Professional SchoolCounselling

EDPY 442: Intro to Counselling Sophie Yohani, Ph.D. R. Psych

School Counsellor Roles

- Counselling individual, groups and families
- Developing and providing educational and support services to parents
- Consultation and in-service programs for teachers and staff
- Facilitating referrals to outside agencies and collaborating with specialist who are working with specific children
- Academic advising and career counselling

ATA Guidance Council

The Guidance Council is a specialist group of the Alberta Teachers' Association which:

- advocates for school counsellors in Alberta
- facilitates professional development activities for practicing school counsellors and related helping professionals
- publishes current research on topics of interest and concern to school counsellors





ATA Guidance Council

- provides input to the Alberta Teachers'
 Association and Alberta Education on current educational issues from a guidance and counselling perspective
- supports comprehensive guidance and counselling program plan approach to school counselling

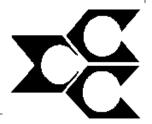




Vision

Establish Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Programs in every school in Alberta





A Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program

An integral part of every school curriculum and includes:

- Students
- School staff
- Parents
- Community agencies





Counselling Program Plan (CPP) Components

- Developmental guidance instruction
- Individual student planning
- School/community support
- Responsive services





Developmental Guidance Instruction

- Preventative and proactive
- Assists students in educational, personal/social and career development
- Advocates for students
- Solicits and coordinates expertise from community agencies

Individual Student Planning

- School completion
- Student interests and needs
 e.g., Special education
- Post secondary education plans
- Careers, career trends, scholarships
- Transition planning





Coordinate and Direct School/Community Support

- Interagency collaboration (social services, resource officers, post secondary institutions, employers, ...)
- Work with teachers and advisory councils to gather information and feedback concerning needs of students

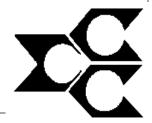




Responsive Services

- Personal or crisis intervention
- Access community resources
- Referrals





A Proposal for Change:

Establishing Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Programs in every school in Alberta





 All students K — Grade 12 should have access to guidance and counselling services at their school





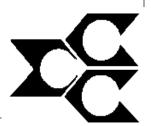
 Counselling services should be provided by certificated teachers with specialized training in guidance and counselling





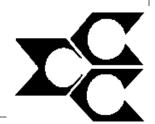
 Personal and career counselling should be provided by guidance counsellors to ensure that advice and counsel are consistent





• The ATA Guidance Council should be consulted regarding proposed changes to regulations or policies related to counselling





Action

- Strategic planning session (2007)
- Provincial survey (April 2007)
- Sought enhanced communication with Alberta Education
- Findings presented at Conference 2007
- Position paper (May 2009)

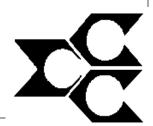


Process

 Position paper submitted for approval to ATA Provincial Executive Committee (PEC)

 Position paper sent to Minister of Education





Our Vision

- The village (school, home and community) collaborates to raise each child
- Schools create safe and caring environments
- At risk children, youth and families are supported
- Counsellor access assured to every student in Alberta

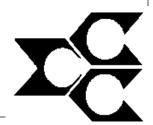




Our Expectations

- A Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program in every Alberta School
- Revision of existing policy
- Move to Curriculum Branch





Our Expectations

- Certificated teachers with specialized training
- Increased funding
- Guidance and Counselling Curriculum
 Educational Manager





Our Expectations

- Professional development
- Revision and development of resources
- Undergraduate school counselling courses at Alberta universities



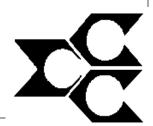


Current Resource

- Program development and validation checklist
- Website address:

http://education.alberta.ca/media/93 3341/ac-guidelines-webversion.pdf





Model

- (Manitoba's Guidance and Counselling PowerPoint Presentations)
 - http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/guidance/resources
 httml
- Manitoba's Guidelines for Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling
 - http://www.msca.mb.ca/downloads/msca_guidelines_2002.p

School Counselling: Primary Prevention

- Delivery of programs within community settings (such as schools, community health centers) with the aim of preventing the development of mental/physical health or educational problems.
- Typically target "at risk" populations and are most successful when they have a specific focus.

 Examples include D.A.R.E. programs to prevent substance abuse problems in school age school; suicide prevention programs; after-school homework clubs.
- Group oriented rather than focusing on individuals.

School Counselling: Secondary Prevention

- Involves working with identified problems with the aim of preventing further progression.
- Work with groups of children with identified social or behavioral problems would fall into this category.
- Children who have **experienced losses or traumatic events** in their lives would benefit from support at this level.
- Problems are typically not severe and are expected to resolve with intervention

School Counselling: Tertiary Prevention

- Involves working with individuals with more severe mental health difficulties while ensuring the safety of the clients and preventing from becoming chronic (e.g. running an eating disorders program).
- Typically do not work alone at this level and often collaborate with specialists such as psychiatrists or psychologists if a child is able to attend school.

Play Therapy: Elementary Age Children

- A form of therapy that helps a child process and work through thoughts and feelings through the medium of play
- Based on the premise that play is how children express (symbolic substitution for words) themselves and learn about their world is essential for healthy development.
- Counsellors observe and extract themes from a child's play in order to better understand the inner working of the child

Play Therapy: Elementary Age Children

- Play therapy is considered a child-centered approach as it meets a child where they are at developmentally rather than forcing them to enter the world of adults through verbal therapies.
- Types of Play Therapy: Child-Centered, Gestalt, Theraplay all are based on theory
- In addition to play therapy, elementary school counsellors can also use games, drama, and various art activities to engage children

Arts-Based Approaches: Middle School Children

- Arts-based prevention and intervention programs are often used with this age group.
- Arts-based activities can be unstructured (child has freedom to draw or make whatever they want) or structured (counsellor gives specific instructions of what the child should draw).
- A key component of any arts-based work is to spend time reflecting on the art with the child. This allows the counsellor to understand the child's inner world.
- Arts-based activities are versatile as they can be used in work with individuals or groups of children.

Case Example: The Hope Project

- The absence of hope or an orientation to the future is reported as a most distressing factor that leads to difficulties in adjusting for individuals who have experienced a traumatic event or loss (Herman, 1992; Yule, 1998).
- Studies of hope with children suggest **hope to be essential for coping with adversity** (Herth, 1998; Yohani & Larsen, 2009).
- Counsellors collaborating with clients to **explore ways of** making hope more visible in their lives has been linked to clients finding ways to increase personal resources (Edey & Jevne, 2003)
- Builds on children' strengths



Hope & Art-Assisted Conversations Sample Questions

- Tell me about your photograph and how it represents hope to you
- Can you tell me how the people, things or events in this photograph reflect your hope(s)?
- What would you add to this photograph that would further show your hope(s)
- What would you add to this photograph that could enhance your hope(s)

Secondary School Students

- Work with students in areas relating to career and life planning, mental health concerns, and interpersonal relationships
- Counsellors design and run life skills programs to assist with transition into adulthood.
- Most life skills programs tend to focus on job searching (resume writing and interviewing skills) managing finances, time managements, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and sexuality education and sexual decision-making.
- Engage in career counselling and vocational interest testing