a previous study by Sutton and Page (1994), 20 % of school counselors received clinical supervision and 63% expressed a desire for supervision related to intervention with client problems and developing skills and techniques as important goals. Clinical supervision is an integral part of the professional development of mental health professionals clinical supervision and provides a way to develop needed skills (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004) in school settings (Crespi, 2003) and community settings. Thus, the multifaceted role of school counselor demands appropriate and meaningful clinical supervision.

A site supervisor is a school counselor with more professional experience, who works in the building with the counseling trainee pursuing a Master's degree or higher. The site supervisor is available on a daily basis or accessible via phone or distance technology. The building administrator or his or her designee usually serves as an administrative supervisor. The Director of Counseling, who coordinates the guidance and counseling services for the district, is usually located at the district level and not the school building with the supervisee. Lastly, a head counselor usually works in the building with the supervisee but does not work one on one with

the supervisee on a daily basis. The clinical supervisor in the school setting is often non-existent; the absence of this type of supervisor may result in supervisees entering the field of school counseling without important developmental skills of school counseling (Studer, 2006).

School counselors often receive supervision from principals, school psychologists, or other non-counseling professionals, which may be ineffective for school counselors' professional identity and development. As well, many site supervisors working with school counselors trainees have not received formal preparation or coursework in clinical supervision. Therefore, they may rely upon their experience as a school counselor to guide the supervision relationship. This type of site supervision may be ineffective in assisting the school counselor in formulating counselor identity and developing professionally. Administrative supervisors not trained as school counselors may not fully understand the role of the school counselor and may expect the school counselor to engage in inappropriate duties such as monitoring lunch or dealing with disciplinary problems rather than appropriate tasks such as behavior modification and conducting social skills groups (Burnham, 2000). Incorporating appropriate administrative supervision as well as clinical supervision is important to the development of school counselors.

Role of the School Counselor

The profession has redefined the role of the school counselors over the years; societal changes and expectations have precipitated this redefinition (Burnham, 2000). Since the mid 1960's, the Association for Counselors Educators and Supervisors, along with ASCA, have categorized the role of school counselors into the areas of counseling, consultation, and coordination (Muro & Kottman, 1995). ASCA states that professional school counselors are responsible for serving all students. The ASCA National Model promotes advocacy, leadership, and service delivery through organization and programming (ASCA, 2005). Professional school

counselors assume responsibility for the academic, social/emotional, and career development of *all* students. This includes twice-exceptional students whose needs are not considered fully in the school counseling or supervision literature.

Defining Twice Exceptional

The term twice-exceptional is used to define a student who has presented with a special need, such as physical, emotional, behavioral or learning disability, while simultaneously possessing gifted and talented abilities (Moon & Reis 2005). Disabilities can mask twice-exceptional students' gifts and vice versa (McEachern & Barnot, 2001). Neilson (2002) notes that these may present as "high level problem solving" masked by "processing deficits"; "advanced ideas and thoughts" masked by "inflexibility"; "superior vocabulary" masked by "uneven academic skills." Other characteristics may include low self-esteem, inappropriate social skills, impulsivity, and highly distractible behavior (Neilson, 2002 p.95).

When students receive identification as twice exceptional, they face many challenges and frustrations (King, 2005). These challenges stem from feelings of confusion about excelling at some tasks and demonstrating less skill at other tasks (King, 2005). Some challenges include feeling academically inadequate compared to their gifted peers; this feeling of inadequacy may lead to resentment and aggression toward peers (King, 2005). Twice-exceptional students may display inappropriate social skills that negatively affect how students develop and maintain peer relationships. Lack of social skills and low self-concept isolate twice-exceptional students and may prevent them from reaching full potential in the gifted program. Thus, adequate attention to the social and emotional needs of twice-exceptional students is as important as attending to their academic needs (King, 2005).

Needs of Twice-Exceptional Students

The needs of twice-exceptional students include but are not limited to, understanding of self, ways to cope with feelings of confusion, frustration, inadequacy, depression, and anger (Neilson, 2002 p 105). In addition, twice-exceptional students need social skills training, opportunity to interact appropriately, career guidance, and study techniques that will assist them in working with their disability (King, 2005; McEachern & Bornot, 2001). Socially, twice-exceptional students may have difficulty developing solutions for social problems, understanding social cues and using appropriate social skills (King, 2005, p.18). Students would benefit from engaging in activities that will help them explore their gifts and talents as well as understand areas of deficiencies (Neilson & Higgins, 2005). In order for school counselors to assist twice-exceptional students effectively, school counselors benefit from reading available literature, case conceptualization, and counseling skills development to understand twice-exceptional students in multiple contexts. Supervision is a way to help school counselors develop these skills.

Strategies for Supervision

School counselors' work in a "time challenging" world that requires them to find ways and time to serve their schools effectively (Studer, 2006 p. 25). Therefore, supervisors of school counselors require supervision strategies that are effective and efficient. When working with a population such as twice-exceptional students, supervision can provide strategies that help counselors understand needs of twice-exceptional students.

ASCA National Model

Integrating the ASCA National Model is an integral part of supervision with school counselors (Studer, 2006). ASCA is a professional organization of school counselors that provides guidance on the roles, functions, and ethical standards for school counseling practice.

Therefore, any supervisor working with school counselors should integrate a working knowledge of the model in supervision and assist the counselor in acquiring a working knowledge of the model (Studer, 2006). This will allow the supervisor to examine how their school counseling program integrates the model and provide a chance for the supervisor to use the ASCA National Model to incorporate activities for the supervisee. Therefore, school counselors will be equipped to help twice-exceptional students develop attitudes, skills, and knowledge in academics, social/emotional, and career development that they will need to reach their full potential. Many school counselors are not aware of the characteristics and unique needs of twice-exceptional students. Incorporating an educational/information component about twice-exceptional students increases the likelihood that the counselors will address the needs of twice-exceptional students in school counseling programs.

Supervisors should choose a supervision model that will address the development of the supervisor and meet the needs of twice-exceptional students. Developmental supervision provides an opportunity for supervisors to guide the supervisee through the levels of development as a counselor in training. This perspective addresses clinical development and appropriate administrative development in the supervisory relationship with school counselors. Using supervision strategies that focus on the counselors' development and promotes positive interactions with twice-exceptional students helps counselors meet the needs of these students.

Future Research

Research can examine the effectiveness of clinical supervision on school counselors' service delivery to twice-exceptional students. This research can examine how counseling supervisors' lack of clinical experience affects the supervised counselor's demonstration of "clinical skills" used in the school setting. Researchers can study school counselors' knowledge

of twice-exceptional students and counselors' role in identifying these students. Research can explore how school counseling programs have included twice-exceptional students in school counseling programming. Future research should also provide knowledge about innovative ways to include twice-exceptional students in training for school counselors; this will lead to increased and relevant programming for twice-exceptional students in the school setting.

Implications for Counseling

School counselors are vital to a dynamic school setting. It is important for supervisees to receive supervision from a trained professional in their profession. As counselor educators, we must insist that site supervisors are from the profession of school counseling and have an understanding of the supervision process. In addition, supervisors must provide opportunities for supervisees to explore current literature on underrepresented populations such as twice-exceptional students. Supervision provided by a professional trained in school counseling as well as supervision models will provide the appropriate personal and professional development supervisees need to function in the role outlined by ASCA.

Conclusion

The literature has begun consideration of twice-exceptional students. However, there is no current literature on how school counselors can affect this population. School counselors uniquely can address the counseling needs of twice-exceptional students given their training as both educators and human development professionals. The supervision experience is one way to increase the knowledge of school counselors about the needs of twice-exceptional students and increase the inclusion of twice-exceptional student programming by school counselors. Utilizing the supervision strategies outlined in this article will allow supervisors to integrate specific supervision models that facilitate knowledge, innovation, and development of school counselors.

Moreover, supervision helps the school counselor provide appropriate services/programs for all students, including twice-exceptional students.

As gatekeepers to the profession, counselor educators must provide supervision experiences that will provide appropriate personal and professional development of school counselors. Increasing the clinical supervision experience will also provide support in the professional identity development of school counselors. Furthermore, supervisors have a responsibility to provide school counselors with a well rounded knowledge of the school setting; this requires increasing their knowledge of twice exceptional students. Utilizing a developmental perspective and integrating the ASCA National Model will increase the effectiveness of the supervisory relationship as well as produce well-trained school counselors.

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Guidelines for Site Supervisors: A Tool Kit

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Abstract

Site supervisors rarely receive training at the master's level in the supervisory skills required for the supervision of intern students. General guidelines for site supervisors are presented in this article. The article suggests steps for a site supervisor to take prior to accepting an intern, procedures to follow during the internship, and information regarding the evaluation process. The appendices contain information that readers can tailor to the unique needs of a site supervisor.

Keywords: school counselors, site supervision, site supervisor, intern students, guidelines, supervision skills

Guidelines for Site Supervisors: A Tool Kit

Introduction

Supervisors are charged with the responsibility for the development of the supervisee, the treatment of the supervisee's client, and the protection of the public from incompetent practitioners (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Bernard and Goodyear defined supervision as:

> . . . an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purpose of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see; and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession (p. 7) .

In schools, it is suggested that supervision for counselors in training include distinctive components to increase counselor competency: 1) clinical supervision, 2) developmental supervision, and 3) administrative supervision (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). Each type of supervision focuses on specific skills and knowledge for the supervisor to address with the supervisee, and each provides assessment and feedback models for targeted skills.

Clinical supervision is designed to increase skills in the areas of direct service delivery and "on the counselors' unique professional skills such as guidance, counseling, consultation, and referrals" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 286). The use of observation to note performance, to assess outcomes, and then to provide feedback, are the essential elements of clinical supervision.

Developmental supervision addresses the supervisees' base of counseling knowledge. "Its purpose is to direct the supervisees' cognitive and affective growth and development" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 278). Examples of developmental activities for the supervisee may include in-service education, conference attendance, and involvement in professional organizations. Other strategies that may be used in developmental supervision could be to involve the supervisee in formal, planned case conceptualization, or to have a mentor assigned to the supervisee.

Administrative supervision addresses other professional aspects of the counselor such as one's soundness of professional judgment, "their mental health, their work habits, their adherence to rules and standards, and the effectiveness of their relationships with colleagues and clients" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 288). Strategies used for feedback to supervisees may involve individual conferences, confrontation and/or suggested improvement strategies, or departmental team meetings.

Many school counselors in Georgia report that they want supervision. Black, Bailey, and Bergin (2011) surveyed school counselors in southeast Georgia to determine the role of clinical supervision in their professional experiences as well as to determine the percentage of those polled who wished to receive supervision. They found that of those responding to the survey, only 5% received clinical supervision whereas 60% would choose to receive these services if available. It becomes evident that these school counselors (the 60%) could see the value in this practice.

Often those counselors with years of experience who provided clinical supervision for interns have had little to no training in supervisory skills (Borders & Brown, 2005). Graduates of master's level school counseling programs who meet the minimum requirements (CACREP, 2009) to be site supervisors typically have had little to no training for fulfilling this essential role. Lack of preparation for clinical supervisory roles does not mean that supervisors are not responsible for facilitating interns' skill development. Nelson and Johnson (1999) noted that "a supervised school counseling internship is one of the most important and rewarding components of a graduate student's preparation" (p.89) for refining and enhancing basic counseling or student development skills, and for the integration of professional knowledge. The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision's Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors (1993)

and Standards for Counseling Supervisors (1990) stipulate that site supervisors are to receive training in supervision before accepting an intern to supervise. Because of the paucity of opportunities to receive such training, most school counselors provide supervision to interns without the benefit of formal training in supervision.

Based on the need for professional supervisory skills and techniques combined with little opportunity to receive training in this area, the purpose of this paper is to provide current and future site supervisors with general guidelines for organizing and administering a learning experience for interns based on best practices of supervision. It is not the intention to replace formal training in supervision with this Tool Kit; however, use of these suggestions may provide a site supervisor with guidelines to conduct supervision with a measure of confidence in their methods.

Requirements to be a Site Supervisor

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009) itemized minimum requirements to be a site supervisor. While not all school counseling master's programs are CACREP accredited, if your intern's program is CACREP accredited, you must meet these minimum requirements to be a qualified site supervisor:

1. Have a master's degree in "school" counseling;
2. Have appropriate certification (certified school counselor);
3. Have a minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the area in which the student is completing clinical instruction;
4. Have knowledge of the master's program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedure for students.

Responsibilities of a Site Supervisor

Supervising an intern can be an overwhelming responsibility, especially given how poor training or supervision can result in inadequate service to stakeholders. However, empirically supported guidelines for conducting supervision include the following:

Points to consider before accepting an intern:

1. Consider your qualifications to be a site supervisor (CACREP, 2009);
2. Do you know what the University expects from you (in your role as University Supervisor) prior to agreeing to host an intern?
3. Review all written documents provided by the school counseling training program (Universities most likely will have a "Memorandum of Understanding" that outlines the university's responsibilities to the student and to the site, and that outlines the site and site supervisor's responsibilities to the student and to the University; ask your intern for a copy).
4. Meet with the counseling student and University supervisor to discuss goals and objectives of the internship.
5. Site supervisors should not agree to accept a school counseling intern if they cannot assist them in fulfilling the requirements of their master's level program.
6. Each University may have a "Site Supervisor's Manual" (CACREP, 2009) available to site supervisors. Be certain to obtain a copy from the internship instructor.
7. Know about providing audio or video taping access for sessions if required, and whether or not signed permission forms are required.

8. Inform the counseling student of the procedures and policies of the school including responsibilities, schedule, assignment of student-clients, emergency procedures, record keeping, confidentiality, and release of information.
9. Determine if your site can provide the intern with the variety of activities and number of hours required by the University.
10. Provide regular ongoing evaluation and feedback to the intern as to their performance.
11. Can you meet at least once a week with the intern to provide regular supervision and consultation?
12. Is there appropriate space for counseling (rooms that maintain confidentiality)?
13. Are your administrators supportive of having an intern? Acquire all official authorization necessary from the school administration for the counseling student to work in the school under supervision.
14. Meet with the university supervisor a minimum of two times during the semester and at other times as dictated by the situation.
15. Submit to the University supervisor an evaluation of the intern at the completion of the term (CACREP, 2009).

If the potential site supervisor cannot provide the proper supervision, then ethical behavior indicates that he or she has an obligation to turn down hosting an intern.

Characteristics of an effective supervisor

Standards for Counseling Supervisors was published in 1990 by The American Counseling Association (ACA, 1990) and provides 11 core areas of personal traits, knowledge and competencies that characterize effective supervisors.

1. Be an effective counselor;
2. Have personal traits and characteristics that are consistent with the role;
3. Be knowledgeable regarding ethical, legal and regulatory aspects of the profession and are skilled in applying this knowledge;
4. Have the ability to think conceptually and to integrate theory with practice;
5. Have knowledge of supervision methods and techniques;
6. Have knowledge of the counselor development process;
7. Have knowledge and competence in case conceptualization and management;
8. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in client assessment and evaluation;
9. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in oral and written reporting and recording;
10. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in the evaluation of counseling performance;
11. Have knowledge of research in counseling supervision (Association for Counselor Education and supervision, 1990);

The next step is to interview potential interns for your site.

Interview questions and information to share.

1. Is there a fit of personality and goals for the internship?
2. Will I be able to work with this person?
3. Do we have similar values related to school counseling?
4. Do the logistics work out (times, hours, needs of supervisee, needs of supervisor)?
5. Does the intern understand the purpose of supervision?
6. What is my method and type of evaluation, and can I clearly explain this to the intern?
7. Can I explain the duties and responsibilities of the supervisee and supervisor?

8. Check for an understanding of ethical and legal issues, confidentiality, counseling theory, and process for complaints and due process to be included in the informed consent.
9. What kind of person do I work best with, i.e., a self-starter, someone to follow my directions, someone to take initiative, others?
10. What does the intern need: direction, instruction, support, "hand holding," and can I provide for these needs?
11. Try to discover anything that may hinder or help the experience being mutually successful. (These were anecdotal suggestions from site supervisors as well as interns applying for a site.)

Practical Suggestions for the Supervision Process

Chronological Listing of Preparation Tasks for Supervision

Date	Not Needed	Item
		Prepare a supervision disclosure statement (consent form and agreement)
		Give copy of consent form and agreement to the supervisee
		Give supervisee instructions on preparing for supervision* Appendix A
		Secure a private space for sessions and for audio/video taping
		Plan agenda for supervisory session* Appendix B
		Have supervisee complete "Intake"* Appendix C
		Ask supervisee to come prepared to discuss his or her cultural background
		Discuss supervisory relationship, leadership style, what to expect
		Schedule minimum of one hour of supervision per week

(Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004) *See examples in appendices.

Use of a Supervision Model

Supervision models provide frameworks for "organizing knowledge and skills for conducting supervision" (Borders & Brown, 2005, p.6). As counseling theories provide a guide for understanding client issues, supervision models help the supervisor choose best ways to facilitate growth and development in interns and for evaluating one's effectiveness as a supervisor. Bernard's Discrimination Model (1979) presents three roles for the supervisor to

employ when working with the supervisee. The role of teacher, counselor or consultant is determined by the supervisor when taking into consideration the developmental level of the intern. A more in-depth explanation of the roles can be found in an article entitled *School Counselors as Supervisors: An Integrated Approach for Supervising School Counseling Interns* (Nelson & Johnson, 1999).

As a teacher, the supervisor instructs interns on assessment, case conceptualization, counseling approaches, legal and ethical issues, among many things, and provides experiential learning activities. Constructive feedback is given after most activities as a means to teach. The supervisor provides information to interns about how the process of supervision works and how they can maximize their supervision experience (Haynes, Corey, & Moulton, 2003).

In the role of counselor, the supervisor focuses on the intern's professional development rather than on personal issues, and uses their counseling skills to guide the intern. A supervisor is not to provide personal counseling for the intern as this would constitute a dual role and be a breach of ethical standards (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Counseling skills are used to understand, motivate, and relate to the intern.

The consultant role is the least definitive role for the supervisor. Consultation comes in the later stages of competency development when the intern has demonstrated their confidence in their abilities. The teacher role takes on less significance and the equality of the relationship takes on greater prominence. The intern still has contact with the supervisor on a regular basis but more as a consultant than as a teacher (Borders & Brown, 2005).

Supervisory Duties

Following are some examples of supervisory duties (CACREP, 2009).

1. Provide opportunities for intern to develop their counseling performance skills in both individual counseling and group counseling,
2. Develop intern's professional behaviors,
3. Co-establish goals for internship; check on progress periodically,
4. Establish learning objectives and evaluate outcomes,
5. Provide feedback on all activities of the intern,
6. Provide an hour of supervision each week based on an agenda,
7. Provide the intern with guidelines to prepare for the supervisory hour,
8. Understand the developmental stages of the school counseling intern (early, middle, late) (CACREP, 2009).

Maintaining proper relationships

It is common for new site supervisors to express concern over their authoritative role in this unique training experience. To avoid discomfort and misunderstanding,

1. Establish early on clearly written goals for supervision.
2. Discuss how the roles of supervisor and intern are different.
3. Disclose the process of supervision and supervisor expectations.
4. Discuss the evaluation process, including expectations, timing, and criteria to be used (See Appendix D, Benchmarks for Intern Skill Development, for criteria to use for establishing and evaluating learning objectives for the intern); these criterion can facilitate skill development throughout the internship.
5. Establish a process to resolve conflicts.

6. Create an atmosphere in which support and challenge coexist.
7. Use humor.
8. Encourage a more egalitarian relationship (consultation) as the supervisee gains in counseling skills.
9. Use the Performance Assessment Instrument for Supervisee* for establishing goals for improvement; do this as often as weekly; have no surprises; keep intern aware of areas to improve (CACREP, 2009).

University Expectations of the Site Supervisor

The internship experience is intended to provide counseling students with a broad-based practical experience in school settings. This experience is designed to have interns relate academic and theoretical learning to field experience in the five areas of developmental guidance: 1) individual counseling; 2) small group counseling; 3) classroom guidance; 4) consultation with staff, parents, and community; and 5) program planning and evaluation (CACREP, 2009).

Evaluation and Goals for Internship

Each University may provide an evaluation form for the site supervisor to complete for the intern at the completion of the internship. This form should be discussed on the first day of the internship. Also, Appendix D contains a list of important benchmarks for interns to attain during the course of their training to be a school counselor. This approach to evaluation is flexible and can be modified to meet the unique needs of the intern. Together, the site supervisor and the intern should choose and set standards for several items to guide skill development each week; bring the results to the weekly supervisory meeting, and evaluate the results. New goals

(evaluation benchmarks) can be established for the next week. Both the site supervisor and the intern are aware of the progress to be made.

Ethics

The site supervisor is to communicate the expectation of adhering to the ethical codes and guidelines sanctioned by the American Counseling Association (Resource List), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (Resource List), other ACA divisions, relevant credentialing bodies (CACREP, 2009) and models of ethical behavior (Author, 2011). Areas of prime concern are: a) Professional disclosure statement and written informed consent as needed or relevant; .b) Client welfare and rights: Primary obligation of supervisors is the promotion the welfare of their clients; c) Supervisory role: monitor client welfare, monitor clinical performance of supervisee, have training in supervisory skills, d) Parameters of confidentiality of the client and of the intern, and e) dual roles. Resource for the Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors can be found in the Resources List.

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Appendix A

Supervisee Guidelines for the Supervision Session

Come prepared with a list of your supervision goals for each supervisory session.

Phase 1: Advanced Preparation for the Supervision Session (the supervisee is to do these)

1. **Content**
   a. Introduce new cases
   b. Review previously discussed cases
   c. Personal awareness (Personalization)
   d. Evaluation of counseling outcomes
   e. Cultural influences
   f. Crisis issues
   g. Ethical and legal issues
   h. Professional development

2. **Process** (reflections on self, on clients, on their behavior in session, on their affect, on their thoughts)
   a. Counseling technique dilemmas
      1) What are you doing to assist the client?
      2) What ideas do you have about helping your client?
      3) What is stopping you from trying out your ideas?
      4) How could you behave differently?
   b. Client Problems
      1) What puzzles you about your client?
      2) What would you like to know about his or her problem?
      3) How could you find out what you do not know?
      4) What resources do you need?
   c. Personal Issues (Process questions for supervisee to present to supervisor)
      1) What is happening to you in this situation?
      2) How are you feeling?
      3) How are these feelings influencing your counseling?
      4) What is your purpose?
      5) How is your counseling behavior related to assisting your client?
      6) What are your hypotheses about your own behavior?
      7) What needs to happen for you to behave differently?
   d. Administrative Questions
      1) What are the ethical/legal issues involved with this client?
      2) What assistance do you need with maintaining your professional qualifications and development?

e. Treatment Planning/Action Issues (adapt to the school setting and developmental level)
   1) What are your client's symptoms/problems?
   2) What hypotheses do you have about your client and/or your client's behavior (theoretically based)
   3) What meaning do your client's situation/personal issues have for treatment?
   4) What are the counselor's goals, and are they separate from the client's goals?
   5) What are the client's goals?
   6) In what stage of change is the client?
   7) What treatment modalities/interventions will be used?
   8) What additional resources are necessary?

f. Unresolved Issues
   1) What are the multicultural issues between you and the client?
   2) Between you and your supervisor?
   3) How will you address these issues?
   4) What disagreements do you have with your supervisor?
   5) How will you handle these disagreements?
   6) Have you asked how your supervisor would like you to implement his or her suggestions?
   7) What do you need from your supervisor? How will you present this topic to your supervisor?

Phase II: Supervision Session
Present your supervisor with your agenda at the beginning of the session.
Make sure that you get your needs met.

Phase III: Translation of Ideas into Action
Have a plan to translate new information into action with your client and know how you will incorporate this new information into your counseling sessions. (Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004)

Appendix B

Supervisor Guidelines for the Supervision Session

1. Your supervisee should come to supervision with a prioritized agenda.

2. As each agenda item is introduced, you are to help the supervisee clarify issues and how supervision can assist with resolution.. Questions to ask:
   a. What is confusing to you about this case/student/issue/group/guidance lesson?
   b. What would you like to happen as the result of our discussion?
   c. What puzzles you about this client?

3. What will be the focus for supervision?
   a. Skill development?
   b. Case conceptualization?
   c. Personal awareness?
   d. Professional behavior?
   e. A combination?

4. What role will you use?
   a. Teaching?
   b. Counseling?
   c. Consulting?
   d. Why?

5. Check and recheck with the supervisee:
   a. Did you get what you need?
   b. Are we finished with this?
   c. Have we covered this enough?

Using this guideline, develop a checklist for each session with your supervisee; keep the completed form as part of the supervisees' records.

Adapted from: Fall, J., & Sutton, J. M., Jr. (2004). Clinical supervision: A handbook for supervisors. New York, New York: Pearson Allyn and Bacon

Appendix C

Intake Information from the Supervisee

Gather During the Interview for Site Placement

1. Demographic information
2. Education/training
3. Experience in the school setting
4. Previous supervision experiences
5. Liability insurance
6. Ethical training/code followed
7. Any previous complaints/legal action
8. Theoretical orientation
9. Supervisee goals/objectives
10. Strengths and weaknesses as a school counselor
11. Professional development plans
12. Description of settings/clients previously served
13. Supervision requirements (# hours, course requirements, reporting, etc.)
14. Supervisee personal issues that may affect client/student treatment (i.e. are there personal issues on-going in the supervisee that need resolution before he or she can be an effective counselor/school counselor?)
15. Supervisee's counseling modality/theoretical orientation (individual, group, theory used).

Topics to Discuss with the Supervisee

1. Purpose of supervision
2. Details of where, when, and for how long supervision will take place.
3. Method and type of evaluation
4. Duties and responsibilities of the supervisee and supervisor
5. Documentation responsibility of the supervisee and supervisor
6. Supervisor's scope of practice
7. Supervision model used by supervisor
8. Confidentiality
9. Ethical and legal considerations
10. Supervisee's commitment to follow all pertinent ethical and legal standards
11. Process for addressing supervisee complaints
12. Emergency and back-up procedures
13. Use of supervision modalities (audio/videotaping, observation, etc.)
14. Supervision session structure
15. Cultural background of the supervisor and supervisee
16. Practicing within supervisee's level of competence
17. Complaints and due process rights

Adapted from: Clinical supervision: A handbook for practitioners. (2004). Marijane Fall & John M. Sutton, Jr. New York, NY: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

Appendix D

Benchmarks for Intern Skill Development

Performance Evaluation Suggested Guidelines
The site supervisor could use many of these benchmarks for cumulative evaluation of the intern throughout the semester. Items could be selected for determining weaknesses and strengths, then for setting goals for improvement. Once goals have been determined, a summative evaluation could be made at the end of the semester. A copy of this form could be given to the intern for self-evaluation and to use for goal setting. Understandably, all of this information will not be addressed each time during the supervisory meeting.

With your supervisee, choose appropriate items from these suggestions to evaluate your supervisee's skills. For any skill rated at 2 or 1, describe the type of intervention you will use to help the supervisee improve.

4-Effective; 3-Somewhat effective; 2-Somewhat ineffective; 1-Ineffective; NA-not applicable

Intervention Skills

__ Establishes rapport with student; projects warmth, caring and acceptance
__ Gets the student's story
__ Assists students in identifying and exploring presenting problems
__ Listens to verbal and nonverbal communications
__ Communicates empathy and genuineness with students
__ Conducts session effectively, using basic skills such as paraphrases, reflections, questions, and summaries
__ Observes in-session behavior (e.g., student language) and uses it to facilitate the student/counselor relationship
__ Uses silence as an effective intervention technique
__ Demonstrates effectiveness in making formal assessments
__ Assists students in goal setting
__ Helps students build on their strengths
__ Assists students in assuming responsibility for their progress in therapy
__ Assists students in normalizing their behavior
__ Uses theoretical techniques to help students change their behavior
__ Understands how to assist students who are in crisis
__ Demonstrates an ability to be concrete and specific
__ Demonstrates the use of multiple approaches to treatment
__ Works effectively with immediacy
__ Exhibits control of the session
__ Models effectively for students
__ Uses reinforcement appropriately

__ Rehearses new behaviors and skills with students
__ Effectively uses contracts and homework assignments
__ Makes referrals when necessary
__ Is knowledgeable about termination:
__ Gives and receives feedback

Conceptualization Skills
__ Identifies important student themes and patterns
__ Assists students in perceiving situations from different points of view
__ Uses student information to develop working hypotheses or hunches
__ Makes relevant observations about student behavior
__ Identifies and uses student discrepancies
__ Perceives underlying student issues
__ Uses student cultural background in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment
__ Encourages students to hypothesize about their own behavior
__ Assists students in developing relevant focus and direction
__ Evaluates the efficacy of interventions
__ Is knowledgeable about how systems impact the student
__ Accurately ascertains the reality of the student
__ Adapts theory and techniques to meet the student's reality
__ Grasps the complexity of issues involved with each student
__ Willing to reevaluate the conceptualization of the student

Personalization Skills
__ Recognizes personal assets and liabilities
__ Perceives self in relationship with student
__ Directly addresses the relationship process
__ Understands the dynamics of transference and countertransference
__ Perceives and addresses countertransference
__ Understands power and influence and their use in enhancing student development
__ Understands difference between student and self
__ Perceives and understands boundaries in the student/counselor relationship
__ Sets and maintains appropriate boundaries
__ Understands the advantages and disadvantages of self-disclosure
__ Responds effectively to personal questions
__ Is knowledgeable concerning out-of-office contacts
__ Works effectively with students who are culturally different
__ Is aware of own cultural background and how it may influence

the student/counselor relationship
__ Is aware of own feelings and
__ Uses time line in assisting students

Professional Behavior
__ Participates in continuing education activities such as supervision, consultation, personal counseling, courses, workshops, teaching, reading, writing
__ Completes paperwork, such as intakes and case notes, in a concise and timely manner
__ Communicates written information clearly and effectively
__ Provides a thoughtful informed consent to students
__ Communicates orally, clearly and effectively
__ Respects appointment times with students and supervisors
__ Possesses working knowledge of relevant professional literature
__ Dresses appropriately
__ Is aware and responsive to relevant ethical standards
__ Is knowledgeable about the profession's primary ethical standards
__Effectively applies ethical standards to practice situation
__ Has begun to think ethically
__Seeks consultation on complex ethical situations
__ Is aware and responsive to relevant legal standards:
__ Is knowledgeable concerning laws that pertain to counseling practice
__ Makes a conscious effort to improve counseling knowledge and skill
__ Exhibits willingness to work on personal issues
__ Exhibits respectful behavior towards students and peers
__ Demonstrates an awareness of personal influence and impact on student

Supervision Skills for the Supervisee
__ Arrives prepared at each supervision session
__ Identifies questions, concerns, and issues relevant to current cases
__ Creates professional development goals for supervision
__ Understands and incorporates suggestions
__ Willing to take risks for learning and identifying troublesome situations
__ Accepts encouragement and constructive criticism
__ Actively participates in the supervisory process
__Initiates dialog with the supervisor

(Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004). *Clinical supervision: A handbook for practitioners.* New York, NY: Pearson Allyn and Bacon)

Essential Pieces to Students' Success