

School Counselors as a Source of Major Support to the School System in fast pace changing and over demanding Educational Revolution:

India has one of the largest networks of schools in the world. An important consequence of expanding system of schools with ever increasing enrolments and acquiring of mass character has been the increase in complexity of school management. The changing pace of technology development and knowledge revolution has made the job of a teacher definitely more demanding. They are required to assume new roles and responsibilities for improving the quality of education and access to education leading to stress in the internal educational system of various public and private schools. The system demands new knowledge and skills from the teachers and head teachers. It also demands greater capability at school level to respond to the emerging diversity in the student population and among those entering the teaching profession. In effect, changes in the characteristics of the system have made the role of the school teacher even more critical than what it was earlier. Has the State, which is the main provider of education in the country, responded to the changed reality? Has the teacher become more empowered? Have adequate efforts been made to equip the teacher to face the emerging challenges? What is the current reality with respect to status, roles and functions of the teacher and the head teachers in India? And how can we come out from this challenge?

These are few issues which need attention especially now when the country is moving towards becoming a knowledge centre and quality education has become determinate in such process. Presence of a School Counselor can really make a difference in dealing with the above mentioned challenges in the educational system. In fact teachers can be trained and must accompany school counsellors for various orientation programs and for updating their skills and knowledge in regard for dealing with behavioural and emotional issues developing early in young children these days. Awareness on various kinds of adolescent issues and psycho-social developmental problems can improve the quality of teaching and learning creating a healthy climate in schools. School Counsellors not only act as a major source of support to the school systems in this fast pace changing and over demanding educational revolution but can also empower teachers, students and parents for resolving various kinds of issues building an overall climate of wellbeing at all levels.

The school counsellor serves as a school leader, student advocate, and team collaborator who work to remove systemic barriers to student success. School counselors plan the comprehensive school counselling program, and facilitate its delivery. Working together with school administrators, other professional educators, and community members, their collaborative approach produces measurable results that are shared and used to inform program improvement.

Comprehensive school counselling programs, integral to the school's educational environment, partner with other academic and behavioural initiatives to effect positive changes in student achievement and behavior. Targeted outcomes of fully implemented programs include increased student achievement, an improved graduation rate, better attendance, reduced disciplinary referrals, completed individual learning plans, and increased student participation in the community.

Five Ways School Counselors Can Support Schools and Students:

School counselors support the academic achievement, career development, and personal/social well-being of students. There are five main ways that school counselors support teachers and students: consultation, preventative programming, classroom guidance, group counseling for students, and individual counseling for students.

Consultation

School counselors have a wealth of knowledge about a variety of topics. Chances are, if you have a question, a school counselor can provide you with an answer or point you towards a great resource. If you are concerned about a student or even just looking for a new activity use in the classroom, school counselors can help. Counselors provide consultation to teachers, parents, principals, and other school staff.

Preventative Programming

Preventative programming educates students about the topic or issue and provides them with ways to handle it. For example, for my school, we are planning a career talk to prepare 8th grade students for their transition to 9th grade and beyond. We are hosting speakers about a variety of career topics and students are participating in a “Reality Check” simulation about education and income level. For our culminating event, students and parents will be invited to a career fashion show demonstrating appropriate attire for interviews and the workplace.

Classroom Guidance

School counselors can facilitate classroom guidance lessons about a myriad of topics for you and your students. School counsellors can facilitate classroom guidance lessons in classrooms and co-taught lessons with teachers.

School counsellors can facilitate classroom lessons on career development, diversity, bullying, cooperation, rumors, and many more topics. School counselors can plan lessons with teachers in advance or facilitate lessons based on teacher or student need. Classroom guidance lessons are also a great way for your students to connect with the school counselor and build relationships.

Group Counseling

When there are multiple students experiencing similar problem or issue, it can be helpful for them to be in a counseling group together. Group counseling helps students build relationships and feel that they are not alone in their experiences. Counsellors or trained teachers can run group sessions on a variety of topics including anger management and building healthy interpersonal relationships.

Individual Counseling

School counselors use many different mediums to work with students in individual sessions. In my individual sessions with students, I allow students to draw, write, sing, play, or just talk. As counsellors or teacher counsellors we must encourage students to do whatever they need to do, whether it is drawing or shooting hoops while talking. Sometimes we work on learning a specific skill such as deep breathing for anxiety. Other times we work on role-playing situations, such as a problem with a friend.

Thus school counselling increases student's ability to concentrate study and ultimately learn.

Counseling decreases classroom disturbances.

Counseling services support teachers in the classroom in order to enable teachers to provide quality instructions designed to assist students in achieving high standards.

School Counselors are trained to recognize "early warning signs" in at risk youth. They work with school staff and management, school principals to deal with socio emotional problems, psycho-social issues and implement school safety as well as prevent school violence.

Students who undergo counselling programs report to be more positive with a sense of belongingness and safety in their schools.