



fall 2009 **Journal**

Features: Directed Student Work



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Table of Contents

- 4 From Your GSCA President by Sonya E. Wright
- 5 From the *GSCA Journal* Editor by Susan R. Boes
- 6 From the *GSCA Journal* Editorial Assistant by Carol M. Mullen

SPECIAL FEATURE

- 7 The Future of the *GSCA Journal*: An Interview with Dr. Rhonda Bryant, Editor Elect by Carol M. Mullen and Susan R. Boes

FEATURED ARTICLES

- 9 Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions to Increase Student Attendance in an Elementary School Setting by Sara D. Peek
- 21 An Action Research Study of the Effectiveness of the Peer Tutoring Program at One Suburban Middle School by Natalie Grubbs with Susan R. Boes
- 32 Utilizing Closed-Circuit Television to Present a Classroom Guidance Unit on Family Diversity by Mallory Banke and Jolie Ziomek-Daigle
- 39 School Bonding, Academic Achievement, and Participation in Extracurricular Activities by Anissa Howard and Jolie Ziomek-Daigle
- 49 Students with Anxiety in the Schools: The Role of the School Counselor by Evelyn Hanie and Rebecca Stanard

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS & JOURNAL GUIDELINES

- 56 Call for Submissions
- 57 *GSCA Journal* Guidelines for Authors

From Your GSCA President



Use Data To Synergize Your Counseling Program

The use of data can serve as an instrumental tool in developing and implementing School Counseling Programs designed to impact student achievement. Data driven School Counseling Programs are aligned with the school's mission statement and the needs assessment of students and existing counseling programs. This combination of data with other resources is sure to yield results that lead to increased student success!!

Do not be intimidated by the word data. GSCA Annual Conference Presenters Jim Bierma, Carolyn Stone, and other colleagues and friends of ASCA refer to what data are when they speak of data driven School Counseling Programs? For starters, they are speaking of data derived from discipline referrals, attendance reports, standardized and benchmark test results, counseling referrals, and needs assessments. This information is useful in collecting baseline data.

Again, baseline data collected in your school can be used to develop and implement meaningful programs which will impact student achievement. Mentoring, Conflict Resolution, Anger Management, Study Skills, Career Awareness, Grief & Loss, Self-Esteem, Divorce, Organizational Skills and Post Secondary Options are great examples of areas in which data driven School Counseling Programs can evolve. All counseling related programs will focus on one or any combination of the three areas of development which reflect the ASCA National Standards, that is, academic, career/vocational, and personal/social development.

The articles in this journal are based on data collection and research conducted by many of our colleagues and friends in the counseling field. One of the highlights of the Annual Conference is receiving the GSCA Journal. Dr. Susan Boes and her team have worked diligently to compose this extremely professional Journal, which results in a superb GSCA member benefit that is second to none. I encourage you to utilize the insights and enlightened awareness gained through each article. Remember, using your school's data will enable you to *Synergize Programs for Student Success!!*

Sonya Wright
GSCA President 2009-2010



From the *GSCA Journal* Editor



This is my final issue as editor of the *GSCA Journal*, a position within GSCA which I truly enjoyed. The cooperation of the authors, over the past 3 years, as they have worked through the various revisions was exemplary. My review team members were also immensely helpful. Sonya Wright, GSCA President, has much patience with her leadership team members and gave me free rein to complete the *Journal* within budget, of course.


In this issue, I am pleased to share a short article introducing the *Journal*'s next editor, Dr. Rhonda Bryant. Carol Mullen, my editorial assistant, interviewed Rhonda this past summer. Carol and I share the interview so potential authors will be familiar with Rhonda's initiatives. A second brief manuscript, by Carol explains the work she did as my editorial assistant. I believe it presents the correct perspective on the tasks of an editorial assistant and may entice other graduate students to accept an editorial assistant position.

All of the manuscripts that were accepted for publication this year are student directed works. The articles describe the results of a course experience and intervention during internship, research seminar, or an independent study. Each was directed by a counselor educator and all but one was coauthored by a counselor educator. Sara Peek and Natalie Grubbs discuss the results of their action research studies which they completed while students in the education specialist (Ed.S.) program at University of West Georgia (UWG). Mallory Banke and Anissa Howard completed a small research study as counseling interns while at the University of Georgia. These impact studies were completed under the direction of their university supervisor, Dr. Jolie Daigle. In another article, Eve Hanie reports on anxiety issues in the schools. This article is the result of an independent study she completed under the direction of Dr. Rebecca Stanard while working on her Ed.S. at UWG. It was pleasant to work with each of the first authors as we worked on revisions to the manuscripts. They took the responsibility for all revisions and worked cooperatively to complete these in a timely fashion. GSCA encourages more practitioner-based work.

Finally, I need to thank my review board members, several of whom have been with me the entire 3 years as *GSCA Journal* editor. Without this group who devoted their time to review manuscripts while making appropriate suggestions for revisions, I would not have been able to complete this *Journal*. Special thanks to Carol Mullen who served as my editorial assistant. Carol feels she learned a lot from the experience and I benefited greatly from her careful editing and help with the correspondence and record keeping. Brenda Cannington, Jim Klein, and Kerry Sebera slide off the editorial review board this year. They are valued colleagues. Their leaving presents an opportunity for Rhonda, our incoming editor, to enlist the help of new members for the review board. Special appreciation goes to Erin Mason and Brooke Svoboda who joined the review board this year. Erin, a counselor educator in Chicago is a past editor, who understands how a careful review will help the editor. Brooke is a professional school counselor in Fayette County and this was her first attempt at reviewing. Leann Logsdon, Lisa Schulz, Rene` Stegall and Hope Munro are "pros" at reviewing manuscripts and will continue as reviewers. They were invaluable for the timeliness of their reviews. All the reviewers' suggestions were made to strengthen the manuscripts.

I am proud to publish this final issue because it is about the work of practitioners in the schools. I feel certain you will learn from reading the articles and applaud the practitioners for taking the time to write. We need more articles about the work of practitioners. Please consider submitting a manuscript for next year's *Journal*. The official deadline is May 1, 2010 but Rhonda will gladly accept manuscripts all year. Remember there is a new edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. It is in its 6th edition. The *Publication Manual* devotes space to being more technologically friendly.

I look forward to reading more practitioner work in the future. Best wishes to all of our school counselors as they go about the wonderful world of children.


Susan R. Boes, PhD, Editor

A GSCA Journal Editorial Assistant's Thoughts



A GSCA Journal Editorial Assistant's Thoughts on the Process

It is a novel experience for me to serve as an editorial assistant. It's a task I thought of as being appropriate for English or journalism students, but most likely I would not have considered it at all. I suspect that there are a number of counselors-in-training and professionals who have not given much thought to what it means to be an editorial assistant for a professional journal. Thus, I will relay some of my experiences for your consideration, as it may help others decide whether serving in this capacity would benefit them personally or professionally.

I began the community counseling master's program at University of West Georgia during the fall semester of 2008. Dr. Susan Boes, the current editor of the *Georgia School Counseling Association (GSCA) Journal*, was teaching psychopathology that semester and I enrolled in the course. A large portion of that course revolved around completion of a research paper that explored a *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR)* diagnosis and effective interventions.

The following semester I took multicultural counseling with Dr. Boes and she approached me about assisting her to edit the *Journal* as an independent study on professional development. She asked me because of my intelligence, connections (basic knowledge of APA formatting), and writing ability which I demonstrated through previous assignments. I willingly accepted the invitation to work with her and learn about the process of creating the *Journal*. It seemed like a good idea to learn more about school counseling since, as I mentioned, I am a community counseling student and had never taken a school counseling course. I possessed limited knowledge of how the two compared in terms of expectations and job descriptions.

I began the summer term by meeting with Dr. Boes to discuss in more detail what would be required of me and what had been submitted to the *Journal* for review at that point in time. I began by helping to organize the manuscripts that had gone out for review and ensuring that contact information was correct for all authors and reviewers. As reviews were returned, I tracked them on a log sheet and began reading the manuscripts myself. I looked for writing style, content, flow, and grammatical correctness as well as how each related to the field of school counseling. That connection was less clear to me at the outset, but after some discussion of the manuscripts with Dr. Boes, I began to see whether topics were relevant to school counseling practitioners.

For each manuscript a packet was created which contained the reviews from the board members and editor, along with a letter regarding acceptance, need for revision, or rejection. On provisionally accepted manuscripts, authors were given the option of revising the manuscript as suggested or to provide rationale against such revision. As review packets were completed, they were sent to the first author so appropriate actions could be taken. It was also necessary to provide each author with a copyright form to allow publication.

While waiting for the revisions to be returned, there was still plenty to be done. Formatting the table of contents, corresponding with reviewers and authors to ensure affiliation information was correct, updating submission guidelines, and other organizational issues had to be addressed. In addition to those tasks, my time was spent interviewing the future editor and drafting her introduction. In order to do that, I had to select interview topics and correspond with Dr. Bryant about the manuscript to ensure it accurately reflected her views. Decisions had to be made about which articles to lead with and the general format of the *Journal*.

As I alluded to, I had not thought about the qualifications required for behind-the-scenes journal work prior to this experience. This has been a valuable experience for me. I learned about the counseling field, specifically about school counseling and GSCA, and about the many processes involved in the creation of a journal. Further, I learned that I was able to meet the challenge presented by assuming this new role of editorial assistant. I hope a result of this essay is that fellow counseling students can understand what's involved with editorial assistantship and consider taking it on.

Carol M. Mullen graduated with distinction from Purdue University in 2003 with a B.A. in psychology. After graduation she worked with adults suffering from mental health and substance abuse issues as a case manager. She moved to Georgia in 2008 and has worked with children and families on behavioral and symptom management as well as parenting education. She is completing her master's degree in community counseling at the University of West Georgia and will graduate in May 2010.

The future of the *GSCA Journal*



The future of the *GSCA Journal*: An Interview with Dr. Rhonda Bryant, *Editor Elect*

Carol M. Mullen and Susan R. Boes

Since Dr. Rhonda Bryant will assume editorship of the *GSCA Journal* in 2010 it seems fitting within this issue to introduce her to our Georgia School Counselor Association (GSCA) membership and potential authors. While we are aware that Rhonda has earned a doctorate degree in counselor education, we hope you come to think of her as a volunteer within the association named Rhonda, rather than Dr. Bryant.

Connection to the Field of Counseling

When asked how she got started in this field, Rhonda laughed and said she couldn't "give a pithy answer" to this request. Career counseling was not emphasized when she was earning her undergraduate degree from University of Virginia so she didn't have that resource to help her make educational choices. She studied psychology but didn't learn its distinction from counseling until later. Rhonda considers herself a very social person and improving society is an important aspect of life to her. Once she discovered counseling, with its focus on wellness, she decided it was more in line with her personality and values than psychology.

Rhonda shared that she completed her graduate studies at the University of Virginia. She worked in the areas of community mental health and substance abuse recovery for 8 years between her master's degree and Ph.D. Her interest in counselor supervision prompted her to return for her doctorate. She saw the tremendous importance of ongoing professional development and chose to become a counselor educator to train counselors and improve the profession through research on counseling outcomes and best practices. With the support of her mentor, Dr. Joan Franks (Professor Emerita of the University of Virginia), she chose to focus on school counseling.

Career in Academe

Her career in academia began as a faculty member at the Austin Peay State University in Tennessee, where she

stayed from 1999 to 2003. At the present time, she is an Associate Professor of School Counseling at Albany State University (ASU). It has been very meaningful to her that her colleagues have supported her efforts to take on the editorship of the *Journal*. ASU is not yet accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), however, the counseling department expanded in January to meet numerical faculty standards put forth by CACREP, which allowed ASU to begin seeking accreditation.

Association Affiliations

Besides being a member in good standing in GSCA and on the editorial review board of the *Journal*, she is a member of American Counseling Association (ACA), ACA's division of Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ), American School Counselors Association (ASCA), and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). Each of these associations is aligned closely with her views and directly to her work. As a counselor, ACA is the overall association for professionals and ACES is an association geared specifically to counselor educators and the teaching and supervising aspects of her work. ASCA and GSCA incorporate her teaching specialty and keep her connected to the current trends, issues, and the views of counselors throughout the nation and Georgia in particular. CSJ connects to her values of advocacy and multicultural appreciation. She is past CSJ Community Representative and is running for president-elect of CSJ this year.

This year Rhonda was honored with the *Ohana Award* through CSJ. The *Ohana Award* is presented at the ACA annual conference. Any member of ACA can receive this award or nominate another member using a form available through the CSJ website (<http://counselorsforsocialjustice.com/ohana.html>). This award was especially meaningful to Rhonda because it honors professionals with outstanding service and commitment to the nine

The future of the *GSCA Journal*

principles attached to the Hawaiian word *Ohana*: Caring, Humility, Intelligence, Generosity, Integrity, Honesty, Unconditional Love, Spiritual Power, Courtesy, and Courage. She was nominated by a colleague for the work she has done to affirm diversity by working with non-traditional graduate students coming from all walks of life, as well as her advocacy efforts for children. Urban education and counseling is one area close to Rhonda's heart. When professional school counselors (PSCs) in urban areas fearlessly advocate for themselves and offer evidence of the relationship of counseling to student wellbeing, they are better able to advocate for their students.

Expertise for the Editorship

Rhonda has a multitude of experience as a reviewer. She has been a member of the *GSCA Journal* editorial review board for several years. Her reviews of potential articles include several areas of expertise. Rhonda must know American Psychological Association (APA) format style for the current edition (remember the new 6th edition APA format style manual arrived in July, 2009), appropriate content for the article, and whether the material discussed is relevant to professional school counselors in the state of Georgia. Besides volunteering as a reviewer for potential manuscripts, she has had a great deal of experience reviewing student papers, which generally also must adhere to the APA format. Rhonda is also the editor of the CSJ newsletter and that experience has helped her understand how to work with potential authors throughout the writing process. She reviews ACA education session proposals and has completed book reviews for counseling publishers.

Dr. Bryant's Vision for the *GSCA Journal*

As *GSCA Journal's* editor-elect she would like to further the work of previous editors and empower the membership to really take ownership of the *Journal*. Rhonda believes the *Journal* should be a body of work members anticipate and feels it should be esteemed for being relevant to the practice of school counseling. She hopes to find new ways to promote the profession through the *Journal*.

She anticipates that one focal point of the *Journal* will be meeting the needs of diverse K-12 and higher education schools in Georgia. Recognizing that K-12 schools serve rural, urban, and suburban communities and that there are a number of counseling training programs within the University System of Georgia, she would like to conduct a needs assessment about the interests of the GSCA membership to discover areas that the *Journal* could address more fully. One particular area of interest

is encouraging school counseling candidates (SCCs) and counselor educators to utilize the *Journal* for the induction of new professional school counselors. She would like to see all counseling students adopt the *Journal* as a resource by increasing their participation by reading and submitting manuscripts both as students and throughout their professional lives. She believes that if counselor educators and SCC internship supervisors promote the *Journal*, SCCs will come to value it as a guide in their school counseling practice.

Rhonda would like to see collaboration increase across disciplines. PSCs who write and research with special educators, teachers, and educational leaders could further the profession by helping all school personnel understand the roles and significance of professional school counselors. In her view, PSCs not only ensure the academic, personal/social, and career development of their students but also promote the wellbeing of the school community as a safe place to learn and grow.

As the membership continues to grow and evolve in its needs from the *Journal*, Rhonda hopes they will consider sharing their suggestions to improve the content and promote a broader utilization of the *GSCA Journal*. Suggestions and comments should be directed to

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Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions to Increase Student Attendance in an Elementary School Setting

Sarah D. Peek

Sarah is in 3rd year as school counselor at Model Elementary School in Rome, Georgia. She was honored as the Outstanding EdS School Counseling Student of the year for the 2008-2009 academic year at the University of West Georgia.

For information regarding this article please contact Sarah at sdpeek@gmail.com

Much thanks to Dr. Susan Boes for her highly valued feedback and guidance throughout the composition of this action research study. The study is a requirement of the University of West Georgia Specialist degree in the area of professional counseling, but is the research of the author.

Abstract

The action research study revealed the effectiveness of recent interventions to the attendance process of a single elementary school located in the Southern United States. The study evaluated the benefits and impact of the interventions, and other possible interventions to increase student attendance. An explanation of each intervention is provided, and the data collected is discussed. If schools do not address reasons for absences, failure to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the area of attendance is possible. The results identify the value of the interventions.

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions to Increase Student Attendance in an Elementary School Setting

The purpose of this action research study (ARS) was to determine whether or not attendance in an elementary school has increased due to the implementation of several interventions. During 2008, the elementary school studied consisted of 615 students. The school is heavily comprised of white students, approximately 557, with Hispanic and African American students following behind with 21 and 17 from each race. Many professional school counselors (PSCs) have the responsibility of monitoring attendance for the entire school. In order to keep this requirement from taking away from more counselor related tasks, such as guidance, small group, and individual counseling, the attendance process must be clear, orderly, and effective. Being that attendance is an important facet of any school, with the requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB), strengthening policies and implementing

incentives is helpful in getting students to attend school regularly and to arrive on time. When attendance is addressed, not only will students prosper academically, but the school as a whole will flourish. The study was based upon the principles of action research, meaning a set plan has been created to increase effective action (Stringer & Dwyer, 2005). The goal of the study was to evaluate current attendance interventions, and deduct whether or not an increase in attendance has occurred. Data was primarily taken from an anonymous, online survey. The survey was based upon the research questions of the study.

Review of Connected Literature

The literature is specific to the following themes of school attendance. The areas identified and discussed include the importance of attendance, reasons for attendance problems, and interventions to improve attendance.

Importance of Attendance

Regular school attendance is a necessary component to student achievement. Although it seems to be common sense, research has concluded that being in school on a consistent basis helps children build a strong learning foundation, on which to increase their knowledge (Chang & Romero, 2008). It is necessary to build a strong foundation during a child's elementary years of education. If a child misses school frequently, the foundation will more than likely not be stable. For a student in the early grades, missing at least 10% of the school year is defined as being "chronically absent". These absences include both unexcused and excused. Studies have found that kindergarten students identified as "chronic absentees", exhibit the lowest general knowledge in mathematics and reading upon entering first grade. Not only will these students lag behind in the first grade, but the poverty stricken students

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

of the group continue to demonstrate struggles until fifth grade, with the lowest scores in reading and math (Jacobson, 2008). These findings relate the connection between regular attendance and academic achievement.

Regular attendance can also be tied to increased standardized test scores. Johnston (2000), reports on several studies pertaining to the benefits of time a student spends within the classroom. A correlation between test scores and attendance was taken, and findings deducted that students who attend class 95% of the time were twice as likely to pass state competency tests as students attending class only 85% of the time. In addition, minority students who increased attendance by one percentage point raised test scores on state reading and mathematics tests by one percentage point. Not only can students fall behind, but irregular attendance can result in a student eventually dropping out of school. Students who do not graduate from high school are twice as likely to live in poverty, are three times as likely to be unemployed, and are eight times as likely to end up in jail or prison (US Fed News Service, 2008). Not only is attendance important in building a student's knowledge, but also in keeping students off the streets and out of trouble. Most cases of juvenile crime related activities occur during school hours. Students who are off the streets and in school are less likely to be lured into criminal activity, or to become victims (US Fed News Service, 2006).

Not only are middle and high school students at-risk for negative occurrences if attendance is not regular, unfortunately elementary students are also. Loeber and Farrington (2000) found that elementary students with chronic truancy can exhibit serious delinquent behavior by age 12, and sometimes even younger. With these findings, it is necessary for children to attend school for their betterment as a student, and for their future as an adult. With hundreds of thousands of students absent from school every day, with no excuse, there must be reasons for such a lack of attendance (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001).

Reasons for Attendance Problems

With such staggering numbers of children being absent from school on a daily basis, one must question what adequate reasoning is there for such irregular attendance. Baker, et al. (2001) found the reasons for excessive absences fall into the following four categories: family factors, school factors, economic influences, and student variables. Poverty, drug or alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and lack of parental guidance and supervision are

all family occurrences that can affect a child having regular school attendance. School climate can also be a factor of truant students if inflexibility exists within attendance protocol, if school climate issues are observable, or if a lack of administrative support is apparent. Economic factors that can be a cause for irregular attendance include single-parent homes, highly mobile families, a parent working more than one job, and a lack of a dependable form of transportation. Student variables include drug or alcohol use, lack of understanding concerning the school attendance policy, and poor mental or physical health. Although it is unreasonable for the school to take responsibility for all four categories, it is necessary for the school to work with families and make parents aware of the importance of regular attendance. Lack of parent knowledge concerning the school's attendance policy is not acceptable in any school. School personnel must be trained to answer questions surrounding the policies of attendance, while helping enforce the protocol daily and fairly among all students.

Other reasons for attendance issues result from a lack of basic resources, such as food, water, transportation, and even an alarm clock. Such basic needs are often taken for granted, yet may hinder a child getting to school on a daily basis. Past negative school experiences, for parents or guardians, can result in disregard for the educational process. This is another reason for poor attendance in elementary age students. A pressing factor for chronic absenteeism is the transient family. Constant moving may cause students to become behind academically and to be socially impaired (Jacobson, 2008). Although the home situation can be a major cause for lack of attendance, it is necessary for the school to work with families to address such problems, or refer families to community agencies. Children of transient families may be living in so-called "homeless" situations. A recent estimate found that during a year's time, over 900,000 children and youths will experience homelessness (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Children living in homeless situations endure family circumstances based upon financial troubles, substance abuse, and mental and physical health issues, which in turn will likely lead to truancy issues (Hernandez Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006). The McKinney-Vento Act was reauthorized in 2001 as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. Homelessness, defined within the McKinney-Vento Act, is a student not having a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" (P.L. 107-110, p. 582). Children waiting for foster placement, staying in a shelter, abandoned building, or hotel, living out of a car, and staying with friends or relatives, are just a few of the

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

situations that can define a student as falling under the McKinney-Vento stipulations (P.L.). Any child living in such accommodations will find regular school attendance an insurmountable task. Based upon the reasons for excessive absences and lack of regular attendance, interventions must be in place to help students in such situations attend school on a daily basis.

Interventions to Improve Attendance

Improving attendance is necessary for the betterment and attainment of AYP in any school. One intervention that can be implemented is increasing parent knowledge of a school's attendance policy, and making necessary modifications to create uniform attendance rules. Another strategy to increase attendance is to strengthen community knowledge of the importance of regular attendance. Additional support can be sought through the help of local churches, recreation centers, and the YMCA. In addition to this strategy, incorporating home visits by school personnel, such as the PSC and school social worker, can build the family's relationship with their child's school. In occurrences where students are experiencing substantial absences due to surgery or illness, hospital homebound services can be implemented to help students stay caught up with lessons and assignments (Johnston, 2000). Incentive programs can also be used as interventions to the attendance process, by rewarding students for regular attendance (Jacobson, 2008). Also making parents aware of absences by phone or letter, and having a contact person, such as the PSC, are effective in decreasing unexcused absences (Johnston).

If such interventions do not increase a student's attendance, many systems use the Truancy Arbitration Program to help parents further acknowledge the importance of school attendance. Parents are called to a hearing before community agencies to discuss the reasons for their child's absences, while also identifying ways to help the family end this problem. The family will sign a contract or "performance agreement", stating that a child must have a doctor's excuse when he or she is absent for the remaining school year, and for the entirety of the next school year. If this does not increase attendance, arrest of the parents can take place (Jacobson, 2008).

The inclusion of the McKinney-Vento Act ensures that students living in homeless situations receive the same education as students living in non-homeless settings. The act's purpose is to keep homeless students in the same school in which they began their school year. If the student has moved out of the school's district, transportation is to be provided. Findings prove that a stable school set-

ting causes academics to strengthen and attendance to increase (National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, 2002). When school systems follow these regulations, students are more stable, resulting in positive change. Overall, interventions to any attendance process must be comprehensive, flexible, responsive, and persistent. In addition, a student's family and living situation must be taken into context when making assumptions about a child's behavior, academic performance, and attendance record. Highly trained professionals, working to support a family's needs, while building positive relationships between the family and school, are invaluable when implementing interventions to increase attendance (Schorr, 1997).

Research Questions

The study was based upon the following research questions, which were created to determine the impact of current interventions to increase regular student attendance.

- What impact have the interventions had on student attendance?
- Does one intervention seem to affect student attendance more than others, or do all of the interventions have a similar impact on attendance?

Methodology

The following modifications to the attendance process were used to collect data and identify whether or not student attendance increased.

Data Sources

Interventions to the attendance process were implemented over the previous 15 months of the study. Upon employment of the current PSC, in January 2007, attendance was an area of concern for the administrators and teachers of the elementary school. During the 2007-2008 school year, the following modifications to the attendance process were made:

- An attendance form for tracking student absences was modified to increase its use and effectiveness for teachers (Appendix E). The purpose of the form is to help teachers be aware of accumulating absences, and to remind them when parent notification should occur. After teachers have tracked 3 unexcused absences and made parent contact, the form is given to the PSC to handle the next step of the process.
- Attendance Review Team (ART) was implemented to make parents accountable for attending a scheduled meeting with the professional school counselor, school social worker, and a school administrator, to

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

discuss their child's current attendance. Making parents aware of what can happen if attendance problems continue, and to offer necessary resources to help the family, is the purpose of ART.

During the 2008-2009 school year, the following were modifications to the attendance process:

- The first notice letter sent to the parent by the teacher was created (Appendix F). This form is accessible to teachers through email attachment. They can easily print it and plug in the number of absences in the appropriate blank spaces. Because teachers are responsible for first notification to the parent, this form was created to make that process quicker and easier.
- A form was also integrated into the Attendance Review Team (ART) meetings during this school year. Teachers fill out the form and return it to the PSC prior to the meeting. The form includes academic, behavior, and hygiene issues. This is a tool to help the PSC discuss other areas of concern, besides attendance.
- The "Perfect Pals" student incentive program was also started. The monthly program recognizes students having perfect attendance (no absences or tardies) during the previous month. These students are invited to lunch in the school lobby, where they receive a small treat (e.g., candy, popcorn, cookie). Pictures of the students are also taken for the "Perfect Pals" bulletin board.

Data was collected on these interventions to determine the impact of each. The goal of the interventions was to increase student attendance.

Data Collection & Analysis

Data was collected from anonymous surveys to measure the impact of the interventions to the attendance process (Appendix A). The survey was based on the study's research questions. A total of 29 anonymous surveys were emailed, and 28 were completed and returned. All teachers with a homeroom received the survey, along with the principal and assistant principal. The survey was composed of 10 items, with 3 items asking for further comments. Items were based upon the benefits of the interventions, and possible modifications to increase their usefulness. Responses to the survey items were compiled and calculated into percentages by the Survey Monkey website. Attendance records, including number of absences for the entire school year, number of days present for the entire school year, and number of students having

more than 15 absences for the entire school year, were taken from the countywide attendance program School Max. This data compared the school's year end attendance numbers, before and after the implementation of the interventions, to determine if an increase in attendance occurred. Review of current literature was conducted to compare researched interventions to those implemented to the elementary school's attendance process. Another source of data included informal discussions with teachers and administrators, which were composed to collect information beyond the survey. Discussions usually occurred when discussing a student's current attendance, meaning teachers were randomly selected. Also, data collected from the outcome results of the current interventions was taken from the PSC's documentation and observations. Since the interventions were initiated, the PSC has kept comparison notes, and counts of students and teachers involved in the changes to the process. The data taken from these sources will identify the level of impact of each intervention, and possible modifications to the process.

Results of Data Collection

The data collected was used to answer the ARS research questions. Using the survey, 50% of the participants strongly agreed, whereas 39% agreed, that modified attendance forms were beneficial to tracking absences and notifying parents of a student's current attendance. Approximately 4% disagreed and 7% strongly disagreed with the effectiveness of the forms. Concerning the effectiveness of the "Perfect Pals" program, 57% strongly agreed and 36% agreed that the incentive was a good idea for increasing student desire to come to school regularly. No respondents disagreed, while 7% strongly disagreed that the program was effective. When survey participants were asked whether or not the ART meetings were as beneficial as making home visits, 36% strongly agreed and 54% agreed. Again, 7% strongly disagreed and 4% disagreed that ART was working. Based upon survey results, 71% of participants believed that Perfect Pals was the most effective intervention, while ART and the modified attendance forms tied with 54% as being effective (Appendix B, Table 3).

All interventions seem beneficial based upon survey results, with 83% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing, although identifying future modifications to increase their effectiveness was not as easy. The survey found that 50% agreed that changes could be made, whereas 50% stated that changes were not necessary. Feedback was presented by 10 survey participants, although nothing spe-

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

cific was volunteered (Appendix C). More contact with parents, and quicker action for repeat offenders, were two suggestions for strengthening the process. Another respondent stated that the attendance process is strong, but that attendance at the elementary level heavily depends upon parents. Every program can be improved, was also stated, unfortunately specific modifications were not stated.

When using attendance records to compare the effectiveness of the interventions, a substantial decrease was found in absenteeism during 2007 (Appendix D, Table 6). During 2006, before interventions to the attendance process were implemented, 51 students had more than 15 absences for the entire school year. In comparison to 2007 and 2008, which were years interventions were implemented to the attendance process, 39 and 41 students were absent 15 or more days (Appendix D). From the PSC's documentation, an increase in the use of modified attendance forms has been noted, in comparison to the previous forms. From August 2007 to April of 2008, 23 parents were invited to an ART meeting and 18 attended. From August 2008 to March 2009, 37 parents were invited to a meeting and 35 attended. In comparison to home visits, which were made prior to implementing ART, 15 home visits were made from January 2007 to May 2007, and of these only 5 parents were at home. Notes were left at the other 10 homes, but face-to-face contact was not made.

From informal discussions with teachers, the Perfect Pals program was found to be the most creative and student anticipated intervention. Counselor documentation identified a steady average of 213 students attending the monthly Perfect Pals luncheons. Suggestions were given by several teachers concerning the effectiveness of the modified attendance forms. Modifications included adding a parent signature and date space to the parent notification form, along with a statement asking the parent to return the form to prove that they have read and understood its purpose. Also, a brief note taken from the school's attendance policy can be added to the form as a reminder of the protocol to the parent. When asked about ART most said that it seemed helpful, whereas others said that they really didn't know much about it since they were not responsible for this step of the process. Although many teachers may not see the positive effects of ART, they are apparent. ART is the step in the attendance process that occurs before a parent is sent to truancy. Counselor documentation from January 2007 to May 2007, before ART was implemented, indicates 9 families were sent to truancy. Since ART began in August 2007, only 1 family

was sent to truancy during the 2007-2008 school year. From August 2008 to March 2009, 4 families took part in truancy, showing a substantial decrease in truancy participation since ART began.

Teachers and administrators were also asked informally about positive changes to the attendance process. Several admitted that not all teachers take the first notice seriously, and either forget to notify the parent or don't see the requirement as important. Another teacher stated that it is frustrating to see parents that have been involved with truancy, especially those who have been arrested, and still struggle to get their child to school consistently. This teacher also stated she realizes such actions are beyond the school's control. Changes can definitely be made to the elementary school's attendance process, although few concrete modifications were suggested.

Discussion

The results of this ARS found the interventions made to the attendance process have been effective. Survey questions on the effectiveness of each intervention received the highest percentage of feedback under the strongly agreed and agreed categories. These findings conclude that teachers and administrators see the interventions as positively impacting attendance. Only 4% of survey participants believed that the modified attendance forms and "Perfect Pals" program were not effective. Year end attendance records for 2007 and 2008 found an increase in the average attendance of students, in comparison to 2006 when no interventions had been implemented. Data and documentation from the PSC noted an increase in the use of the modified attendance forms, along with a decrease in truancy contracts since implementing ART.

Although the interventions have proven to be a positive modification to the attendance process, survey results found the Perfect Pals program to be most effective. The feedback from survey participants concerning the program affirmed its benefits to the students. Although informal discussion with teachers and administrators did not directly identify the most effective intervention, the feedback was optimistic and useful when making minor modifications to the interventions. Student attendance increased the most during 2007, which was the year when the attendance forms were modified and ART started. Looking at the records, these interventions would be seen as the most beneficial to the attendance process.

Current literature states the most promising interventions to reducing excessive student absences are increased parent involvement, having an on-going process of steps

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

within the attendance policy, using incentive programs for students, involving community resources, and incorporating consequences for truancy (Baker, et al., 2001). Parent involvement is increased through the ART meetings, and concrete steps are taken to make parents aware, such as teacher notification, call home service, letters from the principal, and ART. Parents are given information and warnings before being taken to truancy. Perfect Pals is an incentive based program that rewards students for their hard work and attendance, and community resources are offered to parents during ART. If parents must attend truancy meetings, they are required to sign a contract to decrease unexcused absences. If the contract is not upheld, parents are in jeopardy of facing severe consequences such as arrest. Jacobson (2008) includes home visits and high-quality preschool programs as attendance interventions. Even though home visits have decreased because of the implementation of ART, they still occur as needed. The elementary school also houses two preschool classrooms, which helps parents become familiar with the attendance policy before their child enters kindergarten. Attendance is taken in preschool, although until a child is 6 years old, the family will not be upheld to truancy standards. This protocol is set by the county, not the school. Overall, the current attendance process incorporates the suggestions of the literature.

Deciding what future modifications could be made to strengthen the attendance process was not clear from the survey results. Participant responses were split down the middle when asked what changes could be made to the process. Fifty percent agreed that changes could be made, and 50% stated that no changes needed to be made. Intervention suggestions from Baker et al. (2001) and Jacobson (2008) similarly mimic the attendance process of the elementary school. Having a concrete and concise process of steps, along with parent knowledge and involvement, are helpful in decreasing unnecessary student absences. Possible future modifications to the Perfect Pals program could be to strengthen the excitement and knowledge of the luncheon. Such modifications would include student made posters placed around the school as reminders of the incentive, more frequent morning announcements throughout the month, and a variety of treats to be given out as rewards. Although the ART meetings seem effective and beneficial to building parent knowledge of the attendance process, there is still room for improvement. A basic modification would be to include a copy of the student's current attendance in the ART invitation letter. This would give parents access to the record prior to the meeting, and time to review it and develop any questions.

These modifications are reasonable and easy to accomplish, although more detailed modifications may be necessary to further increase effectiveness of the attendance process.

Limitations/Implications

One limitation of the study was the short period of time since the implementation of the interventions. A total of 15 months passed since the first intervention was made to the process. A longer period of time would allow for more data, which could further validate the findings. The Perfect Pals program was implemented in August 2008, meaning that the data collected on its effectiveness is based upon only five luncheons. Another limitation of the study would be the genuineness of the survey findings. It was somewhat odd that 7 of the 10 survey questions had exactly 7.1% under the strongly disagree category, and 5 out of 10 questions had 3.6% under disagree. Having so many same percentages under the same category makes findings seem somewhat botched. If the survey was completed by other school personnel, such as the school social worker, registrar secretary, and even paraprofessionals, broader survey findings would have been given to determine effectiveness of the process. Also, asking parents a few informal questions during the ART meetings would have presented information about their viewpoints. The attendance records from the School Max program were limited because they did not give information on how many of the yearly absences were excused and unexcused. The attendance process focuses most heavily upon unexcused absences. If absences are excused, such as with a doctor's note, these absences are understandable and un-touchable by the school. Knowing exactly how many of the absences were unexcused would have given a more exact picture of the effectiveness of the interventions.

Future Recommendations

A future recommendation for an ARS would be to send the survey out to a variety of school staff, instead of only the teachers and administrators. Making modifications to the staff survey to receive feedback from parents and students would also be beneficial. Slight changes could be made to the existing survey to make the questions appropriate for other participants. Gathering a variety of viewpoints concerning the attendance process will increase the PSC's knowledge of possible future modifications. Explaining the purpose of the study in smaller groups, such as during grade level meetings, is another recommendation for future study. Further discussion of the study and purpose of the survey, would have been more effective

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

than sending a quick email with the survey attachment. The small group would have allowed the participants to ask questions, and in turn the PSC could have possibly received further feedback for the ARS through the discussion of the questions. Another way to gain further information on possible modifications would be to include more survey items, specifically for teachers, concerning their responsibility of the attendance process. Questions such as, "How important is your role of first notifying parents of their child's attendance?", "What is the most challenging part of keeping up with student attendance?", and "What can be done to make your step of the process, first notifying the parent, easier?", would help the PSC determine the best ways to gain support of the attendance process from all teachers.

Conclusion

The ARS found that the interventions, including the modified attendance forms, ART, and Perfect Pals program, to the school attendance process have been effective. Although the interventions were strongly agreed upon by a large percentage of the survey respondents as effective, a small percentage stated that they were not beneficial. Unfortunately the percentage that did not agree with the impact of the interventions failed to offer feedback concerning additional modifications to the process. The interventions seem to have positively affected the school's attendance, though more time will confirm their necessity and true benefit. As stated earlier, attendance is imperative to the betterment of a school's student population, both academically and socially. With this being said, data will continue to be collected and modifications will continue to be made to the school's attendance process, in order to further increase student attendance.

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Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Appendix A

Table 1
Results of Anonymous Survey

Items	Response Percent/ n = 29			
	SD	D	A	SA
1. Usefulness of the attendance forms? -Modified Absent Again form -Teacher First Notice to Parent form	71%	3.6%	39.3%	50.0%
2. Effectiveness of the “Perfect Pals” luncheon? (See Appendix B for additional feedback.)	71%	0.0%	35.7%	57.1%
3. Do students enjoy the “Perfect Pals” luncheon?	71%	0.0%	17.9%	75.0%
4. Do students make the connection between attendance and being invited to the luncheon?	71%	3.6%	42.9%	46.4%
5. Has integrating the ART meetings into the attendance process been effective?	71%	3.6%	53.6%	35.7%
6. Are the parents well aware of the school’s attendance policy?	71%	0.0%	25.0%	67.9%
7. Would including the attendance policy in the school newsletter be an effective reminder?	71%	3.6%	42.9%	46.4%
8. Please rate the effectiveness of the following interventions.	See Appendix B			
9. Have the following interventions been effective in increasing attendance? • Modifications to attendance forms • “Perfect Pals” program • Attendance Review Team meetings	14.3%	3.6%	28.6%	53.6%
10. Could other intervention(s) be implemented? (See Appendix C for additional feedback.)	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%

Appendix B

Table 2
Feedback from Survey Question 2

Has the “Perfect Pals” perfect attendance monthly luncheon been an effective intervention to increase attendance? Please feel free to add suggestions or feedback below:	
Respondent #	Response
21	The students love it. Great idea!!!
7	The students have enjoyed this very much.
4	The students absolutely love it and want to attend next month when they see their friends eating lunch in the lobby. Great idea!

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Table 3

Feedback from Survey Question 8

The following interventions have been made to the attendance process. Please rate the effectiveness of each.			
	Very Effective	Effective	Not Effective
Modifications to attendance forms	42.9%	53.6%	3.6%
"Perfect Pals" program	71.4%	25.0%	3.6%
Attendance Review Team (ART) meetings	46.4%	53.6%	0.0%

Appendix C

Table 4

Feedback from Survey Question 10

Could other intervention(s) be implemented to strengthen the attendance process and increase student attendance? Please include suggestions to improve the contents of the board below:	
Respondent #	Response
25	More contact with PARENTS of students with numerous unexcused absences...before they get to the truancy level. Mailing, phone calls, emails, etc. Maybe these are done now???? When they hear consequences are coming, sometimes they respond quicker.
23	We can always improve a program, but I do not have any solid ideas at this time.
14	I feel our attendance program is very strong.
13	In my opinion, parents whose main concern is their child's education will get them to school. Others will not. While programs may help somewhat, this is, unfortunately, the reality.
9	I think for now what we are doing works.
7	Making parents responsible for their child's education is very difficult. Students' attendance is strongly and directly influenced by their parent's attitude toward education.
6	Our school's children are strongly encouraged to come to school regularly and are given incentives to be here. I think the attendance program is successful.
5	Take quicker action for repeat offenders in the next school year (home visits, phone calls, for each absence), and if absences are not better, quicker action to take them to court.
4	Everything that you are doing is great and appears to be working. Anything that motivates the child and parents is helpful. There are always tangible incentives; maybe include the parents in the reward.
2	I think what we are currently doing is very effective. The school counselor does a very good job staying on top of the attendance issue.

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Appendix D

Table 5

Attendance Information from January 2006 – December 2006

Total Student Enrollment	624 (Male: 337/Female: 287)
Students with more than 15 absences	51
Total Days Absent (entire student body)	4,597
Total Days Present (entire student body)	105,991
Average Daily Attendance	95.84%

Note. No interventions made to the attendance process during 2006.

Table 6

Attendance Information from January 2007 – December 2007

Total Student Enrollment	639 (Male: 348/Female: 291)
Students with more than 15 absences	39
Total Days Absent (entire student body)	4,126
Total Days Present (entire student body)	107,244
Average Daily Attendance	96.30%

Note. The following interventions were made to the attendance process during 2007: Modified attendance forms and ART implementation.

Table 7

Attendance Information from January 2008 – December 2008

Total Student Enrollment	615 (Male: 330/Female: 285)
Students with more than 15 absences	43
Total Days Absent (entire student body)	4,240
Total Days Present (entire student body)	104,831
Average Daily Attendance	96.11%

Note. The following interventions were made to the attendance process during 2008: Creation of parent notification form (Appendix F) and Perfect Pals Perfect Attendance implementation.

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Appendix E

Modified Absent Again Form

Name	
Teacher	
Student ID	

Teachers please record the dates of unexcused absences as a student accumulates them below. Do not worry about recording excused absences. At **three unexcused absences** please make contact with the parent/guardian of the student. At **four unexcused absences** please make a copy of this form and place it in the school counselor's mailbox. Continue to record absences, but once I receive a copy and am aware of this attendance issue I will begin to watch the student for truancy.

Unexcused Absences (Codes: A-20 no reason, A-22 unexcused)

Date & Code	
1.	7.
2.	8. Referred to s. worker by counselor: Contact made:
3. Notified by Teacher:	9.
4. (make copy and put in counselor's mailbox)	10.
5. Notified by Counselor: Letter sent:	11.
6.	12.

Integrating Effective and Beneficial Interventions

Appendix F

Modified First Notice to Parent Form

To the parents of	
Number of days child has been absent	
Of those days	
Have been excused	
Have been excused with a parent note	
Have been unexcused	
Number of days child has been tardy	
Of those days	
Have been excused	
Have been unexcused	

The bell rings at 8:10

Please be aware of the following:

- Students with eight (8) unexcused absences will be reported to the Attendance Officer or School Social Worker.
- Students with ten or more tardies and/or early dismissals are subject to be reported to the Attendance Officer or School Social Worker.

Please discuss with your child the importance of attending school each day for their continued success.

Thank you,

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

An Action Research Study of the Effectiveness of the Peer Tutoring Program at One Suburban Middle School

Natalie Grubbs with Susan R. Boes

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Completing an action research study is a requirement for the Research Seminar course for the Ed.S. degree at the University of West Georgia. The research was completed under the direction of Susan Boes who also helped with design suggestions and all revisions.

Abstract

The results of a study that examined the peer tutoring program at a middle school are discussed in this article. In an effort to determine ways to improve the peer tutoring program an action research (AR) mixed design study was developed. AR is practitioner based research. Its purpose is to examine the work of practitioners for effectiveness and to suggest changes in the program if effectiveness is not demonstrated. AR is a collaborative process of inquiry that integrates the perspectives of colleagues to make appropriate changes for the betterment of program delivery (Stringer & Dwyer, 2004). The data substantiates the need for peer tutoring and provides information for making improvements to increase effectiveness as well as program participation.

An Action Research Design Study of the Effectiveness of the Peer Tutoring Program at One Suburban Middle School

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires schools to reach higher academic standards using research-supported practices (The Access Center, n.d.). While academic requirements are increasing, funding is decreasing. Thus, schools must develop creative means to accomplish these goals. One such example could be the use of peer tutors. Peer tutoring provides a low-cost, research-supported method to improve academics (The Access Center; Coenen, 2002; Colvin, 2007; Hooper & Walker, 2002; Stenhoff & Lignugaris, 2007). Additionally, peer tutoring

offers encouragement to students to do their best which may help improve grades but may also increase the self-esteem of students who may not be doing well in academics (MacIver & Plank, 1996). According to the American School Counselor Association's role statement (2004), professional school counselors (PSCs) promote academic achievement, career development, and social/emotional development. Within these roles, the PSCs at one suburban middle school in the southeast developed a peer tutoring program which promotes their role in academics and social/emotional development. This program also keeps the PSCs involved in the total school environment as students develop better attitudes toward academics and work toward the improvement of grades (ASCA).

Currently, this middle school counseling program provides daily peer tutoring before school called CAT Attack (CA). The peer tutoring is promoted through the Beta club. The PSCs attend the Beta Club where they explain the tasks of peer tutors and recruit 7th and 8th grade volunteers for one-on-one tutoring of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The tutoring can be same-age tutoring or cross-age tutoring. The National Beta organization allows schools to design clubs according to the needs of students within the school (<http://www.betaclub.org/benefits.php>). Beta Club, as a leadership-service organization for grades 7 and 8, fits well with CAT Attack because its purpose is to promote character that makes for good citizenship. Credible achievement and commendable attitude are among the qualifications for individual membership. Also a student must attain a cumulative grade point average of 95 or higher to be considered for membership.

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

In addition to Beta Club recruiting, teachers are also asked to recommend students, who are either strong academically, like to help others, or are very good at organizing.

The PSCs provide a brief training at the start of the school year. The duties of peer tutoring and a description of what it takes to be a successful tutor are explained. Finally, the peer tutor volunteers are asked whether they are still interested in the program after the training session. While help with organization is structured, academic support is unstructured depending on tutee needs. Students attending tutoring sessions were given awards if their grades improved. Tutors received awards thanking them for their assistance. While the PSCs believe this program has been beneficial to students, no formal data was collected before this action research study and only a relatively small portion of students were attending. Improvements could significantly advance the program.

The purpose of this article is to share the results of an action research study (ARS) focused on improving a peer tutoring program. Action research is practitioner based research using survey data or small experiments, observations, reflective analysis, and factual information from such sources as literature reviews to assist them in their work (Stringer & Dwyer, 2005). The data collected in this ARS were expected to reveal whether the program was effective and to identify ways to increase participation. This ARS was conducted at an upper-middle-class, suburban school in Georgia with a student population of approximately 915 students. The ethnic make-up is 81% white, 11.1% African-American, 3.4% Hispanic, 1.7% Asian, and 2.7% other. The student population consists of 31.1% of the students identified as gifted, 9.7% identified as special education, and 12.8% of the students receive free or reduced lunch.

Literature Related to Peer Tutoring

While the literature offered valuable suggestions for improving the peer tutoring program, the one semester timeframe for completion of the ARS was limited and this is reflected in the depth of the review. Key to a definition of peer tutoring is that coaching is performed by peers who learn while helping. Literature related to the benefits and successful components of peer tutoring was beneficial in developing the research questions and survey items.

Definition of Peer Tutoring

Many varying definitions exist for peer tutoring from simply one child helping another child to more in-depth

criteria. Many definitions for the tutoring process involve an expert student assisting a novice student yet this is not always the case (Kalkowski, 1995). At times students were randomly paired to provide assistance. Peer tutoring also transpired when same-age students were paired, and when students were paired with older tutors. Mastropieri et al. (2006) described peer tutoring as groups of two or three combining lower achieving students with higher achieving students for assistance. Further confusing the matter, Mastropieri et al. interchanged peer tutoring and peer-assisted learning. Colvin (2007) suggested peer tutoring occurred within same societal groups and may be formal or informal, may be one-on-one or in small groups, and may involve furthering classroom discussions or solving specific problems. For purposes of this ARS, Goodlad and Hirst's (1989) definition will be utilized which states "peer tutoring is a system of instruction in which learners help each other and learn (themselves) by teaching" (p.13). Peer tutoring implies that teaching is not being completed by a professional.

The Access Center (n.d.) explained three common types of peer tutoring. Cross-Age Tutoring involves older students tutoring younger students. While tutors received training, the format of the sessions remained unstructured. Tutors acted as models for behavior, organization, and improving study habits. Another tutoring method was Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). The PALS approach includes very structured tutoring in math and reading two or three times a week for about 30 minutes. Higher and lower-achieving students were paired together. The higher achiever always began the session as the model and encouraged the lower achieving student to complete the next step. One other peer tutoring program was Reciprocal Peer Tutoring (RPT). RPT consists of two or more students working in a structured format of prompting, teaching, monitoring, evaluating, and encouraging. Tutors and tutees alternated roles in RPT. The main differences in training were the amount of structure and number of participants in tutoring sessions, but all three programs indicated peer tutoring is beneficial (Access Center).

Benefits of Peer Tutoring

Kalkowski (1995) indicated improvements in academics, social behavior, discipline, peer relations, self-esteem, subject attitudes, and school attendance as benefits of peer tutoring. Interestingly, benefits were reported for the tutor as well as tutee. The greatest improvements were for short, structured programs designed to teach lower-level skills. Kalkowski found tutees were less intimidated by

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

peer tutors than adults. Therefore, tutees felt less vulnerable when questioning and exploring, which allowed more complex higher-order thinking.

Obiakor, as cited in Roswal & Mims (1995) reported students often fail and drop out because of low self-esteem. Therefore, improving self-esteem could decrease failures. When research found peer tutoring improved self-esteem, improvements in dropout rates were also demonstrated. Roswal and Mims also reported greater benefits for students both with and without disabilities using peer tutors versus traditional teacher-only education. Bond and Castagnera (2006) indicated peer tutoring is a small-scale society because students must learn to work together. Therefore, benefits went beyond individual students or schools, positively impacting society as a whole. Coenen (2002) reported that one-on-one teaching also allowed tutees to proceed at their own pace and permitted better understanding of material. Additionally, peer tutoring was reported as a low-cost method to address academic concerns (The Access Center, n. d.). At a time when education funding is being drastically cut, this may present a great benefit to school systems. The most significant benefits to academic achievement as well as self-esteem are seen in effective peer tutoring programs.

Successful Components of Peer Tutoring

Coenen (2002) suggested successful peer tutoring programs include several other factors besides training. Peer tutoring programs need established goals and objectives, and tutors need to understand those goals. Adult supervision is essential at all sessions to answer tutor questions, oversee behavior, provide tutor feedback, and to communicate with parents, teachers or administrators if necessary. Hartman (1996) suggests peer tutors should possess leadership skills and a sense of responsibility. Tutors are expected to be able to explain the concepts of the subject being reviewed and have the ability to pique the interest of the tutee about the subject matter.

If possible, tutors should be matched with tutees who are similar which could be according to gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES) or similarity in achievement level (Hartman, 1996). Hartman found the best match occurs when both share similar social characteristics and academic achievements. Hartman reported these similarities allow the best means of collaboration because tutors and tutees more readily view one another as equals. Coenen (2002) found matching according to similarity provides more effective and comfortable communication.

Several studies suggest the most crucial component of a

successful peer tutoring program is tutor training (Bond & Castagnera, 2006; Burns, 2006; Coenen, 2002). While researchers agreed on the importance of training, they varied on the type of training necessary. Burns recommended training immediately before each tutoring session. Bond & Castagnera reported five training sessions were necessary. The first would teach about equity, fairness, and special education. The second offered simple on-the-spot teaching strategies. In the third session, training focused on communicating with those who have difficulty communicating. The fourth session encouraged reflection on the importance of friendships and facilitating friendships with tutees. The final session was to share what tutors had learned over their semester. Coenen (2002) believed three types of training were necessary: preparatory, weekly, and in-session training. Preparatory occurred the week before tutoring began covering teaching strategies, program goals and procedures, and questioning techniques. Weekly meetings provided further informal training on selected topics. In-session training offered on-the-job feedback to tutors on necessary skills.

The information gathered in the literature review was used to guide the ARS methodology. The use of literature reviews is a viable source of data for ARSs (Stringer & Dwyer, 2004).

Methodology

A distinctive feature of any ARS is the increased understanding of practitioners to formulate effective actions to resolve a problem or to make changes in their work. Stringer and Dwyer (2005) suggest a collaborative process of inquiry that incorporates the perceptions of colleagues tends to better serve client needs. In this ARS quantitative data was gathered through student surveys, teacher surveys, student grades, and the peer tutoring log-in book with the intent to better the process of CA. Qualitative data was gathered about the delivery process and to confirm effectiveness using observations and informal discussions with tutees and tutors. The student survey consisted of 6 items asking students to provide feedback about CA and to identify reasons why some students did not attend CA (see Appendix A). A 5 item teacher survey was developed asking teachers to rate CA and to check whether teachers informed students about CA (see Appendix B).

Because a key feature of AR is to look at the practitioner's own work, the data gathered answered the following research questions which were developed from the review of the literature: How effective is our current peer tutoring program at addressing student needs? What can be

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

done to increase participation in the peer tutoring program? What improvements are needed in the current peer tutoring program?

Participants

Twenty teacher surveys were placed in school mailboxes after an email notifying them about the anonymous survey. Teachers were asked to complete the survey honestly and return it to an envelope in the principal investigator's (PI) school mailbox. For this AR study the PI was the PSC in charge of CA. Fifteen teacher surveys (75%) were returned. Additionally, students who returned their permission slips were given the anonymous survey in their math connections class. Students returned the surveys to an envelope in the classroom after completing it. Only 25 of the 45 (55%) permission slips were returned. Three of the returned permission slips stated parents did not want their children to participate in the ARS.

The PSCs required students to sign in each time they attended CA. The CA log book was used to find out how many students attended CA before and after interventions occurred. Furthermore, the log was used to determine students who started attending CA second semester. Those students' second semester grades were compared with third semester grades to determine if grades improved while attending CA. For some qualitative verification, the PI talked briefly with random students about the tutoring process. The discussions and observations that were made during daily CA sessions were integrated into the PI's field notes for later analysis. The timeframe for the entire study from the development of the research questions, permission gathering, data collection and analysis occurred during spring semester only. All the quantitative and qualitative data were gathered for further data analysis.

Data Analysis

Teacher Survey

A total of 20 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teachers were given surveys. Fifteen surveys (75%) were completed and returned. Eighty percent of the respondents indicated they had 3 to 5 students attending CA, 13% had 1 to 2, and 7% had 5 or more students attending (see Appendix C). Seventy-three percent of the respondents believed CA had been somewhat helpful for students, and 27% believed CA was very helpful. All teacher respondents (100%) believed their students went to CA for help with organization, 33% believed their students went for math assistance, and 13% believed for language arts help. Every

teacher respondent (100%) indicated they had informed parents about CA in conferences, 93% indicated they tell the students about CA, and 7% told the PSCs about students who need to attend CA. While teacher respondents indicated they believe CA is helpful, they did offer a few suggestions (see Appendix D). Forty percent of the respondents wanted more feedback about which of their students were attending CA and what they worked on in CA. Twenty percent recommended the PSCs remind the students regularly about the services offered in CA. The students offered additional feedback.

Student Survey

A total of 45 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students were given permission slips to take the survey. Fifty-five percent of the permission slips were returned for a participant sample of 25. The permission slips returned were from a cross section of students (8 - 6th graders, 8 - 7th graders and 9 - 8th graders). Of the 25 participants, 45% indicated they had never attended CA, 32% attended 1 to 5 times, 5% attended 6 to 10 times, and 18% had attended more than 10 times (see Appendix E). Thirteen percent of the students stated CA was not helpful. In contrast, 40% indicated CA was somewhat helpful, and 27% indicated CA was very helpful. Most of the students indicated they came for help with math (67%), followed by language arts (47%), organization (20%), social studies (13%), and science (7%). They had heard about CA from their teachers (47%), PSCs (47%), parents (20%), and friends (13%). The students who indicated they did not attend CA reported it was because they wanted to be with their friends in the morning (36%), did not know about CA (29%), did not need the help (21%), or could not arrive early to attend (14%). Most students said they would not change anything about the program, but a few had suggestions (see Appendix F). Some suggestions were to make CA longer than 20 minutes, to have after school sessions, make it more useful, and to have their teachers come in to help.

Log-In Data

Field notes, observations and attendance records added further data. The CA log-in book indicated that as of mid-semester 100 students had attended CA. Sixty-eight of those students had attended 5 or fewer times, 15 had attended 10 or fewer, 17 had attended more than 10 times. Thirty-one students began attending after January when the interventions began. This increase was exciting. However, 15 of the 31 only attended once. The log-in book identified students who started attending CA second se-

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

mester. Student's average for their five academic classes improved from 77.9% the second 9 weeks to a 78% for the third 9 weeks after they began attending CA.

Discussion

The results of this ARS indicated that although most students and teachers felt favorably about CA, there were still improvements to address. The majority of students attended CA only a few times. Is this because they rarely needed assistance or because the assistance they received was inadequate? Only 13% of those attending stated that CA was not helpful and this data came from students who had only attended 1 to 5 times. However, 36% indicated they did not attend because they wanted to be with their friends in the morning. This indicates students do not attend frequently because it eliminates one of the only times in their day for socializing. This is further supported by the observation that many of the regular attendees at CA were not very social with peers. These students liked the positive interaction with the PSCs. Further, discussions with those who only attended CA occasionally seemed to indicate many students attend CA only when they have a particular question. This could possibly be addressed by offering a CA session during the school day.

Also, more extensive tutor training could be offered to combat any issues with students not receiving adequate help. It was not surprising to find perceptions indicated the program was effective. However, it was amazing to discover the greatest hindrance to increasing participation was spending time with friends and not as the PSCs thought the difficulty lay in arriving at school early.

While teachers had some knowledge of their students attending CA, they were not well informed. This was evident in the discrepancy in the teacher and student surveys. Teachers were not aware of the type of help students were receiving. Teachers believed most of their students went for help with organization, but students said math assistance was their greatest need. Further evidence of this was in the teachers' suggestion of a notification about student attendance and what students worked on at CA. This could be provided in a weekly report for teachers.

Since there was a 45% increase in students attending CA after the interventions began (please see section on interventions), it seemed the interventions were effective. Reminding the teachers and students about the services offered during CA increased CA attendance significantly. Furthermore, since 100% of the teachers indicated they told parents in conferences about CA, it seemed useful to provide teachers with a brochure about CA to give to

parents.

The average scores for students who began attending CA rose from 77.9% the second 9 weeks to a 78% for the third 9 weeks. While this may seem like an insignificant gain, considering textbook material in many subjects typically gets harder second semester this is still an increase. The survey indicated the majority of the students come to CA for academic assistance in math (67%) and language arts (47%). Therefore, it is essential to provide peer tutors who are strong in those subject areas. Interventions were implemented to address these findings.

Interventions

Current Interventions

After analysis of student and teacher surveys, it was determined students needed more information about the peer tutoring program. Therefore, a short slide power point presentation (PPT) was developed to describe all the services offered in CA. The PSCs used the PPT during classroom guidance lessons presented to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in their social studies class. PSCs described each of the services offered at CA such as: organization, academic assistance, computer/internet usage, and school supplies provided. PSCs informed students of the time and location for CA and then answered any questions the class had. At the end of the guidance lesson, PSCs handed out passes to students who wished to attend peer tutoring.

After the teacher survey and discussion with teachers, it was decided a brochure was the most effective way to inform and remind teachers about CA. Additionally, the brochures could be used to inform parents about CA. The PSCs with the help of several teachers developed a brochure with the essential information about CA that would be useful to parents as well as teachers. All the teachers were presented information about the brochure. The brochure's usage, which was to remind teachers about CA and to provide them with a handout for parents, was explained. Then, the brochure was placed in each teacher's school mailbox.

As a result of increased attention to CA, the number of students attending CA increased. The PSCs petitioned teachers for the names of more students who would be good tutor candidates. New students were gathered and given training so as to provide more tutors this year as well as continued help for next year. For current tutors, Coenen (2002) believes in-session training offering frequent on-the-job feedback to tutors on necessary skills is important to program success. Consequently, observa-

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

tions by the PSCs helped provide feedback on tutors' daily interactions with tutees. Additionally, the PSCs listened to tutors' input on improvements for CA. The tutors suggested incorporating red and green cups in CA. Displaying a green cup indicates the tutee does not need help, and a red cup signifies a tutee needs help. Tutors believed they were interrupting students at times and wanted a way to help without disrupting students deep in thought. The tutors described the new procedures to students as they signed in at CA and gave each student a red and green cup. The new procedure gave the tutors more buy-in and commitment to CA as well as improvement to the peer tutoring program.

Future Interventions

Research suggests the most crucial component of a successful peer tutoring program is tutor training (Bond & Castagnera, 2006; Burns, 2006; Coenen, 2002). While the PSCs provide training at the beginning of the year, it is brief and not as comprehensive as that recommended in the literature. Therefore, the PSCs plan to offer more complete and on-going training in the future. The PSCs will offer half-day training at the beginning of each school year. Foster (2004) provides units on orientation, helping relationships, communication, behavior management, principles of education, and content area tutoring. This is a very thorough training handbook for developing a successful peer tutoring program. Selected assignments that best meet the goals of CA will be implemented. In addition, the PSCs plan to complete short follow-up discussions and training on a monthly basis, as well as provide daily feedback. Even with great new insights there were limitations.

Limitations

One of the challenges with this ARS was getting students to return the permission slip to take the survey. Candy was offered to all the students who returned permission slips as an incentive. However, only 25 of the 45 permission slips were returned and three of the parents indicated their children could not participate. The return rate might have been higher if parents had been called and told permission slips were being sent home and if parents were given explanations about the survey. Explanations could have indicated the possibility of grade improvements which may have encouraged parents to learn more about CA. Even if all the permission slips were returned, this is a very limited population. The results only examine a few students in one suburban middle school and could not be generalized for all populations. Additionally, the

survey did not address demographics of the population utilizing CA and this could be helpful information to gather in the future.

Further limitations were with the survey. Students seem to misunderstand some of the items. The directions stated to skip to question #5 if they had never attended CA. However, some of the students did not skip to question #5 and some did. Also, teachers and students were allowed to check more than one answer on some questions. Therefore, the totals on some questions were greater than 100% which is somewhat confusing. Even with these limitations some conclusions could be reached.

Finally, researcher bias and subjectivity which are considered by most qualitative researchers to be both important and inevitable must be addressed. Mehra (2002) teaches the need for practitioners to honestly and openly acknowledge their biases as well as what self-influences they have about the research. Generally practitioners have a good idea about the program or plan they want to study. This drives the work and leads practitioners to question their work. It further impels them to find out what they do not know about their work so that they might make it better. As a PSC, who is in charge of the peer tutoring program it was important that I acknowledge my bias so that I would concentrate on learning how to improve the program for the benefit of the students involved.

Conclusions

This study revealed that the teachers and students surveyed believed the peer tutoring program as implemented is effective. However, based on the information gathered improvements can be made to increase the effectiveness and participation in the program. More training for our tutors will boost their usefulness, thus improving the program. In addition, results indicated students and teachers need regular reminders about CA throughout the school year. This has the potential to encourage attendance. Therefore, the PSCs will teach guidance lessons annually describing all the services offered at CA and provide monthly reminders on the morning announcements about CA. Overall, the results of the study indicated positive attitudes about CA, and the PSCs intend to cultivate and build on those attitudes.

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

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The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

Appendix A

CAT Attack Student Survey

1. How often have you attended CAT Attack?
☐ Never (If never skip to question #5.)
☐ 1-5 times
☐ 6-10 times
☐ more than 10 times
2. How helpful did you find CAT Attack?
☐ Never attended
☐ Not helpful
☐ Somewhat helpful
☐ Very helpful
3. What did you receive help with at CAT Attack?
☐ Organization
☐ Math
☐ Language Arts
☐ Science
☐ Reading
☐ Social Studies
4. How did you hear about CAT Attack?
☐ Friend
☐ Teacher
☐ Counselor
☐ Parent
Other _____
5. Reason you do not attend CAT Attack.
☐ Do not know about it.
☐ Do not get to school in time to attend
☐ Do not need the help
☐ Want to be with my friends in the morning
Other – explain _____
6. What could we do to make CAT Attack more useful to you?

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

Appendix B

CAT Attack Teacher Survey

1. How many students do you have attending CAT Attack?
☐ None (If none skip to question #5.)
☐ 1-2 students
☐ 3-5 students
☐ more than 5 students
2. How beneficial do you believe CAT Attack has been for your students?
☐ Not helpful
☐ Somewhat helpful
☐ Very helpful
3. What do your students receive help with at CAT Attack?
☐ Organization
☐ Math
☐ Language Arts
☐ Science
☐ Reading
☐ Social Studies
4. When do you tell your students about CAT Attack?
☐ Do not tell them
☐ Tell parents during conferences
☐ Tell the student's counselor
☐ Tell the student personally
Other _____
5. What could the PSCs do to make CAT Attack be more useful?

Include your name if you would like me to see you for further details. _____

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

Appendix C

Table 1
CAT Attack Teacher Survey

Questions	Responses			
	None	1-2 Students	3-5 Students	5+ Students
1. Attendance	0%	13%	80%	7%
2. CAT is helpful	Not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	
	0%	73%	27%	
3. Help with	Organization	Math	Language Arts	Other*
	100%	33%	13%	20%
4. Tell about CAT	Don't tell	Conferences	Counselor	Student
	0%	100%	7%	93%

*Science, reading, and social studies

Appendix D

Table 2
What could the PSCs do to make CAT Attack be more beneficial?

Teacher Responses	Number of teachers
Like the way program is being run	1
Very helpful	1
Nothing it's great	1
Talk to students and show them how it works	1
Make periodic announcements about CAT	2
Let teachers know which students attend and what they get help with	6

The Effects of the Peer Tutoring Program

Appendix E

Table 3
CAT Attack Student Survey

Questions	Responses			
	Never	1-5 Times	6-10 Times	10+ Times
1. Attendance	45%	32%	5%	18%
2. CAT is helpful	Never attended	Not helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful
	45%	13%	40%	27%
3. Help with	Organization	Math	Language Arts	Other*
	20%	67%	47%	20%
4. Hear about CAT	Friend	Teacher	Counselor	Parent
	13%	47%	47%	20%
5. Reason not attending	Didn't know	Time	Don't need	Friends
	29%	14%	21%	36%

**Science, reading, and social studies*

Appendix F

Table 4
What could we do to make CAT Attack more useful to you?

Student Responses	Number of students
Nothing	7
Haven't been don't know	5
Make it more useful	2
Make the time earlier so we have more minutes	1
Get teachers to come in and help	1
Have after school sessions	1

Closed-Circuit Television

A New Delivery Method in School Counseling: Closed-circuit Television

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Abstract

In this era of results based education, professional school counselors must discover the most efficient methods for reaching all children in their school, yet still allow time for individual student care. This quantitative research study describes the utilization of a school's closed-circuit television to present a classroom guidance unit on family diversity. A pre/post survey revealed statistically significant findings that could offer professional school counselors a new way of delivery.

A New Delivery Method in School Counseling: Closed-Circuit Television

A new era of professional school counseling has begun. Gone are the days when professional school counselors' (PSCs) major responsibilities within the school were to provide specialized resources to a few needy children. The new model of school counseling requires PSCs to prove their importance for every student in the school (American School Counseling Association [ASCA], 2003). With the drastic changes in American education, there has been a major push for accountability and educational reform within all aspects of the school. The school environment has become a learning focused environment, where student outcomes have replaced teacher activities as the accepted measure of educational excellence (Paisley & Hayes, 2003). This same approach holds true for counseling programs, thus PSCs can no longer expect what they do to speak for itself; they must be able to report student change as a result of their efforts.

Within this new model of school counseling, a change

has occurred in the roles that professional school counselors play. Historically, school counselors have been known as "highly paid clerical staff, quasi administrators, and/or inadequately trained therapeutic mental health providers with unmanageable client loads" (Martin, 2002, p. 150). According to Paisley & McMahon (2001), school counselors are asked to fulfill 13 different responsibilities, including but not limited to "provid[ing] individual and small group counseling sessions, building partnerships and teams within and outside of the school, and prevent[ing] suicides, pregnancies, dropouts, drug use, and general moral decay," (p. 107). Paisley & McMahon further explained that even in the best of circumstances, PSCs must prioritize in order to have time for the most important aspects of their program as well as demonstrate the cost effectiveness of remaining in their counselor roles as opposed to assigned administrative roles.

Successful Delivery Systems for PSCs

Professional school counselor duties are varied and flexible. However, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003) does outline four areas of the delivery system and common practices used to implement a school counseling program. Included in the delivery system are guidance curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services, and system support. While responsive services such as meeting students' direct needs through counseling, conferences, referral, and follow up may be the former focus of school counselors, it is now only a piece of the bigger picture (ASCA, 2003). Nevertheless, it is still a part, and depending on the individual school's need, this segment still has the potential to demand a large amount of time.

Closed-Circuit Television

Guidance Curriculum Delivery

Another unit of delivery system, guidance curriculum, is defined as structured developmental lessons designed to assist students in achieving desired competencies and to provide all students with the knowledge and skills appropriate for their developmental level. The guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and is presented systematically through K-12 classroom and group activities (ASCA, 2003).

Erford (2007) suggests that the classroom guidance segment is effective for delivering the comprehensive school counseling program, and at the elementary school level, the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2003) suggests that PSCs spend 35-40% of their time in classroom guidance. In an ideal situation, this would be feasible; however, many PSCs struggle with providing these school-wide services when there are intense immediate needs for at-risk children at their school (Paisley, 2001). In such cases it may be more efficient to approach classroom guidance curriculum from a new perspective. The purpose of this study was to discover a more efficient way for school counselors to deliver classroom guidance curriculum on various topics.

The Use of Closed-Circuit Television

Televised instruction is not a new phenomenon in education. In past decades, many researchers (Ryan & Whitman, 1969; Toronto Board of Education, 1972; Wilmington Public Schools, 1968) examined the effects of closed-circuit television instruction on students. The Wilmington Public Schools of Delaware reported their findings on the use of closed-circuit television for large scale curriculum instruction including vocational, career, and college guidance lessons. According to the Public Schools of Delaware (Wilmington Public Schools, 1968), educational television contributed to the school counselor's duties in testing and informing large groups of students, thus lending more opportunities to focus on individual and small group counseling. Ryan & Whitman (1969) suggest the potential uses of closed-circuit television and recorded videotapes in the schools. Additionally, Ryan & Whitman assert that these forms of visual media have the ability to save counselors precious time.

Researchers in Canada explored the effects of school telecasts on students (Toronto Board of Education, 1972). These researchers reviewed 13 telecasts on three topics: guidance, art, and science. They then evaluated the effects of these telecasts in multiple areas, including student learning. The researchers found that the telecasts

significantly influenced learning and retention as well as stimulated interest among students. They also found that telecasts work best when presented more than once.

More recently, many researchers (Petracchi & Patchner, 2000; Chernish, DeFranco, Lindner, & Dooley, 2005; Bacon & Jakovich, 2001) examined the effects of televised instruction on students. Petracchi & Patchner (2000) found no significant difference in student perception of their learning environment between traditional classroom instruction and televised instruction. Additionally, Chernish et al. (2005) found no significant differences in achievement for college students taking a human resources management course through the traditional classroom environment or through televised instruction.

Although there appears to be an adequate amount of research on college students and televised instruction, there appears to be a gap in the current literature in regards to using closed-circuit television to deliver non-academic instruction for young children. At the time of this research study, the principal investigator was assigned to the school as a school counseling intern (SCI). After observing the site supervisor working with closed-circuit television, the SCI became interested in being supervised on the use of the closed circuit television. The goal of this study was to discover if closed-circuit television was an efficient and practical method for the delivery of traditional classroom guidance material. The SCI chose to deliver a series of guidance lessons to the students on family diversity, as there were no immediate plans within the school counseling program for guidance on this topic. Through an informal needs assessment using individual interactions with students and their families, the SCI felt that a unit focusing on family diversity would benefit this particular student population.

Method

This quantitative study used experimental design to determine whether closed-circuit television can be an effective tool in the delivery of a classroom guidance curriculum. This study focused specifically on second grade students in a rural primary school in the southeastern United States. This study was completed as part of a school counseling internship requirement in order to gain knowledge and skills pertaining to data collection and analysis.

Participant Selection

Out of approximately 140 second grade students, 25 were randomly selected through systemic sampling from

Closed-Circuit Television

an alphabetical list to receive pretest and posttest measures. Of the selected participants, 18 students returned parental permission forms and minor consent forms. The 18 participants were drawn from all seven 2nd grade classrooms in the selected primary school and included 7 girls and 11 boys.

Design and Procedures

The intervention included eight 20-minute sessions on the school's closed-circuit television that focused on family diversity. All students in the school viewed the lessons during morning broadcasts in their respective classrooms. The sessions were spaced over 4 weeks with two sessions per week. Sessions began immediately after students returned from winter break and concluded before classrooms began major preparation for annual high stakes testing. The unit focused on family diversity. The lessons were designed and performed by the SCI to meet the needs of the student population. Following is a summary of each lesson, based on fictional characters created for this specific unit.

Introduction.

The main character, Hattie the Hippo is introduced by the SCI. Hattie is a puppet and is large enough to be seen on the small television screens. The students are introduced to the idea that Hattie will be teaching them about how all families are different. Some examples of family differences are discussed and include families living in separate homes and families that look different from each other.

Adoption.

The SCI explained that Hattie's mother died when she was a baby. Mama Bear, Hattie's adoptive mother, is introduced. Students are taught about adoption and how it is similar to adopting a pet.

Families can live in different houses.

The SCI shared two pictures that Hattie drew of her families. The first picture is of Mama Bear's house and includes Mama Bear, Hattie and her brother. The second picture included Daddy Bear's house and shows Daddy and two sisters. The SCI explained that siblings can live in different houses and continue to love each other as they are still a family. The SCI asks all students to respond to the question, "Can you be family if you live in different houses?"

Families can look different.

The SCI explained that families can still be families even

if they look different. She brings in Hattie and her three siblings. They are bears with different color fur. They all look different and are still a family. The SCI also showed a family portrait belonging to a teacher at the school. The teacher had multiple children of different ethnicities in the picture. The SCI points out that they are all a family and love each other even though they have different color skin, different color hair, and some wear glasses.

All vs. some.

The SCI reviewed true and false questions about families. These questions were worded in statements using the terms "all" and "some". The SCI explained the importance of noticing the difference in these words (i.e., some families live in the same house, but not all families live in the same house). Some examples included: all kids are girls, families always live in the same house, all kids live with one mom and one dad. The SCI reviewed with the students how to change these statements into more inclusive sentences using the words "some" and "sometimes".

Parents, jobs, and careers.

Using a laptop computer, the SCI showed different pictures of adults working in a variety of settings. The SCI labeled each adult as a child's parent. For example, when showing a picture of a woman in an office, the SCI stated, "This is Johnny's mom. She goes to work in an office." The pictures also included a stay-at-home dad, a grandfather who cooks, a mom working at a store, and a dad who teaches school. The SCI strove to depict adults from a variety of ethnicities outside of stereotypical roles.

Living with grandparents.

Another character from a previous guidance lesson appeared as a friend of Hattie. The SCI explained how this friend's family is special, as she lives with her grandparents. The students were asked to write about how their families are special during their daily writing workshop within their classrooms. This suggestion offered teachers a chance to incorporate the researchers' lessons into academic instruction.

Review.

All of the former points are covered briefly. Students were asked to respond to statements with thumbs up if the statement was true or thumbs down if the statement was false. Teachers were asked to verify the students' responses in their classrooms.

Data Collection and Analysis

The SCI collected data via a one group pretest-posttest

Closed-Circuit Television

design. Students were pulled from their regular classroom on two separate days to complete the pre and posttests in a small group setting. In each small group the SCI reviewed the purpose of the inventory and thanked the participants for their cooperation. The SCI asked each student to follow along and choose the best answer for each question as the SCI read the statements. Students were allowed to take their time as needed. Students were also asked to keep their answers private so as not to sway their peers' answers.

The SCI developed the pre and posttest inventories in order to assess knowledge gained from the closed-circuit classroom guidance unit on family diversity. The questions focused on family differences that occur in the target student population. The inventory consisted of 10 true/false questions (See Appendix A). Two other educators in the school voluntarily reviewed the inventory items in order to assist with age appropriateness.

To analyze the data, the SCI completed a paired samples t-test on pre and posttest scores. This analysis allowed a comparison of means to test for significance in the improvement of scores. The highest possible score on the pretest and the posttest was 10. Scores are reported in a table as shown in Table 1.

Results

The average posttest score ($M = 9.167$) significantly exceeded the average pretest score ($M = 7.056$), $t(17) = -4.945$, $p \leq .05$. For the pretest, the range of scores was from 2 to 10. For the posttest, the range of scores was from 1 to 10. The pretest score of 2 and the posttest score of 1 belonged to participant number 9. It is important to address these particular scores. This student had known academic difficulties and it is the SCI's opinion that the student had trouble understanding the inventory items and format. Despite the inclusion of the outlier, results indicate that the use of a closed-circuit television classroom unit on family diversity contributed to an overall significant improvement in students' understanding of family diversity.

Discussion

The present research study suggests a renewed area for counselor delivery. In order to allow time for other areas in the counseling program, PSCs may consider implementing classroom guidance in a more efficient and practical way than visiting each classroom for extended

periods of time. This study reveals that closed-circuit television can promote highly desired efficiency as well as increase student knowledge and awareness in regards to family diversity. These findings suggest many PSCs might want to review the current breakdown of their time and priorities. If a school has the resource of a closed-circuit television, it may be helpful to implement new and comprehensive classroom guidance units such as this study's family diversity unit.

As mentioned earlier, the ASCA National Model (2003) calls for elementary PSCs to spend 35-40% of their time in classroom guidance. If PSCs can cover the same classroom guidance lessons in a more efficient manner, through the use of closed circuit televisions, then the 35-40% may be reduced to a much smaller percentage. This reduction in classroom guidance time would open up the possibility for PSCs to focus more of their program on other tasks as determined by their school's unique needs. Through this shift in focus, PSCs will easily be able to demonstrate successful results and feel assured that they are not neglecting the significant preventative methods of classroom guidance.

The use of closed-circuit television promotes visibility and also contributes to administrators' and teachers' knowledge as to the role of a PSC. Instead of sitting behind closed office doors, the school staff regularly witness the multiple roles of the PSC. Additionally, Hatch & Chen-Hayes (2008) discovered that PSCs are often fearful when it comes to collecting and using data in their comprehensive school counseling program. The use of closed-circuit television is easily documented; therefore this method will satisfy this educational era's demands for results based interventions in a straightforward way that may appeal to PSCs.

Future Research Recommendations

The present study creates a starting point for future research using closed-circuit television for the delivery of a classroom guidance unit that meets the school's needs such as family diversity. The current study only focused on family diversity. Future researchers may want to investigate which topics are best taught through traditional classroom guidance methods and which may be more efficient through the use of closed-circuit television. Topics such as "good touch, bad touch" may be considered inappropriate for closed-circuit television lessons, but researchers may want to determine which topics are appropriate for school-wide instruction.

Researchers can consider the various methods of in-

Closed-Circuit Television

struction through closed-circuit television. In the current study, the PI used multiple methods, including but not limited to power point slides, puppets, verbal instruction, and written practice. Researchers can determine which, if any, of these methods leads to the greatest learning. Additionally, researchers can examine how best to use homeroom teachers as guides in the students' learning of topics covered by closed-circuit television and consider how closed-circuit television airing could aid in the execution of homeroom advisory programs.

Future researchers may also be interested in determining which age groups respond positively to closed-circuit television instruction. For instance, the present study involved students in a primary school. It may be helpful to understand if PSCs could tailor closed-circuit television instruction to meet the needs of middle and high school students possibly in the areas of career development and college readiness counseling. Finally, researchers can investigate the corollary benefits of closed-circuit guidance on teacher and school cooperation with the PSC's guidance goals.

Limitations

One aspect of concern is the originality of the pre and posttest inventory. This inventory was created by the SCI and was not normed on any population nor tested for validity and reliability. A final limitation includes outdated data thus the literature review is insufficient and not as full as one might expect. Despite these limitations, the SCI feels confident that the significant results of this study warrant further research into the possibility of using closed-circuit television in delivery of classroom guidance.

Conclusion

This study examined a renewed delivery method for PSCs. This delivery method included the use of closed-circuit television in order to present classroom guidance curriculum in an efficient and effective manner. A pre/post survey revealed statistically significant findings that suggest that closed-circuit television is a practical addition to the school counseling delivery system.

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Table 1

Student	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
1	9	10	1
2	7	10	3
3	6	10	4
4	8	9	1
5	5	9	4
6	9	10	1
7	10	10	0
8	7	9	2
9	2	1	-1
10	4	10	6
11	8	10	2
12	9	10	1
13	8	10	2
14	9	10	1
15	7	10	3
16	10	10	0
17	6	10	4
18	3	7	4

Closed-Circuit Television

Appendix A

Pre and post test

Family Diversity

Directions:

- Circle the T if the sentence is true.
- Circle the F if the sentence is false (not true).

1. All families are like my family. T F
2. Some kids live with their grandparents. T F
3. All dads go to work. T F
4. All brothers and sisters live in the same house. T F
5. All families are different. T F
6. To be a family, people have to live in the same house. T F
7. People in the same family always have the same color skin. T F
8. Some kids live with only one grown-up. T F
9. All kids live with one mom and one dad. T F
10. All moms cook dinner. T F

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

School Bonding, Academic Achievement, and Participation in Extracurricular Activities

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Abstract

Utilizing a single-group interrupted time series design (Creswell, 2003), this pilot study examined the relationship between academic achievement, school bonding, and the extracurricular activity participation of "uninvolved" students (n=11) who participated in a voluntary support group at a suburban high school in the southeast. Results indicated that while involvement in the voluntary support group did not have a significant effect on the school bonding of students, involvement in the voluntary support group may have had a significant effect on the academic achievement of the students. These findings suggest that professional school counselors, school officials, and community agency personnel can collaborate and use extracurricular activities to help target the academic achievement of other uninvolved or off-track students.

School Bonding, Academic Achievement, and Participation in Extracurricular Activities

When examining the attitudes and beliefs of students, it is important to examine those concepts within the context of the school environment while also seeking to understand how these concepts reflect student investment in education and connection to the school environment. A recent study presents the aforementioned concepts as interrelated, yet staunchly different concepts. Particularly, the concepts of positive orientation to school, school attachment, and school bonding have all been used to describe various measures of students' attitudes and beliefs

(Libbey, 2004). The purpose of the present study was to attempt to further elaborate on the relationship between school attachment, academic achievement, and extracurricular activity involvement.

Positive orientation to school was a phrase coined first by Jessor, Van Den Bos, Costa, and Turbin (1995). The term was used to measure the attitudes and motivations of students towards learning and school. This construct helped researchers examine how students felt about attending school and how much value they placed on academic achievement. School attachment, in turn, was introduced as a term that represented an individual's sense of connection to the institution (Libbey, 2004) and the degree to which students report that others at school like them (Mouton, Hawkins, McPherson, & Copley, 1996).

School attachment was later revised (Moody & Bearman, 1998, as cited in Libby, 2004) in a scale used in the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. The scale included three items that focused on feelings of closeness to others at school, happiness at school, and feelings of being a part of the school (Moody & Bearman). According to this research, attachment involved an emotional link to school while commitment entailed an investment in school (Libbey, 2004). Although school attachment has been defined in many ways, most research has described it as a single term that is a part of a larger construct called school bonding (Jenkins, 1997; Goode-now, 1993).

According to the American School Counseling Association [ASCA] (Bowers & Hatch, 2005), professional

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

school counselors (PSCs), at a basic level, should be involved in activities that promote the personal/social, academic, and career development of all students. Additionally, school counseling programs are idealized as being comprehensive, systematic, and collaborative in nature (ASCA, 2005). When considering the importance of such factors on individual student success, school bonding should be of concern to PSCs as it has the potential to affect each domain and hence, the educational experiences of students. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that bonding to school can influence school climate (Gottfredson, 1989) and delinquency (Lee & Smith-Adcock, 2005), both of which are major concerns to PSCs and school administrators.

School Bonding and School Attachment

While school bonding and school attachment have been used interchangeably, school bonding, as defined by the Social Development Research Group, is a term that includes varying aspects of the student's relationship to the school such as attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs about school (Libbey, 2004). Underlying the concept of school bonding is the ground breaking theory of social bonding introduced by Hirschi (1969). Central to criminology, Hirschi's social bonding theory posits that delinquency is the result of weakened or broken bonds to society. The four main components of this theory are attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs.

As social bonding is contextualized in the school setting, its applicability, particularly when considering its individual components, can be considered in order to assist in improving the achievement efforts of under-performing students with disciplinary or school attachment/bonding problems. The use of extracurricular, voluntary support programs to that end has not been evaluated and despite controversy, extensive research has been devoted to establishing the relationship between extracurricular involvement and achievement with various age groups (Hunt, 2005; Luthar, Shoum, & Brown, 2006). In using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Dumais (2006) found that the number of activities students participated in during kindergarten and first grade, resulted in significant effects on reading achievement scores.

Additional studies have found similar effects on academic achievement. Akos (2006) discovered that participation in multiple extracurricular activities was related to the academic achievement and school connectedness of middle school children. A cross-sectional study conducted by Darling (2005) found that participation in extracur-

ricular activities was associated with more positive adolescent outcomes for high school students. These studies are important because they seem to suggest that participation in extracurricular activities has been shown to have an effect on academic achievement and school connectedness, which is a subscale of school bonding; hence, advocacy for the existence of a broad range of such activities may help PSCs indirectly promote academic achievement and the development of positive attitudes towards school of all students.

As it pertains to the relationship between school bonding and academic achievement, studies have indicated significant effects. Fleming et al. (2005) found that higher levels of school bonding were associated with higher test scores and higher grades in 7th and 10th graders. Frey, Ruchkin, Martin, and Schwab-Stone (2008) found that school attachment, a subscale of school bonding, was associated with lower levels of violent delinquency and aggressive beliefs, as well as more academic motivation in 8th and 9th graders. Finally, in a study by LeCroy and Krysik (2008), attachment to school predicted a higher grade point average for Hispanic 7th and 8th grade adolescents. When understanding the relationship between school bonding and academic achievement, PSCs are better equipped with the ability to provide and promote a range of services beneficial in helping students obtain an optimal educational experience.

Although trends in the literature may suggest relationships between academic achievement, school bonding, and extracurricular activity involvement, little research exists concerning the relationship of all three of the aforementioned concepts. Furthermore, little research exists pertaining to the way in which extracurricular activity involvement affects the academic achievement of under-achieving high school adolescents involved in voluntary non-school originated extracurriculars.

Method

Guided by Hirschi's Social Bonding Theory (1969), the purpose of the current pilot study, which utilizes a single-group interrupted time-series design (Creswell, 2003), was to examine the relationship between extracurricular activity involvement, school bonding, and academic achievement and to learn how exploring the relationship between these constructs can help PSCs and school officials promote the school bonding and academic achievement of underperforming, uninvolved African American students in high school. The tasks of the current study

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

were implemented by the School Counseling Intern (SCI), who also served as the principal investigator (PI) for the study.

Participants

Eleven high school students (8 females and 3 males; mean age = 17.54 years) volunteered to participate in the current study. "Uninvolved" is defined as non-active participation in any school extracurricular activity or program. The study sample was comprised of a convenience sample of African American high school students who were members of a voluntary support group called Project F.R.E.E. for the purposes of publication. This program is very unique to the area belonging to the PI's research institution, so precautionary methods were necessary in order to protect the identity of the participants of this study. This year long program was created in order to help underachieving students stay in school and learn job skills. With funding secured from a grant overseen by the local police department, this program, which operates under the guidelines of a local non-profit organization, has been active for approximately 2 years.

At the beginning of the school year, a general list of off-track students is created by PSC and graduation coach referrals. Typical program participants are in grades 10-12 and become part of the program after completing an application and being interviewed by Project F.R.E.E staff. During the first semester of the program, students met once a week for Saturday workshops beginning in the Fall to discuss personal goals and to work on interpersonal, communication, and job skills. Student grades and attendance were monitored throughout the school year. All of the participants were either in danger of failing one or more academic courses or were not on grade level during this school term. Grade levels are predetermined by school district guidelines and are defined by the number of course credits (ranging from 0.5-1.0) an individual student has obtained during a semester. Participants did not receive any compensation for their involvement in the study and were told that they would not be penalized if they did not wish to participate in the study. The PI was the SCI, whose primary tasks were to participate in Saturday meetings, monitor individual student grades, and to collect and analyze pre and post test data.

Materials

Using a measure of school bonding titled the "School Attachment Questionnaire" for both pre- and post- tests, as developed by Jenkins (1997), students were asked to respond to a 33 item survey, which consisted of most

of the original items from the Jenkins study. One of the items was excluded (i.e., "How is your high school compared to others?") because it required that participants answer descriptively and could have solicited a range of responses that although would have been valuable, would have warranted a form of qualitative analysis that would have posed a time constraint on the current study. The survey items elicited responses in the areas of school commitment, attachment, involvement, and beliefs in school rules. The survey was taken at the beginning of the study and prior to the end of the study (See Appendix A). The actual survey given to participants was headed with synonyms and phrases for the construct being measured to thwart potential bias (e.g., commitment was replaced with dedication, etc.). Survey items were divided into four sections: commitment, attachment, involvement, and belief in school rules, all of which are central to social bonding theory. The first section focused on school dedication. The second set of questions asked participants about their perceptions of school. The third set of questions centered on activity level in school while the fourth set of questions asked about beliefs towards school rules. An Excel spreadsheet was created to monitor participant grades, absences, tardies and cumulative grade-point averages. The spreadsheet also calculated group averages for the aforementioned items.

Procedure

The survey was given to participants during the first semester and during the first 10 weeks of the second school semester. Each survey was marked with an identification number unique to individual participants. Participants were instructed to respond to each survey item using either a "1" or "2." A response of "1" meant that the student agreed with the question while a "2" meant that the participant did not agree with the question. After completing the survey, participants were asked to place and seal the survey in the envelope provided prior to returning it to the PI. Participants completed the survey as individuals during school hours and at Saturday workshops as time allowed.

Participants met with the PI and other Project F.R.E.E. staff at Saturday workshops and participated in activities that focused on the establishment of good school, work habits, and a variety of other topics throughout the academic year. During the first 8 weeks, the PI assisted with the organization and scheduling of a curriculum from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* (Covey, 2003), which is designed to provide tips to students for improving self-image, resisting peer pressure, and goal

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

achievement. This curriculum was presented to help the students establish a foundation for better interpersonal communication with peers, teachers, and potential employers. During the remaining weeks, the PI and Project F.R.E.E. staff organized student progress meetings in addition to college tours and participant trips to local community activities. Upon completion of the first semester, students received a monetary incentive check from the program's grant funding for the completion of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens curriculum and for compliance with the program's requirements for attendance and achievement.

Data Collection and Analysis

Participant grades were monitored and gathered at the 6, 9, and 12 week periods. Statistical analyses were performed using EZ Analyze for Excel (<http://www.ez-analyze.com/>). Individual participant identification was coded and kept on a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet that was then converted into an EZ Analyze data page. Demographics such as age and gender were entered for all participants. Academic grades for courses were entered by each term and were cumulative averages of all grades received during that grading period. Both pre-test and post-test items were numbered and entered individually in order to get an accurate analysis of the individual survey items. A paired samples t-test was used to examine group mean differences on pre and post test items as well as on individual and group grades. An alpha level of .01 was used for all statistical tests.

Results

School bonding as measured by the survey was not affected by involvement with Project F.R.E.E. In other words, there were no significant changes in the responses of the participant to the pre and post test measures of school bonding (See Table 1). There were however, significant improvements in the course grades of the students and consequently, cumulative averages for the 6, 9, and 12 week periods (See Table 2). Cumulative averages for the group during the 6, 9, and 12 week periods were $M=69.705$, $M= 73.136$, and $M= 77.182$ respectively. During the grading period between 6 and 9 weeks, mean differences were not significant, $t(2.174)$, $p= .055$. Mean differences for the 9 and 12 week grading periods were significant, $t(3.872)$, $p= .003$. Lastly, the difference between the averages of the group overall was significant, $t(4.075)$, $p=.002$.

Discussion

The goals of the study were to learn about the effects that extracurricular activity involvement could have on academic achievement and school bonding. Understanding more about this relationship is important for PSCs because this information will better inform the practices of PSCs. This study provides an example of a collaborative approach that PSCs can employ to target achievement rates. Although participation in Project F.R.E.E. may have had an effect on the academic achievement of the students, it did not have an effect on school commitment, involvement, belief in school rules, and attachment. Based on these results however, the current study presents data that is congruent with other studies concerning the relationship between academic achievement and extracurricular involvement (Hunt, 2005; Luthar et.al., 2006; Dumais, 2006; Akos, 2006; Darling, 2005). In knowing there is a solid relationship between academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities, PSCs can sponsor, create, or advocate for the creation of a range of programs that attract many students with different needs.

Limitations

Despite the obvious limitations concerning the absence of a control group, hence the absence of external validity and small sample size, this pilot-study used a validated measure of school bonding (Jenkins, 1997); however many of the items on the survey were outdated and often not appropriate for the target group (i.e., items in the involvement section solicited responses related to current involvement in school related activities. [See Appendix A]). Secondly, the instrument used did not elicit a wide range of response (i.e., Likert style scale) which may have affected the way in which students responded to individual items. One of the primary areas of focus for this study was to attempt to gain a complex understanding of how Project F.R.E.E. participant involvement in an extracurricular activity related to academic achievement and school bonding. Only one descriptive item was included in the Jenkins study, but this particular item was excluded from the current study because of the qualitative data it elicited and the constraints that this imposed upon the study's completion time; however, this one item does not account for the limitations encountered by questionnaire item structure. The items contained in the questionnaire only required "yes" or "no" responses, which limited participant responses in general. Finally, although grades improved for this group of students, it is not clear whether this was a direct result of involvement in Project F.R.E.E.,

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

or if there were external influences such as private tutoring or other assistance unknown to Project F.R.E.E. staff and the SCI.

Implications

Participation in programs similar to Project F.R.E.E. may be used to help target the academic achievement of other uninvolved or off-track students in high schools. As recent accountability legislation emphasizes assisting underperforming students, schools can utilize community resources in order to help reach underperforming students. By garnering additional support for troubled students, academic success may become influenced, hence graduation rates may increase.

Although the current study did not find a significant relationship between school bonding and extracurricular involvement, this may suggest a more complex relationship between the two concepts. While the literature states that school bonding is a multifaceted term, the integrity of such a term is embedded in its complexity, which may result in difficulties in analyzing its relationship with a one-dimensional concept such as extracurricular activity involvement. Furthermore, little can be inferred about the valence of school bonding because current literature does not address this aspect of school bonding. In other words, current literature has not addressed whether or not there is such a thing as positive or negative school bonding and if such a relationship would prove useful to understanding how school bonding relates to academic achievement. In beginning to understand the complexity of such a relationship, PSCs can design interventions and programs, as well as advocate for the existence of programs, catering to the specific needs of certain groups within their schools. Once such interventions and programs are in place at schools, PSCs will be making progressive strides towards positively influencing school climate.

Future research should consider the development of an instrument that measures school bonding using a continuous scale as well as qualitative inquiries for a better understanding of the complexity of school bonding. Future research should also seek to identify potential mediators such as age, socioeconomic status, and other personal factors to the relationship between school bonding and academic achievement while utilizing a control group and larger sample size.

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Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

Table 1
School Bonding Item Paired Samples t-test
Paired Differences

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Diff.	t	Sig.
Item 1	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.000 1.000	11	.000 .000	.135	.000	1.000
Item 2	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.091 1.000	11	.302 .000	.091	1.000	.341
Item 3	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.909 1.909	11	.302 .302	.135	.000	1.000
Item 4	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.818 1.818	11	.405 .405	.135	.000	1.000
Item 5	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.000 1.000	11	.000 .000	.135	.000	1.000
Item 6	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	2.000 2.000	11	.000 .000	.135	.000	1.000
Item 7	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.000 1.000	11	.000 .000	.135	.000	1.000
Item 8	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	2.000 1.909	11	.000 .302	.091	1.000	.341
Item 9	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.636 1.455	11	.505 .522	.182	1.000	.341
Item 10	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.455 1.636	11	.522 .505	.122	1.491	.167
Item 11	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.273 1.000	11	.467 .000	.141	1.936	.082
Item 12	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.000 1.000	11	.000 .000	.135	.000	1.000
Item 13	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.182 1.000	11	.405 .000	.122	1.491	.167
Item 14	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.909 2.000	11	.302 .000	.091	1.000	.341
Item 15	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.182 1.000	11	.405 .000	.122	1.491	.167
Item 16	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.900 1.800	10a	.316 .422	.100	1.000	.343
Item 17	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	2.000 1.909	11	.000 .302	.091	1.000	.341
Item 18	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	2.000 1.818	11	.000 .405	.122	1.491	.167

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

Table 1 - continued
School Bonding Item Paired Samples t-test
Paired Differences

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Diff.	t	Sig.
Item 19	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.909 1.818	11	.302 .405	.091	1.000	.341
Item 20	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.818 1.818	11	.405 .405	.135	.000	1.000
Item 21	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	2.000 1.818	11	.000 .405	.122	1.491	.167
Item 22	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.636 1.545	11	.505 .522	.163	.559	.588
Item 23	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.273 1.273	11	.467 .467	.191	.000	1.000
Item 24	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.727 1.727	11	.467 .467	.191	.000	1.000
Item 25	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.909 2.000	11	.302 .000	.091	1.000	.341
Item 26	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.455 1.273	11	.522 .467	.226	.803	.441
Item 27	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.909 1.818	11	.302 .405	.163	.559	.588
Item 28	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.273 1.364	11	.467 .505	.211	.430	.676
Item 29	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.545 1.818	11	.522 .405	.141	1.936	.082
Item 30	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.091 1.364	11	.302 .505	.141	1.936	.082
Item 31	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.455 1.545	11	.522 .522	.163	.559	.588
Item 32	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.818 1.727	11	.405 .467	.211	.430	.676
Item 33	Pre-test scores Post-test scores	1.545 1.636	11	.522 .505	.091	1.000	.341

Note. One of the participants did not submit a response for item 16 on the pre-test, so this participant's response was omitted from the paired samples analysis.

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

Table 2

Grade Averages Paired-Samples t-tests

Grading Intervals	Group Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Difference	t	Sig
6-week 9-week	69.705 73.136	11	10.521 8.731	1.578	2.174	.055
9-week 12-week	73.136 77.182	11	8.731 6.088	1.045	3.872	.003
6-week 12-week	69.705 77.182	11	10.521 6.088	1.835	4.075	.002

Appendix A

School Attachment Questionnaire

Please answer with either a 1 or 2.

Yes =1; No =2

Commitment

1. ____ Do you care if your homework is done correctly?
2. ____ Do you think that most of your classes are important?
3. ____ Do you think most of your classes are a waste of time?
4. ____ Have you been on the honor roll this year?
5. ____ Does it matter to you what your grades are?
6. ____ Would you like to quit school now?
7. ____ Do you think an education is important?
8. ____ Do you think you will fail no matter how hard you try?
9. ____ Are you failing any courses this school year?

Attachment

10. ____ Do you care a lot about what your teachers think of you?
11. ____ Do you have a favorite teacher in this school?
12. ____ Do most of your teachers like you?
13. ____ Do you like most of your teachers?
14. ____ I wish I went to a different high school.
15. ____ It is easy for me to talk over schoolwork problems with most of my teachers.
16. ____ Most teachers are not interested in anything I say or do.

Involvement

17. ____ Do you belong to the school band?
18. ____ Do you participate in intramural sports?
19. ____ During the present school year, have you tried to sell things to help your school raise money?
20. ____ Do you belong to the school chorus?
21. ____ Do you participate in the school council?
22. ____ Do you attend school dances?
23. ____ Do you attend athletic events after school hours?
24. ____ Do you attend school concerts after school hours?
25. ____ Do you belong to the drama club?

Bonding, Achievement, and Activities

Appendix A

School Attachment Questionnaire

Please answer with either a 1 or 2.

Yes = 1; No = 2

Belief in School Rules

- 26. _____ Most school rules are fair.
- 27. _____ The principal is tough and too strict.
- 28. _____ Students are treated fairly.
- 29. _____ Rules are too strict.
- 30. _____ The principal is fair most of the time.
- 31. _____ The punishments are the same no matter what.
- 32. _____ Teachers are too strict.
- 33. _____ Are all student ethnic groups treated the same?

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

Students with Anxiety: The Role of the Professional School Counselor

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Abstract

This paper discusses how school counselors can support students suffering from anxiety. The causes and prevalence of anxiety are presented as well as the differences between normal and problematic anxiety. The role of school personnel in early identification is discussed with particular emphasis on the responsibilities of the school counselor. These responsibilities include education of the staff, facilitation of effective communication, and development of appropriate individual plans for these students.

Students with Anxiety in the Schools: The Role of the School Counselor

Personal experience is often like a bright light exposing the gap between reality and perception... It's 1:39 A.M. and the telephone rings. I struggle awake wondering who could possibly be calling at this time of night. My daughter is a first semester student at the university. Has something happened to her? I answer the phone. It is my daughter on the phone, but it's not her voice I hear. It's the sound of rapid shallow breathing followed by punctuated phrases of "I can't breathe. I can't breathe." I struggle not to panic. I tell her to calm down and ask what's wrong. The rapid breathing is followed by phrases like "I can't breathe." and "I think I'm going to die." My mind races and I try to stay calm. I'm over an hour's drive from my daughter's dorm so all I can do is talk to her on the phone. The counselor in me kicks in and I work to help her slow down her breathing. I talk to her in a soothing reassuring manner. After a long 20 minutes, she has calmed down.

She tells me that she thinks she's okay now and she wants to try to sleep. I assure her that she can call back at any time if she wants to, tell her how much I love her, and hang up the phone wondering what in the world just happened. I later discover that my daughter and I had just experienced her first full-blown panic attack.

I have been a professional school counselor (PSC) for almost 20 years and I am familiar with many emotional and behavioral problems exhibited by students in the schools. My counselor education program emphasized the recognition of symptoms of serious mental and emotional disorders as well as protocol for referral to appropriate mental health professionals (MHPs). I had a working knowledge of anxiety, particularly school anxiety, and how to work with students with anxiety; however, the increase in the number of students experiencing problematic anxiety made me realize how much more I needed to know. Traditionally, the responsibility of diagnosis and treatment rested with the MHPs leaving the PSC in the position of support person. While this may be an important role, my limited knowledge of problematic anxiety left me dependent on my basic counseling skills and intuition, parental input, and the treatment recommendations of others. I realized that I must become more knowledgeable about anxiety to better support these students.

PSCs must be able to recognize the symptoms of anxiety and communicate effectively in order to provide appropriate recommendations and referrals. This is particularly important because many students may not be diagnosed with anxiety and, therefore, may not be

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

receiving treatment. PSCs may be the first person with an understanding of problematic anxiety these students encounter. Therefore, PSCs must understand how to support and advocate for the students which often includes the involvement of parents, school staff, and referral resources outside the school environment. It is important to recognize that an anxiety disorder diagnosis is not necessary for early intervention and support.

Although there are many anxiety disorder diagnoses, treatment plans for these disorders are typically based on symptoms and behaviors exhibited rather than on a particular diagnosis (Wagner, 2005). Therefore, early detection and appropriate preventive interventions are extremely important. Within the context of this article, specific anxiety disorders will be briefly discussed; but the primary focus of this article is on the recognition and treatment of the behaviors and symptoms associated with problematic anxiety. The purpose for writing this article is to increase awareness of the PSC's role in the recognition, support, and potential diagnosis of anxiety problems.

Recognizing Anxiety

Manifestation of Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as a subjective sense of fear, distress, or worry that may exhibit both physical sensations (e.g., headaches or nausea) and emotional symptoms (e.g., fear or nervousness) (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000). Anxiety disorders range from those associated with a specific thing or event (phobias) to those in which anxiety is evoked by a broad spectrum of situations, termed Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Due to frequent undiagnosed anxiety in young people, it is important for school counselors to have a basic knowledge of anxiety and the ability to recognize symptoms.

Anxiety is a prevalent problem among young people. Although identification and treatment of anxiety disorders often do not occur until early adulthood, approximately half of those treated for anxiety indicate an earlier onset during childhood or adolescence (APA, 2000). According to the Discovery Education (2005) report, anxiety disorders affect between 2% and 4% of the population and are the most common type of mental disorder in the United States. Erk (2004) estimates the prevalence of anxiety disorders among children from 5% to 18%. Another study by Emslie (2008) reports similar numbers in the range of 6% to 20% of children and adolescents. Anxiety is not just a problem for adults; it is a problem for young people, often manifesting itself in the school

setting.

According to Wagner (2005), about half of students diagnosed with an anxiety disorder experience significant difficulty functioning at school. Anxiety lowers academic performance and productivity, although students with mild levels of anxiety can sometimes compensate using persistence and hard work. Tardiness, absenteeism, and perfectionism, common with more severe levels of anxiety, can lead to incomplete work, test failure, or possible repetition of a grade. Dropout rates are high among students with problematic anxiety, but these figures are sometimes attributed to substance abuse and truancy which can mask untreated anxiety.

Anxiety-based school refusal is common during times of transition, for example, moving from elementary to middle and middle to high school, and it affects 2% to 5% of school-age children (Anxiety Disorders Association of America, n.d.). The onset of social anxiety disorder (aka Social Phobia), characterized by an obvious and ongoing fear of social or performance situations, peaks in adolescence and can often cause significant impairment including school performance as well as problems with interpersonal relationships (Masia-Warner et al., 2005). Students with social anxiety disorder often underachieve due to an avoidance of classroom participation or test anxiety and, in severe cases, may even drop out of school (APA, 2000). Students with anxiety are adept at avoiding situations that may evoke fear or anxiety. In a study of approach and avoidance goals and plans, Dickson and MacLeod (2004) found that adolescents with high anxiety were more motivated to generate avoidance goals and plans and were less specific in forming approach plans. If individuals expect an unpleasant situation or failure, they are more inclined to avoid the situation rather than approach the situation and plan how to deal with it. For example, a student may anticipate failure on an assigned project and, therefore, choose not to attempt the project at all. Students with anxiety may benefit from the support of PSCs and other significant individuals in learning to approach rather than avoid threatening situations.

Students with anxiety are often misunderstood. Parents and others may think they are deliberately being annoying, attention-seeking, or manipulative. These students have difficulty explaining their own behavior which makes misinterpretation more likely. Discrepancies in behavior at school and at home can lead school personnel to speculate that the problem is at home or parents to think the problem is at school (Wagner, 2005). These students often exert tremendous effort 'holding it together'

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

at school and then fall apart at home. Rather than deny a potential problem or blame the parents, educators must understand that this behavior may be the student's effort to cope with anxiety.

Anxiety often manifests as physical symptoms and may occur with other mental health problems like depression (APA, 2000). These co-occurring physical and emotional symptoms exacerbate the problems of the anxious student. Regardless of whether the student has multiple diagnoses or displays undiagnosed anxiety that interferes with social, emotional, or academic functioning, each student's needs must be considered individually.

Signs of Problematic Anxiety

Anxiety is normal and necessary for survival and occurs as the result of someone's judgment of the risk inherent in a situation (Wagner, 2005). An anxiety disorder is an extreme expression of anxiety. Anxiety becomes problematic when it affects one's ability to engage in age-appropriate tasks or complete responsibilities. Wagner defines the three responsibilities of childhood as learning, making friends, and having fun. A simple method of discerning whether anxiety has crossed the threshold from normal to problematic is the use of Wagner's four D's, "disproportion, disruption, distress, and duration" (p. 33-34). Anxiety is disproportionate when it far exceeds the normal expectations of a particular situation. When a student cannot complete normal routines, the disruption causes the student to experience distress and become upset. Anxiety that persists over an extended period of time, usually a month or more, indicates duration. When a student exhibits all these elements, the anxiety level is problematic and referral for diagnosis and treatment is appropriate.

Causes and Triggers

Causes of Anxiety

When someone perceives a situation to be stressful, anxiety is triggered. For most individuals this anxiety is transient but for others it persists. Causes of anxiety may be psychological, genetic, biological, or often a combination of one or more of these. Learning theorists believe that anxiety is triggered when fear occurs with a previously neutral event or object while other theoretical orientations stress the significance of the development of particular thought patterns and imitative behaviors (Discovery Education, 2005). There is evidence of a biologic factor involving abnormal levels or functioning of norepinephrine, serotonin, and GABA receptors (APA, 2000). Stud-

ies have also substantiated a genetic tendency to manifest an anxiety disorder. About 10% of children have a fearful or anxious temperament and may have a genetic predisposition toward anxiety; however, no "anxiety gene" has been identified (Wagner, 2005). Thus it appears, temperament alone is not a predictor of anxiety problems or disorders because many factors interact with genetics to trigger an anxiety problem.

Over-scheduling and Anxiety

Chansky (2004) states the anxieties of children are "a unique combination of genetics, temperament, and experience in the world" (p. 103). Chansky addresses the speculation regarding the impact of environment and culture on anxiety. In the United States, some people are tempted to point the finger at parents who seem to have over-scheduled their children. There may be some reason for concern, especially with early childhood involvement but, by adolescence, many young people are immersed in the culture and see involvement and over-scheduling as the norm and perhaps even as a status symbol. Melman, Little, and Akin-Little (2007) found that self-reported anxiety rose in direct relation to the amount of time students reported participating in activities. However, time is not the only factor according to the research. Expectations and pressure to succeed from parents, coaches, and the adolescents themselves increase anxiety (Melman, Little, & Akin-Little). Ironically, these students often worry excessively about performance quality and competence even when they are not being evaluated by others (APA, 2000).

Cultural Factors

Cultural factors may also contribute to increased anxiety. Chansky (2004) cites information overload, tight deadlines, technology burnout, sexuality and violence in the media, materialism, and commercialism as social forces exerting pressure on adolescents.

Socioeconomics may also factor into the development of anxiety. Levine (2006) says that beyond the age of 11 or 12, material advantages do not translate into emotional health. In fact, preteens and teens from well-educated, affluent families experience the highest rates of anxiety and various other psychological disorders of any group of children in the United States. In an interview with Adams (2006), Levine indicated there are three times as many diagnoses in students from high socio-economic families as compared to the general population. According to Levine, well-educated and well-meaning parents sometimes intervene on behalf of their children as opposed

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

to supporting the child's attempts to problem-solve. In doing so, the adolescent is robbed of the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to approach situations that may evoke anxiety. Poor development of problem-solving or approach skills may increase the tendency of students with anxiety to practice avoidance. While it is important to understand the causes or triggers of anxiety, the major role of the PSC is to focus on identification of the problem in order to understand and support students with anxiety and help them succeed.

The Professional School Counselor as a Partner in Treatment

Early Identification

While the treatment of students with anxiety is often left to MHPs and in some cases medical doctors, the school provides an opportunity to incorporate support from parents, teachers, and peers in a natural setting. Because treatment of anxiety focuses on identifiable symptoms and behaviors rather than a specific diagnosis, prevention and treatment can be delivered effectively prior to a diagnosis (Wagner, 2005). The Queensland Early Intervention and Prevention of Anxiety Project (Dadds, et al., 1999) focused on students with early features of anxiety as well as those with identified anxiety disorders. This project involved using a small group format to teach positive coping skills within the school setting. Results indicated successful prevention of the onset of anxiety disorders with students who showed early signs and reduced disorder rates in students with mild to moderate anxiety disorders. These results strengthen the conviction that school personnel need to aide in early identification and intervention for these students.

PSCs can help educate other school personnel about students with anxiety. These professionals, along with parents and pediatricians, must be responsible for early intervention since few children under the age of 15 are likely to be self-referred for an anxiety disorder (Erk, 2004). Educators may be the first individuals with the opportunity, knowledge, and skills to recognize anxiety in students. Teachers interact with many students and, over time, develop a sense of "normal" for certain age groups in specific circumstances while parents seldom have as many comparison points (Wagner, 2005). With early detection, PSCs can provide appropriate interventions.

Incorporating Strategies into an Existing Framework

Schools must provide an appropriate education for

all students. Students with anxiety disorders should be treated in a manner similar to students with physical or mental disabilities. Students with a diagnosis may qualify for Other Health Impaired (OHI) and have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan which may include accommodations such as a later arrival time at school, prorated credit for partially completed assignments, or similar modifications (Chansky, 2004). However, students do not need to wait for an IEP, 504, or even an official diagnosis in order to receive support at school. PSCs can provide many interventions that can impact school participation and success for students with anxiety in a positive manner.

School Climate

Many schools seem to have all of the environmental elements to exacerbate anxiety in students. Evaluation through grades may cause students to focus on performing rather than learning. A student with a propensity for performance anxiety might exhibit apprehension about grades, particularly if a tendency toward perfectionism is present (Wagner, 2005). Even if teachers are supportive, the social environment in many schools may be intimidating, particularly for students with anxiety. PSCs must develop appropriate strategies and methods to support these students.

The level of school support provided can make the difference in whether a student thrives or shuts down and avoids school completely. The first and most important step is to increase the ability of teachers and other school personnel to recognize anxiety. The PSC can provide professional development workshops and appropriate literature as two means of increasing awareness. Conferences and informal conversations with colleagues about classroom interventions for students displaying signs of anxiety allow PSCs to share their expertise.

Strategies for Professional School Counselors

Development of a Unique and Specific Plan

School avoidance is often a symptom of anxiety. Because total avoidance is counterproductive, it is important to get the student back in school as quickly as possible (Chansky, 2004). The longer a student stays away from school, the harder it is for him or her to return. Schools must take steps to get the young person back in school and appropriately engaged in his/her education. A first step in getting the student with anxiety back in school is the determination of how much or what the student can handle in order to get him or her in the door. Setting

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

up a “safe place” in a PSC’s office or some other location is recommended in case the student needs to leave the classroom temporarily (Chansky; Wagner, 2005). A safe place can be any non-threatening location where the student feels comfortable. After this is established, the PSC can work with the student to set up goals. Dickson and MacLeod (2004) discuss the tendency of adolescents with high anxiety to over-generalize personal plans and goals which may lead to heightened rumination over failure to achieve a goal. Although adolescents who are anxious can be relatively specific about the experiences they want to avoid and how to avoid them, they are much less clear and specific about how to approach a goal or formulate a plan for doing so.

Weisz and Hawley (2002) caution that the acquisition of skills and the application of those skills in a natural setting is sometimes hampered by low motivation. In addition, low motivation may prevent the development of a productive working relationship between the PSC and student. Adolescent involvement in the planning process is important because such involvement often increases the motivation necessary for a successful outcome.

Although student participation in the plan development may increase motivation, the PSC or parent must initially take the lead in cooperatively establishing a manageable plan. Wagner (2005) suggests adopting a team approach in developing an action plan based on the student’s needs. An effective professional school counselor can help develop trust among parents, teachers, and other professionals so the team can establish respectful cooperation. The team must focus on success of small steps so the student does not become discouraged or overwhelmed, and the goals of the action plan should be specific and measurable so the student can recognize accomplishment. The PSC or a designee should monitor accomplishment of the steps so the team can make modifications to the plan if necessary.

Working with teachers to modify expectations and assignments is another important strategy. Expectations regarding attendance may need to be modified to allow late entry or absences from some classes. An assignment requiring group work or an oral presentation may seem insurmountable for a student with anxiety. Alternate methods for accomplishing the assignment or assessment can be helpful in those circumstances. If schools are not flexible in supporting the anxiety management of students, many of these young people will continue to avoid the school setting and perhaps drop out.

Implementing Strategies for the Classroom

Teachers can take small steps to reduce the overall anxiety level in their classrooms. According to Chansky (2004), more than 10% of the students in every classroom have some level of anxiety and have difficulty processing risk accurately. PSCs can help teachers develop sensitivity to these levels of anxiety and teachers can help students put things in perspective. In classroom discussions of natural disasters or serious illness, for example, the use of words like “rarely” and “seldom” can help students assess the risks. Preventive or protective measures can also be emphasized over the potential risk. Teachers can reduce anxiety by creating a nonjudgmental and accepting atmosphere in the classroom. Students with anxiety often experience embarrassment over their inability to participate in classroom and school activities like their peers. The avoidance of certain situations is sometimes interpreted as manipulative. Because students with anxiety can be manipulative similar to students without anxiety, Wagner (2005) points out that it is up to teachers and parents to distinguish manipulation from legitimate anxiety. Education regarding anxiety symptoms and discernment are necessary to avoid inadvertently rewarding manipulative behavior. Increased awareness creates a more tolerant classroom setting allowing room for creative scheduling, learning, and performance assessment.

Teaching Coping Skills

In a study of anxiety, depression, and coping strategies, Matos et al. (2008) found a positive correlation between psychological disorders and poor coping strategies. Normal coping abilities may be overwhelmed by increased internal and external stressors. Assessing coping skills is integral to understanding performance under stressful events. PSCs can assess individual coping skills and work with students exhibiting anxiety to help them develop more effective coping skills. Coping skills may be taught individually or in a small group setting. Dadds et al. (1999) found that a brief psychosocial intervention significantly impacted anxiety levels in school children. The intervention was a 10-week small group within the school setting focusing on the development of positive coping skills to deal with anxiety. The group was complemented with three separate parent sessions. When students are willing to participate in a small group, they are often relieved to find out there are others experiencing this type of difficulty. In addition, PSCs can implement programs to promote self-competence and self-esteem, encourage emotion management, and develop skills in problem identification and solving that might improve

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

the development of effective coping skills (Matos et al., 2008; Wagner, 2005).

Communication with Families

PSCs must also talk with parents about the importance of family activities and “down time” for their child and encourage teachers to support parents who make decisions to limit their child’s activities. Parents of children with anxiety may want to limit the child’s exposure to various media, technology, and information. PSCs can help parents examine the expectations they have for their child and assess the effects that the expectations may have on the student’s anxiety. Although some may argue that parents have little influence on adolescents, particularly in comparison to the adolescent’s peers, parent reactions, responses, and behaviors are frequently mirrored in their children (Chansky, 2004). Young people often imitate their parents’ methods of handling stress. Therefore, it is important to consider family dynamics and, if possible, include the parents when working with students with anxiety. School-based interventions should involve parents because they have strong effects on the student’s daily stress (Matos et al., 2008).

Summary and Conclusions

The research delineates many ways schools can and should be involved in the support of students with anxiety. The primary role of the PSC is to educate and support school personnel in the early identification of students with anxiety and the implementation of interventions to support them. Many students will remain unidentified and unsupported without the involvement of schools. Successful school involvement can be achieved by a PSC who increases the knowledge base of school personnel, promotes effective communication, and creates plans targeting the specific needs of students with anxiety.

The professional school counselor can work with the administration to identify various ways to educate the staff about anxiety. A staff in-service may be an effective way to provide basic information. The PSC might include books and other materials on anxiety in a teacher/parent resource area. In order to be a credible resource for other staff members, it is critical for the PSC to become knowledgeable about the manifestations and treatment of anxiety in students.

Effective communication and collaboration are essential for the consistent support of students who are anxious. Conferences involving the PSC, teachers, parents,

and the student should be encouraged. The use of a team approach which includes administrators and appropriate health experts may be the most appropriate protocol to follow in cases of severe anxiety. Professional school counselors can develop trust among all of these individuals so that the teams can function in respectful cooperation. Communication is the key to collaborative, consistent support for students with anxiety.

The creation of a manageable plan unique to the needs of the individual is the major task of the team. The PSC can insure that the plan is comprised of small achievable steps to encourage student success, with accomplishment of steps monitored by the PSC or another designee. It is important to monitor accomplishment so the team can reconvene to celebrate successes and modify the plan if necessary.

PSCs play an important role in helping students with anxiety succeed in school. The school counselor is in a position to provide information, be a knowledgeable resource, and to advocate for ongoing recognition and support of these students. Approximately one out of every eight students will struggle with anxiety (Wagner, 2005) and the social, emotional, and academic well-being of these students will depend largely on the involvement and support of the professional school counselor.

In Retrospect

There is a saying that hindsight is 20-20. I don't know that experience yields a perfect picture, but it is interesting what it does reveal. The past 7 years have been a journey in which much learning occurred. It was only after my daughter's panic attack that seemingly inconsequential behaviors and symptoms gained significance. The "pieces of the puzzle" began to fall into place.

As a counselor, I was shocked to realize my lack of awareness of a problem evolving right in front of me. As a parent, I continue to struggle with giving adequate support without enabling the problem. After studying anxiety-related behaviors and the "best practices" to address these, I realize the importance of Wagner's (2005) "no blame, no shame". Students with anxiety and their parents want help resolving their difficulties and, as PSCs, we need to give them appropriate support. It is our responsibility to access and use the wealth of information available. We must continue to educate ourselves and others in order to best help our students with anxieties.

Note: The personal journaling is shared with my daughter's knowledge and permission.

Students with Anxiety in the Schools

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Call for Submissions

The Editorial Review Board of the *GSCA Journal* is requesting that practicing school counselors, supervisors, counselor educators, and other professionals interested in the promotion of school counseling in Georgia submit articles for publication in the next issue of the *Journal*.

Articles which highlight the positive outcomes of counseling with students and/or which support the accountability of counseling programs in Georgia are of particular interest to our readers. Manuscripts which address ethical/philosophical issues relevant to school counseling, describe successful school counseling techniques and practices, review books and other media products of interest to school counselors, poetry and other creative writing will also be included in the issue.

Additionally, manuscripts for the column *Networking Notebook* are invited. These are brief manuscripts describing the best practical program ideas and interventions you have designed or adapted. By sharing these practices other professional school counselors and school counseling candidates can learn new ways to work with students, and counselor educators can share what they learned with future professional school counselors.

For more information regarding the *Journal* contact Susan Boes, Editor, in writing at *GSCA Journal*, University of West Georgia, Counseling and Educational Psychology, Carrollton, Georgia, 30118; by phone at (678) 839-6122 or email at sboes@westga.edu.

Submission deadline is May 1, 2010 but **manuscripts are accepted at any time** as it takes time for the reviewers to read and make suggestions for revisions.

GSCA Journal Guidelines for Authors

1. All manuscripts should conform to the guidelines for publication listed in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition*.
2. Submit an original and two copies of the manuscript to the editor by May 1, 2010 **OR earlier if possible** as the reviewers need time to read and make suggestions. These are to be hard copies rather than email attachments so that the APA format stays intact.
3. Submit a cover letter with your submission. On the manuscript include a cover page with the title of the article, the name, title, institutional affiliation, address, and telephone numbers (day and evening) for each author, and the date of submission. Provide a summer address and phone number in addition to a school address for the first author. Email contact information is also helpful. The first author will be the person contacted by the editor.
4. If the manuscript is accepted and revisions (if needed) are completed the manuscript will need to be sent as an attachment by email.
5. Do not submit previously published material or material that is currently under consideration by another publisher.
6. Author(s) bear full responsibility for the accuracy of references, quotations, tables and figures. While the editorial review board member and the editor review these, it is not their responsibility to verify for accuracy.
7. Manuscripts that do not comply with the guidelines will be returned without review to the author(s).
8. Send your submissions to:
GSCA Journal
Dr. Rhonda Bryant, Editor
Albany State University
Counseling and Educational Leadership
504 College Drive
Albany, GA 31705

Notes

GSCA Membership Application 2009-2010

Date:	Membership Year: July 1 - June 30		
Last Name:			Middle Name:
First Name:			Preferred Name:

CONTACT INFORMATION

Home		Work	
Mailing Address:		Mailing Address:	
City:		City:	
State:	Zip:	State:	Zip:
E-mail:		E-mail:	
Phone:	Fax:	Phone:	Fax:

School Name:	System:	Region:
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PLEASE COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION BELOW

Student Members Must Complete this Section:

I certify that the applicant is **currently** enrolled in an accredited school counseling certification program during this academic year at:

Name of College or University

Signature of Professor:

Date:

Signature of Student:

Date:

☐ I certify that I am a full-time student and that I do not qualify for the Professional membership.

Type of Renewal: ☐ New Member ☐ Membership Renewal

ASCA Membership Number

Membership Type: ☐ Professional (\$50) ☐ Affiliate (\$50) ☐ Student (\$25) ☐ Retired (\$25) ☐ Past President (No Dues)

School Type: ☐ Public ☐ Private

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☐ Coordinator/Supervisor ☐ Retired ☐ Other

For additional, up-to-date information, visit GSCA on the web at: www.gaschoolcounselors.com

☐ I do not wish to be included in the GSCA listserve.

☐ I do not wish to have my personal information released to any other organization, group, or corporate entity.

Please select your preferred delivery method for GSCA's Beacon: ☐ Electronic (E-mailed) ☐ Printed (Mailed)

By signing this application for membership in GSCA, I agree to abide by the ASCA *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (2004), whether I am a member of ASCA or not. I further certify by my signature that I am qualified for the Membership Type that I selected above and I have indicated my correct Work Setting.

Signature

Date:

Make Checks Payable to GSCA (Do not staple check to application form)

Membership Dues \$

(If you would like to make a contribution to GSCA, indicate the amount(s) below and include it in your check total.)

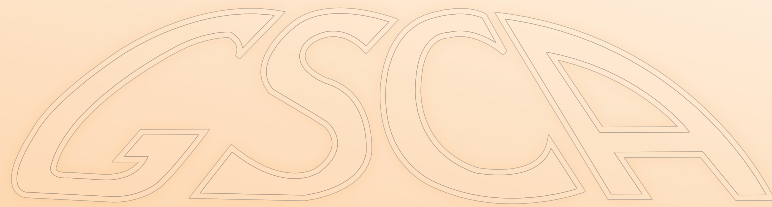
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